A STRANGE CRITIQUE: WHAT DEMOGORGONS TELL US ABOUT THE EDUCATIVE POWER OF RISK

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INTRODUCTION

A truth never comes into the world by accident. As Alain Badiou argues, a truth is named by the event, that is, a presentation wedging itself between the furniture of the world as an "inexistent element" raised to the maximal degree.[1] The event ascends from the nil, the void, the empty set to surface as new material to be or not to be incorporated by the faithful. The event's intensity is but a "fragile scintillation."[2] It soon vanishes, leaving the subject to pluck truth from its trace. The subject, in this sense, is the body faithful to the event; those who give the rupture its embodied form.[3] Seldom can a student engage this subjective act on his or her own. Such requires an intermediary, that is, an education for subjectivity. To be successful in its task, to afford opportunities for students to faithfully participate in a truth's becoming, education must provide, first, space and time for the emergence of the interpreting subject; and, second, support the development of judgement to discern what to *make of* and *do with* the event when it leaves its trace upon the world.

In *The Beautiful Risk of Education,* Gert Biesta cautions that time, space, and judgement for subjectivity, the conditions of a weak and risky education, lack the strength of a learning guarantee. Not only is it possible that this model will compromise a few or more learning standards, so too is it possible that the student will never encounter the opportunity to nominate himself or herself as subject or even care to name an event should the opportunity arise. However, that weakness might fail in its endeavor is far less problematic than the notion that education can or should offer guarantees. As Biesta writes, "To simply demand that education become strong, secure, predictable, and risk free and to see any deviation from this path as a problem that needs to be 'solved' therefore misses the educational point."[4] Supporting the emerging subject is education's point, something that can only happen if the educator takes a risky and deviant path on which obstacles and hazards lay uncertain and unforeseen.

[1] Alain Badiou, *Second Manifesto for Philosophy*, trans. Louise Burchill (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2011), 83.
[2] Alain Badiou, *Logics of Worlds*, trans. Alberto Toscano (London: Bloomsbury, 2009), 45.
[3] Badiou, *Second Manifesto for Philosophy*, 91.
[4] Gert Biesta, *The Beautiful Risk of Education* (Boulder: Paradigm Publishers, 2013), 2.

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In her work *Alienation,* Rahel Jaeggi gives us additional grounds for critiquing a strong education. She defines alienation as a "failure to apprehend, and a halting of, the movement of appropriation."[5] To Jaeggi, in order for an individual to enter into a successful relationship with the world as its subject, he or she must first enter a "relation of appropriation," that is, he or she must be able to integrate and transform social conditions as his or her own. A strong education disrupts this process, one which requires the time, space, and judgement a weak education affords, or so I argue.

The Netflix original series *Stranger Things* expresses our cultural anxieties about events and truths, educational risk, and subjectivity.[6] Briefly, the show is about a circle of intrepid children and adults who decide to engage an event as subjects. The event transpires when a group of scientists open a trans-dimensional tear to the world of the Upside Down. From this portal emerges the Demogorgon, a wicked beast on a mission to colonize the everytown of Hawkins, Indiana. In order to battle the Demogorgon, to faithfully respond to its appearance, the townspeople embark on a deviant and uncertain education. Only by taking this risk can they name the monster as *being-there*. Only by taking this risk are our protagonists able to engage a new world as subjects. Although there is no guarantee our friends will walk away unscathed, the world they fight for is one they faithfully appropriate as their own.

This paper develops its ideas by drawing upon *Stranger Things* as an allegory for an education towards subjectivity along the lines Biesta and Jaeggi suggest. The show places a wager on the possibility of subjectivity over a mechanistic and orderly education, that is, one which is safe, secure, predictable, and risk-free.

A Mechanistic and Orderly Education

An education that is safe, secure, predictable, and risk-free presents the dominant situation (i.e., global capitalism, democratic materialism, Western morality, etc.) as fixed truth. It is as a conservative pedagogy, one which obscures revolutionary acts by treating students as objects of learning rather than subjects of and for new truths. A strong education suspends subjectivity to inculcate students into the normal, natural, and same. A safe education risks stultifying the student into what Henry Adams refers to as "mechanical reactions of a sleeping consciousness."[7] A safe education forecloses subjectivity, and, in doing so, puts the subject to sleep.

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[5] Rahel Jaeggi, *Alienation*, trans. Frederick Neuhouser and Alan Smith (New York: Columbia University Press, 2014), 1.

[6] *Stranger Things,* season 1, directed by Matt Duffer and Ross Duffer, written by Matt Duffer, Ross Duffer, Justin Doble, Jessica Mecklenburg, Jessie Nickson-Lopez, and Alison Tatlock, aired July 15, 2016, on *Netflix*.

[7] Henry Adams, *The Education of Henry Adams* (New York: Penguin Books, 1995), 81.

Within the first few episodes of *Stranger Things,* we encounter Eleven, El for short, having escaped the Hawkins National Laboratory. She bears the marks of her time there. Her head is shaven; she wears but a smock hanging in tatters from her emaciated frame. We find El at an intersection, one at which she risks her familiar and certain life for a chance to name truths as they are given. We find El emerging anew as subject.

El is a child of immense psychokinetic ability, and, up to her escape, had been Dr. Martin Brenner's test subject. Sensing the economic and military potential residing inside, Brenner stripped El of her subjectivity by reducing her to an object of experimentation and observation. In the lab, Dr. Brenner appropriated her immense powers making them *his own*, directing their power to fuel *his* projects. In the Freirean sense, Brenner *stole* El from herself by inhibiting her ability to be with the world as subject.[8] By escaping Brenner's grasp, El newly embarks upon, to draw again from Freire, the great task of liberating herself.

A mechanistic and orderly education robs students of the space, time, and judgement necessary for subjectivity. Under this model, risk is seen as negative, a possible transgression to be mitigated, and policymakers and pedagogists under the "human capital" banner have done their utmost to excise risk with the scalpel of a strong, secure, predictable, and risk-free education. By placing space, time, and judgement under the unified authority of the teacher, the school, the district, legislation, etc., a mechanistic and orderly education inhibits the student's ability to encounter revolutionary events as their naming and appropriating subject. It denies the student his or her subjective power.

Doug Lemov is both a successful policymaker and pedagogist. Walk into a teachers' lounge and chances are you will find a copy of his field manual, *Teach Like a Champion*, on the bookshelf.[9] Lemov promises that his strategies and techniques, if used across classrooms, will "change the equation of opportunity for students."[10] Opportunity, as defined by Lemov, is access to a standardized and controlled pedagogy guaranteeing the future economic productivity of the student. Only through fidelity to the learning standards and with a measured dose of his style of "rigor" and discipline can students achieve higher test scores, college admission, a degree, a middle-class life, and, ultimately, the liquidity to buy nice and expensive things. Lemov seems to capture the zeitgeist of global capitalism, and, from his perch on the bookshelf, influences the American school system in its "high-stakes" conquest over any pedagogy that does not secure maximum utility for the buyer and seller.

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[8] Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, trans. Myra Bergman Ramos (New York: Continuum, 1992), 28.

[9] Doug Lemov, *Teach Like a Champion: 49 Techniques that Put Students on the Path to College* (San Francisco: John Wiley and Sons, 2010).

[10] Doug Lemov, "Doug Lemov Askwith Forum: Teach Like a Champion," Harvard Graduate School of Education, December 3, 2012, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zt9rj76AsLE.

By enclosing education within the dominant matrix, a strong, safe, secure, predictable, and risk-free pedagogy disrupts the revolutionary act, that is, it inhibits the student in his or her ability to be faithful to the evental rupture. To draw upon Freire, Lemovian techniques and strategies "'integrate' [students] into the structure of oppression" rather than "transform that structure so that they can become 'beings for themselves.'"[11] We see this writ large in a classroom vignette Lemov shares at a conference in 2012. In the video, the teacher introduces the day's reading, *Clever Fox*, by taking a quick formative assessment. "What does clever mean?" she asks. The teacher calls on Kayla, who does not know. Another student responds that clever means smart. The teacher asks Kayla to repeat the answer, to which she recites, "Clever means smart!"[12] The exchange illustrates a strong but problematic approach. Kayla's regurgitation of the definition may mark something gained, a word in its conventional usage, but it also signifies something lost—that is, the chance to incorporate a new word as subject. That is the extent of Kayla's education.

Lemov argues that an education that is weak, insecure, unpredictable, and risky presages a lost economic opportunity; through Lemovian prescription, students across the country are primed in an invariant, reliable, and equal way to store and compute data favorable to the gears of commerce. Without co-construction and co-creation, Kayla wears the word like El's ill-fitting smock. It is a thing that is not her own, rather, an off-the-rack definition that is to be stored and regurgitated. To Lemov, an education is nothing else.

Badiou may well classify Lemovian techniques those of the "reactive subject," that is, Lemov and his acolytes acknowledge exceptional events but decide to react to them with measure and compromise. Take, for instance, the primordial statement: *in politics there is conflict between the dominating and the dominated.* As a reactive subject, Lemov does not deny that domination drives inequality in the classroom; he acknowledges what Annette Lareau calls "unequal childhoods."[13] However, rather than join in solidarity with those who seek to end oppressive structures as they appear, Lemov incorporates "a measured present, a negative present, a present 'a little less worse' than the past."[14] When Lemov says that he wants to change the equation of opportunity for students, he does not suggest we do so by working faithfully to destroy structures of domination. Instead, he negotiates a compromise with the existing matrix: domination can exist, but only if the dominated have the opportunity to grow up as dominators.

At issue here is the student-as-subject. By inculcating the student into the matrices of the normal, natural, and same, Lemov forecloses education to

[11] Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, 61.
[12] Lemov, "Doug Lemov Askwith Forum."
[13] Annette Lareau, *Unequal Childhoods: Class Race, and Family Life* (Berkley: University of California Press, 2011).
[14] Badiou, *Logic of Worlds*, 55.

the possibility of educating for the faithful subject. What implications does this have for the student who is consciously or subconsciously aware of any truth distorted by capitulation? I turn to the next section with this question in mind.

Alienation: A "Radical Detachment" of Self

Rahel Jaeggi interprets alienation as a deficient relation, one she calls a "relation of relationlessness," in which an individual is inhibited in his or her own ability to relate to his or her world as its appropriating subject.[15] For Jaeggi, appropriation and re-appropriation are necessary towards developing a successful and subjective relationship between the self and the world. Through the act of appropriation, an individual *integrates* and *transforms* his or her social conditions as they are given. The elasticity of social conditions is important to this point: people, things, and/or institutions can be added to, taken away from, or reorient themselves within one's relational constellation. In response to these events of social reconfiguration, the subject qua subject integrates and transforms—re-appropriates—his or her new social conditions as his or her own. Such is a successful and subjective relationship between self and world. An individual enters a relationship of alienation when he or she is inhibited in his or her ability to appropriate social conditions when they change. Should an act of appropriation be disturbed, the individual "no longer experiences itself as an 'actively effective subject' but a 'passive object' at the mercy of unknown forces."[16] To put this another way, the individual who is inhibited in his or her ability to appropriate and re-appropriate social conditions as given comes to live *in* the world but not *with* the world.

The plight of *Stranger Things* character Joyce Byers illustrates alienation as a deficient relation with the world. The series begins with the disappearance of Joyce's twelve-year-old son, Will. Before Will's disappearance Joyce lives with the world. She was born in Hawkins, Hawkins is home. She hobnobs within her social circle effortlessly as a relationship builder, and, consequently, interacts with her world as its creative subject. Joyce's worldly attachment begins to unravel with the loss of her son, a loss she attributes to the Demogorgon's preternatural appearance. The town refuses to join her in her project of recovery and retreats from her seemingly irrational and erratic behavior. A sympathetic Officer, Jim Hopper, attempts to coax Joyce with a rational explanation: Will is likely with a friend or a relative, he says. Yet, Joyce can see Will, feel Will, as he reaches out to her from another world. She rejoins Hopper's assertion that her otherworldly perceptions are false and that she "pack all that away."[17] She senses her son calling her from the void and, facing few alternatives, distances herself from the old world, one which denies her the ability to name the Demogorgon's appearance as truth.

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[15] Jaeggi, *Alienation*, 1.

[16] Jaeggi, 1.

[17] *Stranger Things,* episode 5, "Chapter Five: The Flee and the Acrobat," directed by Matt Duffer and Ross Duffer, written by Alison Tatlock, aired July 15, 2016, on Netflix.

Unable to reconcile the old world with the new, Joyce loses her friends, social position, and sense of identity, and, by doing so, loses herself. She becomes a recluse, a stoic, alienated not only in her relationship with the world but also in her self-perception. "Maybe I am a mess," she tells a confidant, "Maybe I am crazy. Maybe I have lost my mind."[18] When the monstrous Demogorgon emerges from the world of the Upside Down, its violent interjection fractures Joyce's social conditions rendering them irreconcilable with that which presents itself as normal, natural, and the same. She becomes indifferent as one *in* the world but not *with* the world. To use Jaeggi's words, she is severed from subjectivity as "she but not herself."[19]

Jaeggi interprets indifference as symptomatic of a radical "detachment from one's practical involvement in the world and the loss of self-identification." Joyce can no longer sustain a successful relationship with the world and becomes increasingly distant from and indifferent to relationships she once found meaningful. Her "interest in the world in general dissolves" leaving her detached, isolated, and alone. Joyce only recovers herself when she enters into a relationship with those who acknowledge the Demogorgon's ontological alterity. Together, this assembly of perceivers nominate the beast's appearance as truth, that is, an event of transworldy truth. This act of co-nomination validates Joyce, enabling her to enter into new and meaningful relationships with other human beings, things, and social institutions. With her newfound community, she is able to re-appropriate her world by "establishing relations to oneself and the world, a way of dealing with oneself and the world and of having oneself and the world at one's command."[20] Joyce learns that she is not crazy. She is not a mess. She has not lost her mind.

No individual becomes alienated by accident. As education can mediate the emergence of subjectivity, so too can it inhibit an individual's ability to name events and appropriate truths. In his *Second Manifesto for Philosophy,* Badiou offers an unforgiving critique of educational sophistry, those who disrupt truths: "This is the standard theme intoned by the worst conservatives, from Antiquity right up until today," he writes, "young people run extremely grave risks if put in contact with 'bad masters' who will divert them from all that is serious and honorable—namely, a career, morality, the family, order, the West, property, law, democracy, and capitalism."[21] When truth breaks with the dominant opinion, a weak and risky education can support the emerging subject in his or her ability to name truths and appropriate their appearance as meaningful. This messy transgression against the normal, natural, and same is the risk Lemov seeks to mitigate. A strong, secure, predictable, and risk-free education strips the 'bad master' of his or her risk

[18] *Stranger Things*, episode 5.
[19] Jaeggi, *Alienation*, 99.
[20] Jaeggi, 36.
[21] Badiou, *Second Manifesto for Philosophy,* 70.

pedagogy by inscribing the student with dominant notions. When education is placed safely under the tutelage of the neoliberal juggernaut, it forecloses possibilities for the student to engage with the processes of integration and transformation. In short, an education for conservation works except that there are unnamed truths.

After fulfilling his artistic core requirement, the promising business major may find he or she would rather make a career as an artist than financial analyst. The priest in formation may find he does not believe in divinity after all. The family man may discover his asexuality. If lacking the time, space, and judgement to name that which emerges as a subjective truth, education provides no referent with which to orient oneself in relation to that which is new. Jaeggi calls this a "view from nowhere," a perspective in which one loses his or her ability to establish a correspondence between the self and its affective attachments.[22] Without an education that imparts the space, time, and judgement to transgress against that which is normal, natural, and the same, the artist, atheist, and asexual are inhibited in their ability to re-orient themselves in a way that corresponds with what they have discovered to be authentically true of themselves. The world becomes alien to them as a state void of meaning. They are denied, in the Freirean sense, their vocation to become more fully human.

Jaeggi's interpretation of alienation as living *in* the world and not *with* the world is reminiscent of Heidegger's concept of *falling,* that is, the individual—Dasein—falls into patterns of *everyday* idleness. Dasein falls into patterns mirroring what *they* do rather than realize himself or herself as possibility. To Jaeggi, this is a situation where, in one case, "someone fails to apprehend that she *leads* her life; in the other, that she *herself* has to lead it."[23] If this is true, then *how* does the individual initiate his or her life? After all, an individual who has fallen into the patterns of everydayness is unlikely to decide to take command of himself or herself without antecedent. The priest is not going to wake up one day denying god *unconditionally*. Such a revelation, to be a revelation, would necessarily be conditioned by his authentic interpretation. Here we see two implications: (1) that the evental rupture necessarily happens, and (2) that its trace is necessarily embodied by the faithful witness. In making the primordial statement, *I am not a believer of god*, the atheist-priest subordinates himself to an event of maximal and undeniable intensity. From that point forward, he leads his life in a different way as the event's faithful subject; in effect, he appropriates the ontic schism and makes it his own.

The process I outline above is just that, a *process*. I do not explain how the subject becomes capable of bringing his or her own subjectivity to bear nor how he or she develops the intellectual equipment to discern the evental trace. I consider this the *method* of subjectivity; one I argue begins with an

[22] Jaeggi, *Alienation,* 136.
[23] Jaeggi, 19.

education for subjectivity. I turn now to such an education to interrogate its merits and risks.

A "Pedagogy with Empty Hands": An Education for Subjectivity

It is only in season two of *Stranger Things* that we encounter the Shadow Monster. As the monster's tendrils uncurl beneath the town's bucolic pumpkin patches and cookie-cutter subdivisions, the natural landscape blights and deadens. Despite bearing intimate witness to these strange mutilations, the town's adults rather speculate based on what Biesta calls "known, fixed, and present" than risk an ulterior understanding.[24] The pumpkins have been poisoned by rival farmers, they say, and that is that. Aside from a few adult interlocutors, it is the town's youngest generation who demystify the monster and come to understand its alterity.

The children, being children, lack the experience to know everything they need to know in order to confront the Demogorgon and save their world from ruin. Cue the teacher, Mr. Clarke. Like the children, who are seen pejoratively by their peers as "nerds," Mr. Clarke is peculiar. He is not one to be sucked into, and shaped by, the normalizing influence of teachers' lounge gossip. Often, he is alone, and, when not alone, he is with his students. Mr. Clarke employs a pedagogy faithful to the children's interpretive sovereignty. When the children come to him for judgement or wisdom, he gives it. When the children find that they need to build an anechoic chamber so that El can reach Will telepathically, Mr. Clarke does not introject incredulously. He provides them with the information they need so they can continue with their emancipatory project. Mr. Clarke is not risk-averse; he is not afraid to eschew control and oversupervision; his curriculum is open. To borrow from Biesta, he offers a "pedagogy with empty hands."[25]

A weak education widens the frame through which the individual can pass into subjectivity. It provides space and time for interpretation and supports the development of one's ability to integrate and transform conditions as they are given. The teacher takes a risk when he or she sets the conditions for subjectivity. He or she may need to yield a degree of his or her authority to the students, and, by doing so, risk being marked as Badiou's "bad master." Biesta's wager is that a teacher who takes this risk by emptying pedagogy of monoliths opens education to the possibility of "freedom and independence of those being educated."[26] A pedagogy that dispenses space and time and cultivates judgement makes freedom/independence, time/space/judgement, and integration/transformation compossible.

[24] Biesta, *The Beautiful Risk of Education,* 2.
[25] Biesta, 22–23.
[26] Biesta, 2.

In *Logic of Worlds,* Badiou counters democratic materialism thundering, "There are only bodies and languages, except there are truths."[27] The Hawkins we first encounter presents itself as a picturesque version of the American Dream. It situates itself serenely within a distinct social landscape saying, in essence, *we are this and not that*. The Demogorgon's exception to this paradigm transforms the world that is. When the children decide to act upon this exception, to name it, Mr. Clarke provides them with time and space for interpretation. As moderator of the A.V. club, Mr. Clarke provides the students access to its radio so they can conduct their self-guided "science experiments" in search for Will. So, too, does Mr. Clarke support their discernment. When the students are stumped about how to reach Will, Mr. Clarke explains how, given a tremendous power source, interdimensional travel might work. Freed from their cognitive impasse, the students harness El's psychokinetic energy to open a portal to the Upside Down. In both instances Mr. Clarke takes a risk. There is a chance the children's faithful truth-project leads them astray. There is a chance they, like Joyce, become targets of conservative ridicule. There is a chance they never emerge as subjects in the new world. Yet, Mr. Clarke recognizes there is a chance, too, that they make sense of the exception and do something about it.

Biesta argues that only through "a pedagogy with empty hands" can an event of subjectivity occur.[28] An empty-handed education is a sandbox, one which is open to the possibility of self-nomination as truth-seeker. As much as teachers reconfigure their classrooms, curriculum, and pedagogy, the appearance of an event is never a guarantee. However, there is no event if our pedagogical hands are full of monolithic Lemovian techniques and strategies. Mr. Clarke's hands are empty, and, by the same token, full of possibility. He does not intervene in what may seem to him to be his students' childish escapades of play; instead, he supports their judgement as emerging subjects embarking on a risky project. Through Mr. Clarke's mentorship and guidance as one on the side of the child, our protagonists arise from their objective status as classroom accoutrements. They emerge as subjects engaged in a relationship with a world that is their own.

Conclusion

It is fitting that the climax to *Stranger Things'* first season should be set in a classroom. At this point, with the help of Joyce, Mr. Clarke, and a few other adult interlocutors, the children have made their own sense of the "ethereal plane" and its creatures. They have figured out a way to get Will home. Having lured the Demogorgon back to Hawkins Middle School, they wait for an opportunity to confront the beast and end its reign of terror once and for all. They are not alone. Dr. Brenner and his team of pugilists have tailed

[27] Alain Badiou, *Logic of Worlds*, trans. Alberto Toscano (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2009), 4.
[28] Biesta, *The Beautiful Risk of Education*, 23.

them in their pursuit of El. Armed with assault rifles, the "safe" solution, Brenner's army falls to the Demogorgon one by one. El, standing amongst the vanquished, her former captors, blasts the beast with a dose of her tremendous psychokinetic power. With a yelp, the Demogorgon is sent back to the Upside Down, the world from whence it came.

Although campy pop culture, *Stranger Things* has something significant to say about schooling as it has become under the dominant matrix of neoliberalism. The show reflects our cultural anxieties on a cracked mirror. On one half, we see progress, power, and unity of capital should we stay the course; on the other, ennui of the individual and alienation of the subject and self in the face of the event's exception. Lemov, like Dr. Brenner, sees our brave new world as one full of positive certainties. He can only see, or only admit to seeing, the dynamism of capital-fueled economics, science, and information technology. Everyone can have—nay, has a right to—a slice of the pie if only they can harness the competitive edge. Thus, he commands educators to *make* opportunities so that all students can play the same game. A risky and weak education confronts this line of thought by echoing Badiou's assertion that *there are languages and bodies, except there are truths*.

In this paper's introduction, I enumerate the possible risks of a weak education as, first, estrangement from the present condition and, second, that it yields nothing of value to the student. I draw upon Biesta and Jaeggi to argue that a weak education, one that supports the time, space, and judgement to name and appropriate truths, is a risk worth taking. I will end with some thoughts on strangeness.

In an era of "fake news," QAnon, Pizzagate, and other conspiracy theories, we are reminded that communication technology allows for the wide, penetrating, and destructive proliferation of strange opinions and false truths. The fallacious statement is not a triumph of subjectivity; it is not good enough only to be strange. A truth is not true to one person but not the other, rather, a truth is a transworldly state of being. It bears itself to the event's faithful beholder as true *across* worlds. As Badiou puts it: "The conditions of philosophy are transversal. They are uniform procedures recognizable from afar, whose relation to thought is relatively invariant. The *name* of this invariance is clear: it is the name 'truth.'"[29] Invariance is achieved through procedure, that is, by following objective and generic truth procedures.[30] For Badiou these are math/science, politics, love, and art/the poem.

Our protagonists are faithful to the event. Lest we forget, they do investigate covert government entities, a trans-dimensional portal, and a

[29] Badiou, *Manifesto for Philosophy*, trans. Norman Madarasz (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1992), 33.

[30] Badiou cautions philosophy against "suturing" itself to one but not the others. Truth statements carry a richer veracity when *that which is* emerges from *that which is not* through an "intellectual circulation between the truth procedures conditioning philosophy." Badiou, *Manifesto for Philosophy*, 35, 61.

preternatural beast, after all. They appear strange to a dominant matrix of being that would rather obscure a truth than see its hegemony disrupted. By taking this risk, they emerge as subjects who nominate an event as *being-there*. Their subjectivity is not achieved through acts of wild speculation and false statements. The children use empirical methods and fantasy role-playing games to define and name the Demogorgon's intermundane singularity. Mr. Clarke engages in a political act when he transgresses against pedagogical norms. Joyce discovers the beast in loving pursuit of her son. The intellectual circulation of these discoveries made through generic procedures validate the beast's existence as truth.

A pedagogy toward subjectivity, one with empty hands, is revolutionary without transgressing all norms. Mr. Clarke takes his pedagogical risks while wearing a tie. His classroom has four walls, his students sit at tables, transitions are governed by the bell, and it is likely he delivers an occasional dry lecture. In many ways, Mr. Clarke is indistinguishable from his colleagues except in the case of an event. Such is the great task of a weak education towards subjectivity. Not only must it make time and space provisions for strangeness, it must also support the development of objective judgement to discern as subject what to *make of* and *do with* that which is given; to embody the evental trace. A weak education is an act faithful to the emerging subject, and, consequently, faithful to the event of education itself.