

AAACS Address

Reconsidering our Attendance to Curriculum Development as... Events, Subjectivities, and a Cosmopolitan Praxisⁱ

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There is, however, a conspicuous lack of attention being paid to the meaning of curriculum theory in a Canadian context.

Osborne 1982, 95

And here in Canada, I ponder the word “nation” in “the founding nations,” “the first nations,” “the Canadian nation.” I am pulled into the tensionality of differences of meaning. I ask more.

Aoki [1992] 2005, 383



If events provoke us to reconsider our attention to the world, how then, might an event like *American Association for the Advancement of Curriculum Studies* conference call us to attend to our professional duties, to ask more of our historical, present, and future circumstances whether we are attending to the worldliness of education as administrators, teachers, or curriculum scholars? How can such reconsiderations of our attendance to the world shift us away from disciplining bodies of knowledge through teachers and students marked as a standardized presence or absence? Instead, how might we retrace our reconceptualization of attendance, its genealogies, reflectively and recursively, through its curricular roots (routes) to the etymological praxis of being present, presenting one's self, while stretching our minds toward something . . . like whose internationalization in times of globalization? Such questions provide provocations, a calling forth, an invitation if you will, to experienced and burgeoning curriculum scholars, administrators, teachers, and graduate students to stretch their minds toward historical, present, and future conceptualizations of internationalization in times of crisis either here in Canada or abroad. And like Aoki ([1992] 2005), such questions provoke you to ask more . . . to feel the worldliness of education tremble when we utter words like "Canadian," "American," "curriculum," "nation," and "land."

More than forty years ago, Robin Barrow (a visitor to Canada like many of us at the University of British Columbia here in Vancouver) provoked curriculum scholars to reconsider the "common sense" of curriculum theorizing taking place (or not) within the different Faculties of Education across Canada. At the time, Barrow (1979) provided a personal view that provoked Canadian curriculum theorists to think things through, to suspect and question our personal and professional stances in relation to what he called a "Western industrialized state" (p. 20). An admitted outsider from Britain, Barrow told us then

. . . the fact that I am approaching the matter from the outside will allow me to be less bound by cultural assumptions, less inclined to let sleeping dogs lie, less respectful and more candidate in my criticism than the insider is prone to be . . . There is not yet a very clear or long standing tradition of educational theory in Canada. So, encouraged by the generous reception accorded to other outsiders, I humbly submit this essay, which for the most part consists of arguments, proposals and suggestions that are essentially supra-cultural and supra-national, being derived from reflection on what schooling and education ought ideally to be. (pp. 20-21)

Indeed his call for a "common core curriculum" that moved beyond the rhetoric of progressive and radical education movements provoked Canadian curriculum scholars like Antoinette Oberg (1980a) and later Ken Osborne (1982), to pay attention, to ponder, and to ask more. "An essay in curriculum theory," as Barrow (1979) stressed then, "involves an attempt to think curriculum matters through from the beginning in a systematic way" (p. 16). Although there was a sense during the 1970s and 1980s of "a conspicuous lack of attention being paid to the meaning of curriculum theory in a Canadian context" (Osborne 1982, 95), many curriculum scholars both here in Canada and the United States, were reconsidering their professional obligations to the field of curriculum studies in terms of theorizing differences of possible inter-national meanings for curriculum theory, and musings about Canadian nationalism (like Milburn and Herbert, 1974), . . . stretching our minds toward curriculum inquiry in a new key.

The year prior to Barrow's publication, Aoki ([1978] 2005) was busy provoking curriculum studies at the University of Alberta, beyond its apparent common sense. "Increasingly," he tells us then, "we have come to give [Canadian curriculum studies] a phenomenological emphasis" (p. 109). And yet

at times during their reconceptualizations of the field, Aoki and his colleagues felt “suspended as in brackets,” wondering whether or not they were constructing a “mystified dream world, in the process of estranging themselves from the mainstream flow of educational researchers” (pp. 109-110). Catching glimpses through their theoretical passageways to the future, Aoki and his colleagues became more “sensitive to the urgency of coming to know how to communicate cross-paradigmatically at the level of deep structure” (p. 110) . . . to theorize within the uncommon countenance of Canadian curriculum studies and commit their professional duties toward co-creating research paths upon which we contemporary scholars now tread.

During the 1980s, scholars like George Tomkins working outside the field of Canadian curriculum studies (within the field of Canadian Studies) published what remains one of the most comprehensive (albeit colonial) historiographies on Canadian curriculum studies. *A Common Countenance: Stability in and Change in the Canadian Curriculum* traces a history of European settler pre-industrial and public curriculum from the 1840s to the 1980s. As Canadians we also owe our thanks to yet another international scholar William F. Pinar (2008a, 2008b) now working at the University of British Columbia for provoking the republication of “A Common Countenance,” and reminding us to ask more of our intellectual histories. Working as a cosmopolitan scholar with a long history of disrupting axiological voids and what Dwayne Donald (2012) calls elsewhere the colonial frontier logics that exist within the worldliness of curriculum studies, Pinar (2003, 2009, 2010, 2011a, 2011b, 2012) has been committed for more than 20 years to the intellectual and international advancement of curriculum studies. “While Tomkins’ study is not primarily intellectual history,” as Pinar (2008a) makes clear, “it provides a structure of such a history” . . . and, “what we are missing are intellectual histories of Canadian curriculum studies . . . and of the Canadian school curriculum after 1980” (xi-xii). Since the 1980s, Canadian curriculum theorists, and perhaps most notably Cynthia Chambers (1999, 2003, 2004a, 2004b), have sought to advance different (alter/native) interpretive meanings of and for Canadian curriculum theory.

Twenty years after Barrow’s provocative call, Chambers (1999) published *A Topography for Canadian Curriculum Theory*. Our challenge as curriculum theorists, Chambers (1999) reminded us then, “will be to write a topography for curriculum theory, one that begins at home but journeys elsewhere” (p. 148). In this initial intellectual study of our field, Chambers speculates about some common topographic characteristics found within the Canadian territories of curriculum theorizing including survival, alienated outsider, colonialism and our tenuous relations to the land. Today this essay continues to provoke us to ask more, to pay attention, to stretch our minds toward such provocative questions:

1. How are we experimenting with tools from different Canadian intellectual traditions and incorporating them into our theorizing?
2. What kinds of languages and interpretive tools have we created to study what we know and where we want to go?
3. In what ways have, and are, curriculum theorists writing in a detailed way the topos— the particular places and regions where we live and work?
4. How are these places inscribed in our theorizing, as either presence or absence, whether we want them there or not?

More recently, Chambers (2012) has stated that our common countenance here in Canada is that we are all treaty people...that the very foundation of what it means to be Canadian is invoked in our historical and present treaty relationships with the First Nation, Métis, and Inuit nations across Canada.

And yet, while mapping out part of that intellectual topography for the first *International Handbook of Curriculum Research*, Chambers (2003) emphasized that indigenous education remains particularly

contentious and underrepresented in (mainstream or contemporary) Canadian curriculum scholarship. Since then, several Canadian curriculum scholars have sought to address such present absences in both provocative and productive ways (Chambers 2008, 2012; Cole 2006; Donald 2004, 2009a, 2009b; Haig-Brown 2008; Hasebe-Ludt, Chambers and Leggo 2009; Kanu 2011; Nahachewsky and Johnston, 2009; Stanley and Young 2011). But, still more work needs to be done in this and many other areas of educational research that remains at the margins, the edge; whether that is in our intellectual work, or government curriculum policy documents, and/or school board priorities and initiatives.

Since its inception, *the Canadian Association for Curriculum Studies* and its respective journal (thanks to the past and the current editors Karen Krasny and Chloe Brushwood at York University and present editors Theodore Christou and Christopher DeLuca at Queen's university) continues to play a prominent role in supporting the ongoing intellectual advancement of curriculum studies here in Canada. We would not be able to do such innovative provocative work in Canada, if it was not for these four scholars and the long list of others who have dedicated their professional lives toward supporting the advancement of curriculum studies.

The Canadian Association for Curriculum Studies co-sponsored Provoking Curriculum Studies conference at the University of British Columbia. In 2003, this conference asked curriculum scholars to stretch their minds toward the theme of "*Provoking Curriculum*," with a sub-theme of narrative experimentation. Initially, this conference was created to encourage creative presentations and conversations around interpretive and critical approaches to curriculum theorizing. This first conference celebrated the illustrious career of Dr. Ted Aoki, and the publication of his writings (see Aoki 2003; Pinar and Irwin 2005). Since then, four other conference proceedings have taken place. In 2005 the University of Victoria hosted the second of such gatherings, which focused on "*Trans/forming Narratives*." In 2007, the University of Calgary sponsored the third rendition of this conference in Banff where scholars provoked our curricular narratives with themes of "*Shifting Borders and Spaces*."

In 2009, the University of Ottawa would become the next site for this biennial pro/vocation to take place. This was the first time that the *Provoking Curriculum Studies Conference* would take place outside the western territories of Canada. Furthermore, hosting the conference at our national capital university provided a unique occasion to provoke a multilingual and multicultural rendition of this conference at an officially sanctioned bilingual university. Past conference organizers, like Hans Smits (2008), expressed the difficulties he and others previously had soliciting francophone participation. Although scholars from Quebec, New Brunswick, and Ontario did participate, francophone representation remained fairly limited. Nonetheless, our hope continues to be that at our CACS gathering we can afford international, immigrant, indigenous, multilingual speaking curriculum scholars a common time and place to share our uncommon countenance of lived experiences both within and outside the field of Canadian curriculum studies. Our most recent conference gathering in 2011 returned in many ways to its beginnings at the University of Alberta where Aoki improvised, like jazz, theorizing curriculum in a new key, provoking curriculum studies as an aesthetics of vulnerability. And, the next one will take place again at the University of Ottawa where scholars are invited to provoke the concept of "curriculum" as strong poets like Geoffrey Milburn, Roger I. Simon, and Ted. T. Aoki.ⁱⁱ

Such strong poets are needed! For we are living in a world of crisis. A world that is not that promising for my three boys. Like Alain Block (1997), I await my boys to sing out and sigh, mama I'm only bleeding, in response to what they see taking place in our backyard and in other places around the world. The future I en/vision now as a father, is not that promising for our young three boys. Moreover challenging the inequitable distribution of common capital due to institutional symbolic and material manifestations of "Patriarchy," like poverty, racism, sexism, misogyny, homophobia, etc. as a father, as

a curriculum theorist, with our three sons' capital interest in mind during such troubled times often remains confusing, disorientating, and painful. What kinds of "autos" will our sons have to trade-in to challenge their future institutional relationships of enslavement to commerce, capital, and so on? And, what does the dissociation and reformation of national borders, the "multinational" corporate competitive race to stake "high claims" over the commons and its natural resources mean for local indigenous communities and their pre-existing sovereign relationships to the land? What will our children inherit from this current (neo... neo... neo... ad infinitum) kind of in-corp./orated curriculum development of future "commonwealth"? These are the kinds of questions that Beverly Gordon asks us to reconsider in *Curriculum Studies, The Future of: Essay 2*. These are, as Gordon suggests, the kinds of strategically "essential" and ethical questions teachers, students, and we curriculum scholars might continue to ask ourselves as we encounter others outside ourselves 'in the teaching machine' (Spivak, 1993).

Afghanistan... Arab Spring... Alberta Tar Sands... Human Rights... Syria... Poverty... Peace... Radical Hope... these words *could* be posted up on any elementary or high school classroom word-wall here in Canada (or elsewhere)—indeed, this might be one of the many classroom beginnings toward living a cosmopolitan praxis among teachers and students. Yet how are teachers candidates for example learning a cosmopolitan vocabulary and its respective global multiple literacies that move beyond (or at least think through) the "pitfalls" of educational tourism? How are curriculum scholars, teachers, and students attending to the rippling affects of the ongoing geopolitical balkanization of the former Soviet Union (with recent turmoil during the Russian elections) and/or continued post-colonial break-up of countries in Africa within the confines of national and provincial curriculum content standards? And, what does the dissociation and reformation of national borders, the "multinational" corporate global competitive race to stake claims over the global commons and its natural resources (drilling and exporting oil from Libya, mining diamonds in northern Ontario, planting eucalyptus plantations in Brazil, etc.) mean for local indigenous communities and their pre-existing sovereign relationships to the land which houses such material, social, and cultural capital (access to water, food security, shelter, education, health services, etc.)? Such curricular asking provides pedagogical opportunities for our (reconstruction of) subjectivities as curriculum scholars, teachers, and students to form what Wang (2006) calls fluid, intertwined, multilayered, and networked links to the complex affects of globalization that move beyond the 'global' and 'local,' the particular as parochial, and universal as homogenous, as either static or abstracted entities, toward what might be richer cross-cultural, psychic and material relational engagements with others both inside our classrooms, and while banging pots and pans outside on the streets.

As curriculum scholars and pre-service teachers, and settlers, and indigenous communities, we come from different walks of life, are at different stages of our educational careers, and work (or will work) at public institutions located across the diversified narrative landscape of Canada. Some of us are first, second, third, fourth, and... generation immigrants to the different territories of this landscape we now call home. Whereas others were born here and can trace their genealogical narrative histories to the indigenous peoples who inhabited, migrated, fought over resources, and traded with other communities across this land. As such, we strategically walk across the crevices of our national narrative bedrock, métissageing and lingering, intermingling our differing lived experiences, deconstructing and braiding our curricular texts to generate autobiographical anti-colonial stories of our migratory inhabitations of a Canadian landscape. "Carefully crafted autobiographical texts," as Hasebe-Ludt, Chambers, & Leggo, (2009) suggest, "open apertures for understanding and questioning the social conditions in which those experiences are embedded, and the particular languages, memories, stories, and places in which these experiences are located and created" (p. 35). Furthermore, at the opening of

such apertures, narrative métissage provides a place for the creative interplay of life writing texts, “a contact zone where dialogue among multiple and mixed socio-cultural, racial, transnational, and gendered groups can occur” (p. 35). Living within the tensioned spaces of such textured openings, we might then take up alter/native intellectual histories that help us to deconstruct the inter/disciplinary territories of existing colonial narrative scared into the very material fabric of the land, as an aesthetic form of curriculum theorizing. Such curriculum theorizing might begin by teachers connecting the self to the worldliness of others in their histories, politics, psychologies, and cultures—their similarities that are differences.

My last name is doubly hyphenated...and I think scholars like Ted Aoki would have had a lot of fun helping me as a graduate student and later colleague to improvise with such hyph-e-nations. Contemporary, scholars like Petra Munro Hendry, William Doll Jr., Denise Egéa-Kuehne, Claudia Eppert, and William F. Pinar and the fellow graduate students that I worked with us with the Curriculum Theory Project at Louisiana State University, and other scholars (Alan Block, Greg Demitriatis, Marla Morris, Peter Applebaum, Janet Miller, Patrick Slattery, John Weaver and so on) at conferences like Bergamo and Curriculum and Pedagogy, supported young academics like myself to advance our understandings of theoretical concepts like the double movements of appropriation and alienation, and more importantly to question our subjective locations within such movements in relation to the broader international field of curriculum studies. For example, I am a foreign born Canadian, with dual citizenships (British and Canadian). However, my father’s family traces their oral histories to the Hakka people. We are indigenous nomads originally from a northern part of what is now known as the People’s Republic of China. Some of us were displaced due to natural disasters and civil wars. Consequently they migrated to the southern shores of Guangdong province and eventually overseas to places like Taiwan, Malaysia, Hong Kong, and Jamaica. In 1833, Britain passed the *Slavery Abolition Act*, which in turn necessitated the establishment of a new workforce for their colonies in the Caribbean. In 1853, the first three ships carrying 637 indentured laborers from China arrived at the ports of Guyana, who would all for the most part, work as cane reapers on colonial plantations (Sue-A-Quan, 1999). Once Fook Ng (or John Cyril) finished fulfilling his indentured contract as a cane reaper, he opened up a small business as a shopkeeper.

During the 1960s, his grandson, my grandfather received an economic grant from the government which was attempting to nationalize its industries as part of the process of decolonizing itself from British and American private corporate ownership. Consequently my grandfather traveled to Chattanooga Tennessee to purchase an industrial ice-cream cone machine. He established a prosperous ice-cream cone factory, taxi business, and auto shop despite living within the economic and civic confines of Burnham’s dictatorship. The economic capital produced from those businesses, the Chinese community’s appropriation of the colonial English language, and let us not forget the violent usurpation of the local indigenous populations whether physical or psychological, directly or indirectly, afforded his children an opportunity to attend universities in the United Kingdom. As a result, my father studied medicine at Glasgow University where he eventually met my mother who was a psychiatric nurse at that time.

My mother’s life narrative can be traced back to Ireland, where her grandfather, a Kenny and a member of the original Irish Republican Army, fought against British colonization during the War of Independence, between 1919-1921. Her family who were Celtic, and who historically spoke Gaelic, migrated both voluntarily and involuntarily from Ireland to Scotland, where they later survived the ration lines and German bombing raids of WWII. During the early 1970s my parents met and fell in love. Soon thereafter they married even though miscegenation was, and to some extent still is taboo.

Although my brother and I were born in Glasgow, and mother a British citizen, and father now a qualified physician, the United Kingdom denied granting him the privileges procured under the title of British citizen.

In 1975 our family landed as immigrants here in Canada. The narrative setting that would play a major role in my self-formation as a child and adolescent before leaving for university was Kapuskasing, a small rural logging town in Northern Ontario. Even though the name Kapuskasing translates to “bend in the river” in the Anishinàbeg language, the local surrounding indigenous communities, their historical narratives, and their accounts of postcolonial contact were absent from the school textbooks we took up in class. Nonetheless, the original inhabitants, their respective ancestral relationships with the land were ever-present in Kapuskasing, in the curriculum of conquests taught at school, and the derogatory conversations of ignorance that took place outside.

This narrative landscape of settler disinheritance—physical, geopolitical, architectural, institutional, historical, psychic, etc.—represents the banality of colonial inscriptions hidden in plain sight within the bedrock of our publically instituted provincial curriculum. However the banality of colonial power, Mbembe (2001) writes, “does not simply refer to the way bureaucratic formalities or arbitrary rules, implicit or explicit, have been multiplied,” nor are they simply concerned with a colonial curriculum that has become routine (p. 102). Instead the curriculum of banality refers to the colonial aesthetics of vulgarity located in “non-official” sites “intrinsic to all systems of domination and to the means by which those systems are confirmed or deconstructed” (p. 102). Here in Canada, we are surrounded “by artefacts of the histories of colonialism, but these artefacts are rendered invisible, common sense, and a part of taken-for-granted discursive formations, that in some instances are quite literally set in concrete” (Stanley, 2009, p. 158). Moreover, the historical discursive formations that inscribe themselves both physically and psychically into the concrete narrative character of our Canadian narration of settler landscapes, work in turn to reproduce the socio-cultural formations of what Mbembe (2001) calls a curriculum of the “postcolony.”

A curriculum of the “postcolony” identifies a given historical trajectory of societies recently emerging, as Mbembe (2001) maintains,

...from the experience of colonization and violence which the colonial relationship involves. To be sure, the postcolony is chaotically pluralistic; it has nonetheless an internal coherence. It is a specific system of signs, a particular way of fabricating simulacra or re-forming stereotypes... The postcolony is characterized by a distinctive style of improvisation, by a tendency to excess and lack of proportion, as well as by distinctive ways identities are multiplied, transformed, and put into circulation. (p. 102)

Consequently settlers of what is now known as Canada, as Stanley (2009) stresses, “remade the cultural landscape of the territory imposing their disciplinary practices and ways of knowing on the territory and its inhabitants, effectively steamrolling the systems and ways of cultural representation and the meanings already in place” (p. 158). And as an immigrant child it is within this narrative vision of national banality where I first learned how to become a Canadian citizen.

Not until being asked to decolonize narratives of my settler relationship to the land during my graduate studies, and more importantly to the original people who live on it, did I start to question how I narrated the “limit-situations” of my “successful” integration into the dominant settler culture and its respective capitalistic economy (see Ng-A-Fook, 2001, 2007; Haig-Brown, 2009). Moreover, I did not question the ways in which such educational assimilation works as a process of narrative zom-

bification for forgetting our inheritance of a colonial past. How might we then begin to advocate for a curriculum of decolonization that asks teachers and students to remember colonialism's narratives of forgetting?

Such acts of colonial remembrance, like our historical implications with residential schooling and appropriation of indigenous territories, entail a pedagogical openness to the possibilities of experiencing a certain amount of epistemic violence with students in the classroom (Smyth, Ng-A-Fook, Berry, & Spence, 2011). Despite the pedagogical risks, I remain committed to living a curriculum that redresses our historical relationships with indigenous communities. Clearly there is no pedagogical recipe for preparing teacher-candidates to engage their psychic encounters with the violence of colonialism's histories as learners. However, I would like to suggest that engaging a social action curriculum project as an aesthetic form of narrative métissage provides a generative opportunity for students and indigenous communities to work through their curricular and pedagogical encounters with the remnants of colonialism's historic violence (Blood, Chambers, Donald, Hasebe-Ludt, & Big Head, 2012).

As with many other institutions of higher education, the University of Ottawa, this capital institution, seeks to strategically enhance its international, national, and local presence as a "globally competitive," top tier research and teaching institution. In turn, the administration has mobilized university-wide initiatives such as but not limited to the following: increasing recruitment of international students from China; fostering strategic research and development partnerships with institutions in India and China; and establishing new infrastructure like the *Center for Global and Community Engagement*. In line with these larger initiatives, our Faculty of Education has attempted to expand and institutionalize its international programs partly in response to the 2008 global recession under the guise of what university management calls "optimization." While such organizational restructuring through the rhetoric of optimization has increased our workload (class sizes as one example), it has also afforded our administration and some professors unique opportunities to internationalize our research partnerships and teacher education programming.

I am fortunate enough to work with a group of professors at our Faculty of Education within the University of Ottawa who have over the last decade attempted to mobilize proactively and address the internationalization of teacher education (Lorna Maclean, Ruth Kane, Tracy Crowe, and Sharon Cook). Of particular note is our *Developing A Global Perspective for Educators* (DGPE) program whose primary function "is to instantiate," what Trifonas (2008) calls elsewhere, "states of being that point toward an ethic of care or being-for-the-other" (p.71). This program works to translate the internationalization of curriculum into what might be called a cosmopolitan praxis, as an alter/native way for us to welcome each other's differences within the context of the classroom. Our teaching in the DGPE program aims to support the development of critically reflective teaching professionals who personify an ethic of caring and/or being for others, knowledge of, and commitment to, their eco-civic responsibilities through public education (Ng-A-Fook, 2011; Trifonas, 2008).

In our courses (Curriculum Design and Evaluation, Schooling and Society), teacher-candidates are invited to question, among other things, how they can re-imagine educational issues in terms of international cooperative development, social justice, peace education, and environmental sustainability (see www.developingaglobalperspective.ca). In turn, we challenge students to articulate their eco-civic responsibilities in relation to prior narrative inhabitations of the existing Ontario curricula (Ng-A-Fook, 2010). Moreover, these students are invited to participate in various social action projects that move beyond the "prorogation" of what Westheimer (2005) calls armchair activism. Our partnership with the *Centre for Global and Community Engagement* at the University of Ottawa has provided an invaluable opportunity to design, advocate and model a social action curriculum as a form of cosmo-

politan praxis. Students who participate in this larger university program are required to complete thirty hours of community service learning with different community organizations that surround the walls of our university. The key is to make those walls more porous to the potential cultural, material, and epistemic relations we might foster with others outside the privileged enclosures of our institution. Upon completion...yes, students receive a co-curricular certificate from the university. But some receive much more.

I recognize that as future teachers the students enrolled in our DGPE program may one day play a key role in terms of internationalizing their curriculum development as a cosmopolitan praxis and introduce students to the complex and sometimes controversial issues taking place outside the school walls in their community backyards and far beyond (Schweisfurth, 2006). While the goals of global citizenship within such internationalization are evident in recent Ontario Ministry of Education (2007, 2008, 2009, 2010) initiatives and curriculum, how teachers develop the pedagogical knowledge and experiences that enable their fostering of global citizenship as a form of cosmopolitan praxis within their elementary and middle school classrooms remains less clear. Moreover, while the existing literature is useful in describing the broad themes encompassed by global education (Hicks 2007; Pike 2000), it still leaves many wondering (including myself) what kinds of content and/or how different pedagogical approaches might translate into what we might call internationalization, globalization, and/or a cosmopolitan praxis in Ontario (Evans, 2006; Pinar, 2009). And, I am still experimenting theoretically to make sense of curricular and pedagogical translations.

To address such curricular and pedagogical translations, our organization created the Global Education Research Network (GERN). A primary aim of GERN is to dig deeper into this comprehensive yet ambiguous educational approach and explore how internationalizing teacher education as a cosmopolitan praxis, as a care-full global citizenship curriculum if you will, can be taken up by teacher candidates across all of the dimensions of classroom teaching like curriculum development, pedagogy, assessment, and so on (McLean, Cook, & Crowe, 2008; Reimer & McLean, 2009; McLean, 2004, 2010; Tupper, 2007). Consequently, our research within GERN has focused on how educators might foster a cosmopolitan praxis—as a framework—for designing curriculum that serves the public with what Wang has called elsewhere compassion (Pinar, 2009; Wang, 2011). And yet, such internationalizing of teacher education as a public service, as a cosmopolitan praxis, must move beyond the neoliberal market rationale of programmatic (economic) outcome-based values (Smith, 2011). After all, “curriculum development is not,” as Pinar (2009) makes clear, “in this sense, programmatic, but intellectual, finally an individual affair, not a state (or province)-wide, not necessarily even a school-wide, bureaucratic undertaking” (p. 43). Instead as educators we can encourage teacher candidates to study academic knowledge in relation to their lived experiences and in turn develop curriculum as an aesthetic act that might enable our capacity (without promise or predetermination) to engage (radical) differences between “self” and “other” in compassionate and compelling ways (Wang, 2011).

Curriculum Development as a Cosmopolitan Praxis

Like artwork, then, such curriculum development is the teacher’s opportunity to explore subjects informed by the academic knowledge and lived experience they and their students find compelling.

(Pinar, 2009, p. 43)

When we come together from such diverse backgrounds, with international histories that involved colonization, occupation, political ignorance, and arrogance, how can we speak with each other in

such a way that the past does not overshadow the present encounter?

(Trueit, 2000, p. ix)

What would it mean for teacher education students to engage curriculum development, like artwork, for teaching academic knowledge and engaging lived experiences within the hyph-e-nated spaces of inter-national and inter-cultural relationships with others? Here, “the emanation of the cosmopolitical view,” Trifonas (2008) tells us, “is a gathering of multiplicity in knowledge communities that articulate the ethical terms of a responsibility to acknowledge the profundity of differences within the same archive of knowledge and thinking” (p. 72). In order to support students as experiential learners within such interstitial spaces of gathering one of my strategies is to incorporate a community service learning social action project component into the curriculum development of the courses I teach within the teacher education program. Much like William Heard Kilpatrick’s (1918) *Project Method*, I ask teacher candidates to create social action projects that are compelling and connected to their local, national, and international communities both within and outside the academy. During such projects, I invite students to inhabit the playful spaces between cross-cultural hyph-e-nations. Linger within the poetics of these hyphenated spaces is where the hyphen both binds and divides (Wah, 2000). But even when it makes its presence, as Wah (2000) reminds us, the trans-local hyphenated relational space between self-other “is often silent and transparent” (p. 73). Therefore, part of our work as educators is to illuminate such cross-cultural hyph-e-nations and attune ourselves toward curricular possibilities that break through such silences toward what Aoki (2005) calls elsewhere a curriculum in a new key.

And yet, how might we engage such curriculum development wholeheartedly as a cosmopolitan praxis that inhabits the curricular hyph-e-nations of radical encounters between self-other? Such a cosmopolitan praxis—of local, national, international geographical and cultural third spaces—whether we are an educator, teacher, or student involves learning to negotiate the relational and violent psychic affects of potentially alienating and appropriating each other’s difference (see Ng-A-Fook, 2009; Ng-A-Fook, Radford, & Ausman, 2012; Wang, 2004). Moreover, such cosmopolitan praxis involves deconstructing our autobiographical inhabitations and translations of the colonial narratives put forth within the content of the provincial curriculum policy documents here in Ontario.

As I stated earlier, the ways in which we reread and live the intellectual history and present material realities of curriculum policies here in Canada or the United States often continue to narrate national creation stories that disinherit indigenous histories, knowledge and language by ignoring the potential pedagogical value they might bring to our contemporary educational contexts (Battiste 2011). Therefore, the concept of “indigeness” and its respective teachings provide a potential passageway toward the future for us to recursively and reflectively ask more of our national narratives, of narrating alter/native visions of living a Canadian postcolony curriculum (Kanu 2009, 2011). How might we then reconsider the worldliness of educational possibilities within and beyond our narrative imaginations of a Canadian postcolony (this is not to say colonialism is over, and we still have the Queen’s head on our money)? In response to such questions, I’d like to suggest that life writing provides a potential research methodology where we can take up indigeness as an aesthetic form of theorizing our historical, present, and future relations to the uncommon countenances of the internationalization of curriculum studies.

To challenge colonial narratives, in 2007, I accompanied 12 Bachelor of Education students down to Raceland, Louisiana to work with the Houma people who continue to suffer the devastating effects of recurring hurricanes like Katrina and now the Gulf of Mexico oil spill. My students worked with

elders at a New Orleans Jazz Festival non-profit food booth, attended eco-justice workshops with indigenous community activists, and created podcasts to share their stories. Upon our return to Canada one student shared the following compelling autobiographical story:

When one signs up for an international community service learning project, especially in a highly profiled impoverished place like Louisiana, the expectation is that you will be making a difference in the lives of those of whom you might work with. During my stay in this southern state, I had the chance to meet some incredible people within the Houma communities, to learn about their history and struggles during the era of racial segregation, to understand the ongoing environmental crisis taking place on their scared landscape, and experience a different cultural pace of life. Our community service learning project is a type of lived experience that affords an alter/native way of engaging thinking, of conceiving the world around us, as well as deepening our understandings of the very concepts of “community,” “service,” and “learning.”

Our international community service-learning project, afforded us an opportunity to disrupt our preconceived stereotypes of the “American South.” In turn, we were forced to challenge our prior knowledge, and thus change our perceptions of the media representations we receive here in Canada. As a result of this trip, I am open to new possibilities, of thinking and engaging lived experiences. I now realize that Louisiana, much like many places here in Canada is a culturally complex and dynamic place both with its historical, present, and future limitations and possibilities. As a result, we learned a lot from them about how to foster a sense of unity in diversity, create healthy relationships with elders and marginalized youth, show compassion for others who suffer, how to build bridges between communities, and how to accept one another. I will forever share this learning experience with future students and colleagues.

This student’s auto/biographical writing makes the interstices at the margins of the hyphen more audible and the cross-cultural pigmentations of colonialism more visible (Wah, 2000). A cosmopolitan praxis as community service learning, as least for this student, provided a pedagogical opportunity for the transparency of the hyphen between self-other to become a deconstructive thorn—an aporia, a perpetual deferral of signs, signifiers, and signified—in the side of prior psychic and material colonial configurations (Wah, 2000).

Across different Bachelor of Education courses, I continue to ask teacher candidates to engage the limitless possibilities of trying to develop curricular and pedagogical trans-local community service learning social action projects that embrace civic public action and connect to the local, national, and international educational needs of various communities. Engaging community service learning social action curriculum projects with teacher candidates has afforded me unique opportunities to develop and enact curriculum as a form of cosmopolitan praxis with different global, national, and local (indigenous) communities. This cosmopolitan praxis asks teacher candidates to consider their curriculum development as “a public form of self-cultivation” (Pinar, 2009, p. 43). Such self-cultivation, many students acknowledge, often opens us up to more questions rather than providing definitive answers for how we might negotiate curriculum development and hyph-e-nated relationships between self-other as a form of cosmopolitan praxis; as a relational ethics of being for the other.

Reconceptualizing teacher education and our respective curriculum theorizing as a cosmopolitan praxis involves animating our curricular passions for global social justice, as educational researchers, teachers, and teacher candidates beyond its potential market value. And, future conceptualizations of cosmopolitan education might continue to cultivate not only ‘what knowledge is most worth?’ but also reconsider how we might share our diverse relationships with each other while also developing

compassion and our capacity to live within the interstitial spaces of inter-cultural relationships as curriculum scholars, teachers and students between self and other, always hyph-e-nated, and yet nonetheless, always mobilizing to serve the larger public good during such international times of crisis and globalization.

Endnotes

ⁱ I would like to thank Peter Applebaum, Peter Grimmet, João Paraskeva and Maria Alfredo Moreira for inviting Rochelle Skogen and myself to share some of work as co-presidents of the Canadian Association of Curriculum Studies. Unfortunately, Rochelle was not able to attend the conference. Consequently, during the address I attempted to share the following: 1) A partial history of our field in terms of key publications and conferences; 2) Situate my involvement as a co-president and a curriculum theorist within our international field of study; 3) Provide a brief sketch some of the research and community service learning I am currently doing within the Bachelor Education program at the University of Ottawa (for more information on our different social action curriculum research projects see www.curriculumtheoryproject.ca); 4) Begin preliminary conversation on the experimental possibilities of developing curriculum as a cosmopolitan praxis. Some sections of the address have been updated and edited to represent events that have transpired since our collective gathering.

ⁱⁱ We mourn together, the recent passing of Ted T. Aoki, Geoffrey Milburn, and Roger I. Simon. These three do not easily fall under the mere umbrella of “academic scholars.” In the words of Richard Rorty (1989), these are “strong poets.” “Strong poets are,” Ibrahim (2012) tells us, “those who not only have the language but also the vision to tell us something new, or invent the known in an unknown language” (n.p.). At this gathering we look forward to how our fellow scholars provoke the concept of strong poet in relation to the historical, present, and future contexts of Canadian curriculum studies.

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