

# Inclusion?

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## **Abstract**

*It is generally accepted that the notion of inclusion derived or evolved from the practices of mainstreaming or integrating students with disabilities into regular schools. Halting the practice of segregating children with disabilities was a progressive social movement. The value of this achievement is not in dispute. However, our charter as scholars and cultural vigilantes (Slee & Allan, 2001) is to always look for how we can improve things; to avoid stasis and complacency we must continue to ask, how can we do it better? Thus, we must ask ourselves uncomfortable questions and develop a critical perspective that Foucault characterised as an 'ethic of discomfort' (Rabinow & Rose, 2003, p. xxvi) by following the Nietzschean principle where one acts 'counter to our time and thereby on our time... for the benefit of a time to come' (Nietzsche, 1874, p.60 in Rabinow & Rose, 2003, p. xxvi). This paper begins with a fundamental question for those participating in inclusive education research and scholarship – when we talk of including, into what do we seek to include?*

Keywords: inclusion/exclusion, interiority/exteriority, centricity/ex-centricity,  
Foucault, Deleuze, Derrida, pedagogical discursive practices, Queensland.

## **Introduction**

Whilst inclusive education is a relatively recent advance in our thinking about schooling and pedagogy, it is a rapidly establishing movement within both local and global contexts. Familiarity with the terminology of inclusive education has grown considerably, however, there are various, competing discourses through which meaning and understandings differ. On the surface these differences are concealed by the continued use of these generalised terms within schooling vernacular; terms which assume a benign commonality. This is a dangerous assumption. Elsewhere Slee (2005) has drawn on Said's depiction of travelling theories to capture the 'domestication' and 'taming' of what were in their time and setting subversive theories that have been appropriated and popularized by others. So it is for inclusive education philosophy. Originally, inclusive education was offered as a protest, a call for radical change to the fabric of schooling. Increasingly it is being used as a means for explaining and protecting the status quo.

Perhaps this is what we see happening in the Australian state of Queensland,<sup>1</sup> where the implementation of practices to promote the inclusion of students with disabilities is understood as the achievement of an inclusive education system. One could reasonably argue however, that '[w]e are *still* citing inclusion as our goal; *still* waiting to include, yet *speaking* as if we are already inclusive' (Slee & Allan, 2001, p.181, emphasis added). This premature articulation, if you'll forgive the expression, points to a problem within the discourses of inclusion. Education Queensland states a commitment 'guaranteeing inclusiveness' (Education Queensland, 2002, p.4), however, we contend that to include is not necessarily to *be* inclusive. To shift students around on the educational chessboard is not in or of itself inclusive.

The Queensland model, like experiments elsewhere (Allan, 2003), fails to secure inclusiveness due to the existence and extension of uninterrogated normative assumptions that shape and drive policy (Popkewitz & Lindblad, 2000).<sup>2</sup> These assumptions about identity, difference and academic trajectories inform the construction of reform agendas that do no more than tinker at the edges to produce an appearance of more inclusive schools. It is our argument that such cosmetic adjustments to traditional schooling (Slee & Allan, 2001) simply work to (re)secure an invisible centre from which constructions of Otherness and the designation of marginal positions becomes possible (Ferguson, 1990). It is hoped that this paper may provoke consideration of and renewed debate over:

- what is meant by talk of inclusion,
- how this may differ from being inclusive and,
- whose interests may be served by practices that seek to include.

Perhaps in this way we can jettison the rhetorical inertia of instrumentalist gestures '*towards* inclusion' (Slee & Allan, 2001), by making visible and deconstructing the centre from which all exclusions derive?

### **Exorcising Presences at Centre**

It is in general a question of method: instead of moving from an apparent exteriority to an essential 'nucleus of interiority' we must conjure up the illusory interiority in order to restore words and things to their constitutive exteriority. (Deleuze, 1988, p.43)

As Deleuze (1988) suggests, we must look to words and things for how they might work to constitute exteriority. Correspondingly, Graham (2006) argues that the term inclusion suggests a *bringing in*; a term that presupposes a whole into which something (or someone) can be incorporated. It would be reasonable to argue that there is an implicit centred-ness to the term *inclusion*, for it discursively privileges notions of the pre-existing by seeking to include the Other into a prefabricated, naturalised space. As such, Derrida's statement that, 'language bears within itself the necessity of its own critique' (Derrida, 1967, p.358) is particularly pertinent to inclusive education for the movement is troubled by the multiplicity of meanings that lurk within the discourses that surround and carry it.

Thus, there is a requirement to arrest 'inclusion's need to speak of and identify otherness' (Harwood & Rasmussen, 2002, p.5), as this works to produce both margin and centre through the privileging of 'universal categories and a romanticized, universalised subject' (Lather, 2003, p.260). As the term inclusion arguably presupposes the already-begun, perhaps the term inclusive is less likely to bring about the sense of foreclosure that appears inherent to inclusion? In order to 'liberate the repressed contradictions always-already present' (Trifonas, 2000, p.274) in the terms *include* and *inclusion*, we argue for the *deliberate use* of the term "inclusive" but following Derrida, 'let us use quotation marks to serve as a precaution' (Derrida, 1967, p.351). This may remind that the centre into which we talk of including is but a barren and fictional place.

If we must talk of inclusion, then we argue for an invocation of the Derridean concept of writing under erasure which is,

... to keep something visible but crossed out, to avoid universalizing or monumentalising it, a form of a warning of an irreducibility outside of intentional control in the play of the world, keeping a term as both a limit and resource, opening it up to margins. (Lather, 2003, p.263)

Spivak explains, 'since the word is inaccurate, it is crossed out. Since it is necessary, it remains legible' (Spivak, 1997, p. xiv). The benefit to writing under erasure as opposed to devising new words is that the word signifies the meaning we are all used to but the crossing out adds a political message, a dimension of criticality that a whole new word would fail to achieve. Indeed, Spivak cautions against (re)inventing language in an attempt to escape that-which-has-gone-before stating, 'to make a new word is to run the risk of forgetting the problem or believing it solved' (Spivak, 1997, p. xv). Fittingly then, reference to "inclusive" or ~~inclusion~~ in inclusive education scholarship and research can challenge the centred-ness implicit in tokenistic attempts to "include" the marginalised Other. Such limited notions of inclusion are characterised by instrumental accommodations for alterity within an otherwise mainstream education system (Graham, 2006).

It appears then that inclusive education scholars need to explicate the discourses of inclusion. Such clarity may help to flush out motives and press us to distinguish between means and ends in education (Slee, 2005). Perhaps the question now is not so much how do we move '*towards* inclusion' (original emphasis, Slee & Allan, 2001, p.180), but what do we do to disrupt the construction of centre from which exclusion derives? It is relatively easy to point to exclusion and the excluded (Stiker, 1999). However, when we do this we make visible the conditions of exclusion by pointing to exceptional characteristics as the markers of difference. And so we go around in circles, for the question to-come but which has not-yet-come in inclusive education research and scholarship is: Different to *what*? What we do not question (but should) are the assumptions that enable us to think in terms of exceptionalities. What normative circuitry may we be drawing on to do this and what circuit breakers might we deploy to avoid turning 'desire for assimilation into a norm that supports the perception of disability [and difference] as an alien or exceptional condition' (Stiker, 1999, p. xi)?

Stiker (1999) argues that 'a community's marginality is implicitly underscored by the request for inclusion itself' and calls for an examination of the different forms of social inclusion. He states,

The dilemma, exclude or include, hides a whole series of inclusions that are not all the same and of inclusions which are not all commensurate. We could just as well say that the dilemma is *illusory*. What are societies doing when they exclude in one way or another and when they integrate in this fashion or that? What do they say about themselves in so doing? The study of everything that we could call the marginalized allows us to bring out previously ignored or neglected dimensions of that society. (emphasis added, Stiker, 1999, p.16-17)

It can be argued that an authentically inclusive education invites the denaturalisation of "normalcy" to arrive at a ground-zero point from which we banish idealisations of centre. In this way, the language of special and regular education is rendered redundant. If we listen to teachers, education administrators and academics as they discuss inclusive education and the range of kids who present for schooling, we soon hear that we are a long way from where inclusive schooling should take us. There remains a firmly embedded notion of what a regular school is and more particularly, who it is for. Others may be allowed in but their's remains a conditional entry and tenure, for inclusion by no means 'guarantees inclusiveness' (Education Queensland, 2002, p.4). After further conceptualising the theoretical terrain, we will return to this point to interrogate the local context and discuss the problem with labelling later in this paper.

In the meantime, we argue that limited notions and models of inclusion, such as those realised through resourcing mechanisms that ensure the objectivisation of individual difference, result not only in an ever more complex and insidious exclusion but arguably work to refine schooling as a field of application for disciplinary power (Graham, 2006). In seeking to know the particularities of individual school children, resourcing mechanisms such as Education Queensland's Ascertainment/EAP<sup>3</sup> (Education Queensland, 2002) and Appraisal Intervention<sup>4</sup> (Education Queensland, 2001), allow for the differentiation between and validation/invalidation of different ways of being. We argue that such

normalising lenses, ushered into schools under the pretext of better resourcing the included, further open-up schools to a technique of government that Foucault calls 'discipline-normalisation' (Foucault, 1975a, p.52), thus providing the means by which we make judgements about the character, ability and future of different school children.

The deployment of a poststructural analysis relating to disciplinary power can provide a helpful lens to look differently, think otherwise (Ball, 1998) and in this way, interrogate the conjoined nature of inclusion/exclusion. In this paper, we do not simply critique limited notions of inclusion (Graham, 2005) and the inevitable exclusions that result. Instead, we aim to look not beyond but *before*; to make explicit and interrogate the normative assumptions that lead us to think we can even talk of "including".

### **Normative Connectivity**

For the differentiation, categorisation and spatialisation of individuals to become possible, one must have a common referent to consult. This was achieved by the human sciences through the construction of the norm (Foucault, 1972; Foucault, 1975b; Foucault, 1977) securing psychology's role in 'governing the soul' through techniques of normalisation and the strategic stimulation of subjectivity, anxiety and desire (Rose, 1990, p.4). Under the sustained and combined influence of the medical and psychological disciplines, educationalists have become used to thinking in terms of the norm and categorising educational endeavour according to abstract notions of intelligence (Flynn, 1997) and developmental age/stage theory (Walkerdine, 1984). As Ewald points out though, such 'normative individualisation comes about without reference to any nature or essence in subjects... it is purely comparative' (Ewald, 1992, p.172). It can be unsettling to acknowledge that the norm is a fiction; however, normalisation is a man-made grid of intelligibility that attributes value to culturally specific performances and in doing so, privileges particular ways of being. Similarly, Ewald reminds that, 'it is not the exception that proves the rule. Rather, the exception is *within* the rule' (emphasis added, Ewald, 1992, p.173).

Although predicated as natural and true, the rule of the norm is statistically derived, negating the diversity to be found within nature and the naturalness of diversity. Educational use of the norm and normative judgement is disturbingly pervasive as the psychological notion of the norm has acquired legitimacy through a parasitic effect producing its own truth within powerful domains of knowledge production, such as special education and educational psychology. Macherey speaks to this effect when he states, 'if the norm is not exterior to its field of application, this is not only because... it produces it but because it produces itself in it as it produces it (Macherey, 1992, p.187).

Correspondingly, Ewald stipulates that 'the norm, or normative space, knows no outside' (Ewald, 1992, p.187). This may seem an irreconcilable argument in a paper theorising inclusion/exclusion or experiences of interiority and exteriority; however, this can be understood by returning to Foucault's premise that there is nothing outside of power. That is; there are domains of interiority (centricity) and domains of exteriority (ex-centricity) but neither is free from the effects of 'discipline-normalisation' (Foucault, 1975, p.52); that is, *everything* is within the realm of disciplinary power. Even those at centre are shaped through subjectivation and positioned; their tenuous presence held in check by normative prescriptions of what is right or what is normal.

Indeed, it could be said that the pervasiveness of disciplinary power is assured by the *proliferation* of centre/s which presents multiple opportunities for the workings of discipline-normalisation through the experiencing of multiple subjectivities. In describing power as diffuse Foucault cautions against theorising a centralised power (Foucault, 1980); as in state power or state control, or dare we say, educational bureaucracies. Therefore, a theorisation of *centre* must not be confused with the centralisation of power. There is no headquarters to disciplinary power and thus problematically, no head to cut off which explains to some degree, the *power* of power and the perplexing endurance of inclusion/exclusion.

Foucault argues we must 'eschew the model of Leviathan in the study of power' and 'instead base our analysis of power on the study and tactics of domination' (Foucault, 1980, p.102). He insists 'power must be analysed as something that circulates... through a net-like

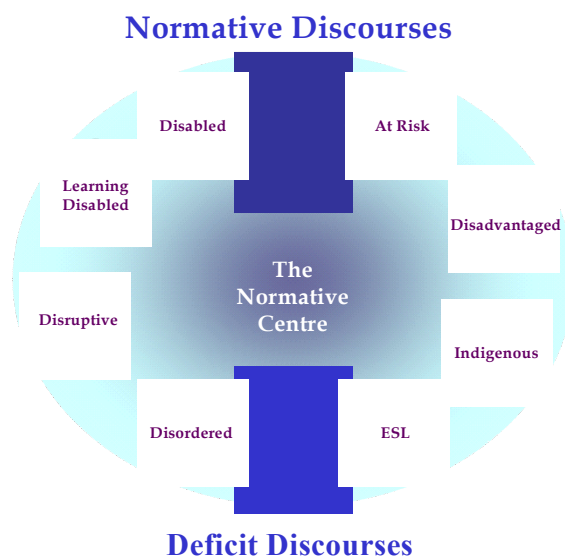


organisation' (Foucault, 1980b, p.98). This organisation functions via disciplines (hospitals, prisons, schools and so on) as carriers of an arbitrating discourse although Foucault (1980) points out that, whilst this discourse speaks of a rule, the code these disciplines come to define 'is not that of law but that of normalisation' (p.107). Tying the disciplines together in a diffuse but cohesive network of power are the sinuous threads of normative discourses through which disciplinary society communicates with itself (Ewald, 1992), producing both 'the elements on which it acts' and 'the means to control these elements' (Macherey, 1992, p.178). This is a 'form of power that makes individuals subjects' (Foucault, 1983, p.214), where the use of discursive dividing practices 'categorizes the individual, marks him by his own individuality, attaches to him his own identity, imposes a law of truth on him that he must recognize and others have to recognize in him' (Foucault, 1983, p.214). This results in the compartmentalisation of individuals into spatialised domains and we illustrate this in Figure 1 below.

In the educational context these domains, constructed by virtue of psychological and special education knowledge claims, become filled by so-called target groups for inclusion – disabled children, learning disabled children, disruptive or disordered children, ESL children, disadvantaged and at-risk children, and Indigenous children (Education Queensland, 2004b; Education Queensland, 2004c; Education Queensland, 2004a).<sup>5</sup> In this process of individuation (Foucault, 1975b; Foucault, 1977), schooling operates as a field of application for disciplinary power (Allan, 1999). This occurs through the production of normative domains as comparative grids of intelligibility that are not only constitutive of exteriority but protective of the centre from which they emanate.

Normalisation produces these domains through normalising discourses that affirm or negate particular ways of being. These discourses can be drawn as two poles of division (Macherey, 1992, p.177). On one side, as depicted in Figure 1 below, we have normative discourses comprised of valorising and affirming statements of the desirable and the normal subject. On the other, we have statements of deficit, conceptualisations of the other than normal; discourses that demarcate the abnormal object. As a result of the constitutive

pressure of these two discursive poles denoting consistent subject and object of error, we can visualise a discursive centre and conceptualise a place representative of normative action and anonymous expressions of disciplinary power.



**Figure 1: Production of spatialised domains through the constitutive pressure of normative pedagogical discourse naturalising constructions of centred-ness**

Within this centre we find the privileged notion of ‘the permissible and the normal’ (Macherey, 1992, p.177), outside of which but always within a relational existence is the negative characterised by the pathological, the minority, the Other. The subject’s relationship to the norm is dependent upon whether the subject as object is internalised within the boundary of the norm or externalised as beyond its limit. Conversely, the abnormal is defined through transgression of these limits via practices of identification and disqualification, recognition and non-recognition and is a way of being that exists at the margins, held in an external relationship to privileged social norms. It is here that we can find domains of interiority and exteriority within an ostensibly inclusive education environment. From this, we can start to conceptualise how it is that education, as a field of application of normalising judgement, both sets up and is beset by the conjoined nature of inclusion/exclusion.

### **Normative (In)Visibility**

Inclusion can thus be theorised as a discursive strategy in a political game that constructs not simply position (modes of interiority/exteriority) but the play by which borders and limits are conceived (Derrida, 1967).

Play is always play of absence and presence, but if it is to be thought of radically, play must be conceived of before the alternative of presence and absence. Being must be conceived of as presence or absence on the basis of the possibility of play and not the other way around. (Derrida, 1967, p.369)

However, Ferguson points out that 'the place from which power is exercised is often a hidden place. When we try to pin it down, the centre always seems to be somewhere else' (Ferguson, 1990, p.9). This is perhaps because, as Derrida argues, there *is no* centre but instead an *absence* of centre for which infinite substitutions are made, for there is no natural essence, origin or 'invariable presence' (Derrida, 1967, p. 353), supporting a legitimate claim to centre.

The substitute does not substitute itself for anything which has somehow existed before it. Henceforth, it was necessary to begin thinking that there was no centre, that the centre could not be thought of in the form of a present-being, that the centre had no natural site, that it was not a fixed locus but a function, a sort of nonlocus in which an infinite number of sign-substitutions came into play. (Derrida, 1967, p.353-354)

Highlighting the artificial constitution of centred-ness, Derrida (1967) points to 'a lack which must be *supplemented*' (Derrida, 1967, p.367, original emphasis) through the addition of a sign which (re)places the centre. Thus, when lacking 'a natural site' (Derrida, 1967, p. 353) and faced with an absence of centre which is needed in a gyroscopic sense to limit 'the play of the structure' (Derrida, 1967, p.352), we discursively inscribe signifiers of centred-ness producing a *ghostly* centre. This is an apparition which eludes critical examination for it has no essence, presence or definitive claim to Being. However this substitution of sign, substituting presence (i.e. singularity/normality/whiteness/ ablebodiedness and so on) for

absence (multiplicity/diversity), prepares the ground for the deployment of relations of power therein because, as Derrida argues, in 'orienting and organizing the coherence of the system, the centre of a structure permits the play of its elements inside the total form' (Derrida, 1967, p.352). This confers privilege upon those whose characteristics align with predicated social norms. In a movement that speaks of the eternal return, those same individuals in positions of power gazing from the vantage of privilege set the parameters of normality and manage the markers of difference.<sup>6</sup> Thus, those at centre ride the boundaries determining centricity and ex-centricity. However, privilege and position at centre is dependent upon the subjection and marginalisation of the other. The maintenance of positions of power through discursive dividing practices as rhetorical strategies (Nakayama & Krizek) that (re)secure domination and privilege results in the reinstatement of the politic of the powerful. This goes some way towards explaining the conjoined nature of inclusion/exclusion.

### **Words & Things**

The realisation of the 'structurality of structure' according to Derrida was 'the moment when language invaded the universal problematic, the moment when, in the absence of a centre or origin, everything became discourse' (Derrida, 1967, p.353-354). Recognising the primacy of discourse (Foucault, 1972) in constructions of centre and margin and thus, the implication of discourse in the conjoined nature of inclusion/exclusion, we seek to interrogate the discourse of inclusion as 'a play of substitutions' (Derrida, 1967, p.365); a play that substitutes an appearance of presence in the absence of a fixed and universal essence. In this way, the discourse of inclusion may indeed function as strategic rhetoric (Nakayama & Krizek, 1995) which supports this 'movement of supplementarity' (Derrida, 1967, p.365) by obscuring the constructedness and territoriality of a normative, fictional centre (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987).

This occurs through the use of dominant discourses which invoke a mythical norm (Ferguson, 1990), creating both centre and margin by defining and universalising 'tacit standards from which specific others can then be declared to deviate' (Ferguson, 1990, p.9).

This perpetuates for those whose interests it serves a shadowy and (un)articulable place (Deleuze, 1988; Ewald, 1992); an invisible nerve-centre from which socio-political relations of power that strengthen existing structural arrangements are strategically and anonymously deployed. Realised through technologies that make visible particular objects of scrutiny (Graham, 2006), inclusion functions as a panoptic mechanism through techniques which allow 'the assignment to each individual his 'true' name, his 'true' place, his 'true' body, his 'true' disease' (Foucault, 1977, p.198).

Thus, when realised through normative practices that identify and make visible difference as forms of alterity to include, inclusion works to (re)secure the position and 'invisibility of the centre' (Ferguson, 1990, p.11) through the *normalisation* of culturally specific performances as particular expressions of academic, physical, creative ability; and the *naturalisation* of particular ways of being which are characterised by whiteness, maleness, ablebodiedness and so on. It is our contention that such limited notions of inclusion (Graham, 2005) qualify as strategy within a political project that fundamentally is 'more about the disablement of conflict than the recognition of rights' (Rose, 1990, p.123). Moreover resourcing mechanisms that 'measure, supervise and correct' (Foucault, 1997, p.199), such as Queensland's Ascertainment/EAP and Appraisal Intervention,<sup>7</sup> operate as an exercise in what Foucault describes as 'binary division and branding' (Foucault, 1977, p.199). This results in an illusory interiority; an apprehended inclusion, where the maintenance of notions relating to normality, mainstream, natural and majority ensures that certain children exist as the included Other.

### **The power of language**

As discussed earlier, Derrida argues that the desire for a centre to 'orient and organise the coherence of a system' (1967, p.352), leads to the supplementation of a central signifier which is played off against other signifiers in a system of differences. The maintenance of this central signifier results in an *appearance* of centred-ness within the social imaginary that is spoken into existence through tactical statements that allude to a natural human essence by discursively constructing an/other. This movement establishes a socio-political pivot to

secure dominant relations of power, fulfilling 'humankind's common desire... for a stable centre, and for the assurance of mastery – through knowing and possessing' (Spivak, 1997, p.xi).

Derrida's notion of *différance* speaks to this movement. *Différance* is a play on the French word *différer* which means either to differ or to defer. *Différance* suspends by simultaneously differing *and* deferring. In the context of this discussion, interiority and exteriority or centricity and ex-centricity (Hutcheon, 1988) occurs through the movement of *différance* where the naming or signification of the other, obtains meaning only through the effacement of other meanings. Thus, for one meaning to prevail it must not only differ from other meanings but suspend them entirely; it must *defer*. Derrida notes, 'differences are "produced" - deferred - by *différance*' (Derrida, 1982, p.14). Thus, it can be argued that signification (in this case, naming or labelling) brings about a double-movement, working not only to differentiate but to defer. In this, labelling works to bring certain characteristics to the fore - making them visible. At the same time, the play of *différance* defers – effacing and naturalising – in effect, achieving invisibility for *that-which-is-not named*.

### **The problem with labels...**

Perhaps it is here that we can return to a theorisation of inclusion/exclusion in education and question what else we might be doing when we identify groups that we must work to "include". For example, in a School Report for "Kiltarnan State School"<sup>8</sup> in the Australian state of Queensland, the school is identified as a 'co-educational community based primary school', which

...includes a Special Education Unit (these students are mainly diagnosed as having Autistic Spectrum Disorder and/or Intellectual Impairment). "Kiltarnan" is a diverse community where inclusive practices are paramount. Some cultural backgrounds include Indigenous Australians, Serbian, Ethiopian, Arabic, Thai, Japanese and Malaysian. (School Report, Researcher Archive, 2005).

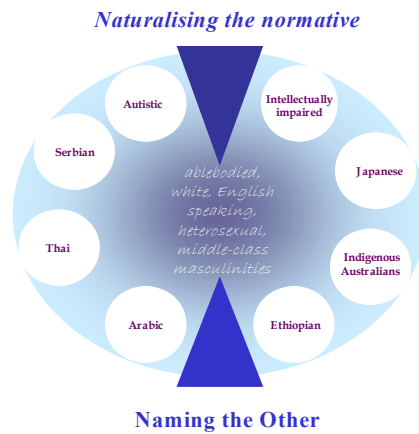
Arguably, this Report elucidates how naming of the Other in order to facilitate or demonstrate their “inclusion” functions to naturalise normalised ways of being. In this example, alterity (difference in behavioural or intellectual performances, colour, culture, appearance, first language) is named and when we do this, ‘we point up a difference’ (Stiker, 1999, p.5). Once again, however, we return to the question: Different to *what*? Existing unnamed in this tokenistic play in the ‘pure politics of identity’ (Said, 1993, p.310) are the characteristics held by dominant groups, which in Australia can be said to include whiteness, ablebodiedness and so on.

We see striking correlations here with Sleeter’s (1993) description of how race comes to be pedagogically constructed:

Americans of color were lumped with immigrants who were collectively defined as “other”, bringing customs that are, at best, interesting to learn about and share when there is time. “Whiteness” was taken as the norm, as natural... multidimensional representations of whiteness throughout the school were treated as a neutral background not requiring comment. (Sleeter, 1993, p.167)

However in the “Kilternan” School Report, *other* culture is not the only form of Otherness being named, as performative anomalies relating to notions of “normalcy” are also identified as depicted in Figure 2 below. Here, normalcy is established through an unsaying; an *absence* of descriptions of what it is that constitutes normalcy, although it is arguably conceived as a way of being that is underpinned by the taken-for-granted “nature” of whiteness and ablebodiedness and ability and so on.<sup>9</sup>

This play of differences succeeds through the movement of *différance* (Derrida, 1982), in which the differing and deferring of difference results in an uncontested, naturalised domain at centre.



**Figure 2: Conjuring up the illusory interiority of limited notions of inclusion**

Naturalisation effaces. In naturalising a particular mode of existence, we construct a universalised space free from interrogation, a ghostly centre which eludes critical analysis and thus recognition of the power relations embodied within notions of normalcy which exert influence over other ways of being (Nakayama & Krizek, 1995). When we identify categories of children, whether we refer to children at risk or children with a disability or children whose first language is not English, we not only make difference *visible* but work to maintain power imbalances and structural inequity by reifying *unnamed* attributes that carry social, political and cultural currency. Popkewitz and Lindblad (2000) speak to this manoeuvre when discussing the normalisation and reification of schooling performances under the rubric of urban/rural normativities:

When one examines the education of the poor and groups that have been socially and politically marginalized in the US there are also the inscriptions of universals that go unnamed... Yet even with the absence of categories about which the normativity of the urban child is constructed, everyone knows 'who' is being talked about. What is named and what goes unnamed is an effect of power. (Popkewitz & Lindblad, 2000, p. 9)



Correspondingly, Popkewitz and Lindblad (2000) refer to Nicholson's argument that 'such discursive practices are the effects of power where those with power can depict others but not themselves as possessing 'ethnicity' and in which men more than women see themselves as without gender' (Nicholson, 1999, p.130 as cited in Popkewitz & Lindblad, 2000, p. 9).<sup>10</sup> In naming *other* 'cultural backgrounds' or minority ethnic groups (Indigenous Australians, Serbian, Ethiopian, Arabic, Thai, Japanese and Malaysian) but *not-naming* the dominant group (Caucasian or European Australian), the "Kilternan" School Report fails to acknowledge the 'ethnicity' of the dominant group; that is, 'ethnicity' comes to be a characteristic of the other and the 'diverse community' produced by the presence of that other is particularised as a cultural zoo. Here the project of inclusive schooling derails into 'symbolic colonization' (Grinberg & Saavedra, 2000, p. 422).

Unfortunately, such exotic-fication of *other* culture in Australian society is not new and despite the abolition of the White Australia Policy some 30 years ago, racism still runs deep.<sup>11</sup> Problematically though, not only does 'language sustain all ideologies, including racial-nationalism' (Tavan, 2005, p. 236) but language also produces the subjects and objects about which these ideologies circulate and the subject-positions (interiority/exteriority, centre/margin) they come to inhabit. In addition, the discursive play of *différance*, which involves the differentiation and deferral of signs, leads to normative (in)visibilities. This offers up particular individuals to the full force of the gaze whilst leaving others in the relative but contingent safety of the shade.<sup>12</sup> In this way, in the words of Ferguson, we are,

... returned to the invisibility of the centre. In our society dominant discourse tries never to speak its own name. Its authority is based on absence. The absence is not just that of the various groups classified as "other", although members of these groups are routinely denied power. It is also the lack of any overt acknowledgment of the specificity of the dominant culture, which is simply assumed to be the all-encompassing norm. (Ferguson, 1990, p.11)

### **Wherefore inclusion?**

This paper aims to pick up the conversation from Bernadette Baker when she questions the 'hunt for disability' by asking,

What power relations inhere the production of categories such as normal and abnormal? Are these relations worthy of perpetuation? And finally, whether intended or not, is labelling a way of morphing "disability" into the assumptions of an ableist normativity, with all its racial-cultural overtones, rather than questioning certain privileged ontologies and epistemologies to begin with? (Baker, 2002, p.689)

Our contribution to the debate is simple and to make our point, we refer back to the local context.<sup>13</sup> Education Queensland has committed to fostering inclusiveness. This is commendable. It must be acknowledged that Queensland education has taken giant steps in the development of the New Basics Project, Productive Pedagogies and inclusive education initiatives and practices. It is a mistake, however, to argue that education in Queensland is authentically inclusive, since the development of inclusivity in Queensland has been attempted via methods of identification and categorisation that make visible ways of being designated as other. As discussed, the problematic here is twofold. First, as Stiker argues, 'when we name, we point up a difference' (Stiker, 1999, p. 5). Second, identification and naming of Others functions to preserve existing relations of power in a reified mode of invisibility; which exists 'unnamed and unexplored' (Allen, 1999, p.5) as the *natural* way of being.

In other words, institutional attempts to "include" through processes that identify the other result in an illusory interiority due to the adoption of discourses and practices that are both normative and confer exteriority (Deleuze, 1988). Such limited notions of inclusion result in a forced and ever more strange *inclusion* (Foucault, 1975) which further opens-up schools to techniques of 'discipline-normalisation' (Foucault, 1975a, p.52), legitimising judgements about the character, ability and future of different school children as 'ideal' citizens-in-the-making (Popkewitz & Lindblad, 2000; Baker, 2002; Popkewitz, 2004). The

subsequent validation/invalidation of different ways of being normalises and naturalises schooling performances that are in accordance with accepted social norms whilst particularising, objectifying and compartmentalising those which are not.

Baker (2002) conceives of this as an 'outlaw ontology' (Baker, 2002) which subjects the errant child to a 'controlling logic of ableism' through the use of 'perfecting technologies' (Baker, 2002, p. 675). Coupled to this logic is the inexorable push-pull of normalisation. Whilst we agree that 'alterity is brought back to the centre to reinforce it' (p.675), we would qualify that this does not mean that ex-centricity suddenly achieves or is granted centrality, as the notion of inclusion would imply. Instead, we argue that the maintenance of notions of normalcy results in an exercise of disciplinary power where alterity is subjected to rehabilitation through an intensification of normalising practices (Ewald, 1992). Perhaps this is inclusion but it is not inclusive. First, talk of "including" can only be made by those occupying a position of privilege at centre. Second, that talk seldom revolves around recognising and dismantling that vantage and the relations of power and domination sustaining it. Third, talk has constitutive and material effects that can function either as cultural work in a refusal of what is (Foucault, 1980a), or as strategic rhetoric that functions to obscure and (re)secure the existing order of things. Regardless of how well-intended (Baker, 2002), talk of "including" that involves what Slee (2005) calls a 'technical fix' cannot help but to bring into play all of the negative ontologies and discursive effects of which we have spoken here.

As Slee & Allan (2001) point out, the distinction between inclusion/exclusion (not to mention abled/disabled) is discursive. Recognising the dangers in the discourses of inclusion and noting such suspicion by writing under erasure, is a critical step in the realisation of an inclusive schooling ecology where 'inclusion is no longer cited, but has passed spectrally into our language and processes' (Slee & Allan, 2001, p.181). It is not enough to evaluate what was planned or what we intended to do. We must also acknowledge and ameliorate the gaps arising from our efforts to include. Fundamentally, we must ask what assumptions might inform our personal and collective philosophies in relation to inclusive education? What do

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we *mean* when we talk of including? What *happens*? Whose interests are being served? And most of all, into *what* do we seek to include?

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<sup>1</sup> In Australia, education remains the authority of State Governments. This means each state has a separate educational system and differences in pedagogy, governance and structure can be found between each. Currently, one point of difference relating to the Queensland system is that the compulsory school age does not begin until the year the child turns 6 years of age at which point children enter Grade 1. Queensland currently offers 12 years of formal schooling, whereas in other states, such as New South Wales, 13 years of formal schooling is offered and children enter Kindergarten around 5 years of age to commence their first compulsory year of schooling. Queensland will be implementing a full-time Preparatory year in 2007 to bring this state system more into line with other Australian states, however enrolment in Prep will not be compulsory. In addition, Queensland differs in that the Primary years include Grades 1-7 and Secondary school includes Grades 8-12. New South Wales, for example, Primary includes K-6 and Secondary is from 7-12. The assessment/assessment practices and final examination schema are also unique to each state.

<sup>2</sup> In this paper we are cognisant of the research problematic of which Popkewitz and Lindblad (2000) speak: 'When social policy and research coincide in classification of groups to be included, such research conserves the political systems of reference through accepting the practices of reform. The problem of research investigates only the effects of the given social relationships, not how those social relations may themselves be the effects of power' (see p. 8 in Popkewitz, T. and Lindblad, S. (2000) *Educational Governance and Social Inclusion and Exclusion: some conceptual difficulties and problematics in policy and research. Discourse: studies in the cultural politics of education*, 21:1, pp. 5-44.)

<sup>3</sup> Ascertainment is a resourcing model that aims to appropriately provide support services to students with disabilities in schools. Ascertainment is currently being phased out in Queensland, over the 3 years from 2005. The replacement model is Education Adjustment Program or EAP. The report findings from the Ministerial Taskforce on Inclusive Education (Students with Disabilities) were instrumental in Queensland's redevelopment of Ascertainment, and a great deal of the Taskforces recommendations were heeded. However, relevant to the

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argument being made here is that EAP is no different to Ascertainment in its reliance upon deficit/medical model descriptions of impairment and the restrictive recognition of six relatively narrow categories of disability; Intellectual Impairment, Physical Impairment, Vision Impairment, Hearing Impairment, Speech/Language Impairment and Autistic Spectrum Disorder.

<sup>4</sup> Appraisal Intervention is similarly an identification/resourcing model used in Queensland Schools to identify and support children with learning difficulties and/or learning disability.

<sup>5</sup> Reference to the original inhabitants of the country now known as Australia comes most often under the title Indigenous people or Indigenous Australians. The term Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples attempts to acknowledge that the original inhabitants of this country are not a homogenous group but a diverse multiplicity.

<sup>6</sup> This includes, for example, those who decide what is pathological behaviour and entextualise constructions of normality/abnormality in the DSM-IV-TR; those who make decisions in psychiatric offices about whether parent/teacher reports of problematic child behaviour fits within any of these evolving categories; to individual teachers who interpret certain classroom behaviours as normal/acceptable and others as abnormal/unacceptable.

<sup>7</sup> For a more detailed analysis of how Education Queensland resourcing mechanisms and testing regimens work to point up a difference and therefore contribute to exclude, see Graham (2005).

<sup>8</sup> School name is a pseudonym. Brisbane is the capital city of Queensland, a north-easterly state of Australia.

<sup>9</sup> Here again, following Derrida we use quotation marks to serve as a precaution, for there is nothing natural about white ascendancy and systems of domination

<sup>10</sup> For further discussions in the area of discursive strategies that work to (re)secure white dominance, see the 2003 special issue in *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, Vol.16, Issue 1.

<sup>11</sup> This cultural “exotic-fication” is uncomfortably reminiscent of an enduring White Australia sentiment which in 1901 culminated in the White Australia Policy which was aimed at restricting immigration to particular Western European cultural groups. Heavily influenced by eugenics and racial determinism theory, the White Australia Policy endured until the mid-1970s. Until the late 60s, Aboriginal peoples were not allowed to vote and until the 1968 referendum were not considered citizens and were counted as fauna. Finally after the 1968 referendum, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders were counted in the national census. However, even after the Policy was abolished, Australian immigration sought to avoid ‘the difficult social and economic problems which may follow from an influx of peoples having different standards of living, traditions and cultures’ (Tavan, 2005, p.192) to preserve ‘social homogeneity’ (p.236).

<sup>12</sup> In referring to shade here, we do not claim that those at centre are immune to the gaze nor reside in the safety of darkness. Instead, consistent with Foucault’s discussion of ‘intensification’ and ‘redoubled insistence’ (Foucault, 1977; Ewald, 1992), we suggest that there are proximal-zones of scrutiny and that the force of the gaze and intensity of light increases incrementally upon one’s deviance from the “norm”.

<sup>13</sup> However, in doing so we must stipulate that the argument being made can be extrapolated to any educational context using policy that relies on the psychological notion of the “norm” and the identification and spatialisation of children according to varying degrees of individual deficit.