

OF “WILD PATIENCE” & “WILD SURMISE”:¹
WAKING UP TO THE WORK AND THE WORLD
WITH MAXINE GREENE

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I find myself moving from discovery to discovery... now and then renewing, the terms of my life... And even that is not all there is. We also have our social imagination: the capacity to invent visions of what should be and what might be in our deficient society, on the streets where we live, in our schools... a mode of utopian thinking: thinking that refuses mere compliance, that looks down roads not yet taken to the shapes of a more fulfilling social order, to more vibrant ways of being in the world.... released through many sorts of dialogue... (Greene, 1995, p. 5)

[I] seek[s] an audience of the incomplete and the discontented, those who educate with untapped possibility in mind, with hope for the attainment of freedom in a difficult and resistant world. My hope is to reawaken concern for and belief in a humane framework for the kinds of education required in a technological world. It is to recall [people]... to some lost spontaneity, some forgotten hunger for becoming different, becoming new. My hope is to remind people of what it means to be alive among others, to achieve freedom in dialogue with others for the sake of personal fulfillment and...a democracy dedicated to life... (1988, p. xii): ... a community always in the making—the community that may someday be called a democracy. (1995, p. 6)

At a moment when so many forces are working to thrust young people into passivity, the open-mindedness and the sense of exploration fostered by aware aesthetic involvements may well move them to break with ‘the cotton wool’ of dailyness—to use Virginia Woolf’s language in Moments of Being (1985)—

the plain ordinariness of things. To give up stock and stereotyped responses is, at any age, to achieve a new readiness. Not only may there be a consciousness of things in their multiplicity and particularity, there may also be a consciousness of things as they actually present themselves to the individual... the person grounded in his/her own lived world. And this may well lead to a fresh orientation to the search for meanings.... If all this is coupled with an awareness that each human being can become different as he/she moves on his/her way—and that things can be otherwise than they are—new sorts of possibilities may be disclosed. They cannot be predicted, of course. Nothing can be predetermined or predicted.... But anything is possible. We have only to free ourselves, to choose. (Greene, 1980/2001, pp. 22-23)

To plunge in; to choose; to disclose; to move; this is the road, it seems to me... (1971/2013, p. 138)

I find myself moving from discovery to discovery—and yes, moved to renew the terms of my own life and work too—as I explore anew (hopefully with requisite awareness, sensitivity and involvement—key concerns Greene would herself have us each and ever attend) the work of the truly wonder-ful(l) Maxine Greene in the wake of her passing; for, it is a wellspring. Too, I seek to do so, and with our work in curriculum studies in view, in a way that may well among us lead therein to: the search for meaning oriented afresh, the achievement of a new readiness, the revitalized commitment to the attainment of freedom, the reawakening of a concern for our humanity, the remembrance of spontaneity and the invention of visions by which we imagine things “otherwise” and disclose new possibilities. For all such, we need still, and ever, and herein Greene is with us—voicing and visioning voluminously what she calls “education that brings together the need for wide-awakeness with the hunger for community” (1988, p. 23), alive among and with others, finding more vibrant ways of being in the world, creating together and renewing a world and worlds we share. Drawing from Dewey, she affirms our need to “keep alive ‘the power to experience a common world in all its fullness’” (1993/2001, p. 178).

I plunge in, yet struggle to find a road—too much disclosed, to disclose; too moved to move, I find it difficult if not impossible to choose. And then Greene’s emphatic embrace of the difficult, impossible, inexplicable, is called to mind; along with the

importance she places on beginnings, and also ever on our manner of attendings. Of beginnings, she says:

'Begins'—this is important.... I would like to claim that this is how learning happens and that the educative task is to create situations in which the young are moved to *begin*... (1995, p. 6)

I am tempted, you see, to remain with what Foucault elsewhere calls 'the established order of things'—pedagogical things, liberal education things (1973, p. xxi). I am drawn to affirm...what I have come to love... what I choose to think of as the very sources of my self. ... I would not have to disrupt. I would not have to begin anything.... But then I think of how much beginnings have to do with freedom, how much disruption has to do with consciousness and the awareness of possibility that has so much to do with teaching other human beings. And I think that if I and other teachers truly want to provoke our students to break through the limits of the conventional and taken for granted, we ourselves have to experience breaks with what has been established in our lives; we have to keep arousing ourselves to begin again. (Greene, 1995, p. 106)

And she concludes *The Dialectics of Freedom* (1988)—positing, too, education and freedom as a main theme in her life—declaring: "And when freedom is the question, it is always a time to begin" (p. 135). Perhaps, here, too she has kept alive the provocations of Hannah Arendt, whose thought influenced hers. Describing the essence of education as *natality*, the fact that new beings ever come into the world before whom we are responsible, Arendt (1954/1993) brings particular attention to a perpetual testimony to the principle of beginning itself—a supreme human capacity, the ontological root of action, the foundation of freedom: the very power to begin, again and again. Such power is also related to the work of love, her *amour mundi*: in love of and for the world, a world we share and for whose renewal we are mutually responsible (Bowen-Moore, 1989).²

I seek, then, in beginning, to plunge in after the manner of Greene (albeit impossible), exemplified in our kindred Rilke's (1934/1993) urging: "A world will overcome you, the happiness, the abundance, the incomprehensible beauty of a world. Live a while in the[se] books, learn from them what seems to you worth learning, but above all love them" (p. 25); akin perhaps to Deleuze and Guattari's

“reading with love”³ (1980/1987). Carl Jung (1929/1966) asserted that: “You can exert no influence if you are not susceptible to influence” (p.71). This is attested to in Greene—so susceptible, so influential: embodying and embracing immense openness, deep listening, welcoming encounter, genuine engagement. There has been, then, for me also a fervent intention to begin here with her own words—their influence, and those too she articulates about her own work—in fact, to fill the world of this tribute with such; and to be mindful of how I go about attending. “So much depends” says Greene (1980/2001), “on the ways we go out to what is offered to us, on our participation, our openness to the qualities of what we hear and see—to what has been, for many of us, heretofore unsuspected, unheard, unseen... what...permits us to find fresh significance in our being in the world” (pp. 18, 19).

While Greene has primarily located her work in the exploration of philosophy in the context of teacher education, it has also powerfully inhabited curriculum theory as well, or, in the least, profoundly influenced it and the field of curriculum studies writ large. Greene’s work is, in fact, well allied with, finds much affiliation with, that of many curriculum theorists as well, especially in the light of Pinar’s (2012) decisive conceptualizations of curriculum theory emphasizing: the interdisciplinary study of educational experience, and the formative role of the arts and humanities in such study; the pursuit to understand the educational significance of the curriculum and in its relation to the individual, history and society; curriculum as educational experience, and conceived as “complicated conversation”; the import of subjectivity, and of examining the contribution education can make to an understanding of one’s own life (p. 45), a passionate life in public service (2009); and the practice of “a form of autobiographical truth-telling that articulates the educational experience of teachers and students as lived” (2012, p. 35). Greene has certainly lent her life foundationally to this work, the achievement of such work; or perhaps the living impulse at the heart of curriculum theory has lent its to the achievement of hers, inspired and influenced as it has been by her work.

Of roads, and setting out upon them, we in curriculum too know much—even via the word itself and its etymological origins in signifying a course for running as also of study; and also of concerns for the way in which they are taken, *currere*⁴ calling attention to the quality of experience of life upon such roads. Of choice we in the field know much as well—however ‘troubled’ a concept, a key curriculum consideration it is, oriented around the question of what knowledge is of most worth; freedom and agency also more than just a subtext in all things herein. We, too, can claim to have embraced difficulty, disruption, and inexplicability; as well as

dialogue, difference, possibility and imagination in our complicated curriculum conversations; and those also in aspiring to a wide-awakeness, affiliated with what Freire (1970/1995) called 'conscientization' from whom Greene was also inspired, and community too. It would, of course, be terribly trite to borrow from Robert Frost (1916/1972) in also asserting that she has *taken the road less travelled, and that has made all the difference...* though she did, and it indeed has, and for so many of us in curriculum too.

What, then, might it mean for us, here and now, and for the to come, in curriculum studies, to be influenced anew by Greene and her work? How might we look down roads unknown, not yet taken and less travelled, to the shapes of the more socially fulfilling, in the manner of more vibrant world-being? What might it mean to relinquish the stocked and stereotyped, refuse the compliant and conventional, rend with the 'cotton wool' of the "cabined and cramped" curriculum existence, and renew the terms of the work, and of our lives? How to realize—and this ever afresh and with fresh significance—the appetite for becoming different, the openness to a new readiness, the revelation of that which might be otherwise: the courage to free ourselves, to choose, to begin again and again? And from the grounds of our own lived worlds?⁵

Greene is not one for, in fact perhaps abhors, tributes—I believe it was when honored on the occasion of her 90th birthday that she expressed a hope rather to inspire outrage over the tragic callousness and carelessness by which the world is so terribly marked, and which is reflected still in education; she would honor the existential engagements of teachers and students, riddled with "unanswerability," rife with mystery, reaching moment-by-moment in relationship for meaning (Greene, 2008b, March). Perhaps, though, she would be content with tributaries—testifying to, testimonies of, the wellspring of her life and work which feed new trails of thought, unrelentingly, passions of and praxes for the possible (2008a, March; Quinn, 2011a; via inspirations from Ricoeur) for which she is most famous. Her work—in its depth, duration and reach, truly immense and immeasurable, impresses us powerfully with its perpetual persistence, and before the profound imperviousness of what she describes, with Camus, as the "plague of indifference" (Greene, 2008b, March) besetting our world; it presses upon us the ever present demand to, what she calls, 'lend our life to the work', and labor to 'achieve' it. We are compelled to ponder her life and work and our own lives, and work in curriculum studies, as works of art that have been "made by living persons for living

persons; they offer each of us visions *for us*—if we are willing to open ourselves to them, to attend” (1980/2001, p. 12).

And so I choose to be present to this movement, this disclosure, respecting Greene’s influence in and for the present moment of curriculum studies through which we live. I seek to affirm what she christens—borrowing from the poet Adrienne Rich (1981, p. 8) on “Integrity”—a *wild patience*, that took her so far (Greene, 1988, p. 135); and from Keats (1975), a *wild surmise*, that so awakened her imagination: “I see, I hear, I feel, I *know*” (Greene, 1997/2001, p. 154), she declares. A 2006 tribute of the Lincoln Center Institute (Greene, 2006), *Lending the Work your Life: A Celebration with Maxine Greene*, I think, is so aptly titled. Here, Greene speaks of lending our lives to the works of art, and arts of work, we encounter or engage (whether pedagogies, performances, paintings or poems), and the necessity of such to actually achieve them as meaningful in manifold ways (2001, p. 6). Of such, she elaborates: “It requires a mental and imaginative participation, ... a consciousness of a work as something to be achieved, depending for its emergence on the way it is attended to...” (1980/2001, p. 13); something, opening up landscapes which lie beyond, that can only be perceived and understood by those who attend. Herein, perhaps, lies an ‘achievement gap’ of another order about which we might in curriculum studies also speak, as we consider how we ourselves might achieve the work Greene has set before us, the works of art that are our own lives and works, in attending.

In a published 1995 lecture on “The Arts and the Human Condition”, Greene (1995/2001, p. 153) cites another poem by Adrienne Rich (1989, p. 32), a “Poetry in Motion” piece on display in the subway—so fitting as emerging from the underground of her own lived city context, and expressing something, I think, of substance about her life, her work, her life in the work, and both as works of art, from which we can learn and ‘achieve’ much: possible reminders and re-awakenings for and of our work in curriculum, and perhaps some of the terms of its renewal. I present but one verse of it here, with the hope hereafter of attending line by line—concluding with the last one toward lending the work our lives, lending our lives to the work, achieving the work through our lives—to the consideration of such possibilities as moved by Maxine, and perhaps as Maxine would move us:

*If you think you can grasp me, think again:
my story flows in more than one direction
a delta spring from the riverbed
with its five fingers spread.*

Give Up the Grasp, Think Again

Think again: if you think you know yourself, your road, another, our field, the problem in education, the curriculum response. If you think you can grasp any or all of such, Greene or her work, where our field is going, what it ought assert, leave behind, aspire to, attend—think again; and even if you don't, keep on thinking, and thinking again. The very and pervasive banality by which so much happens in the name of curriculum as framed through a controlling culture of 'cotton wool' completion, routinizing regulation, auditing accountability and acquiescing accreditation—bolstered by a rhetoric of equity and excellence in education relinquished to an unquestioned, presumed and positivistic objectivity (in the service of government and business, global market and competition)—is not altogether removed from the banality of evil described by Arendt (2006) who, in examining those who perpetrated the holocaust found such was made possible in the making of mere servants of the state, via the resignation of thought and surrender of thinking, compelled to effectively carry out the Nazi curriculum, Hitler's design. Here, we have the all-too-unprotested perpetration of "teaching by numbers" (Taubman, 2009) and "gracious submission" of teachers (Pinar, 2012), among other mind-numbing mechanisms antithetical to reflection, inquiry and thought impacting all involved in education.

Thinking, the foundation of human freedom, agency and conscience, never given or guaranteed—Greene re-minds us of its profound import: ever decrying the already predetermined, the future foreclosed, the appetite for the finalized; ever calling us (and teachers and students) to begin again, and to consciousness, awareness, wide-awakeness, ongoing inquiry. Here, too, we understand that knowing and knowledge, thinking and thought, are not only matters of epistemology, but also of ontology and axiology as well. Surrendered, abnegated, denied, such is, in the words of Simone de Beauvoir⁵ (1953), "a degradation of existence... the brutish life of subjection to given conditions.... a moral fault if the subject consents to it; if... inflicted... oppression. In both cases... an absolute evil" (pp. 28-29). We must commit, then, to incompleteness, the yet to be attained, the thought that keeps thinking which wakes us up in "perceptual aliveness" (Greene, 1980/2001, p. 21) to the work and the world with new awareness, a "sense of discovery and the desire to learn" (p. 21). We must fill our own worlds (and those we influence) as lived with that which inspires faithfulness to this commitment—e.g., the books we choose to live in, the works of art we lend our lives to, the relationships and dialogues therein we engage, the labors in which we participate. We must strive to ever be mindful of our

susceptibility before what Heidegger⁷ (1927/1962) calls the existential or ontological “forgetfulness of being”; and of our contentedness to be mere “rationalists wearing square hats [who] think in square rooms”, to incite a line from the Wallace Stevens poem (1982, p. 75) with which Greene reports being so obsessed (Greene, 1980/2001, p. 13).

Live Your Story, Let it Flow, in Many Directions

Choose, rather, rooms of your own, and educationally endorse for each and every a “room of one’s own” (Woolf, 1989) as well. *Let your life speak*, as the story goes, one also involving what is, and has been, but also is not yet/yet to come, open to possibility. For Green (2001), this wide-awakeness and awareness pursued makes possible the freedom to possess one’s own lived world—embracing a situation as ‘mine’—and find one’s voice and work in it. She speaks about her own many “years of self-discovery and continuing efforts to move a diversity of teachers to discover new dimensions of themselves” (p. ix); suggesting that perhaps only the teacher in search of self, his or her own freedom, may be able to inspire the same in students—“the achievement of freedom by people in search of themselves” (1988, p. 14), ... and as possibilities for themselves (p. 41). Arendt inspires her here to speak from the place of *who and not what she is*, and promote the same in others (incited in Greene, 1993, p. 13)—self disclosed as an original subject, recognizing, too, that only subjects can choose (1995, p. 70). The self is disclosed, too, and the life of the self, via narrative: with each birth, a historical event, the announcement of the new, a biography begins, an unprecedented story unfolds, begs to be told (Arendt, 1954/1993; Bowen-Moore, 1989; Quinn 2011b).

Autobiographically, Greene owns what she describes as her own stubbornness—indeed, wild patience—in pursuing “the existential questions” and in positivistic contexts in which they are increasingly denied, declared senseless or self-enclosed or untrue (Greene, 1988, p. xii). Yet, the truth, reality, for her is in experience interpreted, in the achievement of meaning rather than mere discovery, and always ever from the circumstances of our own lives (2001). “I wanted people to name themselves and tell their stories,” (1988, p. xi), she reflects, and she wanted, also, to arouse them to move out beyond themselves too, to confront the rich complexity and variety of human experience constitutive of multiple truths and realities. Herein lies a place and space of possibility, for making sense of one’s life and lived world, and for inter-subjective agency and empowerment. Of naming herself, of telling her own story, she writes:

I stand at the crossing point of too many social and cultural forces; and...I am forever on the way. My identity has to be perceived as multiple, even as I strive toward some coherent notion of what is humane...just. At the same time amidst this multiplicity, my life project has been to achieve an understanding of teaching, learning, ... education; I have been creating and continue to create a self by means of that project, that mode of gearing into the world. (1995, p.1)

That mode of gearing into the world, or this story in the making that flows, to me, relates to an openness, and hospitality,⁸ wherein we can receive and attend to one another with care (1988, p. 14), related to a commitment to and realization of the significance of dialogue as well—the achievement of freedom, and justice, that can only be reached by entering into its pursuit with others, in solidarity and compassion (1988, p.18; 1995, p. 55)—as subjects who choose. Through our stories (the settings, characters, plots and themes of our own lives), we can affirm our own existence and that of others—foundational to what Freire (1970/1995) calls “our historical vocation of humanization,” build bridges among and between one another, and cultivate capacities for healing and transformation. I am reminded here also in contemplating such movement in ‘*more* than one direction’ of the story of our “moreness,” a concept Greene’s colleague, and another of our mentors in curriculum theory, Dwayne Huebner (1999) coined. It speaks to the facticity that there is always more than we can or will ever know—infusing the world and also each of us as human beings, catching us at the limits of our knowing, reminding us that before us ever lie our possibilities. With our imaginations, acknowledging such—enabling us to move beyond our present boundaries, to transcend what is known, to become something different and new—we are also said to “dwell faithfully in the world” (pp. 403-404). This moreness, too, that is revealed through love, and the anticipation of love, overcomes us.

So there is this mooring in and from more than one direction, moreness in direction, many directions, through which to embrace and express our stories in the flow and flux of our life and work. Here, Greene (1995), in her own life and work, beseeches us, then, to attend the:

interplay of multiple voices, of ‘not quite commensurate visions’...the plurality of consciousness—and their recalcitrances and resistances, along with their affirmations, their ‘songs of love’ And, yes, ...to work

for responsiveness to principles of ...equality, ...freedom which still can be named within contexts of caring and concern.... *chosen* by living human beings against their own life-worlds and in the light of their lives with others, by persons ... using their imaginations, tapping their courage—to transform. (p. 198)

From this effort, she hopes too—borrowing from Richard Rorty (1991, p. 23)—will grow “the desire to extend the reference of ‘us’ as far as we can” (Greene, 1993, p. 18). It requires courage, indeed, to name ourselves, to tell our stories, to enter into the stories of others, with openness, acknowledging all that is incomplete, unforeclosed, to come, and in the making, and in manifold and multiple ways.

Although, consider what Nigerian novelist Chimamanda Adichie (2009) calls “The Danger of a Single Story,” a single story which not only silences, excludes, marginalizes, stereotypes, flattens, our own existence and that of others; but also tends to become the definitive and only story. More than an injustice—what an impoverishment of human possibility and solidarity lies herein, what a loss of the range and richness of human experience and knowledge in the world the curriculum claims to address, that our education might embrace! There is, undoubtedly, and happily, in the least in our field, much work that has been undertaken in the way of autobiography, oral and life history, narrative research, the phenomenological study of lived experience, and hermeneutic interest in the interpretation of reality as pertaining to the stories of those involved in curriculum, pedagogy and education—and in the qualitative attending to the meanings therein from which we can learn.⁹

Yet, do we have the wild patience and wild surmise, the courage, to continue such work—more often than not unsupported economically, move it in more than one direction, in many directions, and challenge that which is at odds with and opposes it? In the face of forces bent on denying, discrediting, and abnegating so many stories—the legitimacy of stories themselves in relation to knowledge and truth, unless they be the stories that can be spun from numbers in educational research which has increasingly adopted what Horkheimer and Adorno (1944/1972) have called “the instrumentalization of science” as method and model? And what does such courage and commitment mean for curriculum theory, curriculum studies, our fields of labor in education; for me, for you, for us, and for expanding the qualifications of ‘us’ as far as we can? We can, indeed learn from Greene, for “only someone” (like Greene), in the words of Rilke (1934/1993), “who is ready for everything, who excludes nothing, not even the most enigmatical, will live the

relation to another as something alive and will himself [or herself] draw exhaustively from his [or her] own existence.... living the questions.... love running through the fabric of ... growth, a most important thread" (pp. 68, 34, 25).

I want to speak a bit further to these notions "wild patience" and "wild surmise" here—especially as I have taken them up for the title of this piece, and the relation of both to this courage we are called to as curriculum theorists. Greene borrows both: "wild patience" from a poem of Adrienne Rich (1981, cited in Greene, 1988, p. 135), and "wild surmise" from that of John Keats (1975, cited in Greene, 1997/2001, p. 154). I submit that both, too, are qualities apt for describing Greene herself, and characteristics of her life and legacy. She summons us to such, too, I would claim. 'Wild patience' is incited by her in concert with the title of Rich's poem, "Integrity," as well as the concepts of 'beginning' and 'freedom.' We think of patience often in relation to: persistence, endurance, constancy in effort, the bearing of adversity or suffering—or to being willing or able to bear such. Our dictionaries (e.g., *Oxford English Dictionary* [OED], 1989) confirm as much, and yet also such notions as: submission, humility, and indulgence. Etymologically, from the Old French, it denotes this bearing, permitting, supporting, enduring, and tolerance; but also that which is firm, hard and unyielding. The word is likewise affiliated with the root *pe(i)*, shared with the word 'passion'. Greene is indeed longsuffering, relentless, passionate, full of integrity, with respect to her commitments and labors, to say the least—and wildly so, in educational contexts and commitments so at odds with her summons.

There is, then, a 'wildness'—an embrace of the undomesticated, uncultivated; a refusal to be tamed or domesticated; and also in the sense in which it connotes that which is exceptional and exciting—in engaging imaginative possibilities as she does and advocates. It is required of one who would begin again and again and again; commit to and strive for, perpetually in each moment and every case and place, the achievement of freedom. Here, Greene (1988), in speaking to the need for a wild patience, 'indulgently' beseeches us to insert ourselves into the world, enter fully into our "we-relations"—and submit ourselves herein with constancy to fresh starts, to new journeys; opening up ourselves, and spaces for others, to act together in concert, wherein resides the locus of empowerment and freedom.

In her essay on "The Power of Incompleteness" (1997/2001, p. 154), Greene explores the relation between the imagination, asserting its import, and the opening up of the new—possibilities, perspectives, beyond the expected or inherited, experience itself

holding far more for us than can ever be foreseen. She delights here in the cultivation of the uncultivated, or wild—the imagination: that which can expose, defamiliarize, disorient and reorient us. The notion of ‘surmise’ (*OED*, 1989) incites ideas of conjecture, to be sure, and interpretation, and yet also of accusation—bringing charges against that which is, the given and unquestioned. “Exercising imagination, the individual—looking into the faces of those around in what Keats called “a wild surmise”—is liable to come awake as seldom before... ” (Greene, 2001, p. 154), and express with all his or her sensibilities this ‘wide-awakeness’, a new clarity, vision and possibility.

Attend, Enter Into, Inhabit, the Delta Spring, From the Riverbed

A delta spring is indeed an apt metaphor for such a person and posture—“Delta,” also the title of this poem Maxine (1995/2001) recited and we incite here by Adrienne Rich (1989). A delta is home to rich and fertile soil; alive, a place of exhaustively generative and generous growth, and in relation. From the riverbed, from the ground of your own habitation, and life world, flourish and feed the life around you too—is one of the messages it conveys. For a delta nourishes extensive vegetation, important, too, to humans, and to the sustenance of all life. To speak of it is to speak of biodiversity, and fruitfulness too. At the mouth of the river, water—healing, refreshing, reviving, sustaining life—flows in manifold directions into oceans, estuaries, tributaries: as source, and wellspring. Annually, some five million duck and water fowl, creatures threatened and endangered, also retreat, for instance, to the Mississippi Delta, to find a safe habitat, and sanctuary. A child myself of the Mississippi delta, the arrival of so many pelican especially each year, along with other water fowl, was always an anticipated event, their presence and habitation embellishing the beauty of the swamp, oft like ornaments perched amid and beneath water cypress tree branches and Spanish moss.

We could play with and ponder also here the legend locating the origin of its name as delta as given by Herodotus—also known to be the storyteller and father of history—to the Greek letter of that name, given its appearance as a triangle (and the mathematical Pythagorean relations herein: e.g. transcendence, harmony, creativity, imagination, expression), and significations related to transformation, difference and change. “We might, for the moment, think of it as a distinctive way of orienting the self to the possible, of overcoming the determinate, of transcending or moving beyond in the full awareness that such overcoming can never be complete” (Greene, 1988, p. 5); as Sartre (1963) describes: “the project of “imagining a better state of

things" (Greene, 1988, p. 5). Emily Dickinson (1960, p. 689) speaks of the "slow fuse" of imagination by which the possible is lit (Greene, 1993/2001, p. 178); about dwelling in possibility, "numerous of windows" and "superior for doors" (Dickinson, 1960, p. 327, cited in Greene, 1981/2001, p. 44)—our delta.

Herein we are urged to find refuge in that which springs up in nearly all of Greene's work: an attention to and call to attend the imagination as source, so profoundly related to renewal, the beginning that begins again and again: "gestation and bringing forth... in itself, in the dark, in the inexpressible, beyond... birth hour of a new clarity" (Rilke, 1934/1993, p. 29-30). Moreover, this entails the capacity "to feel things from the inside," "develop heightened sensitivity" (Greene, 1980/2001, p. 8) and counter so much "anesthetic" in life and education—serving to subdue and suspend voice and vision in our relations to the world—via the aesthetic (2001, p. x, from Dewey's inspiration); and in and through our own personal transactions with art and as art, the mode of experience brought into being by such (p. 5), as well as a larger commitment to the aesthetic in education in general. The aesthetic, the imagination, Greene requests of us, though, is ever embodied, illuminating our very existence as it permeates our experience (1980/2001, p. 8), a delta spring from the riverbed we are required—mind, body, emotion, spirit, soul—to enter into.

Entering into the imaginative and aesthetic in an embodied way, as a mode of participation—particularly in trans-actional encounter with that which is deemed other, we are enabled to get in touch anew with vitality and vibrancy, immerse in and open to different traditions by which to engage different perspectives and inhabit "multiple provinces of meaning" (2001, p. 6). Herein, we know, too, a kind of liberation, dynamism, by which we exceed the life-negating and possibility-punishing (mis)educational outcomes of a curriculum fixed, fragmented, compartmentalized, categorized, stripped of world-wonder and knowledge-worth. We are moved, rather, to "greater coherence"; to new meanings in our own lived worlds, and experiences and visions of wholeness, what Greene refers to as a satisfying recognition of totality. This pursuit of a grounding for ourselves, which awakens us up to "a colored, sounding, problematic world" (1980/2001, p. 7), "make[s] possible the living of lyrical moments, moments at which human beings (freed to feel, to know, and to imagine) suddenly understand their lives in relation to all that surrounds" (p. 7); and is accompanied also by "a sense of something still to be seen"—"intellectual possibility" (2001, p. x, inciting Dewey), as yet undisclosed possibility, the heretofore wholly unthought or unexpected.

What might it mean to ‘aesthetize’, counter anesthetization in, our life and work in curriculum studies, singularly and together, and arouse such in teachers and students from the grounds of the curriculum as lived? How might we imaginatively and generatively invigorate and revivify the contexts within which we labor and learn; reconceptualize and reembody them as living commons wherein diversity is regarded—and difference in its distinctiveness; wherein we take up, and this on-goingly, our responsibility to love the world, for its renewal, and to do justice to its multiplicity? How do we, in the circumstances through which we create our identities, keep such engagement alive and, as Greene puts it: “open up [and to] experiences (and yes, our curricula) to existential possibilities of multiple kinds [which] is to extend and deepen what we think of when we speak of community” (1993, p. 15)?

Reach with Fingers Outspread to the Work at Hand

From such a place, too, we each are enabled to extend and deepen our own response and reach, attend the world and the work with greater awareness, sensitivity, involvement—love; “willing to leap out of the ordinary and be present, as authentic and incomplete beings to the work at hand” (1980/2001, p. 10). To enter into the work, to lend our life to it, thus, is also a call to agency, responsibility, and participation—from and within this creative delta spring and habitat of vital and generative community, embracing diversity and solidarity; non-instrumentally, too, with others, meeting mystery in the face-to-face, and as we face ourselves. Greene (2001, p. 6) draws upon Rilke (1940/1974, p. 93) in her incitements here, the true test of our capacity to attend the work in hearing and heeding its demand: “You must change your life.” By our thinking, and thinking again, through the living out—and telling—of our own stories we let them flow in many directions, more than one direction, kept alive in and before possibility with others in a world via the aesthetic and social imagination; we must confront ourselves anew, that which calls us out into the world, and demands our outstretched fingers, our response. We must free ourselves, to choose, to move, again and again, she reminds. How will you change your life? How will I change mine? In what manner need we command the life of the curriculum, of our field, to be transformed?

With ... five fingers spread. Ever we return, via Greene, to the visceral, the existential, our own life and lived world, and the freedom and agency that can only ever be achieved therein, from such a place. In *Dialectics of Freedom* (1988), engaging Jefferson’s notion of freedom, she illuminates for us that such freedom, or agency, is

neither subjectivist nor privatist, but rather conceived in relation to self-directed action and participation in the public sphere, constituted in connectedness and community (p. 26). The world, and love to the world, in this way, calls us to the work. For her, she describes it as "a lifetime's preoccupation with quest, with pursuit.... Striving to affirm... while reaching, always reaching, beyond the limits imposed.... That of a person struggling to connect the undertaking of education... to the making and remaking of a public space, a space of dialogue and possibility" (p. xi). To be the change we wish to see in the world, to borrow from Gandhi (1958), there must be first or in the least a simultaneous cherishing of the world, and commitment and empowerment with others to attend its renewal.

It is no surprise, thus, that Greene (1988, p. 57) strives to awaken her own such commitments, and labors, ever labors, to arouse such within us too here, declaring, so eloquently as expressed by the poet Muriel Rukeyser (1962/1973, p. 374):

I am in the world
To change the world
My lifetime
Is to love to endure to suffer the music
To set its portrait
Up as a sheet of the world.

She asks us, no matter how small our piece or corner of the world, our world as lived and loved and suffered and portrait-set: "to paint it gold-groundly and great, and hold it most precious, [for we] know not whose soul it may liberate" (Rilke, 1905/1977, p. 3; cited by Greene, 1995, p. 16). Kahlil Gibran's (cited in Dyer, 2002, p. 197) portrait of work speaks similarly, and so clearly of hers, and of that to which she exhorts us:

When you work you are a flute through whose heart
The whispering of the hours turns to music.
To love life through labor is to be intimate with life's inmost secret.
All work is empty save when there is love, for work is
Love made visible.

How can we, can I, can you, then, make visible this love, this wild patience and wild surmise, in waking up to (and laboring to achieve) the work—"what it actually means to be attentive, to go out to the works at hand, to take the risk of going deeper

and deeper to gain a sense of what lies beyond” (Greene, 1980/2001, p. 20)—and to and for the world we share, for and of which Greene taught us so richly and vividly and beautifully to care? As we are beseeched, entreated, by her—to ever think, speak, feel, imagine, engage and act; may we each, all, together, live and love such questions, from our own lived worlds and rooms, and dwell together in our curriculum studies labors in such too.

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Notes

¹ Greene, drawing from a poem by Adrienne Rich, embraces this idea of “wild patience.” See: Greene, M. (1988). *The dialectic of freedom*. NY: Teachers College Press, p. 135. Similarly, she takes up the aspiration to “wild surmise” from a Keats poem. See: Greene, M. (2001). *Variations on a blue guitar: The Lincoln Center Institute lectures on aesthetic education*. NY: Teachers College Press. p. 154.

² Of note here, as well, in Bowen-Moore’s (1989) analysis of Arendt’s work is her distinction as a philosopher, who is also female, respecting her orientation—one of being-towards-life; rather than that of most philosophers, most notably who are also male, of being-towards-death. Greene, also a renowned female philosopher, carries on and affirms this orientation in her own work.

³ While a complex idea, here I am referencing what Deleuze and Guatarri (1980/1987) have described as a mode of reading wherein the attempt is made to put something into motion inside the reader, to take up the writing as a flow meeting up with other flows. Such is an intensive reading by a person situated alongside and outside “the line”, enacting experiments amid and in the midst of events outside “the book” which is yet also torn to pieces as it is made to meet up with, encounter and engage with other things.

⁴ For more on the etymology of curriculum—to a course of/for study from a course for running and chariot for racing—as well as that of its Latin infinitive *currere*, denoting “to run”; see the Oxford English dictionary. (1989). Oxford: Oxford University Press. Curriculum historian David Hamilton (1990) also illuminates well the context of the introduction of the term into educational discourse in the 16th century. For a more recent treatment of *currere* as engaged in the field of curriculum studies, see: Pinar, W. (2012). *What is curriculum theory?* (2nd Edition). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

⁵ For more on the question of *natality* in education and curriculum in an ever-emerging context in which we must be prepared to begin again and again, see: Quinn, M. (2011). On Natalty in Our Roots, Routes, and Relations: Reconceiving the “3 R’s” at the Rendezvous of Education, Citizenship, and Globalization. *Teachers College Record*, 113(6), p. 1214-1236.

⁶ In a case such as this, I am intentionally drawing upon existentialist philosophers to emphasize this influence and legacy within Greene’s work; as well as female philosophers, as Greene is also situated within this influential tradition and significant achievement—to recognize, here too, the exclusion and marginalization with which she reckoned and overcame as a women in the academy, especially in philosophy, in the 20th (and at the turn of the 21st) century, and through such forged pathways for other women intellectuals.

⁷ While Greene herself was not terribly influenced by—and I am told not terribly impressed with—the work of Heidegger, he is allied with the existentialist and phenomenological traditions so central to Greene's work, and was also the teacher of Hannah Arendt for a time, whose thought influenced Greene, who also attended some of her lectures at NYU.

⁸ For more on exploring the question of hospitality in curriculum studies, see: Quinn, M. (2009). 'No Room in the Inn'? The Question of Hospitality in the Post(Partum)-Labors of Curriculum Studies. In E. Malewski (Ed.), *A curriculum handbook: The next moment* (pp. 101-117). New York: Routledge. The bibliography therein illuminates other work in this vein as well.

⁹ For pursuing further initial information about such bodies of work, see: Pinar, W. F., Reynolds, W. M., Slattery, P., & Taubman, P. M. (2008). *Understanding curriculum: An introduction to the study of historical and contemporary curriculum discourses*. New York, NY: Peter Lang. For a rich source for initial examination of varied contemporary examples herein see also: E. Malewski, E. (Ed.). (2009). *A curriculum handbook: The next moment*. New York: Routledge.