

ABSTRACT

Title of Document: “STOP THE LIES. LET THE TRUTH BE TOLD!”: EDUCATION REFORM AND THE SAVE OUR SCHOOLS MARCH AND NATIONAL CALL TO ACTION (SOS)

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Embedded in the Social Constructionist tradition, this study examines the dynamics and interactions of the Discourses and forces of the current U.S. education reform movement as it is shaped by and through Media, Money and Government Discourses which negatively frame teachers as the “problem.” Using the interview and observation data, this qualitative study uses ethnographic methods to examine the 2011 Save Our Schools March and National Call to Action (SOS), revealing how SOS attempted to complexify the current reform narrative and construct a narrative from the voices of teachers, students and parents in an attempt to present them as legitimate participants in public policy debate and formation. SOS advocates for a reform narrative that includes a Democratic, Grassroots and Sustainable Discourse for and by local stakeholders. An Autoethnography is included as the embodied experience of an American public school teacher and argues for the teachers’ right to be critical participants in the narrative of education reform in the United States.

Finally, the American Public Education Complex (APEC) is introduced and presented as a framework of factors that contribute to the overall educational development of a student and should be considered in any reform narrative because of the complex and often polarizing ideological American landscape.