

# Currere in a New Tonality: A Tetradic Analysis

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The artists of our culture, ‘the antennae of the race,’ had tuned in to the new ground and begun exploring discontinuity and simultaneity (McLuhan & McLuhan, 1988, p. 47)

WHILE LISTENING to people speak about William Pinar at the IAACS conference in Ottawa (2015), I downloaded Pinar’s AERA presentation (1975a) on currere onto my iPhone.<sup>1</sup> Simultaneously listening to the speakers who honored his works, and reading the opening pages to that paper, I suddenly realized synchronicities between Pinar’s method of currere and other ideas I have engaged with over my past 30 years of academic life. That it happened so unexpectedly and forcefully, in an instant, was striking because I had been exposed to so many of his ideas through personal readings and through graduate students who incorporated his works into their papers and dissertations.

Not unlike Pinar’s landmark work, the method of the current paper will be written in a form of free association. But we conceptualize it more so as a musical improvisation – not completely “free” improvisation, but rather one that is structured by the “harmonic progression” of ideas that Pinar provided for the method of currere. In a metaphoric sense, we follow his thought progression as we would follow a chord progression to improvise a solo. To demonstrate the far-reaching spatiotemporal resonance of Pinar’s notion of currere, we will attempt to (1) draw comparisons between the regressive-progressive-analytical-synthetical features of currere and the enhance-reverse-retrieve-obsolesce lens of McLuhan’s tetrad, and (2) expand notions of the biographical and autobiographical to a re-conceptualized notion of autobiographical and autoethnographical. Out of the dialectic and tetradic processes we will engage with, we hope to arrive, however temporarily, at a new synthesis of ideas regarding currere.

In his classic 1975 presentation, Pinar adopts the role of artist (i.e., as creative writer of biography) and the epistemological stance of a phenomenologist in attempting to place and define the role of the Self (the *auto*) through a transconceptual, transtemporal lens. By default, his study of *that which appears to make sense* (i.e., the phenomenon, or *phainomeno*; φαινόμενο) seems to

be a non-linear stance – the person is able to recognize and identify the past and present, in relation to what the self can imagine to be the future (both that which is immediate and that which is to follow).<sup>2</sup> In recognizing the *I* and *that* – and the notion that there are multidimensional relationships of the in-between, Pinar was on the advance edge of knowing and foreseeing the *auto* (the *αυτό*, pronounced *afto*, means much more than *self*) in all its intended, contextualized meanings – self, him, her, this, that, those, they (see Gouzouasis & Ryu, 2015; Gouzouasis & Leggo, 2016) – and how it relates to biography, notably *autobiography* (a term that does not appear in Pinar’s 1975 AERA paper) and *autoethnography* (a term that does not appear in educational research for at least 15 years after Pinar’s seminal paper).

Phenomenology is dialectic in ear-mode – a massive and decentralized quest for roots, for ground. (McLuhan & McLuhan, 1988, p. 62)

Influenced by Husserl’s (1936/1970) phenomenology with the *auto* (self), Pinar (1975b) foregrounded the notion of *Lebenswelt* influenced by Husserl’s phenomenology. Consider, for example, his supposition that “the point of coherence is the biography as it is lived in the subjectivity of everyday life” (Pinar, 1975b, p. 1). In other words, *both* theory *and* science (i.e., conceptual *and* perceptual, theoretical *and* experiential) are necessary, related, relational, and useful in our attempts to write about how we as humans understand time, space, experience, existence, body, spirit, and heartfelt aspects of teaching and learning as they relate to curriculum. Thinking about subject and object, self and other, self with him, her, this, that, those, and they, time and space, mind and body – from a relational perspective – leads us to our notion of *auto* as it is related to Hegel’s phenomenological stance: “Self-consciousness exists in and for itself when, and by the fact that, it so exists for another; that is, it exists only in being acknowledged (Hegel, 1807/1977, p. 111). Taking Hegel one step further, Husserl’s phenomenology was about placing consciousness and meaning in context. Consider, in the following quotation, how Husserl (1936/1970) situates both the *lifeworld* and the subjectivity in which *we* live as contingent on one another.

In whatever way we may be conscious of the world as universal horizon, as coherent universe of existing objects, we, each ... and all of us together, belong to the world as living with one another in the world; and the world is our world, valid for our consciousness as existing precisely through this ‘living together.’ We, as living in wakeful world-consciousness, are constantly active on the basis of our passive having of the world ... Obviously this is true not only for me, the individual ego; rather we, in living together, have the world pre-given in this together, belong, the world as world for all, pre-given with this ontic meaning ... The we-subjectivity ... [is] constantly functioning. (pp. 108–109)

In the process of describing the connections between ones’ personal experiences, the many relationships between and across professional and personal work, and various ways of knowing, we may arrive at a predominant question: what has been, what is now, and what can be(come) – regarding not only the nature of our educational experiences, but how those experiences are related to the broad, interpretive spectrum of the *auto* in coalescence with the lifeworld. Thus, we are capable of *living with* a simultaneous sense of intrasubjectivity and intersubjectivity – both an individual and shared sense-making and meaning-making of, with, and in the world. The process

is one of epoché (ἐποχή), where personal beliefs may be suspended to enable us to attain understandings.

### The Sources of the Self and Currere<sup>3</sup>

... stories tell us what things mean, what things matter and how we should live our lives. (Donmoyer, 1995, p. 152)

In currere, Pinar's acknowledgment of the self and our existential experiences as the source of "data" was a quantum leap in understanding the role and relationship of the researcher to that which is researched.<sup>4</sup> It is akin to ideas that were being developed in sociology and anthropology in the early 1970s. For example, over 40 years ago, Buerkle and Barker's (1973) stories of jazz musicians in New Orleans were interpreted as "folk narratives" and "folk memory" (Turner, 1977).<sup>5</sup> In the 21<sup>st</sup> century we would in the very least consider their book an ethnography (Geertz, 1973) or more specifically, an autoethnography (Goldschmidt, 1977). That said, while the last 40 years have brought an increasing legitimacy of self and story in social science research, currere predates the work of Denzin, (1985), Lather (1986), Van Maanen (1988), Connelly and Clandinin (1990), Barone (1990), Richardson (1990), Donmoyer (1990, 1991a, 1991b, 1995), Ellis (1991, 2004), Leggo (1995) and many others who recognized and identified the power of story in reshaping educational research.

Currere is a reflexive cycle in which thought bends back upon itself and thus recovers its volition. (Grumet, 1976, pp. 130–131)

The Latin root of currere refers to running a course, a race, or making one's course. McKnight (2006) provides the historical context for the kind *auto-bio-graphy*, or self-life-writing, that is making one's course in life. Using the concept of a curriculum vita as his entryway to this history, he notes how the vita of one's curriculum was not always an abbreviated list of career accomplishments, but, with roots in the Reformation, was the process of narrating one's course to make meaning from what would otherwise be meaningless. Who am I? What makes me valuable? What is my aspiration? My trajectory? My course? In such existential questions, currere is an accounting of life, of vita, a kind of life writing, or in terms Pinar (2004) prefers, "the biographical significance" of study (p. 36). In this way, currere becomes a methodological framing for study.

It [currere/study] is therefore temporal and conceptual in nature, and it aims for the cultivation of a developmental point of view that is transtemporal and transconceptual. From another perspective, the method is the self-conscious conceptualization of the temporal, and from another, it is the viewing of what is conceptualized through time. (Pinar & Grumet, 1976, p. 51)

McKnight (2006) recounts an interesting history of "the course" of one's studies. The modern conception of a course as a predetermined curriculum is attributed to Peter Ramus, a mid-1500s university scholar. He prioritized order and structure. As McKnight recounts, Ramus' grand scale diagrams might be considered the first curriculum guides. Before Ramus, the onus for making connections was on the individual, and McKnight traces this approach back to the

Reformation. Curriculum vita, or life writing, was the description of an individual's journey in responding to a call, a summons that was understood to give a person purpose and meaning in life. Curriculum work was an intensive and rigorous process that involved “listening to all of the competing voices within one’s embodied existence and hearing and acting upon a particular call” (McKnight, 2006, p. 175). Much like the inspiring call of beauty via great art, significantly, the existential responsibility to find purpose and meaning in response to a summons is opposed to instrumental and technical approaches to curriculum where the learner is to apprehend the field as it is given. In the latter, learning is entirely socialization, creating a sense of the world as complete, little more than a set of common sense orthodoxies that, ideally, would be programmed into the willing learner. Against this objectified world of closure and certainty, currere is an intentional strategy of resistance, a “revolutionary act ... of self understanding (Pinar, 2004, p. 35) that “extricates us from the banal” (Pinar, 2010, p. 1). The interior work of currere simultaneously “presses us into the world” (Pinar, 2010, p. 1): A person conceptualizes curriculum “as something beyond, for each generates obligations and responsibilities on the individual’s part, as well as on the cultural institutions within which people dwell” (McKnight, 2006, p. 175). Not surprisingly, Pinar turns to the aesthetic as a means for experiencing a fuller humanity and the struggle to articulate the “what is not yet,” the “what of becoming,” of possibilities unimagined.

All experience is the product of both the features of the world and the biography of the individual. Our experience is influenced by our past as it interacts with our present. (Eisner, 1985, pp. 25–26)

While clearly a turn inward, currere is not free of external structures. As in musical improvisation, currere is structured (and cannot be otherwise, for music starts with acoustic pattern making, on micro and macro levels) as we inherit the structures, language, and logics as part of our making sense in and of the world. Thought progressions, just as musical progressions, are simultaneously definitional (“auto” as both subject/object) and transconceptual (“auto” as both medium and message). The simultaneous and multidimensional chordal/thought progression of currere – regressive-progressive-analytical-synthetical – provokes alternative imagining of the entangled relationships of self and world, necessarily so. For, no longer teleological in nature, how we understand time, space, experience, existence, mind, body, and spirit need not be any particular resistance to regimes of truth or ideology, but a process of remaining open to alternate understandings of what can appear as closed or certain. Thus, we are capable of living with a simultaneous sense of intrasubjectivity and intersubjectivity – both an individual and shared sense of making meaning, making self, and making the world.

### **Currere as a Tetradic Model**

All script represents words as in some way things, quiescent objects, immobile marks for assimilation by vision.... The alphabet, though it probably derives from pictograms, has lost connections with things as things. It represents sound itself as a thing, transforming the evanescent world of sound to the quiescent, quasi-permanent world of space (Ong, 1982, p. 91).

If a curriculum theorist is someone who imagines new possibilities in ways we think about

ourselves in relation to curricula and praxis, then Marshall McLuhan could have been considered an early curriculum theorist of media studies. McLuhan was a messenger of change and noticed ways that media, as forms of communication, evolved over the centuries and transformed the ways that humans create and use tools. He was wedded to text and consumed with tracing the evolution of the ways that humans developed and recorded language – from oral traditions to stone tablets to sheepskin and parchment, to the revolutionary printing press, and to electronic media. Moreover, McLuhan probed how a medium can simultaneously be conceived as message and the message as medium. Media possess the potential to change the ways we communicate, and as such, change the ways we conceptualize and theorize curriculum. Change happens, change is inevitable, change can be positive or negative, change is development, and change is the potential to become something different and new. The message of a medium is not merely its content; the message of a medium is its effects. As such, if “the most human thing about us is our technology” (McLuhan, 1974, p. 19), and telling a story is a communicative act, then storying one’s self and the world in which one lives – across a lifetime – is what defines us as educational scholars.

### **The Relationship Between Dialectic and Tetrad**

The laws of the media, in tetrad form, bring logos and formal cause up to date to reveal analytically the structure of all human artefacts (McLuhan & McLuhan, 1988, p. 127)

The dialectic triad – the thesis (event, experience), antithesis (contradiction or questioning of the experience), and synthesis (coming to a new level of understanding of that experience; the reconciliation of thesis and antithesis) – is a consequence of linguistic form. As each synthesis is the starting place for a new beginning (a new thesis) it is a sequential process. It is directional in nature. On the other hand, a tetrad is simultaneously relative and relational in that a tetrad’s pattern of logic is contemplated simultaneously, in much the way that a painting, a photograph, a music composition, or ambient sounds are perceived and conceptualized. Each of the questions comprising the tetrad – abbreviated as *enhance*, *transform*, *retrieve*, *obsolesce* – represents a process orientation. As McLuhan and McLuhan (1988) explain, “Each tetrad gives the etymology of its subject, as an uttering or outing of the body physical or mental, and provides its anatomy in fourfold exegetical manner” (p. 224).

Posing the four questions reveals the tetrad’s four actions: What does the medium enhance? What does it retrieve from the past? What does it reverse into? What does it obsolesce? Tetrads are expressed as analogies; for example, Enhance:Retrieve :: Transform:Obsolesce (E:R :: T:O) or Enhance:Transform :: Retrieve:Obsolesce (E:T :: R:O).

The following quadrants may be used to capture the four questions simultaneously.

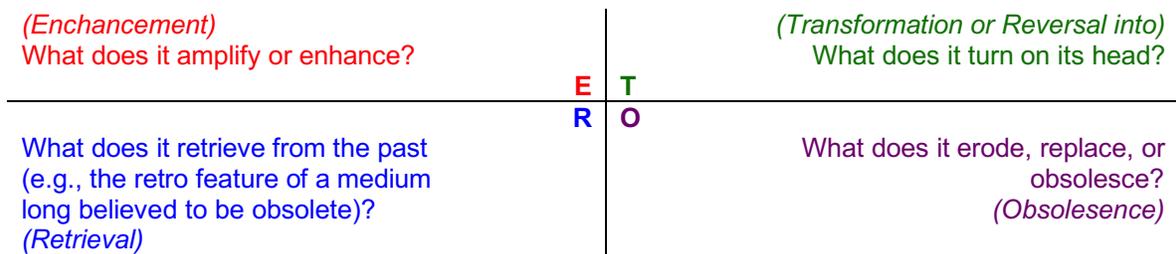


Figure 1. The Tetrad. It consists of four questions, meant to be considered simultaneously when exegeting a subject (McLuhan & McLuhan, 1988).

The dialectic triad principally serves to analyze the figure, or the thing – that is, the phenomenon or artifact – in focus. For instance, in the case of the written word, it serves to elucidate the thesis (i.e., the invention of the written word), the antithesis (i.e., the forging of mass literacy), and its subsequent synthesis (i.e., modernity). In this instance, the written word leads humans, causally, toward modern thought. On the other hand, the tetrad serves to illuminate a different process – one of change, namely, one of simultaneous change. In the simplest tetradic analysis, the written word *enhances* thought, it enables us to *retrieve* story, it *reverses* into forgetfulness, and it *obsolesces* oral traditions.

In the process of asking McLuhan’s four questions, one may begin to understand the tetrad as comprising four *actions*: enhancement, retrieval, reversal into (transformation), and obsolescence. Combined, those actions describe the functions and subsequent impact of a medium. If one considers that all human artifacts are forms of media, then every artifact possesses the qualities of both the content and context – i.e., of both the message and the medium. No medium is ever “empty” of either its context (ground) or content (figure).

However, to complicate matters somewhat, McLuhan contended that every medium is ostensibly the medium for another medium. For example, words, music, images and dance are the media of expression for thoughts (i.e., cognition, abstraction), feelings, and emotions. The piano is a medium for song, and song is a medium for artistry and technique; in turn, both are the media for the musical thoughts of a pianist. Thus every medium possesses the quality of both figure (content) and ground (context). For instance, if the figure is the song, then the piano may be considered as the ground. Conversely, if the figure is the piano, then the song may be the ground. That example metaphorically defines the subtle difference between dialectic and the tetrad.

### Massaging the Tetrad

Metaphor has traditionally been regarded as the matrix and pattern of the figures of speech (McLuhan & McLuhan, 1988, p. 231).

For any tetrad, we are able to explore a plethora of possibilities to the four questions in four quadrants, simultaneously, that are posed by the figure (i.e., specific topic).<sup>6</sup> Depending on the subjects we choose to study (e.g., piano and currere in the examples provided below) we can arrive at different grounds, or contexts, relative with and in relation to the four quadrants of the tetrad. That relationality reflects the notion that the medium is the message *and* the message is the medium

– in other words, the ground of any figure is the figure of yet another ground. Another important notion is that tetrads are not inclusive and definitive. Rather, they are inclusive, interpretive, and performative. Any pianist (or curriculum theorist) may compose any number of tetrads with similar and dissimilar conceptual facets. For example, the piano does much more than obsolesce the harpsichord and lute. As a medium of musical expression, it was used to push aside all forms of accompaniment performed with other music instruments, particularly in song (lied), and create (replace) all forms of harmonic texture (chords) that could be provided by three or more instruments. Thus, instead of cello concertos in which an entire orchestra accompanies a soloist, we have cello sonatas where a soloist is accompanied by piano.

Enhances “amplitude” (volume) and expands possibilities for dynamic contrasts and laying in tune in all keys and tonalities (major and minor)	Transforms the intimate (e.g., chamber, salon) into a public (concert hall) performance; changes how audiences access music
E	T
Changed music itself in a profound way—extended harmonies; the birth of the virtuoso performer and creation of a new popular music	Pushes aside the harpsichord, pianoforte, and lute; becomes <i>the</i> polyphonic instrument of choice for composers and performers; becomes <i>the</i> instrument of choice for accompaniment
R	O

Figure 2. The tetrad applied to the subject of the piano.

Currere enhances thought Broadens (changes) notions of curriculum theory	Shifted the education research paradigm from quantitative toward qualitative; transforms curriculum from material object to conceptual space
E	T
Retrieves story as a form of research Expands and redefines the notion of the ‘auto’	Pushes aside positivist, realist forms of research and uninspiring notions of curriculum (curriculum handbook, plan, document)
R	O

Figure 3. The tetrad applied to the subject of currere.

### Obsolescence of Self as Superabundance

“Obsolescence is the moment of superabundance.” (McLuhan as a panelist in Jeffares, Auden, McLuhan, Fuller, and MacGowran, 1972, p. 135)

Following a tetradic logic with currere means we try out theory in a lifeworld – a biocosmo (βιόκοσμου) – that resembles the *auto* of experience, and through language and other artistic forms of representation we explore dissonance and discrepancy in personal perception and theoretical

conception. The tensional aspects between one's lifeworld and storied world – its context (enhancement), narration (transformation), reception (retrieval), and breach<sup>7</sup> (obsolescence) – are interrelated and intrarelated, and bring into question what is typically, seemingly stable. In musical improvisation, there is productive tension between the melodic improvisation, structures of chord progressions (and substitutions of chords), and the overall music compositional forms (that can also be improvised and reshaped). Turning to currere, consider, for example, how the relationships – of self to time, self to place, self to language, self to sound (e.g., music, or any acoustic space) and self to other – provide structures to the regressive-progressive phases of currere. They simultaneously provide analytic/aesthetic room to improvise by which the multiple relationships of self are interrogated, contesting an empirical tendency to navigate perception via stabilized, formulaic conceptions. Continual questioning of how (and who, where, and when) to be in these relationships demonstrates the willingness to explore the interiority of experience.

Taking one possible example of a tetradic conception of currere, we interpret that Meyer (2010) conceives of place, time, language, and self/other as living inquiry, a hermeneutic progression and hermeneutic improvisation where the tetradimensional pattern of logic is contemplated simultaneously. In Meyer's living inquiry, there is no imperative to be comprehensive; in articulating place, time, language, and self/other as a progression, there is nevertheless a desire to interrogate these, to engage the *bio*, the *auto*, the *ethno*,<sup>8</sup> and the *graphy* in hermeneutic conversation. Echoes of Pinar's (2004) notion of "complicated conversation" are here, the inextricable nature of the personal and professional, the *ethno*, where – through a notion of *graphy* that embraces multiple senses and forms of representation (i.e., the writing and drawing of all art forms) and senses – the *auto* is awakened to a personal passion in *bio* (βίος) and *zoe* (ζωή).<sup>9</sup>

To further complicate the conversation around notions of *ethno*, one may interpret *ethos* (ἔθος, ἦθος) – the root of *ethno* – as a place, a state of mind, a sense of being – an essential characteristic that may shape an individual. However, Miller (1974) notes a clear distinction between the two, related Greek spellings of *ethos*: ἔθος (ethos) as habit, disposition, or custom (i.e., as a way that things are usually done) and ἦθος (eethos) as character or accustomed place (pp. 309–310; see Donnegan, 1840). Aristotle did not explicitly discuss the distinctions and relationships between these words. These are subtle nuances in interpretation of *ethos* and *eethos*; however, there "exists a close familial relationship suggesting that when Aristotle used *eethos* to designate the character of a speaker as revealed in a speech, he was thinking of the speaker's habits, customs, traditions, or manner of life" (i.e., *ethos*/ἔθος; see p. 310). In other words, *ethos* (i.e., habitual behavior) may be considered as indicative of *eethos* (i.e., ἦθος, a person's character; see p. 313). Miller (1974) sees this relationship as being consubstantial (i.e., of the same substance), and makes the sensible observation that "a man's habits are indicative of his character" (p. 309). More recently, Baracchi (2008) offers yet another perspective.

The word *ethos* signifies precisely disposition, character in the sense of psychological configuration, and hence comportment, the way in which one bears oneself. However, the semantic range of the term exceeds this determination and signals that it must be situated in the broader custom, of shared usage, and even understood in the archaic but abiding sense of the accustomed place where the living (animals, plants, or otherwise) find their haunt or abode (p. 53).

She sees ethics as a "first philosophy" and as such it is a reflexive stance informed by ἦθος (eethos) (p. 2). To clarify the concepts as they are used in the present paper, ἠθικη (eethikee, or ethical

virtue) emanates from the word ἦθος (eethos), but both are derived from ethos (ἔθος). Most important, both habits (ἔθος) and character (ἦθος) relate to how individuals conduct themselves within a society (p. 310).<sup>10</sup> Along those lines of thought, Reynolds (1993) refers to ethos as “the character of an age, era, society, or culture, something like zeitgeist ... a complex set of characteristics constructed by a group, sanctioned by that group, and more readily recognizable to others who belong or who share similar values or experience” (p. 327). Space, place, and location are the fundamental characteristics of ethos, and root it in the notion of a “technic rhetoric” (in Greek, Τέχνη Πητορική; see our detailed discussion of *téchne*).<sup>11</sup> Moreover, eethos (ἦθος) is one of the three artistic “pisteis” (πίστις; literally translated as “beliefs” but usually thought of as a “mode of persuasion”) and is interrelated with logos and pathos, all of which are core to our contemporary interpretation of currere.

As we read Meyer, it is clear that in the progression of place, time, space, language, and self/other, each are simultaneously both figure and ground, the medium for another medium. Tetrads, as noted above, are interpretive and performative rather than definitive; as such, in the queries that are living inquiry and lived curriculum (Aoki, 1993) there is no aim to progress toward an objective, as is wont to happen when one pursues an ideal, confining thinking and being toward its attainment. Pursuing ideals are the consummate actions of a self’s subjectivity. Instead, the medium of living inquiry has a *tetradic* action: thus each medium is both/and and both/and at once. Living inquiry *enhances* a self’s relations by amplifying the material condition of the body in place, time, space, and self/other tensions; it *retrieves* the subjective in the constant struggle to be existentially conscious (Miller, 2010), that is, to be awake to the passion of living (Greene, 1995); it *transforms* experience by cultivating open-heartedness and the courage to remain open, even in greater knowledge of the entanglements that are who we are; and it *obsolesces* the self, involving “self shattering” or “self dissolution” (Pinar, 2010, p. 1).

McLuhan’s wordplay and aphorisms about research methods and forms of representation resonate with artistic sensibilities, which in turn amplify Pinar’s commitment to the aesthetic. The potential of this resonance between McLuhan and Pinar can be illustrated via the interplay of obsolescence and superabundance (Jeffares et al., 1972, p. 135) and emancipatory reaggregation – what Pinar calls the final stage of currere: synthesis (σύνθεση). In co-mingling these concepts, what emerges is *obsolescence of self as its superabundance*. This is no Romantic notion of greater knowledge, divine felicity, or blissful communion with nature, but an intense commitment to subjective restructuring. The promise of currere is the superabundance of subjective restructuring, and its engagement requires a willingness to explore the *metaxy* of pain and pleasure, contentment and suffering. This both/and notion of metaxy (μεταξύ) traces back to Eros, the daimon between gods and humans. Eros exemplifies the ways and means by which art solicits passion, a necessary intensity for working the inner artist’s landscape. Without passion to be free from a socially and politically determined subject location, the self submits to its subjectivity and embraces the comfort of the familiar. Pinar’s (2010) close reading of Maxine Greene’s collected lectures at the Lincoln Institute for the Arts in Education, locates this passion in the aesthetic. “Art solicits passion,” says Pinar (2010), “and Greene appreciates its erotic and as well as emotional elements ... desire is interesting to Greene for its aesthetic potential. Through desire one becomes, achieves selfhood, and acts in the world.” To act in the world, the aesthetic first acts on us. It breaks us down, shatters our paradigms and dissolves our cultural idealism. Pinar (2010) explains:

Aesthetically structured teaching encourages students to reconstruct their own lived worlds through their reanimation of the material they study. This subjective restructuring – it is

also an animation, rendering one's intellectual passions "contagious" (2001, p. 179) – is, Greene notes, "a matter of bringing to the surface forces, stirrings, desires we often cannot name" (2001, p. 108). There we can represent them ... through aesthetic forms offered us by the arts. (p. 5)

Entangling McLuhan and Pinar, we see how the obsolescence of self is a significant point in Pinar's study of curriculum. What obsolesces, through an inner aesthetic experience, is the socially and politically determined subject location. Education, if it is to be something more than socialization, depends on human beings facing the realities of their existence; that is, their subject position, their subjectivity, their subjugation to culturally imbued norms. Self-shattering (i.e., autoshattering) becomes a process of freedom-making where the self can be remade on its own terms for its own agency. McLuhan makes a similar case insofar as he proposed that, "without the artist's intervention, man merely adapts to his technologies and becomes their servo-mechanism" (McLuhan & McLuhan, 1988, p. 98). Humans have "groped toward the arts in hope of increased sensory awareness," McLuhan wrote, and "the artist has the power to discern the current environment created by the latest technology" (McLuhan & Parker, 1968, p. xxiii).

From that perspective – and ideas offered throughout our improvisation-inspired, complicated conversation – if it is possible to achieve an awareness of "the entire environment as a work of art" (McLuhan & Parker, 1968, p. 7), the individual's holistic role of *artistresearchteacher* (Gouzouasis, 2008), and currere as an artful process, then the role of tetradic analysis in curriculum studies is magnified for scholars who are carefully attending to the arts, and the ethics of currere (as art making), at work in their lives.

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> The 'I' of this narration begins with Peter's voice, as he completed a substantial draft of this paper before inviting Sean to compose as a coauthor. Sean's articulations have been woven into the text, and both have synthesized their ideas to formulate the summary.

<sup>2</sup> To extend a music metaphor, this coincides with the concept of *audiation*. Audiation is the ability to conceptualize musical sounds without the sounds being physically present. It is the ability to conceptualize and compare the immediate past in music listening with the present, and to connect that which has been heard, and that which we are hearing, with our expectations of what we are about to hear (see Gouzouasis, 1992). For example, if I sing the first pitch (and word) of the children's song 'Old MacDonald' and ask you to audiate the remainder of the first phrase and then sing the final pitch of the first phrase, you are audiating the entire phrase. I can then ask you to sing the next phrase without the cue of a starting pitch and you would be able to predict the precise sound of that phrase based on the melodic material you already audiated. Not everyone audiates the same way, and that contributes to some people not being able to sing in tune, with or without melodic support or accompaniment.

<sup>3</sup> This heading follows Taylor's (1989) book, *Sources of the Self: The Making of the Modern Identity*.

<sup>4</sup> Existential implies empirical "data," from the Greek empirikos, *εμπειρικός*, "with experience."

<sup>5</sup> I would like to point out that Frederick Turner completely missed the point of Danny Barker's participation as coauthor in lending credence to the perspective of "jazz musician as member of the underworld." The fact is, to this day many jazz musicians live on the edge of poverty, addiction, and mental illness. Moreover, Turner criticized the language used in the book as "a queasy mixture of the old 'gee whiz!' jazz history" and sociological jargon. That lifestyle is a norm and not a rare exception to the life of jazz musicians. When I received my copy of the book, I first interpreted Buerkle and Barker as a history of New Orleans jazz (see Gouzouasis, 2016). What I did not account for,

from a researcher's stance, is that it was immersed in the *lifeworld*, a story told through the eyes, ears, hearts, minds, and stories of people who lived and breathed life into jazz.

<sup>6</sup> In a sense, the *figure* may be interpreted as a *thesis*, which may be where dialectic and tetrad initially overlap. Hegel's notion of the "identity of opposites" (Stace, 1924, pp. 104) – that we cannot, for example, understand the light of daytime unless it is in relation to the darkness that occurs without sunlight, and vice versa – is not only the crux of the notion of relationality, but in our paper explains the relationships between content and context (which may shift depending on one's perspective) as well as the four actions of the tetrad. Perhaps *relationality* is as important a concept to come out of understanding the function of Hegel's dialectic as the action of thesis-antithesis-synthesis. Even the notion of thesis-antithesis is more than seeing it as statement (observation)-contradiction. This also brings us to a new understanding of relationality – the impossibility of understanding the *one* is impossible without understanding the *other*. In currere, this would be that which troubles the self, the goad. It is a topic, or question/quest, but the selection of such a topic is in relation to *auto* (αὐτό). The 'goad' makes us think of the tetradic figure as a *speculative* topic (i.e., the specific object of our speculation).

<sup>7</sup> The concept of breach is Bruner's (1991), and it describes how the logic of narrative is one of canon and breach. A story, to be instigated, to even qualify as a story, is a breach against community norms, a trying out of difference from whatever has been canonized. Stories of significant cultural import revise canonical norms and thus create obsolescence.

<sup>8</sup> In Greek, the term *ethno* (ἔθνος) refers to nation, country, people, race, tribe, and group of people living together, as well as community and family.

<sup>9</sup> While *bio* refers to that which is organically alive, and *zoe* refers to that which has life or is life-like, we use these terms to relate (i.e., interpret relationally) the notion that things which are *bio* (have life, are life-like) have *zoe* (organically alive/living), and vice-versa.

<sup>10</sup> There are similar, parallel difficulties in the interpretation of the words *ethnos* (ἔθνος) and *genos* (γένος) in the writings of Herodotus (c. 484 BC – c. 485 BC), who is considered the "father of ethnography" (see Jones, 1994). I raise this point because *ethnos* is very similar in spelling and pronunciation to *ethos* and demonstrates the way that the Greek language is developed and used in the vernacular.

<sup>11</sup> As we develop deeper insights, we revel in the notion that the primary definition of *téchne* is *art* (Oxford Greek Dictionary, p. 185). In Greek, related words that share the *artistic* aspect of that root are *technotropia* (artistic style), *technikales* (fine arts), and *technocritis* (art critic). However, secondary definitions of *téchne* are craft, skill, and craftsmanship. Related words that share those aspects of the root are *techniki* (technique), *technologia* (technology), *téchnagma* (artifice), *technentos* (artificial), *technikos* (technical, skillful, skilled in mechanical arts), and *technitis* (craftsman). Interestingly, the word in Greek for "invent" or "think up" is *technazomai*. Moreover, it is fascinating to consider that the Greek words *téchne* (art) and *logia* (words) form the term *technologia* (technology) and *téchne* and *logiki* (logic; way of thinking) are at the root of "technological," or in other words, artful thinking.

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