

Reclamation, Resistance, and Curriculum Within the Tremors

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IN VOLUME 41, ISSUE 2, we invite readers to encounter scholars who locate themselves within a complex and contextualized present: educators and curriculum theorists who draw upon the past to make sense of curriculum while preparing us to imagine different futures. The articles curated in this issue emerge within a particular spacetime mattering, (Barad, 2007) one marked by profound violence, uncertainty, and struggle.

Across the globe, people continue to witness the televised genocide in Gaza, where the relentless circulation of images and testimonies has collapsed the distance between spectatorship and complicity while revealing the uneven value assigned to human life. The expansion of militarism, including the preemptive war against Iran and escalating regional conflicts, further exposes how fear and empire continue to shape geopolitical realities. Locally, these global crises reverberate through intensifying law enforcement violence against communities of color, the brutality of Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) raids in the United States, and sustained political attacks on diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives that seek to make educational institutions more just and accountable.

These are not merely background events or historical conditions external to curriculum; they constitute the very spacetime in which educators, students, and scholars live, think, grieve, resist, and create. The contributions in this issue neither retreat from these realities nor presume to resolve them. Instead, they invite readers to consider how curriculum theory can remain responsive to the ethical demands of the present while cultivating the historical consciousness, relationality, and critical hope necessary to imagine futures that exceed the violences of our time.

DeLeon (2026), in “*Curriculum at the End of Time: Abjection and the Apocalyptic Body*,” suggests that even if we are living through apocalyptic times, the work of teaching, theorizing, and creating continues:

When we theorize and create at the end of time, we speak into a chamber of echoes, knowing what may return can be potentially distorted, partial, or even lost. Even despite this reality, something answers. Students breathe. Teachers theorize and create. Rituals repeat. The forms of silence in the margins gather new kinds of meaning. We teach and produce in the tremors. (p. 51)

Throughout this issue, we encounter these reverberating tremors in scholars’ examinations of themselves, their histories, and broader curricular possibilities—even within the constraints of the present moment.

In his 2025 Bergamo keynote address, King (2026) reminds us that continuing to theorize and create requires critical hope. He does not present critical hope as a singular solution for a moment in which “DEI, Critical Race Theory, ‘woke’—[are] all positioned as threats to society” (p. ##). Instead, King recounts his own experience of being targeted for supporting and using the Black Historical Consciousness framework (King, 2020) with partner school districts. Yet he argues:

While oppressed people may succumb to cynicism, hopelessness, or retreat, those who embrace critical hope resist despair and imagine their current conditions as temporary. They envision the possibility of a better—or at least more equitable—future. Critical hope is cultivated by historically oppressed groups that proactively and innovatively create spaces for hope to emerge. (pp. 12-13)

Spaces in which such hope may emerge are also illuminated by Porcher and Bertrand (2026) in “Honoring the OGs: Centering Black Educators as Theorists in Teacher Education.” Through Collective Black Feminist Currere (McNair-Lee, 2025), they draw upon their Black Gaze Framework (Bertrand & Porcher, 2023) to urge teacher educators to center the intellectual and pedagogical contributions of OGs such as Alice Dunbar-Nelson and Septima Poinsette Clark. As they explain, “Through collective Black Feminist currere, engaging the lives and work of OGs becomes a regressive act of remembering and a relational act of reclamation” (Porcher & Bertrand, 2026, p. ##).

While Porcher and Bertrand offer teacher educators frameworks for engaging with the lives and work of Black educators from the past, Murray (2026) uses Black Feminist currere to examine her mother’s educational journey alongside her own. From within an increasingly difficult educational context, Murray openly wonders about her capacity to continue: can she “stay”?

My mother’s journey through these multiple worlds, where navigating life as a single mother, an undergraduate student, and into teaching at the age of 50, was a living embodiment of the progressive phase. Her radical commitment to finish what she had started in 1973 at Nicholls State University is a model of what it looks like to choose education again and to restore what one may think is lost. Yet, as I move through my own educational career, I stand at a restless crossroads to continue in the K-12 sector, the urge to further my educational pursuits into higher education, or to leave the public school system as a whole. This painful tension exposes my accomplishments alongside my fears—

coexisting with my success as a teacher, the communities I participated in to sustain myself for 12.5 years, and the grief of what I believed education was supposed to be. (pp. 59-60)

Kraemer-Holland (2026) similarly offers readers a feminist currere journey through affect and emotion in education.

In creative communion with Adrienne Rich's poem "Diving into the Wreck," she traces the emotional contours of educational experience. Although Kraemer-Holland does not characterize her work as post-apocalyptic, her encounter with wreckage resonates with DeLeon's invitation to inhabit and examine the ruins:

This wouldn't be the last time that my—or other—voice would carry, upending educational and public spaces with displays of resistance, anger, or rage. While a small part of me now acknowledges how this formative moment might have (sub)consciously informed my decision to become a teacher—or informed how I teach—this moment also shaped how I came to initially understand emotions, especially my own, as seemingly entirely private, individually-dictated, and often unbecoming choices. In this case, I'd chosen the wrong one, a choice that contoured my stature in my tiny educational world; a choice that altered how my parents viewed me; a choice that damaged my personal and professional relationships with others, and with myself. I did not act angry; I was angry. And I found it, this label, disastrous—until I carved out an opportunity to "seize" (Greene, 1977, p. 284) meaning within the wreck(age) underneath these unspoken emotion-labels and emotion-rules, and (re)turned to see them differently up close. (p. 99)

DeLeon (2026), King (2026), and Schultz (2026) each ask readers to see education as it is, without surrendering the possibility that it might become otherwise. Schultz's essay, "Selling School Safety: Surveillance, Commercialism, and a Not-So-Hidden Curriculum," cuts directly into a lived reality of contemporary schooling. Students, families, and educators are increasingly told that surveillance is a necessary condition of safety. The systems Schultz examines may not initially appear as "ruins," but the questions they generate echo across the issue and help readers, in DeLeon's terms, "recognize the situation we are in" (2026, p. 41). Schultz asks, "Perhaps, in the spirit of curriculum studies, we need to keep asking questions. What can be done to keep young people and schools safe, given the urgency of the moment?" (2026, p. 36).

Although Schultz poses this question in the context of surveillance and institutional attempts to produce safety, it reverberates across the work of every scholar in this issue. What does it mean to create safety within conditions of abjection, censorship, exhaustion, grief, racialized violence, surveillance, and institutional abandonment? What histories and relationships help educators endure? What forms of curriculum make reclamation, resistance, and different futures possible?

As DeLeon (2026) writes:

As we embrace the ruins and explore the graveyard of what once was, we are not pulled towards a nihilistic conclusion, nor are we called to a vanity of hope that pervades much educational theory. Recognizing the situation we are in, is not defeat nor is it resignation. Instead, it becomes a productive force that animates our imaginations towards a radically different future potential. (p. 41)

The scholars in this issue neither minimize the conditions of the present nor allow those conditions to have the final word. They remember, reclaim, question, teach, and create within the tremors. Their work invites us to recognize what has been damaged or lost while remaining attentive to what still answers.

Onward toward a future of radically different potential.

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