Education, the Politics of Resilience, and the War on Youth: A Conversation with Brad Evans

Tyler J. Pollard

Tyler J. Pollard [hereafter referred to as TP]: Given the corporatization and privatization of nearly all forms of education over the past several decades, how do you think the university and its faculties of researchers, teachers, and students should be communicating their work—in particular, work that engages the problematic of youth and education? How can academic laborers speak to or counteract the neoliberal forces that are working to render education into little more than worker training, and begin to reconceive of education as a public good fundamental to democracy?

Brad Evans [hereafter referred to as BE]: I think a good place to start when talking about the role of academics and what we can do to respond to the corporatization of education is to begin with the question of what we actually mean by “education”? When we do so, it becomes quite evident that education subjects—that, quite literally, education is a subjective matter. That is, education is framed through a hierarchy of subjects and is really all about creating spheres of knowledge and power. When we’re dealing with the question of what is the subject matter of education, we can start from the premise that education is all about the production of certain political subjectivities and about authenticating, and indeed disqualifying through what is not taught, the particular meaning and value of life. Once you start with this premise that the subject matter of education is integral to the production of certain political subjectivities, you can then start to open up an entire field of analysis around the idea that education is a form of political intervention—that education has always been a form of political intervention. You can then start to meaningfully interrogate the organization, the roles, the meanings, the functions, and the modalities of education right across the board from primary school right up to the university, and indeed, beyond into other spaces of education.

In light of the increasing neoliberalization of education, the knowledge that education is always political allows us to make sense of the fact that these
changes, which are often presented as ideas around efficiency, equality of opportunity, and opening up the educational sector to market forces, cannot be divorced from the production of neoliberal subjects. The conflict that is taking place in the university sector and beyond is precisely a conflict over this question of education as a form of political intervention. This makes it incumbent upon academics and teachers to, first of all, be aware of the starting point—that you are always involved in a relationship between power and politics. This, of course, requires a lot of critical self-reflection. How do you function as an academic? What shameful concessions are you forced into on a daily basis if you disagree with the very type of subjectivities that are being produced? How can you operate within that system such that you don’t comply to the prevailing logic that the only purpose of education is to produce a productive work force, such that education is reduced to methods and labor skills and quantified only in terms of the jobs available at the end of the process? I think if you can only see education in such a limited way you lose sight of the fundamental value of learning in itself.

Where we can take this a stage further as academics and intellectuals is to reinscribe more forcefully the value of critical pedagogy. The one thing that we are increasingly finding in terms of the changing nature of the education system is less and less importance being put on the value of critical thinking. How are we ever going to conceive of the political stakes and the power relationships in which we are all increasingly embedded without any strong sense of the value of critical pedagogy? So I would say that the first site for intellectual struggle for academics must be to fight once again for reinscribing the value of critical pedagogy. And we need to do this in a way that encourages students to challenge fundamentally their role in an academic system that is becoming increasingly neoliberalized.

TP: It seems to me that adequately responding to the war on youth requires an interdisciplinary engagement with the variety of different conditions that impact what it means to be young, to grow up, and to learn to mediate an assortment of challenges, institutions, systems, and technologies. Could you speak to how your own work and research contributes in a direct or indirect way to these interdisciplinary discussions about youth? In your view, what manner of intellectual work is necessary in order to create a space in which dissimilar disciplines are able to enter into a dialogue with one another?

BE: I intellectually grew out of a discipline that is commonly termed the continental political and philosophical tradition. An integral element of the tradition, which is why it received so much hostility, particularly during the 60s, 70s, and 80s, was precisely its insistence on the need for transdisciplinarity. If you wanted to study politics you could read Thomas Hobbes, but you could equally read Franz Kafka and gain just as much political purchase around political concepts, political ideas, and, indeed, ideas around what it means to be a political subject. Growing out of this tradition, it has seemed to me to be self-evident that you need a transdisciplinary pedagogy. And yet, in the academy today, for all the talk of the value of transdisciplinarity, particularly in the field of politics, it is still regimented into disciplinary silos, or what we might call academic sovereignties. Increasingly, on the one hand you have, through the neoliberalization of education, talks about
the need to break down borders and barriers between disciplinary paradigms; and yet, on the other hand, the pressures that are placed on academia today force you to become so specialized that talking to another discipline seems almost impossible. And this seems almost like the schizophrenic nature of the way that the academic environment functions.

Thinking about this from a political perspective, much of the hostility that critical scholars in the field of politics and international relations have experienced is because they abandoned the sovereign privilege particular to the discipline. Too many academics assume they have some privileged access to the world because they are rooted in a theoretical paradigm in which theory comes first—you start, for instance, with liberalism, or realism, or sovereignty, or whatever, and thus theory only becomes important insofar as it becomes self-referential and self-validating. If we are going take the question of transdisciplinarity seriously, and I think this is what I’ve tried to develop in some of my research, it has to come together around a shared problematics, and we have to begin with a particular problematic. And this in itself then becomes another form of political intervention. How do we frame the shared question such that different disciplines can bring their own logics to bear on it? The obvious ethical start point involves abandoning the idea that we have any privileged access to the world and appreciating that every single discipline will come at the problematic differently. If you have a shared problematic then that has to be the starting point for a discussion, which, if done correctly, could be wonderfully enriching. So, we need to start then with the premise that no one discipline has privileged access to a better world and accordingly we all need to work through these shared problematics together.

I have tried to do this in my research with the shared problematic of violence. Violence is such a complex phenomena that there is no one dominant narrative that we can say has all the answers to the problematic. So whether we would deal with violence from a political perspective, a psychological perspective, a sociological perspective, a geographical perspective, or any other perspective, violence has to be interrogated across multiple terrains to gain a better understanding of it. If we are going to see a fundamental change in the meaning and function of education in the university as we go through the twenty-first century, perhaps it will be precisely around the emergence of different schools of thought or ideas which are less disciplinary and more problematically driven. So you could take violence, or what people call the Anthropocene, or indeed the war on youth, but you must start with a particular problematic. Where this becomes fraught, or where you can at least see the power relations embedded within the university sector and the funding that makes research possible in the first place, will be very much around what kinds of problematics will be allowed to be interrogated. No one is saying that transdisciplinarity in itself is going to lead to the interrogation of the types of questions which are deemed to be socially imperative.

**TP:** You mean what sorts of questions are allowed to be asked in the neoliberal university?

**BE:** Absolutely, for sure. It’s through what is allowed to be questioned in itself that education can be politically manipulated. Again, this raises the question of
the function of the critical academic in this terrain. The critical academic’s function here is precisely to bring into question what is not being questioned and to keep pressing upon those who are setting the research agenda. And let’s not be under any illusions: research agendas are largely set today by those organizations that can allocate resources in order to make that research happen. So, we have the financialization of a research agenda, which does in some instances play into a particular politics and a political ideology, as well as a particular valuation of what is good research versus what is unnecessary research.

TP: It seems that there are two problems here. The first is to orient work within the university around a shared set of problematics and the other is to rethink the space of the university itself and the kind of work that is allowed within it.

BE: Yes. All the great research that’s being done never starts from a theory. It always starts from a shared problematic and an urgent shared problematic. Now, this can put academics in a floored position because every new problematic demands new thinking. This does away with the idea of the sovereign expert academic who thinks they have the ultimate truth in the world. It also places academics in a more precarious intellectual position insofar as you have to accept that sometimes you don’t have the answers and you don’t have the solutions to these problematics. But this does not mean to say that intellectuals are not equipped with the intellectual resources to work things out. I think we need to overcome what is in large part a lazy academic practice where people are simply happy to rest on their theoretical laurels. No great academic book has ever been written which starts from a theoretical premise. You have to begin with a shared problematic. And once you start from a shared problematic if you don’t engage in a transdisciplinary method then I think it’s basically just a retreat into a sovereign conceit.

TP: You’re right. It really is essential to begin with a problematic. I wonder, then, if we might turn briefly to the problematic of the future. Any serious discussion about the place of young people in the contemporary moment needs to be forward looking. Indeed, the assault on young people has been intensified by a failure on the part of multiple parties to imagine the future otherwise, to challenge common sense, and to resist and respond productively to the commodification, privatization, and criminalization of the spaces young people occupy. What would you say is essential that we take away from the concerns raised here at the Summer Institute? And how might these interventions give us a language with which to speak differently about, on the one hand, the future of young people and, on the other hand, the role of education and the university moving into the future? To what extent might we say that education is always about a struggle for the future?

BE: First of all, I think you’re right. Education has always been about a struggle for the future. Because if we’re talking about the production of particular political subjectivities then it’s always premised on the basis of what subjects are to come. What kind of subjects are we going to invest in to create the future? One of the ironies here is that education policy is always set in the present, and hence, like every regime of political power, it always believes itself to be in the right and it
will invest in the present largely in such a way that political subjectivities will emerge, which will reaffirm what are deemed to be acceptable political standards, political values, and political meanings. But the one thing the future always does is outlive the present very quickly. This in itself is one of the tensions that educators, and certainly political leaders, invariably feel which is perhaps why they often fear youth as much as they see them as a source of political optimism—because the future will always be different than the present.

The question of the future in itself is, I think, profoundly significant in terms of understanding education as a form of political intervention. If we form a prevailing mantra of this idea that education is all about equality of opportunity, we start to see the future as an open terrain, or an open horizon of possibility, where nothing in the future is set, nothing is established. In other words, the future is disembodied: No one occupies it and as such there are no power relations at play. When you’re young, whether you go to an overtly militarized inner city school or you go to the best private school in the country, it doesn’t matter—the future is still open to you. Of course, we know that that’s preposterous. The future is already embodied. And if we take seriously the idea that education is a fight for the future we can already see that the battles over power and politics, and the way power operates, are not simply about the here and now, they have a futurity to them.

In fact, such battles are already being waged in the future. A philosophical term that Gilles Deleuze (2007) invokes is “the virtual.” The virtual is basically the realm of possibilities. We can see this very clearly in the ways in which education expands the capacities or the possibilities for certain youths and diminishes the capacities for certain others (see Giroux 2013a). There is of course nothing to say that just because one student has their capacities expanded that those capacities will be realized, or indeed, that just because a student has their capacities minimized that they won’t turn out to do wonderful things. I’m not in any way suggesting that power is so debilitating or disempowering that people don’t break through the system. What I am, however, trying to point out is that the future itself is already inscribed in the imagination of the present and people do very much act in the present as if the future is at stake. And I think that is one of the clearest senses you get from evaluating the power politics invested in the education system. The imperative questions then become: how is the future analyzed today? And how does the way we understand the future today impact upon the present pedagogical imperatives of the education system and, in particular, how we look at the question of youth?

One thing that I’ve written about in my work is the slow shift towards what I call the catastrophic topography of endangerment (Evans 2013). That is, the future now only seems to us a terrain of unending catastrophes. We seem to be going from one catastrophe to the next and then on to the next again. And it seems that only a small minority of the Earth’s citizens are able to secure themselves from those catastrophes. The real tragedy of this is that catastrophe is now repackaged back to us as a condition of possibility, a learning process, indeed, something we can become more empowered from by accepting the crisis of crisis.

TP: Perhaps I’ll ask you about this then: You argue that governance, or more specifically, neoliberal self-governance, operates increasingly according to a logic
of what you call the resilient subject—a logic which naturalizes and renders common sense an ontological state of vulnerability and precariousness and which is ordered around the production of populations with the capacity to withstand ecological, political, social, historical, and psychic crisis. One of the impacts of this has been a collapse of imaginative and political forms of resistance into a default mode of resilience in the face of the uncertainties associated with living in a neoliberal conjuncture. I wonder if you could talk a little bit about how a critique of resilience, as well as the ways in which young people are refusing to be defined in such a demoralizing way, might give us a richer and more nuanced approach for thinking about the war on youth? I wonder, in what ways does this resilient mode of subjectivity mark a novel historical development?

BE: It’s really quite remarkable in terms of the pace of change with which resilience has become the lingua franca of the age. Resilience now appears in any and every discipline, and it’s presented as purely positive, purely benevolent. The first thing to do if you want to analyze the explosion of discourses around resilience is to simply type the term into Amazon and it’s full of various self-help books, from cradle to grave. All these books put forward the proposition that life is now forever in crisis and you need to accept the inevitability that you’re in a full life crisis. Psychological interventions around resilience are all about the ability of the individual to bounce back from some traumatic experience. I know this sounds wonderfully benevolent. Why wouldn’t you train someone to recover from trauma or crisis? The other place where resilience has been dominant is in the field of ecology, and the idea that ecological systems are actually resilient, so they will themselves recover and bounce back from catastrophes. I’m not in any way in my work, or the work I’ve been doing with Julian Reid (Evans and Reid 2013, 2014), arguing that resilience does not exist in ecological systems. However, there is something profoundly different in saying that plants are resilient and saying that the fundamental basis for political subjectivity is resilience. Indeed, one of dangers that we try to interrogate in our work is the reduction of life into basically a system of weeds—the debasement of the political subject.

When you come at the problem of resilience politically, the first question you need to ask yourself is what’s being masked and precluded from the analysis? What are the gendered, racial, and classed aspects being omitted by saying that the basis of subjectivity is the resilient subject? The questions we try to raise in our research are What conditions have arrived to enable us to go into this discourse on resilience such that it’s become so dominant? What does this discourse already take for granted? While resilience certainly appears different across a whole number of fields and disciplines, I think the term itself is meaningless unless we can gain some tangible purchase on the commonalities that are presumed amongst all those disciplines, amongst all the ways in which resilience is presented.

There are a number of features that have become politically evident to us through our research. First of all, that resilience assumes the inevitability of the catastrophic—another attack is going to happen, in one way or another. As Nietzsche once said, to live is to forever be in danger. Resilience takes that mantra and runs with it. Thus, it encourages an art of living dangerously. The second
point is that resilience accepts insecurity by design. This comes about largely through the complexity sciences, this idea that we need to abandon thinking about security because actually insecurity is the new normal for human cohabitation. I think in this you find a collapse between different discourses on what it means to be resilient. To be resilient now is not to be resistant. And what that means of course, largely, is that the political has been settled.

How this matters to us politically in the context of the war on youth is that, first, resilience is big business and, second, it propels the subject into a full life crisis. Resilience in itself doesn’t refer to some natural aptitudes that people innately possess; resilience is not a naturally existing state of resourcefulness. Resilience has to be a learned behavior and resilience is therefore a form of political intervention—people have to be taught to be resilient. What this of course requires is, first of all, a fundamental assessment of those populations that are currently deemed to be non-resilient such that power can intervene to make them more resilient. These tend to be the most vulnerable populations in society and, you could argue, the most dangerous populations politically. But the further production of that intervention is to further authenticate the idea that education is all about reaffirming that life is vulnerable. This also means that in order to teach youth and adolescents the meaning of being a resilient subject, the first thing you need to do is get them to accept and highlight their vulnerabilities. This then becomes the starting point for thinking about how they might, to use the term, “bounce back.”

**TP:** And this of course naturalizes vulnerability.

**BE:** It naturalizes vulnerability, but it also *ontologizes* vulnerability. Vulnerability becomes the starting point for thinking about empowerment, emancipation, and so forth. We’re not saying that vulnerability does not exist. Of course it does. But, what does a pedagogy of vulnerability do as opposed to a pedagogy of oppression? And what does it mean to say that everybody is ontologically vulnerable as opposed to saying vulnerability is produced out of conditions of oppression? Here we get into an entirely different political discussion. What are the pedagogic implications for thinking about this at the level of youth? Because if you start from a pedagogy of vulnerability, then educational policy and practice goes into accepting that everything changes such that everything can politically remain the same. You bounce back so you don’t fundamentally challenge those structures of power that create those conditions of vulnerability in the first place. A pedagogy of oppression is fundamentally different because, instead of focusing on vulnerabilities, you would rather instill confidence in subjects to say no to abuses of power. An ontology of vulnerability and an ontology of political confidence take you into two entirely different political avenues for rethinking the meaning of political subjectivities in the twenty-first century.

**TP:** I wonder if you could talk a bit about some of the recent work on the left that has attempted to do just that, to ontologize the category of vulnerability and precariousness. How might a more critical approach to resilience add something to those theories?
Part of our concern with leftist discourse today has been precisely around the question of appropriation. The one thing necessary to understand regarding the way power operates is that it does appropriate concepts and refashion them for the conditions of the present. So, what we are calling “resilience” is in many ways the neoliberalization of what Michel Foucault (1997) called “care for the self.” Indeed, it evidences many of the hallmarks of what some people have called Deleuzian ontology, and the embracing of emergence, the acceptance of the politics of events, accepting that everything is in crisis, and so on. There have of course been nuances within this, but there certainly has been appropriation of certain elements of this. Equally, you could say that what initially occurred in the 1990s (and perhaps for good reasons) has been a new emancipatory discourse around ontologies of vulnerability which today plays precisely into the ways that power wants subjects to operate and to function. The obvious thinker here is Judith Butler (2004, 2009) who really promotes this idea of an ontology of vulnerability. But it’s also there in the work of Alan Badiou and, in particular, his book In Praise of Love (2012) where love appears for Badiou very much as a vulnerable condition. Of course, we see this in Zizek’s (2008) further readings of this as love as violence; this idea of a politics of love requires resilience, it requires you to bounce back at every given opportunity.

The question is does power fear vulnerable subjects or, conversely, does power fear subjects who have the confidence to say, “No, we’re going to transform the world differently”? This is one of the profound political questions of our time and the answer, I think, is that power does not fear vulnerable subjects. Actually, power produces vulnerable subjects. If we are going to make a fundamental rupture or break with the power of the present, then we need to start to think the political differently and not simply conform to precisely the types of subjectivities that dominant forms of power and oppression demand from people. Rethinking the political requires a new vocabulary and language that is no longer simply grounded in the emancipatory politics that emerged in the 1990s.

Your work with the Histories of Violence project, which I believe you began as a kind of response to the escalation of violence across the world after 9/11, has gone to great lengths to provide a public forum for outlining the ways in which violence is understood or not understood today. Perhaps, drawing on your own work, you could speak generally about the ways in which violence operates in the neoliberal conjuncture and then a bit more specifically about how these forms of structural violence are affecting young people in particularly troubling ways? To what extent is a certain experience of violence or violation constitutive of what it means to be a young person today?

Perhaps a good place to start is with the ways in which theorists and intellectuals dealt with the violence on September 11th, 2001. It became vogue very quickly to talk about the violence of 9/11 as an exceptional moment in history—and an exceptional act of violence, of course, requires an exceptional response. Tony Blair, for instance, came out and said, “This is the day the world changes forever.” So, there’s a futurity instantly embedded in this narrative. Everything has changed and the future will never be the same as the past. This
narrative also played into the critical mediations around so-called ideas of the state of exception. There was this response that was exceptional. Some said that transgressed ideas of international law and international norms. The justification for this was precisely that we’re in a new political terrain. While a number of critical scholars bought into this logic, I think it was very reactionary, very short-term, and it failed to look at the broader trajectory of neoliberal empowerment and at how war had been a condition of possibility for liberal power particularly since the collapse of the Cold War. It was as if the state of exception discourse enabled certain liberal and neoliberal scholars to reduce everything to American hegemony and, thus, remove the broader framework from the analysis.

What we have increasingly seen in the decade that followed 9/11 has been the shift from a sense of exceptionality to what I call terror normality—terror has become terrifyingly normal (Evans 2013). The implications of this have been to accept the normalization of violence. Violence has become normalized and has become an accepted part of the everyday political vocabulary. That, to my mind, is even more dangerous because it’s all too easy to critique an exceptional act. However, once violence becomes normalized, it requires a much more rigorous assessment of the ways in which violence and power operate within the remit of everyday life, within the remit of law, within the remit of civilization. And it requires a much more critical self-reflection about our society and about what kinds of regimes of power we exist and operate in.

This normality of terror and crisis has impacted youth in profound ways. One of the shifts when you say that terror has become terrifyingly normal is that you no longer focus on the exceptional threat, but threat becomes ubiquitous. Everything becomes potentially endangered, everyone becomes potentially threatening. And, indeed, those that are closest to potential modes of radicality are the most dangerous. There’s no coincidence, then, that you find as a sophisticated political move in the post-9/11 moment the veritable collapse between fundamentalism and radicalism. To be radical now is to be a fundamentalist. The obvious target—once again you see this in counter-terrorism and broader securitization frameworks—for this counter-radicalization is youth. It starts with saying that to be radical or to be critical is to be dangerous, because you don’t know how far that radicality is going to go. So there is a conscious and direct targeting of youthful populations on account of the fact that their youthfulness lends itself to more radicality and more radicality is more potentially dangerous. There is a very clear move here.

One of the best ways of interrogating and diagnosing the logics of violence at any time is to look at the scapegoats; to look at what populations are being scapegoated for the way the system doesn’t function. If you follow any news sources, it’s quite clear that even the crisis that we are now in owes itself largely to my generation and the political leaders that came through my generation. However, overwhelmingly the burden of failure is now placed on youth. They are the ones that are not able to get jobs, and so they are the ones who are looking for illicit means for survivability. So it’s youths themselves, in particular, the age bracket between seventeen and twenty-four. You look at the way they are presented in the media today—they are the ones who are rising up and taking to
the streets. Youth are potentially the dangerous class and they are, in other
words, being scapegoated for the instabilities that the system has already created.

TP: So, it’s young people’s innate capacity to see the future otherwise that’s
responsible for their being figured as a threat to neoliberal security?

BE: Yes. Regimes of power always fear those who see the future differently. Why? Because it’s a fundamental challenge to their regime of power. The one
thing that youth certainly have is wonderful imaginations. Youth have hope,
youth have confidence, and youth have an innate desire to live differently than
those generations that have come previous to them. They don’t buy into the
conceit that this is as good as life is going to get, or that you need to accept
the inevitability of the catastrophic, or you need to simply play the game. In fact,
part of the purpose of education is to domesticate radicality such that youth learn
to live to play the game. Indeed, if education ever manages to do that completely
then the battle will be lost.

But the great thing, what history teaches us more than anything, is that no
system of power can ever be total, can ever be complete. Indeed, the ability to
refuse the operations of power appears in the most unlikely of places. The one
thing that you can see that regimes of power really do fear today is the fact that
a large proportion of youth are unemployed, have been presented with a view of
the future that appears to be crisis-laden, which they have no embodiment
in. That in itself has become the basis for really rethinking what it means to be
political and it’s wonderfully imaginative. It doesn’t conform to any of the
political registers that the political class has been taught to accept as gospel
and which are deeply troubling for those in power. They try to dismiss this
emerging political imagination as something that doesn’t conform to already
existing political registers and thus they assume it fails. However, if you judge
these movements on the terms of youth then you can see that it’s been wonder-
fully successful, because it has created a new political vocabulary. We have to
learn from them, and this is deeply unsettling for those in power.

TP: A lot of your work deals with the problematic of liberalism and liberal viol-
ence, and with what has become an intensification of war and militarization
across all spheres of life (see Evans 2013). And, as you suggest, this intensification
has been in the name of life. Can you talk about how what we might call the
question of liberal violence towards the other might be used as a framework
for thinking about the war on youth? And by that I mean, if, as Henry A. Giroux
and others have insisted, young people really have become a threat to notions of
liberal progress, if young people really have been figured as a threat to neoliberal
security, which I believe they have, how might this help us to better understand
the reasons for the rise of a militarized punishing state, which is increasingly
a defining feature of life for poor and minority youth? To what extent is liberal-
ism co-extensive with—if not outright constituted by—a logic of discipline,
punishment, and abandonment?

BE: To start with, I think there are two questions here. First, you’re right, the
category of life has become essential to theorizations of power. The explosion
of interest in Foucault’s work on biopolitics has not been incidental, but rather
has been a response, in particular throughout the 1990s, to emergent discourses around human security into the twenty-first century and an attempt to think about what happens when life becomes the object of power and the forefront of thinking about political analysis and political discussion. This in itself raises some interesting questions because previously life itself appears as an emancipatory political category and this was part of the early impetus around theorizations of human security. We can argue today that we’ve never been so saturated by mediations on life. However, to simply think that life itself is a sufficient basis for rethinking the political is, I think, a failure to understand the way in which power is already caught up in this discourse on life. Power talks to life consistently. This relationship between power and life is one of the misunderstandings of Nietzsche in *Human All Too Human*. What he was actually gesturing towards was that there’s something to the human condition that is more than human, which has to be the starting point for the meaning of the political. What is the understanding of political communion, and what is it that gives real meaning to forms of life, if it’s not something more than the biological fact of being alive?

The concomitant militarization of life takes us back into questions around how we theorize global power—how do we analyze and rigorously map out what global power actually looks like as an empirical reality? Again, I’m taken back to the earlier provocations and the reductionism around Carl Schmitt’s (2003) idea that the prevailing nomos of the earth—the dominant ordering principle of planetary life—is the breakup of the old Westphalian modern nation state project. From Schmitt we get the idea that we are encountering the emergence of a new planetary nomos. In the post 9/11 moment, much of the reductionism comes out of the idea that if you want to understand the nomos then it’s the camp—the camp becomes the defining paradigm. Much of this analysis of the familiar sovereign political exception retreats into looking at spatial configurations of confinement and control. This type of analysis precludes a much broader political discussion around the positive operation of power and neoliberal power.

If we again follow the analysis of the biopolitical—How does biopolitics function?—it is through what we might call a nomos of circulations. Biopolitics is all about promoting good and bad forms of circulation, which is a much more enriching way of analyzing power in the post 9/11 moment. What global forms of circulation are allowed to flow and function? What are the dangerous threatening forms of global circulation? Through this, you can see that ideas about circulation and containment are not incompatible logics. Circulation is not abstract—the circulation of money, numbers on a computer screen, etc. Circulation is also worth dealing with as an embodied form—that is, what people and ideas are allowed, as an embodied state, to circulate the planet without any form of sovereign intervention, without any hindrance into forms of prevention to those circulations. The next question, of course, is what is not allowed to flow and function, which in an embodied state constitutes the majority of the world. Migration itself is biopolitical. When you’re dealing with restriction on migration flows, let’s forget fences, barriers, walls, and so on, and look at the body that’s not allowed to cross. When you do this, you get a real sense of the logic, politics, racism, class, and gendered distinctions around what is deemed to be bad or unnecessary or unwanted forms of circulation. You can see this open
terrain of the nomos of circulation really taking shape, particularly in the post Cold War environment. What we’re increasingly finding is the crisis of liberalism globally, and almost the declining zone of influence of liberalism globally, externally but certainly internally as well. Liberalism and neoliberalism are in crisis. They’re quite precarious actually.

This crisis of neoliberalism and liberalism is matched by an increased incarceration of populations. I think we need a more nuanced understanding of incarceration. On the one hand, there is an explosion of enclosure of the global poor in terms of imprisonment; but there is also the increased sedentarization of zones from which they cannot leave. Zygmunt Bauman (1997) has a compelling mediation when he asks, roughly, “What do we mean when we say this is a ‘no go’ area?” The obvious response is this is an area which is dangerous and which you do not enter. Bauman suggests we flip this logic because what this actually means is that the people who live in these areas cannot leave and this is becoming the case for the vast majority of the world’s citizens. Through systems like mass incarceration, populations are becoming increasingly contained, rendered sedentary, insomuch as to move from where you don’t belong is deemed to be dangerous. You can see this in the case of Hurricane Katrina where the U.S. government declared that they had an internal refugee crisis. Why would you designate or signify these people as refugees if you did not want to establish encampments to keep them where they belong? The one thing the American public didn’t want was the victims of Katrina wandering around the so-called “land of the free.” So containment itself is a geospatial orientation, which is very racially and class determined.

TP: Of course we see this not just in exceptional instances like Katrina, but also ubiquitously in almost every major inner city area—New York, Chicago, Philadelphia, Detroit, and so on. We see this in the collapse of public education and the makeover of schools as prisons and warehousing spaces. The point really is not to allow these kids to create something better for the future; it really is to leave them in what Joao Biehl (2005) has referred to as “zones of abandonment.”

BE: Yes. And to go back to an earlier question, when you’re dealing with these zones of abandonment you’re also dealing with the pedagogical encouragement of resilience, and resilience is indeed about further entrenchment. The idea is that you stay in your environment and “bounce back” in your environment; learn to deal with your environment. And, indeed, if you have knowledge of your environment you don’t have knowledge to exist in other environments. Your knowledge is to survive in your environment, and that bounce-back ability that is a learned behavior in that environment becomes pernicious in the further sedentarization of life. There’s something profoundly unsettling happening here. On the one hand, a large part of the education of the city is directed towards encouraging people to survive in only that environment. On the other hand, the elite institutions are precisely those institutions that are encouraging the study of the liberal arts and are basically saying “free your mind, open yourselves up to the world of possibility,” and so on. In fact, this is becoming what you could call educational apartheid. If you work in the education system and you want to understand the relationship between power and politics, you need
to ask why are the liberal arts good for the elite institutions of the world, and yet, we don’t want to teach them in educational sectors where we would prefer to teach young people to be resilient.

TP: Teach kids to get used to a world with little or no social protections, or I guess, more immediately, demoralized teachers with no unions, not enough desks, no art classes, no gymnasiums, no music programs, and of course, no thinking critically about inequality, the environment, politics, etc.

BE: Yes, and education becomes not only a substitute for vocational training, but also a much more crude disciplinary and ordering setting insomuch as kids are being forced to accept the catastrophe of their condition.

TP: We’ve talked at length over the past week about neoliberalism, the emergence of corporate forms of sovereignty, and the ways in which power, in particular at a global level, has been disconnected from politics. While politics has been rendered local, power has been elevated largely into global corporate and economic spheres, where it has, in many ways, become indifferent to the specificity and practices of local political realities—for instance, the kinds of struggles facing young people in places like Greece, Spain, across North Africa and the Middle East, as well as in the U.S. and elsewhere. In other words, politics no longer seems to exist in the spaces where we see power most visibly. Could you talk about this tenuous relationship between power and politics—the forces causing it, for instance—and about how this makes it particularly difficult, but, of course, more necessary than ever, to find ways of challenging the complex forms of neoliberal violence bearing down on young people today? I wonder, how can local, grassroots forms of political organization ever hope to speak to a power elite whose scope seems to have become transnational?

BE: The idea that there has been a separation between power and politics resonates throughout the wonderful corpus of Zygmunt Bauman. Bauman (see, e.g., 1998) eloquently puts this thesis forward that neoliberal power is global, and yet, the recourse to thinking about the political remains entrenched in the model of the nation state—that is, ways of acting politically or the orthodox assumptions around what politics means remain at the national level. We have yet to conceive of a global political consciousness or imaginary or indeed a framework through which to really deal with the emerging political problems of our times. On the one hand, a number of people might point to global organizations such as the World Health Organization or the United Nations development project, and so on, which resemble an already existing architecture for global governments. I think that is partly right. However, much of what passes for a global political architecture is basically a hyperextension of the modern nation state—it’s built on the shoulders of the modern nation state, and it serves, in many senses, to divorce from the logic that the modern nation state has now been reduced to a militarizing and policing function for the service of global neoliberalism and global capitalism.

So the first question becomes: If there is this separation of power and politics, why is so much investment going into the idea of the modern nation state as if that can still be a site for political emancipation when the role and function of
the modern nation state has been reduced to either (a) how can we better manage the crisis without fundamentally upsetting the cause of the crisis in the first place? or (b) a militarizing and policing function, not least the policing of ideas and what is an acceptable critique? The simple answer, if you look at those young people who are reimagining the meaning of the political, is that actually the nation state doesn’t matter. While we can place demands on the nation state there is a real need to fundamentally reconceive not only what it means to be political as an idea, but the forms of organizations which are now required to transform the world for the better.

Young people can point to a real clear structural violence in place to prevent those organizations from producing precisely those political architectures that are required to challenge the way power operates today. This violence can be understood very much in terms of the containment zones, the physically embodied containments of the local struggles, which prevent everyone from connecting globally. There is a very clear structural architecture and violence in place that openly operates to stop those connections from happening. And equally, of course, if we want to look at the state and the meaning and function of the state today we have to look at the militarization of responses to protest to see the way in which the state genuinely fears the protesting of youth—particularly, if that protest becomes “too political.” We can accept the protest of youth provided it’s regulated such that it doesn’t upset the political status quo. The moment that protest starts to really play into the politics of the everyday then it becomes overtly militarized and you see the reversion to law and order as a way to intercept into the protest to disrupt any sense of the political.

There is something else at stake that works out of this, and this is part of this emerging terrain about rethinking the very meaning of the political in the twenty-first century. The first question is what do we mean by the political? The political is certainly not taking place in an electoral process once every four or five years such that you elect someone. The term that gives it away is that it is “representative democracy.” It’s not democracy; it’s representative democracy. In other words, it’s an illusion. We can call that regulatory politics. Rather, the political as I would understand it, is about the creation of new modes of subjectivity that are yet to exist. In this sense, it’s a generational thing; it’s a youthful project. The political, which is all about the creation of new modes of existence, requires a new language, a new political vocabulary, and new political registers and terms of engagement and organization.

You understand this if you look at the ways youth are protesting and operating today. They are often lambasted for not having a recognizable political vocabulary, but that is precisely the point. They are emerging and constructing a new sense of what the political means, which we’re still yet to formulate, we’re still yet to make sense of. It’s only really with the passage of time that political theorists will be able to make sense of and respond to that very existing empirical reality that youth are constructing. It’s certainly not the case that a political thinker will put forth an intellectual book and hope youth will follow. Youth are constructing this new imaginary and it’s up to political theorists to catch up to the new empirical reality of the world. The great joy that I see when you look at these movements, (and it’s not a movement it’s multiple movements), is how wonderfully
affirmative, optimistic, and poetic they are. They don’t resort to old dogmatic, positivist political vocabularies. Certainly there are those in the academy that will say these ways of thinking are immature, but this is the default setting of those that fear the power of youth. Others will say that this is a wonderful moment; that despite all the crises, these youths are actually willing to do something positive and affirmative and are not buying into the conceit that they have to accept the way things are. Also, if we accept the idea that youth are constructing new imaginaries, new political vocabularies, then they’re not simply going to rest on their laurels and accept what was deemed to be emancipatory discourses over the past twenty or thirty years.

As I noted, my early work grew out of this continental political tradition, and so you put a lot of intellectual purchase into these ideas—well, I did certainly in my early studies, into ideas of certain post-structural and post-modern theorists, and I think sometimes those terms have been bastardized. But there is certainly intellectually emancipatory potentials that existed in those theorizations and new ways to interrogate power and some of those tools still have value for me. But to buy into the conceit that those ideas won’t be reappropriated by power is, I think, what we might call “the ostrich theory of politics”—you stick your head in the sand and no one can find you out. If the ideas matter that much then power is going to catch up to them and reappropriate them; none more so than certain postmodern and post-structural ideas. For instance, Michel Foucault’s ideas about the “care of the self” have been reappropriated, and military personnel have openly appropriated his language of war by other means. But equally we can look at the ideas of, for instance, Gilles Deleuze and Jacques Derrida, which have been equally appropriated by power. If we are going to take the ethics of these theorists seriously then there is a need to move beyond them, and there is a need to accept very clearly that what they once called emancipatory is now the way power operates today.

However, I think this needs to come with a warning, and that is that if we accept that what was deemed to be radically new during the 1990s has now been appropriated by power, the last thing we can do is romanticize what came prior to that. So we don’t simply say “post” theorists have now become dangerous because this is what power now wants, if only we could go back to the good old times of the 1960s and 1970s where everything was foundational and certain and set in place. Because we all know the social states in those times were equally problematic for an assortment of reasons. To rethink the political is thus not to revert to Leninism or Maoism, or whatever, as if we can divorce the empirical realities of the violence of those projects. It’s precisely to make a fundamental break and rupture with the past. If we are going to rethink the political register in the twenty-first century we can see the return to Fascism as dangerous but it’s certainly not to return to the modern social state as we once understood it. Perhaps it’s simply to abandon altogether the categorization of communism, to rethink what political community might mean in the twenty-first century, and it’s certainly a call to think beyond liberalism.

TP: I wonder then what you think about the current nostalgia of many on the left for social democracies of the twentieth century?
BE: Nostalgia is always a wonderfully powerful political tool. It’s often also a very dangerous road to go down. However, this gets us into a particularly important element of what we mean by critical pedagogy. One of the most pernicious outcomes of the way power operates today is to actively promote what Henry A. Giroux (2013b) characterizes as the politics or “the violence of organized forgetting.” Everything now has become so instantaneous that we simply respond to the present; we simply learn to survive in the present. Part of this is that everything has now become “post”—post-racial, post-gender, post-class, as if the history of those struggles can simply be forgotten and collapsed into the present. We live in a kind of dystopian time where we’re told everything is as good as it’s going to get.

If we are going to take the political value of critical pedagogy seriously then we have to still maintain a commitment to what Michel Foucault called the history of our present. History is only important insofar as it allows us to interrogate the political present, the political conditions that we have arrived in. History in that sense becomes important because it allows you to learn lessons from the past. If we learn from the empirical realities, from the history of our past and the conditions and ideas that shaped them, why on earth would we try to go back to, say, state socialism as it previously existed, or indeed communism as it previously existed? The empirical realities of those projects were socially, intellectually, personally, and politically disastrous for the vast majority of the people who lived under those projects. This seems to be the dialectic operating—either we try to live with the current condition or we simply revert back to some old past—this in itself is a kind of war on youth because it says that we cannot think the political in a new way.

TP: It’s certainly a further denial of the emancipatory potential, which, as you noted earlier, is always embodied in young people.

BE: Absolutely. It denies the imagination of political ideas that are yet-to-come and that are already embodied in youth. As if it’s only the present or the past that has the answers to the future. History is profoundly significant for doing some of the critical evaluation of what has always passed as emancipatory politics. A large part of my work is an open critique of the legacy of Immanuel Kant and precisely the false promises that Kantian politics has promoted, the way Kantian thinking lent itself to the moralization of biopolitics, the apparent racism in his thought. However, to my mind, it’s not a case of forgetting Kant; quite the contrary, Kant is not read widely enough.

But this of course raises another significant problem: Who has the time in the modern condition to read? Even in the academic setting the luxury of reading is increasingly being denied. If we are going to take forward what it means to be politically different in the twenty-first century then one of the evident weapons at our disposal is temporality. We have to reclaim time; we have to reclaim the value of time. Paul Virilio (2006) understood this forty years ago; speed has conquered space, politics has sped up such that we have set about in a delirium. One of the temporalities that we should insist upon as a fundamental category for thinking about the political is time itself and how we can reclaim the meaning of time. We can link this back to (as Simon Critchley pointed out) the claim that
Tony Blair makes, in the immediate aftermath of 9/11, that “this is the day the world changes forever;” and yet, twenty days later we go to war. If truly 9/11 was a moment in history when the world changed forever, shouldn’t we spend more time reflecting on the political philosophical consequences of this? But modern politics doesn’t lend itself to that kind of temporality. This is one of the ways we can start to make serious political changes, and also to give more respect to organizations such as the Occupy movement. Don’t simply judge movements like Occupy on their immediate results. We need to give these spaces of resistance a much broader temporality and then begin to assess what social changes have been made possible by them.

TP: The politics of time and temporality is so important. In fact, the contemporary conjuncture is characterized by what Larry Grossberg (2010) calls “the problematic of temporality,” and, in particular, “the problematic of the future.” Of course, the problematic of temporality in the neoliberal conjuncture is not simply about our failed relationship to the future, but also about an unwillingness to attend to history and to those historical complexities which continue to bear down on the present and inform our ability to theorize the possibilities for the future differently. How might intellectuals today take up the question of the past in order to resist the intellectual violence of forgetting, and, moreover, how might intellectuals do this in ways that allows them to tell a better story about the past, present, and future? And, let’s not forget, to tell about the significant role that historical memory and public memory must play in our engagement with questions about young people and the war on youth?

BE: The first place to start with this question around the future is to look at the historical conjuncture in which we operate, and when I talk about “we,” I’m referring to the digitally connected liberal zones of affluence in the world. When we talk about global imaginaries of threat and governmentality, what we’re largely referring to is a system of rule that privileges liberal zones of affluence. It’s a small percentage of the world’s population that is deemed to be under threat and under siege. The way the historical conjuncture that now operates within the liberal metropolitan zones—that are equally precarious and have internal pockets of abandonment—is that ideas of space and time have no meaning. What used to hold the modern political project together was a clear sense of spatiality, where the world was literally carved up into boxes and your sense of political belonging just so happened to emanate from whichever box you happened to be born into. Any sense of time was also very utopian: Everything was chronological, naturally unfolding, and teleological. Hannah Arendt understood all too well that this idea of spatiality has been in crisis ever since the Second World War. The idea that sovereign integrities now matter has been eviscerated from liberal zones of affluence. We live in an almost post-spatial setting insofar as all problems in a liberal society are globally internal problems. That isn’t to say that internal demarcations don’t take place but that the global imaginary and global powers have all but eviscerated any sense of the outside. Ideas of the inside and the outside no longer resonate. Equally, of course, ideas of time itself have also been all but abandoned. All of our politics now has a futurity and, indeed, modes of governmentality are so future orientated that they impress upon the present
a catastrophic imaginary that has been politically catastrophic. We cannot think about contemporary problems today without pointing to a future catastrophe. Of course, the connections to neoliberalism become all too evident here—it’s a future market. It’s all about predicting the future, and acting on the future, quite literally, waging the destiny of the species of human life on its future political strategies.

**TP:** It’s a discourse and a politics that’s about speculating on death...

**BE:** Speculating on death, yes. Speculating on where the next catastrophe is going to arise, speculating on who has the freedom to leave and who is forced to stay in these catastrophic zones, and who will learn to be resilient. We need to start from this fundamental premise of the collapse of the space-time continuum that once held modern politics together. Anyone who has a so-called smartphone knows this all too well. And I love the term in itself—you don’t need to be smart any longer because your device will do it for you. The smartphone is the clearest indication of this time–space collapse. You don’t need to travel anymore because the world comes to you. That’s what globalization really means: *the world comes to you.* Instantaneously you can know about every crisis that is happening in the world today. Quite literally, it’s in the palm of your hand. Your work life has been shattered. As an academic, the worst thing you can do is to respond to a student on your smartphone because the moment you do is the moment they realize you are available twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week, and there’s that instant response. The work/leisure demarcations that once set out the modern political subject have also been eviscerated. Also, you pick up your phone today and it’s all about mediations about what the future is going to look like as a catastrophic potential. “Fear the Future” is the dominant trope of the time.

The question, then, is what happens when our sense of space and time loses all meaning? Well, history is only important insofar as it reaffirms the crisis of the times. If you look at all the fundamental tropes around the history of the human condition, if you, for instance, watch any television documentaries, it’s simply presented as the history of human survival and catastrophe. We’ve always been catastrophically endowed when we look back over history. The way we frame the contemporary period provides a new window into a history that was always already meant to be this way.

**TP:** History evaporates into the present. It becomes, in a sense, evolutionary.

**BE:** Yes, it becomes neo-Darwinian. We have, we’re told, always been on the verge of survival, we’ve always been resilient subjects. This becomes the natural unfolding such that where we are as political subjects today is where we were always meant to be, we just didn’t really realize it. The task of criticality becomes how can we excavate an alternative history of our present? How can we attend more clearly to histories of non-violence? How can we attend more clearly to a history of political subjectivity that hasn’t simply been reduced to the question of survivability? What does it mean to say that there are alternative historical truths to the most catastrophic events? In any catastrophic event you have an official narrative. The task of the critical cartographer, however, is to excavate those stories that are not told by the official narrative.
TP: You make a key distinction between what you call soft and hard forms of militarism which, in many ways I think, speak to Henry A. Giroux’s (2012) distinction between the soft and hard wars on youth. On the one hand, young people and the spaces they occupy are endlessly commodified and turned over to ethically vacuous forms of marketization, financialization, and so on. On the other hand, those young people who, for whatever reason, can’t fit the liberal consumerist script are funneled into one of the multiple containment zones of the punishing state. That said, your notion of soft and hard militarism I think nicely addresses the ways in which militarization works throughout society on multiple levels—in the form of global, national, and domestic security, but also insofar as military language, logics, and affects have crept ubiquitously into our everyday lives through a forcefully militarized cultural apparatus. Could you talk a bit about how we might unpack and then extend these categories in ways that allow us to understand a bit better one of the most significant fronts in the war on youth?

BE: I think we need to start here by looking at the title of the Summer Institute, that is “The War on Youth.” How do we look at the discursive provocation of saying there is a war on youth taking place? We’ve had some discussion around whether the term “war” itself is a metaphor or whether it is a diagnostic tool for really analyzing the conditions of the present. The question that is instantly raised is how does the term “war” function politically? One thing we can say is that within military establishments, and certainly within the political environment on popular media, the proliferation of the use of the term “war” has not been anything unique. Throughout the 1990s every form of social ill seemed to have a war waged on it—the war on poverty, the war on drugs. This goes into the war on terror, which becomes an openly declared war on all fronts. I was watching Fox News yesterday and they were talking about a war on Wal-Mart.

This language is emotive and functions in a certain political way. But also, it does reveal the way that people will diagnose the operation of power. First, an important start point here is that the proliferation of the use of war doesn’t open up into popular vocabulary within critical discourses—it’s actually touted by regimes of power. A regime of power will say a war needs to take place upon this particular social problem. The proliferation around the meaning of war has been made into a moral and ethical imperative, such that action needs to be taken because the stakes are so high there will be casualties, and of course all wars produce casualties. You then have to go into the question of saying: “What is the use value and function of appropriating the terminology of war and turning the logic of war back against itself?” One of the earlier and really sophisticated mediations on this appeared in Michel Foucault’s (2003) Society Must be Defended, where he really appreciates the idea that power has always taken life as its object, particularly since the beginning of modernity, and indeed, that war has always taken life to be its object. This resonates with the Nietzschean idea that war is the mode of modern societies, such that nihilism is also the motive of modern societies.

Situating this in the context of what’s happening to youth today, if we take power at its word, then youth are quite literally inserted within a war paradigm. If we just take the post 9/11 moment, it was certainly a war paradigm insomuch as youth overseas were deemed to be the troubling demographic which could
become radicalized and which could become insurgents. Youth at home increasingly became profiled and analyzed on their basis for radicality. This paradigm of war, insecurity, and profiling has increasingly become normalized such that the academic setting itself has become the front line of a war effort in the most militarized and crude policing insofar as educators and academics in the UK and Europe now have to monitor students—attendance, performance, whether someone speaks in a way that might raise suspicions of radical thoughts. We have openly talked for the last ten–fifteen years about this as a “war for hearts and minds.” In other words, how could you even think to divorce education from a war for hearts and minds? It’s an integral element for the war effort and it continues to be an integral element of a war effort that is, by definition, a war without end. There is no end to the catastrophic condition of our times.

**TP:** This is what you mean when inverting Clausewitz; when you talk about politics today becoming a war by other means?

**BE:** Absolutely. And politicians have expressed this precise sentiment that we need to see politics as the continuation of war by other means. Why? Because conventional understandings of warfare have been all but eviscerated. There is no clear sense anymore of who are our friends and who are enemies, who is inside and who is outside, and when times of war and times of peace exist. These categories have been all but eviscerated because neoliberalism has collapsed the precise space-time continuum that once held modern politics together.

**TP:** Which is why I think to deny that there is a war on youth is not just to misunderstand what’s happening to young people today, but it’s also to misunderstand the changing shape of war in the contemporary moment.

**BE:** Absolutely. And to misunderstand the ways in which war has become normalized, to deny the very terms that power uses. Power in itself openly declares a war upon youth insomuch as youth and radicality are deemed to be dangerous. The peace effort has to begin from the logical position that a war is taking place. And this war takes children as its object. Why does it take children as its object? This is because some ideas are liberatory, some ideas are dangerous, this is a war effort which is very much taking place in conditions of normality such that the military paradigm of society cannot be divorced from the civic. One of the inevitable outcomes of this has been the shift towards what we can call “entertaining militarism.” Not only do we entertain the military as a central element of global civil society, but the idea that the military should simply exist in the barracks and be brought out during times of exceptional crisis has been eviscerated altogether. We had the military providing security for the London Olympics, we have the military parading on talent shows as if it’s part of everyday entertainment, military personal are being openly recruited into education systems through Troops to Teachers programs, and so on. The lines between the military and the civic have been so eviscerated that it is impossible to distinguish between times of war and times of peace. Or, to put it another way, since peace is now seen to belong to a bygone era and war has become so normalized then the front line exists everywhere. It exists in what types of commodities you purchase, it exists in what’s permissible to teach, and it certainly exists in terms of what types of subjectivities we are producing.
TP: It seems that any logic of towards perpetual peace has become perverted into "towards perpetual war."

BE: Well this is one of the real great ironies of the revival of certain thinking around perpetual peace, because what we have quickly discovered is that through inaugurating perpetual peace what we’ve actually declared is global war. Global war becomes the inevitable outcome of a peace that cannot be achieved other than through militarism. A question that needs to be asked, and which Michel Foucault always asks, is what type of political subjects do you produce if you say that violence is necessary for their production? Of course, the type of subjects you do produce are subjects that have learned to accept the normalization of violence as integral to their very forms of life.

TP: Subjects, in fact, which don’t simply accept violence, but which have been schooled into taking immense pleasure in violence.

BE: We have to look at the proliferation of spectacles of violence today to see how violence operates not only through the pleasure principle, but how, on the one hand, society and popular culture preaches that the only way that you can really truly find empowerment today is through violence; and yet, on the other hand, you’re demonized on account of acting upon those precise messages that popular culture deems the only way to find empowerment, pleasure, and desire in the present moment.

This interview has been edited for length and clarity.

REFERENCES