

Engaging Texts Today or How to Read a Curriculum Poem

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In the dark times
Will there also be singing?
Yes, there will also be singing
About the dark times.

Bertolt Brecht, motto to “Svendborg Poems,” 1939

I AM HEARTENED TO JOIN THE EDITORIAL TEAM of *Journal of Curriculum Theorizing* in this time of great uncertainty and promise for the field and, indeed, education writ large. I imagine our time is not unlike those confronting the original team of the *Journal* led by William Pinar. *JCT*, as it is now called, was created in what Pinar (1999) called “a period of breakdown,” and “crisis” of the field and the times.

We have entered another such time in which it seems necessary to review and renew significance of our work in the post-truth, post-reality world. The foundation of Western knowledge initiated by European colonialism is duly shaken. The stakes over the generation of knowledge and curriculum that matters in our lives have never been higher, even while the activities of knowledge—free enquiry, study, reading, researching and pedagogy—are significantly weakened by the devaluing of the humanities in public and higher education in democratic nations.

As such we are put upon to get ahead of the times to dream up an education that can sustain the recent onslaught to the life of the mind and higher education. The culture/knowledge wars, and its soldiers, identarian politics viciously resurge as this regressive movement seems bound and determined to turn us on each other in this moment of global political upheaval. Onto-epistemological wars are not new and are endemic to academic scholarship—gate-keeping after all is to secure an enclosure for one’s kind. But what is new is that these powerful intellectual and textual rhetorics are mistakenly cited, seized by strong men who acquire the full force of their populist rancor to sew division and resentment in the real world. If colleagues are right to point out the ways in which the field is Eurocentric and upholding whiteness and, as such, parochial, we also cannot let politics come between our search for regenerating knowledges in all forms that

teach us as they repair, renew, and reconcile an unspeakable past with each other. As James Baldwin (1962) reminded us, “To accept one’s past—one’s history—is not the same thing as drowning in it; it is learning how to use it.”

Reconceptualization then, as Pinar (1979) wrote in Issue 1(1) of the *Journal*, “begins in fundamental critique of [our] field.” In such a reconceptualization, traditions of thought serve as resources for revolt rather than orthodoxies securing assent. Most importantly I think, at least for my editorial vision of the section, “Engaging Texts,” is Pinar’s (1979) understanding of curriculum as a “dialectic relation among knowers, knowing, and the known.” It is this dialectic that allows us to speak to and speak back to our readings of (m)others, tradition, the ancestors, and an old world while making way for a new (Arendt, 1958/1988). Curriculum, Madeline Grumet (1989) writes, is lived out on the body. As taken from its root, as *currere*, curriculum runs the course of a life (Pinar, 1975) but also, I might add, following Thomas King (2003) and Hannah Arendt (1958/1988), the lands we walk and the worlds we make.

Curriculum theorizing is radically reforming in the way it was first reconceived by the first editorial team in those early days 40 years ago. Still and today, the field has always responded to the times because as Madeline Grumet (1999) insisted, the curriculum field is “firmly anchored in the world.” “Curriculum,” she continued, “is a child of culture, and the relation is as complex and reciprocal as are any that bonds the generations.” Culture is evasive, as Gayatri Spivak (1999) noted, always “on the move.” We are chasing culture even as it is making us who we are and might be.

Curriculum scholars wager on the power of thinking and its attendant activities of reverie, study, contemplation, and deliberation. We engage in attentive study to question, learn, understand, and reword the world. We read the world in a word, to speak to and act in it, as Paolo Freire (1985) urged us to do. Curriculum theorizing provides a third space between identity/knowledge and culture/politics. Study seems like a weak force in the times in which we live. It has proven to be so forceful in the strongest social movements of acting in and redressing human injustice.

In 2016, a most unread, bigoted, brutal, and narrow-minded man became president of the United States. It is no surprise, perhaps, that violence, fascisms, populism, and non-reading/thinking collude with each other. Women across the globe set to the streets *en masse* with signs resounding, but not in the same way, the civil rights and Feminist movements of the 60s. While participating in the marches, my mixed-race daughters asked, “What do the signs mean?” I pointed them to primary texts accounting for each and every fraught wave of feminist thought. The signs reverberated a curriculum of women and women-identified persons. Millions circulated in a sea of protest, wrought out of a history of civil rights won by the courage and resolve of people marching and dying on streets. Similarly, living syllabi emerged out of the Idle No More and Black Lives Matters movement as Nathan Snaza (2019) noted in his recent article, “Curriculum Against the State.” These voices of studious dissent rallied against the forces that continue to subjugate Black and Indigenous peoples to a brutal colonial and enslaved past unthinkably resurged in the history of the present.

Without engaging texts put forth by Feminist, Indigenous, and Black intellectual traditions of thought, social movements appear to come from nowhere. But these movements are scholarly traditions, modes of thinking together, as Stefan Harney and Fred Moten (2013) insisted. They gift us with the language so desperately needed to articulate cruel and inhumane rhetoric, policies, acts.

In a time of sound bites and social media, language is emptied out and weaponized. The diminished language of Us and Them wielded so carelessly by mostly fascist men and a few

women, shows that not only is literacy, truth, and education in crisis, but so is the social imaginary. It is why, in this demeaning time where language is reduced to rubble, that studying, engaging, recreating texts that sustained us in times past can be called upon as primers for the present. Plato's (360 B.C.E./2003) *Republic*, Plenty Coup's (1930/2003) *Dreams of the Chickadee*, Jacob's (1861/2001) *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*, Arendt's (1958/1988) *The Human Condition*, Jordan's (2016) "A Poem about my Rights"—these old, worn, enduring curriculum texts can guide a way that we recall was worth the sweat, blood, and tears of those who came, studied, spoke, wrote, and acted before us. "Better people than you were powerless," the poet Carolyn Forché (1982, 2019) put it: they died so we must act, live with the thought of their memory in mind (Simon, 2004).

In these times we are witnessing, not only are academics and teachers turning back to texts of generations past, but so are reporters, politicians, lawyers, and artists. Lost for words to describe what we are witnessing, we consult revolutionary thinkers like James Baldwin, Jericho Brown, Hannah Arendt, Toni Morrison, Carolyn Forché, Gayatri Spivak, and new ones like Cristina Sharpe, Ilya Kaminsky, Iman Perry, Claudia Rankine, Rebecca Solnit, and Layli Long Soldier. These brave minds all, in their own way, attempt to read the tautologies and fascisms heralded by supremacies, misogyny, in other words, nationalisms, as Arjun Appadurai (2006) noted in *Fear of Small Numbers: The Geography of Hate*.

The discourses of fundamentalisms, orthodoxies, supremacies that rabid nationalisms and group think generate will and can lead to our collective death and destruction. And so we see, words are as powerful as weapons when armed with vitriolic rivalries and launched like cluster bombs at those who are without a shield and platform with which to defend their lives. As Jacques Derrida (1985) noted in "Racism's Last Stand," hatred has to have a word; race begins in and with a word placed against an other. To combat hatred and violence also requires strong, unyielding, well-read, and carefully spoken and placed words. As such, symbolic things require our attention more than ever in this world of unregulated socially symbolic media explosively combusting uncontained hateful opinions into acceptable public and political discourse.

It is our study of affective forms of knowledge making the world that distinguishes us curriculum scholars. Curriculum textual theorists are trained in a special kind of closely felt reading we perform on texts to engage how it is they pedagogically seduce us, lead us on our thinking, insinuate in our skin, make us believe we are not normal or real if not like the characters depicted on the page. In his revisiting of Arthur Mee's *Children Encyclopedia*, the Nobel prize winner J. M. Coetzee (2018) demonstrated the power and possibility inherent in re-reading, re-viewing, re-memorizing, and re-constructing the texts that are critical to a child's formation. He showed that curriculum not only runs the course of a life but forms while it carries it. We cannot afford to engage children in texts without first studying their meanings critically, he gently and insistently argued, without mediating them pedagogically, without considering what enigmatic messages they give not only by way of words, but to a soft, insinuating, profound force of pedagogy that grips us without knowing: feeling.

The first curriculum text I (Mishra Tarc, 2015) engaged is one expressed by a mother's grief. More so than joy, beauty, resistance, and even love, it is grief with the world that each person haltingly labors to communicate to the world. Scholars mistake grief for anger, and although anger is one of grief's most spectacular productions, I, like Morrison (1987), have little time "to watch it." Curriculum breaks our silence, Janet Miller (2005) reminded us. It unsettles the illusory peace. It gives us the language, the ideas, the precedents, the resources to prepare ourselves to wage what

Derrida (1998) has called, “hand to hand combat” with those forces that would seek to do us in. It gives us the symbolic means to carry our unrest and speak our grief with the world, with others.

Grief precedes all emotion—it is the grounds for a hard-fought existence forcibly coming out of another into ourselves. We are born stricken with loss, knowing that something is not quite right where we are found. We come into the world without membership in a pre-formed society, subject to conditions these strange grown up beings place on our tiny bodies. We come into or out of ourselves again in school, as children. Our infantile grief with the world is confirmed when we learn that the best of ourselves can be turned against ourselves. We are made to occupy sexual and social identities, positions, and cultural morays that resemble little of the way we feel and want to be inside.

I began studying the workings of grief on existences as a small child given to console a homesick mother. This study steers me to my curricular objects—children left behind by parents, separated at borders, stranded at sea. I lift up children’s stories that no one hears and return them in words that labor to bring significance to all children feel and experience of the world. My mission for literacy is not to teach children to be successful in a capitalist society that rabidly consumes its young; it is to teach them to closely read to generate knowledge of their selves, the world, and others (Mishra Tarc, 2020). My investigations of how language forms a life, as Christopher Bollas (2011) finds, informs my aesthetic and capacities for reading, which is through a wet fog of wanting to know, clamoring to understand. Grief fashions the tales I tell to repair irreparable things, to paint them with something that can stick together fragments of a life caught in between worlds and needing a way to reconcile the difference.

I learned to read the valences of sorrow in between the lines of my mom’s heart bifurcated language text. When I write, I do so brokenly, doubled down, and sometimes in search of a story in pieces, in pursuit of “the parts left” out as Thomas Ogden (2014) suggested of all stories. I have long-abandoned the demand for coherence or the so-called rigor required of an academic theoretician. I refuse to play a language game of the best technicians, mimics, and cheats common to so much academic writing. But I can write this way if necessary because I know communication in the other’s language is for survival the way Adrienne Rich put it in response to the protests of her dear friend Audre Lorde’s caution about the master’s tool never taking down the master’s house. But to search for the words is already an agony, as Derrida (1998) noted on the occasion of speaking to a second language colleague (with his mother’s dementia in mind). I have only one language, and it is not mine.

Words have never moved me as much as what they hold silently inside: the contents of the speaker, writer, teller (Klein, 1928). It is the unknowable affect of the text, Sandro Barros (2018) finds, moving us to hear others. Those who read work that endures, not for a soundbite, but for a lifetime, have felt this too. I do not know how some words get to us, get in, but when they do there is no end to what might be found and learned anew there.

And it is for this wordless, stirring, overwhelming affect that feels everything and “says nothing,” Jean Francois Lyotard (1995) insisted, we owe an existential debt. Everything that moves us to read, speak, and write affects us (Springgay, 2011). Let us leave the work of scholars who write without feeling, divorced from the words they write, unable to summon the grounds of their infancy and childhood that allowed them to speak and then write in the first place. Let us be like children only choosing objects that appeal to and move us because, as Melanie Klein (1952) found in her work with young children, they are significant, important, pressing, help us to dream, speak, imagine, revolt. I feel sorry for the scholars who believe their words to the point that they

materialize them in their real world, wage war with others over them. I have learned that, even in the best writing, words fail to get across what we and they can mean over and over and over again.

“I grew out of books,” the fictional John in Coetzee’s (1974), *Duskland*, proclaims (Mishra Tarc, 2020). As have I. I imagine I have more in common with fictional people I read in a book than real ones. As such, the curriculum theorizing position that seems most comfortable for me is that of a reader. In reading we do not have to communicate our understandings immediately to others. We can hold the other’s words in our minds for a long time, stewing over them, mulling them over, ruminating over what they mean with so much pleasure it feels painful. Deep inside the other’s minds, we can play with their words, so enigmatically put, resounding the things we cannot express to others, expressed to us. Engaging texts means paying close attention to how words form our existence, such that the intertextual voice with which we speak to others resembles the one we feel stirring within. How I learn to speak anew with Toni Morrison’s (2000) words, see from John Berger’s (1980) inner vision, stand up with the appeal to children’s existence in a sustainable world made by Greta Thunberg (2019), sing the courage of Mary Brown (in Pinder, 1991), an Indigenous elder fighting a land claims trial with a song.

The profound and lasting affect of significant curriculum texts is pedagogical. You read Morrison’s (1970) *Bluest Eye*, and you find that eye staring back into your own, for days, and months, and even years later. You drink in like water her dying for thirst phrases in *Beloved* like, “Freeing yourself was one thing; claiming ownership of that freedom was another” or “everywhere, children are the scorned people of the earth” or “you your best thing, you are” (Morrison, 2000), and her luminous vocabulary takes over the lexicon, initiates a counter-culture, becomes part of a new way of inhabiting yourself and being with others. From this quality of being altered by curriculum, we speak, see, hear, relearn our minds, again in a community of others with nothing and everything in common, and we are not the same.

The world as it is today is the most broken I’ve witnessed in my lifetime. Some days I feel as I imagine my parents must have, black and brown immigrants with a new baby, lost in the U.S., in the height of the violence of the Civil Rights Movement, overwhelmed and helpless, afraid to death for their children. These days, I do confess, it is hard to think, let alone create, in the midst of such compulsively, brutally repeating colonial history, racism, violence, and hatred. And as so many have done before me in times of utmost incomprehensibility, I’ve reached not for a person, but a book to guide my way.

It is unsurprising to me that others did the same under the hardest of times. Hannah Arendt read Proust while being detained in Gurs (in Stonebridge, 2019). Wole Soyinka (1969) wrote poetry while jailed as a political prisoner. The last English words my father spoke to us were “tyger tyger” from Blake’s (1794) poem *My Tyger*, a work he recited throughout his life by heart, wrought from his British colonial childhood. When our lives are failing, when the world fails us, when every human person fails us, it is these texts, these sacred words summoning us from inside to keep going: I love you my child, you are my life (Coetzee, 1990); the weight of the world is love (Ginsberg 2006); at some point in your life the world’s beauty becomes enough (Morrison, 1981). These first curriculum lessons we learn from our mothers, our teachers, our authors in childhood, in school. This most secret, untold knowledge of our most significant (m)others keep us going, remind us of our humanity; in these life sustaining words of the other, we hear a voice summoning our way through the glimmer of silence. The “silence that is something of the sky in us,” as Ilya Kaminsky (2019) reconceived in his stunning revision of what it means to hear and engage human texts attesting to our humanity in a world in ruins, a world we can remake anew, if we have the will and way, in a *Deaf Republic*.

So even in the worst of times, we engage texts to engage our ruins to engage our lives to engage each other. More than any other activity, engaging texts help us retrieve the plot of the broken pieces of our human story. “We tell ourselves stories in order to live,” Joan Didion (1979) writes. And as Adriana Cararvero (1997, 2015) finds: We write narratives after destruction to pick up the pieces of our ruined lives, to repair ourselves, to begin once more. We need words to remind us who we are, to refind and reclaim our stolen stories, to repair our collective grief with our societal loss, in the words of Paulo Salvio (2017). Or, in another time and way, James Baldwin (1963) said, “You think your pain and your heartbreak are unprecedented in the history of the world, but then you read.” We need these songs, Greg Dimitradis (2009) insists, this curriculum of freedom, “to mitigate the vulnerability...experienced” in our lives. And so, through words, we say our peace in hopes of freeing ourselves, replacing ourselves, as Brian Casemore (2007) put it, time and time again—a mind, a relation, a life, a world, without giving in to inconsolable devastation.

Toni Morrison (2015) wrote that it is when we are at our most lost for words and each other that,

artists go to work. There is no time for despair, no place for self-pity, no need for silence, no room for fear. We speak, we write, we do language. That is how civilizations heal. I know the world is bruised and bleeding, and though it is important not to ignore its pain, it is also critical to refuse to succumb to its malevolence. Like failure, chaos contains information that can lead to knowledge—even wisdom. Like art.

As Morrison’s indomitable indignant summons shows, the pedagogical potential of engaging texts speaks to the what Julia Kristeva (2014) termed “new forms revolt” of a person, “keeping the psyche alive.” This revolutionary curriculum text, cowritten with and by our other, compels us to say something about a grave injustice, a dark time, an unfair world. The curriculum of the other, Nicholas Ng Fook (2010) finds, passes through the person, the artist, the scholar, the reader, the child, and back to the world. The other’s knowledge gives us a chance, a promise, a plea for another version of the story we tell each other to change the narrative, stay afloat, to survive. What if we told another narrative of human being than the one we wrought? Cameron McCarthy (2002) asked poignantly in the days after 9-11. What might we be, then? The question, what if, materializes through the chance that, with a curriculum of the present, we might inventively repair, renew broken societal ties and scenes with each other. So we keep reading, studying, dialoguing together, to think, create, and write an untold story, risk ourselves, participate in our collective curricular rising. This generative, reparative, forgiving, pedagogical action, wrought from an aesthetic of grief, mourns our unthinkable existence, while navigating the sea storm of this ruined world we share (Britzman, 1998). Curriculum is then a demand and plea for the living, in our struggle for memory, for every violently lost gentle and loving soul, in their memory, which came before us and continue to make our way.

In her re-reading of the 2009 apology President Obama made to Native Americans for the decimation of a peoples and their ways of life, Layli Long Soldier (2017) produced the stunning text, *Whereas*. Her re-reading of the official apology, she wrote, is “directed to the apology’s delivery, as well as the language, crafting and arrangement of the written document.” In the long form poem, Long Soldier rereads what is terribly unsaid, in her symbolic combat of the violence constitutional language commits to apology. She excavates deep within what the document does

not say to resurface the language of the voices of the dead crying out for redress. She visits the architecture of public apologies through intimate reviews of colonial pasts in the lives they have devastated. And through the exchange of words, she fashions a text that more directly addresses the brutal violence locked in post-colonial histories the government seeks to foreclose in its use of “Whereas.”

In *Whereas*, what I consider a curriculum text, Long Soldier re-enacts powerful reclamation of self, of motherhood, of childhood, of the existence of a people in a multiplicity of acts of self-determination. In the introduction, she writes,

I am a citizen of the United States and an enrolled member of the Oglala Sioux Tribe, meaning I am a citizen of the Oglala Lakota Nation—and in this dual citizenship, I must work, I must eat, I must art, I must mother, I must friend, I must listen, I must observe, constantly I must live.

To engage texts, then, requires a working through of the land’s histories, a refinding of lost knowledge scattered in plains, a putting together the broken pieces of our mother’s language, our wind, it moves us from within. With whatever it is, Paula Gunn Allen (1989) wrote “moves” us. *Taku skan skan* forms a fundamental redress of the conditions of colonial life that make us other than human, the way Long Soldier so poignantly does and learns to do. From her daughter’s learning of Lakota, she learns how in childhood it is possible, it is indeed necessary, to learn to make new selves, apart from our parents, to witness our children find their way, in the world they too “constantly must live.”

The first reconceptualization of curriculum came in the wake of the Civil Rights Movement in the United States. Every significant revision to thought comes in a global time of political upheaval, as Paul Tarc (2013) noted. We are now entering another such time of great turmoil resonant of the Second World War with its attendant rise of strong-men and their toxic fascisms. Now it is not only the curriculum field and public education that find themselves sorely tested, but truth and knowledge of reality itself. We watch helpless as human history is eroded by a global amnesia reminiscent of the one that plagues the elders searching for their disappeared children in Kazuro Ishiguro’s (2015) *The Sleeping Giant*. But we do have help. It is in our history of surviving the past. Without this shared text bearing witness to traumatic human history and with no sense of what is real and true (Crichlow, 2014; Simon, Rosenberg, & Eppert 2000), humanizing education might fall to the priorities of a killing capitalism. What is needed more than ever, Mario Di Paolantonio (2015, 2019) finds, is a thoughtful education, forums of education oriented to thinking and forming critical capacities of young people to meaningfully engage the times and each other in a shared old world lying between us (Arendt, 1958/1988). The everyday, on the ground, “folk” curriculum we produce from our felt relations to each other and responses to the world and each other teach us how to hear, talk, and learn from each other to speak as political subjects and act in the world (Rocha, 2015).

With my fellow editors, I gravely assume responsibility of moving this journal into another sphere of reconceptualization that heeds the one in which it was born while considering the challenges for reconsidering curriculum before us. *JCT* is a journal that is often overlooked because it is collaborative, free, and does not adhere to bean counting (Willinsky, 2009). And because it is a forum of free enquiry, in the truest sense of engagement of and for all, it remains so critical, seminal to our scholarly and pedagogical development in addressing the times. At no time in my academic career have I felt this pressing urgency for those of us in positions of power,

tenured in a time in which the work of so many is tenuous and precarious, to hold, what Arendt (1958/1988) described as, the “special” duty of the public scholar/teacher to *freely* study, write, speak, and act for the un/common good and wellbeing, to try to intervene in social hatred, inequality, injustice, and environmental degradation, and, above all, to take responsibility for children and the generations, where and when we can. As readers, educators, and scholars, we must hold ourselves in the “third space” between politics and the state mediating how it is young people and the public can make sense of our lives (Bhabha, 1994). In a time when so many are fighting for their lives, many of them children, we, the teachers, cannot maintain public silence and fail to act in ways that intervene in and with the forces of tyranny, destruction, and extremity that threaten us all.

To those who say poetry, literature, art, knowledge, these curriculum texts can do nothing to stop injustice, intervene in racism, reunite families at the border, I say, think again. It has always been the tiny, intimating, revolting words of the other (Kristeva, 2014) that have stirred us, stirred millions to action. *Mama. Papi. I do not want to be alone* (migrant child in M. Jordan, 2018). *Ain't I a Woman?* (Truth, 1851). *J'Accuse* (Zola, 1898). *Free at last* (Luther King Jr., 1963). *The personal is political* (millions of women in Hanisch, 1970). *I can't breathe* (Garner in Gross, 2017). *Water is life* (Standing Rock Collective in Looking Horse, 2018). *I am here to recruit you* (Milk, 1978). *You are still not mature enough to tell it like it is. You are failing us* (Thunberg, 2019). These words stirring from the inside of others remind us of what it means to be human. These indelible words are spoken out of worlds of struggle and find articulation in its collective expression as a call to read and rewrite the plot and narrative of our shared humanity, to renew mutuality in and of our relations that make up our worlds before it is too late (Den Heyer, 2014). And these words lay the foundations of our collective curricular struggle to regenerate our social movements to equality, liberty, and freedom over centuries. They remind us adults to tell it like it is: not for some unknowable future world of children but to not fail them right now.

As words that attest to one's revolt, perhaps the poem, most of all, as Carl Leggo (2016) insists, *can* support us to theorize curriculum anew. We found our way with poetry in times past, through the words of Olds (1984), Celan (2000), Sebald (2003), Darwish (2003), Hikmet (2003), J. Jordan (2005), Lorde (2012), Rich (2013), and Rukeyser (2020). It is not surprising then that in our dark time poetry is again on the rise in the breath-taking works of Jericho Brown (2019), Ilya Kaminsky (2019), Terrence Hayes (2017), Ada Limon (2018), Mary Ruefle (2016), Garth Greenwell (2020), Ocean Vuong (2019), and so many more, too many to name. I welcome curricular readings of these poetic works supporting us to bear witness to terrible times while offering ways of hope forwards (Tippett, 2019). And, I see regenerating work as textual as it is pedagogical, social, activist, as it is political (Mishra Tarc, 2015)—someone with ‘authorial force’ needs to read and re-read the times to our young people, to ourselves, and translate those readings into a critical and sensitizing engagement with social life that can profoundly alter the destructive path of the strong men who have seized control of political power over and across the globe. We cannot leave this vital, pressing, existential work to our children with little conceptual resources and limited vocabulary and no political power, whose sense of tradition and history is obstructed by fabricated social media accounts, outright boldface lies, gaslighting how the world is and has come to be.

To strengthen our authorial and rhetorical force as scholars, teachers, as human beings who care about the present and reading to tell it as it is, I ask you to send me your engagement with texts that express both your hope and revolt against the times. Send me your engagements with people and texts, people in texts (Eastabrook, personal communication, 1997-present) that make

you think and feel alive. Send me the readings that kept you going and the ones that you can't let go. Send me engagements that speak the truth and truth to power delivered as pedagogical subjects, one to the other. Send me the engagements that can compel us to stop killing the world we share and each other. Experiment with the "literary pedagogy" of texts that bring us closer to feeling for our own world and those of others (Robertson, 1999). This section is for us to dream up curriculum that sustains our lives in all the existing and regenerated forms it can derive. And above all, read in close, sustained, and critical ways. I have not provided page numbers for citations to the texts mentioned in this introduction. Instead I offer you a book list, a curriculum, a syllabus to urge you to read and locate these works for yourself. The list is eclectic, but so are our lives in this time in this world in these circumstances.

Together, let us set a new chart for curriculum that resounds in the old one but with a difference to acknowledge how vital curriculum is not simply in educating the generations but in ushering the survival of our existence. The cultural politics of knowledge cannot save us, only reading, thinking, speaking, bearing witness to, acting on, and writing of our (in)human condition over and over, again and again, has and can do that. Let us engage texts that carry our lives to sustain us, all livings thing from the tiniest plant to the largest ocean, throughout the generations, to regenerate our fragile and fraught co-curricular existence. We look forward to hearing from you, reading your words, writing with and against your texts, and acting in the world with intention, with renewed meaning.

Notes

1. I wish to acknowledge and am grateful to Kelly Waldrop and the *JCT* editors for the care and painstakingly close reading and review they have taken with this text.

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