Editorial
A vision for transnational curriculum inquiry

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Abstract

This essay presents the foundation Editor's vision for *Transnational Curriculum Inquiry (TCI)*, the journal of the International Association for the Advancement of Curriculum Studies (IAACS). It explores some theoretical and practical possibilities for building new transnational and transcultural solidarities in postcolonial curriculum inquiry and argues that building such solidarities requires a rethinking of the ways in which we perform and represent curriculum inquiry, so that curriculum work within a global knowledge economy does not merely assimilate national (local) curriculum discourses-practices into an imperial (global) archive.

Welcome

Welcome to the inaugural issue of *Transnational Curriculum Inquiry (TCI)*. Editorials will not be a regular feature of *TCI* but I thought that it might be useful to share my personal vision for the journal in this first issue. As an electronic open-access journal, *TCI* is both a site for transnational scholarly conversations and a site for inquiry into the ways that electronic publishing procedures facilitate and/or constrain inclusive knowledge work in global virtual spaces.

Internationalising curriculum inquiry

In my contribution to William Pinar's (2003) *International Handbook of Curriculum Research,* I critically appraise attempts to 'think globally' in environmental education over the past thirty years or more, and consider some implications of this critique for internationalising curriculum inquiry. I will not attempt to summarise this critique here but quote briefly from my concluding comments:

> internationalizing curriculum inquiry might best be understood as a process of creating transnational 'spaces' in which scholars from different localities collaborate in reframing and decentering their own knowledge traditions and negotiate trust in each other's contributions to their collective work. For those of us who work in Western knowledge traditions, a first step must be to represent and perform our distinctive approaches to curriculum inquiry in ways that authentically demonstrate their localness. This may include drawing attention to the characteristic ways in which Western genres of academic textual production invite readers to interpret local knowledge as universal discourse (Gough, 2003, p. 68).

I thus begin this editorial by outlining my location as an Australian curriculum scholar and explaining how that position disposes me towards doing curriculum inquiry transnationally. I agree with Allan Luke's (2002) diagnosis of the dilemmas presently facing academic curriculum scholars in Australia:

we have reached an impasse in theory, policy formation and classroom work that is leading to passivity, paralysis and acquiescence to a neo-Tylerian curriculum agenda… The now dominant approach to curriculum-making in Australia is typified by lists of attributes and skills and outcomes of the new human subject. To offer a normative alternative requires an ethical and political metanarrative, however self-skeptical this must be. It requires a species of critical educational theory, hybrid and polyvocal itself, that both articulates visions of social and cultural utopias and heterotopias, while blending this with a continued skepticism towards totalisation and towards the kinds of essentialism that always seem to land grand narratives in deep trouble (p. 49).

I characterise my own self-skeptical normative alternative to the now dominant approaches to curriculum making (and curriculum work writ large) in Australia and elsewhere as reworking the languages of curriculum for new publics. I will deal with these two key referents – *languages of curriculum* and *new publics* – in reverse order (and the first very briefly), beginning with the conditions under which we now perform curriculum work in Australian schools and universities. A recent rereading of Dean Ashenden et al's (1984) 'Manifesto for a democratic curriculum' reminded me that these conditions are very different from the circumstances in which I began my professional and academic career. Although the manifesto's key principles of equality, commonality, and making the curriculum public remain durable, the terms in which the authors couch their curricular imperatives reflect the values and visions of the democracy they then inhabited. Twenty years ago, conceptions of a socially just self-managing school, and references to 'progress', 'co-operation', 'success', 'enduring relevance', 'student growth and autonomy', and 'community', could be read relatively unsuspiciously. Such concepts and terms now seem less innocent and more problematic, especially if we agree with Luke (2002) that 'the unfinished business of nation-building sits undone, with misrecognition of identity and hybridity, ongoing struggles around reconciliation and entitlement, confusion about place and situatedness, and… a very slow coming to grips with our own new blended, cosmopolitan affinities and networks' (p. 50). Like Luke, I want to explore possibilities for teaching and learning and research beyond the Australian nation, and argue that new *transnational* publics might produce more defensible metanarratives for curriculum work than nationalism.

Public education in 'a democracy tempered by the rate of exchange'
During the past 20 years Australia has clearly fulfilled a prophecy made more than 120 years ago by Marcus Clarke: it has become 'a Democracy tempered by the rate of exchange'[1]. Many aspects of Australian social (and educational) policy now are functions of the nation's position in a global marketplace understood as 'a grand democracy of consumption' (Edwards, 2002). Lenore Cooper (2002) warns of the possible effects of this policy environment on the higher education sector in an article headlined 'Globalised out of existence? A new world trade agreement could mean the end of public education, but no

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[1]   Clarke used this expression in a satirical pamphlet (c. 1878), 'The Future Australian Race' (see Mackinnon, 1884, p. 251), in which he also predicted that by 1977 Queensland and other northern areas of Australia would be 'authoritarian potentates like those found in Latin America and the Orient', while the South would be a Greek democracy: 'The intellectual capital of this Republic will be Melbourne, the fashionable and luxurious capital on the shores of Sydney Harbour'. Clarke (1846-1881) is now most often remembered as the author of *For the Term of His Natural Life*, a nineteenth century convict melodrama first published as a newspaper serial and recycled posthumously as a novel, a silent movie classic, and a TV mini-series in the 1970s. But in 1870s Melbourne, Clarke was widely known as a satirist, playwright, editor and crusading journalist who was sympathetic to Victoria's underprivileged and contemptuous of the pompous colonial ruling class.

one's paying much attention' (p. 40). Cooper notes that Australia is one of only four nations among the 144 members of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) to advance proposals for the education services sector as part of the WTO's General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS). The vast majority of WTO members have made no commitments to opening their education services sectors to global competition, and their caution may reflect widespread concerns about education becoming a commodity to be traded for profit under international law rather than being a not-for-profit public good.[2] Evidence that such concerns are justified can be found in other sectors of public administration where trade liberalisation threatens socially equitable access to utilities and amenities. For example, environmental organisations are prominent in the backlash against economic globalisation in the US because many federal laws on emissions, recycling, waste reduction, and toxic substances in packaging – for which US environmentalists lobbied long and hard – can now be challenged as barriers to free trade by nations without comparable environmental legislation, thanks to the Clinton/Gore administration's enthusiastic support for the terms of the Uruguay round of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) in the early 1990s. Although education in Australia might be in no immediate danger of being 'globalised out of existence', the potential long-term implications of the GATS for higher education is one among many early warning signs of policy trends that Australian curriculum scholars might have reason to resist and subvert.

By allowing their authority in some public policy arenas to be subordinated to global economic forces, governments of nation-states such as Australia are in effect making their own national boundaries increasingly permeable (despite preaching and prosecuting some aspects of border protection much more vigorously). The point that I wish to emphasise here is that this undermining of national authority destabilises the grounding and legitimation of public education systems in national democracies. As Carlos Alberto Torres (2002) points out, the purposes of public education typically include preparing future labour for the nation's economy and preparing citizens for the nation's polity, but globalisation 'shifts solidarities both within and outside the national state' (p. 364). He thus argues that alternative futures for democratic education under globalisation must address questions raised by the globalisation of the two traditional bases of formal education systems, namely, governance and economies:

> These questions are very straightforward: Will globalization make human rights and democratic participation more universal, or will globalization redefine human enterprise as market exchanges invulnerable to traditional civic forms of governance? Whether education as a publicly shared invention, contributing to civic life and human rights, can thrive depends on the future of globalization – a future that may offer the internationalization of the ideals of a democratic education or may reduce education, and civic participation, to narrow instruments of remote and seemingly ungovernable market forces (p. 364).

Torres thus calls for a reexamination of democratic education in the light of the transformations of individual and collective identities into both more privatised and more globalised forms and concludes that 'to ask how educational policies could contribute to a

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[2]   For example, Cooper (2002) reports that a coalition of four peak bodies (the American Council on Education, the [US] Council for Higher Education Accreditation, the [Canadian] Association of Universities and Colleges, and the European Higher Education Association) has issued a joint declaration recommending that their respective national constituencies make no commitments to trade liberalisation in higher education services, because too little is understood about the consequences for domestic regulatory frameworks, public subsidies, quality, access and equity (p. 40). The Administrative Board of the International Association of Universities subsequently endorsed this declaration; see http://www.unesco.org/iau/globalization/wto-gats.html <13 January 2003>

democratic multicultural citizenship poses a formidable challenge to the theoretical imagination' (p. 376).

Shifting solidarities within and outside the nation-state create both new threats to public education and new opportunities for its reconceptualisation. Threats include various large-scale and long-term homogenising projects that use seemingly innocuous acronyms – TIMSS, PIRLS, PISA[3], etc. – to disguise the powerful normalising agendas of the international league tables they produce. This is not the place to engage in an extended critique of these projects, but I certainly reject their rhetoric of 'effectiveness', 'improvement' and pursuit of 'world class' status. They are manifestations of 'audit cultures' (Strathern, 2000) that reduce education to a remote instrument of competitive market exchanges.

My focus here is on opportunities for reconceptualising curriculum work that can be generated by considering how we should respond to, and progressively consolidate, the formation of new publics – democratic, multicultural, *and transnational* citizenries. I suggest that one plausible defence against the crude thinking of culturally homogenising international projects is to work towards building transnational coalitions for public education that critically and creatively translate, adapt and expand national democratic ideals into international educational purposes. How can national democracies with diverse histories and different social contexts collaborate to prepare future labour for a *global* economy and prepare citizens for an *international* polity?

New publics 1: multinational curriculum development

Cherry Collins (2002) identifies and criticises a number of current trajectories in Australian school systems, including a trend 'towards an international rather than towards a national curriculum' – a curriculum that 'has a distinctly capitalist flavour. It has to do with a world in which influential capitalist firms have a global reach and in which people are primarily seen as human resources (p. 48).

I suggest that people can help each other to resist their own commodification as instruments of market forces by taking advantage of the shifts in solidarities within and between nation states that globalisation affords. Nancy Fraser (1993) distinguishes between two senses of solidarity:

—Solidarity premised on shared identity: this sense of solidarity encompasses the circle of those whom we feel to be like ourselves, while excluding those whom we feel to be different from us.

—Solidarity premised on shared responsibility: this sense of solidarity encompasses the circle of those upon whom we feel entitled to make claims for help and those whom we feel obligated to help in turn (p. 22).

Fraser notes that these senses of solidarity are not neatly separable, but that solidarity as shared identity often sets the limits of solidarity as shared responsibility – that is, we tend to limit our sense of shared responsibility to People Like Us. But these different senses need not coincide, and Fraser suggests that solidarity as shared responsibility is potentially more encompassing than solidarity as shared identity. She expands this potential by outlining four ways of formulating an 'inclusive, universalist, global view of solidarity as shared responsibility which does not require shared identity'. In brief, these are:

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[3]   The Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS 2003) succeeds two rounds of the Third International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS 1999 and TIMSS 1995). The Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS) commenced in 2001 and the OECD Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) is a three-yearly assessment of reading, mathematical and scientific literacies of 15-year-olds in industrialised countries that commenced in 2000.

a. A socialist view of global solidarity based on… our interdependence in a common global political economy… where wealth is the common creation of all people's labor, both waged and unwaged…

b. An environmentalist view of global solidarity based on our… interdependence as inhabitants of a common biosphere…

c. A feminist view of global solidarity rooted in a concrete sense of human interdependence in everyday life, a vivid sense of the forms of emotional and practical support people require from one another in daily life, not only when they are very young, very old, or sick but also when they are healthy adults…

d. A radical-democratic view of global solidarity rooted in the fact that we inhabit an increasingly global public space of discourse and representation… that might be redefined as a space in which all people deliberate together to decide our common fate (p. 22).

None of these views of global solidarity requires sameness of cultural identity, and they suggest a plausible response to Torres's (2002) 'challenge to the theoretical imagination' by inviting us to rehearse alternative ways to rehabilitate democratic ideals in the wake of their destabilisation by global corporatism. The challenge to the *curricular* imagination is to envisage how we might build transnational networks of curriculum workers who share these senses of solidarity and are willing to enact them in curriculum inquiry.

Walter Parker, Akira Ninomiya and John Cogan (1999) describe a multinational curriculum development project that goes some way towards enacting some of these global solidarities. A multinational team of 26 researchers from nine nations in four regions[4] worked over a four-year period to plan and conduct a study that would result in a set of curriculum recommendations focused on education for citizenship. The team adapted the Delphi futures research methodology to interview and then survey iteratively a panel of 182 scholars, practitioners and policy leaders in various fields (science and technology; health and education; politics and government; business, industry and labour; the arts) in these nations. The researchers sought the panel's agreement on major global trends over the next 25 years, the desirable citizen characteristics needed to deal with these changes, and the educational strategies likely to develop these characteristics. Delphi techniques aim to produce deep rather than superficial consensus and the strongest joint recommendation on educational strategies produced by this multinational panel of scholars and practitioners, a minority of whom were educators, was for 'critical thinking with different others' on 'ethical questions' arising from the global trends (Parker, Ninomiya & Cogan, 1999). They recommended 'a question-driven (not answer-driven) curriculum with deliberation (not transmission) the pedagogy of choice' and with an 'emphasis on multinational contacts and cooperation' (p. 125).

The subject matter of the curriculum devised by this multinational approach is a set of six ethical questions derived from the consensus trends, characteristics and strategies:

1. What should be done in order to promote equity and fairness within and among societies?
2. What should be the balance between the right to privacy and free and open access to information in information-based societies?
3. What should be the balance between protecting the environment and meeting human needs?
4. What should be done to cope with population growth, genetic engineering, and children in poverty?

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[4] The regions and nations were: East Asia (Japan), Southeast Asia (Thailand), Europe (UK, The Netherlands, Hungary, Germany, Greece) and North America (Canada, USA).

5. What should be done to develop shared (universal, global) values while respecting local values?

6. What should be done to secure an ethically based distribution of power for deciding policy and action on the above issues? (Parker, Ninomiya & Cogan, 1999, p. 129)

These questions are augmented by a set of more familiar curriculum components – concepts, skills and attitudes related to the questions – but these are seen as ancillary to the curriculum's key attributes: *ethical questions* and *deliberation*:

> The research team understands that goals are transformed right within the process of public discourse. For this reason, deliberation is not only an instructional means but a curriculum outcome itself, for it creates a particular kind of democratic public culture among the deliberators: listening as well as talking, sharing resources, forging decisions together rather than only advocating positions taken earlier, and coming to disagreement. Because the issues being deliberated in the curriculum are multinational issues, and because students are conjoining in some way (e.g., face-to-face, electronic) on these common problems. This curriculum has the potential to contribute to the development of what Elise Boulding (1988) called a 'global civic culture' or what today might be called a transnational civil society (Parker, Ninomiya & Cogan, 1999, p. 130).

There is much more to Parker, Ninomiya and Cogan's (1999) study than I can recount here, and the details of their research make it clear that they are not starry-eyed internationalists. Rather, they represent a team of curriculum makers that is working purposively towards a multinational perspective on citizenship and citizenship education that loosens the grip of shared national identity on the meaning of 'citizen' and raises the more cosmopolitan concept of a 'world citizen… for whom the commonwealth is not only a local or national political community' (p. 130). I do not believe that I am reading too much into their study by locating it in the political imaginaries of shared responsibility that Fraser outlines. Although their conceptions of deliberation are informed by Deweyan scholars like Joseph Schwab (1969), they also cite Fraser (1995), and others who critique the boundaries of identity politics (e.g. Benhabib, 1996), in recognising that deliberation 'is hugely problematic in actually existing societies where power and status control participation in deliberation as well as the topics considered appropriate for deliberation' (p. 133).[5] These researchers recognise that expanding the array of forums for deliberation, and expanding access to them, is central to their project. They thus tacitly anticipate the formation of the 'new publics' that I envisage being constituted by the transnational social and economic processes that now structure the world – divisions of labour, movements of capital, and transnational movements of people (immigrants, guest workers, refugees and asylum seekers).

New publics 2: transnational curriculum inquiry

The IAACS is constituted to support a worldwide – but not uniform – field of curriculum studies. IAACS recognises that much curriculum work continues to take place within national borders (often informed by governmental policies and priorities), but also recognises that processes of economic globalisation are (as I argue above) blurring nation-state boundaries and destabilising national authority in curriculum decision-making. Thus, *TCI* will encourage contributions that examine the impact of globalisation on curriculum work in relation to

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[5] I also appreciate Parker, Ninomiya and Cogan's (1999) reflexive awareness of the difficulties created by referencing mainly North American literature in deference to the presumed readership of the *American Educational Research Journal*: 'This creates the confounding problem of casting the project further in North American terms and viewpoints (further than is already the case with two of the three authors being steeped in this milieu). For present purposes, we accept this trade-off' (p. 142).

national and international debates on such matters as human rights, social justice, democratisation, national, ethnic and religious identities, issues of gender and racial justice, the concerns of indigenous peoples, and poverty and social exclusion. A specific aim of *TCI* is to examine the interrelationships between local, national, regional and global spheres of curriculum work. *TCI* assumes an international readership and an international authorship and will be a 'quality controlled' site for scholarly conversations within and across national, regional and cultural borders and boundaries. It is published electronically using Open Journal Systems (OJS), an online journal management and publishing system produced by the Public Knowledge Project (PKP), University of British Columbia, Canada.[6]

Establishing *TCI* forms part of the work of a Deakin University research group that is developing a program of research activities and projects focused on the interlinked themes of internationalisation, inclusivity, and innovative knowledge work, with a particular emphasis on reconceptualising their generative interrelationships. We understand the *idea* of transnational curriculum inquiry as involving more than producing a journal – it is also a site for research and for producing intercultural understanding and actively valuing cultural diversity. The Deakin group is committed to working from within our own cultural locations and dispositions to displace the West (and Western academics) as the unmarked centre(s) of global knowledge production and we hope that *TCI* will materialise what Fraser (1993) calls a 'global public space of discourse and representation' (p. 22) in which her 'radical-democratic' form of global solidarity based on shared responsibility will be fostered. We thus see *TCI* as a constructive contribution to reconceptualising curriculum inquiry as a postcolonialist project. As Helen Verran (2001) writes:

> Postcolonialism is not a break with colonialism, a history begun when a particular 'us,' who are not 'them,' suddenly coalesces as opposition to colonizer… Postcolonialism is the ambiguous struggling through and with colonial pasts in making different futures. All times and places nurture postcolonial moments. They emerge not only in those places invaded by European (and non-European) traders, soldiers, and administrators. Postcolonial moments grow too in those places from whence the invading hordes set off and to where the sometimes dangerous fruits of colonial enterprise return to roost (p. 38).

Among the postcolonial moments we hope to nurture are disruptions of what James Scheurich and Michelle Young (1997) refer to as the 'epistemological racism' that results from the vast majority of epistemologies and methodologies currently legitimated in education having arisen almost exclusively from the social histories of the dominant White races. Borrowing Patti Lather's words (quoted by Pinar & Reynolds, 1992), we want 'to decolonize the space of academic discourse that is accessed by our privilege, to open that space up in a way that contributes to the production of a politics of difference' (p. 254).

Annette Gough and I (in press) found ourselves reflecting on the difficulties of decolonising academic discourse recently when we were invited to contribute a quasi-editorial overview essay to a special issue of the journal *Environmental Education Research* on environmental education research in southern Africa. Although the production of this special issue seems – at least potentially – to be a 'postcolonial moment' for environmental education research internationally, the journal itself, like the vast majority of scholarly journals published in Western nations, is also complicit in modes of textual production that consolidate neocolonialist hegemony, historically rooted in the ways in which Western disciplinary knowledges of colonised sites and peoples were produced and represented in the West, and then projected back through Western lenses onto those who have been colonised. As Linda Tuhiwai Smith (1999) observes:

> Research is one of the ways in which the underlying code of imperialism and colonialism is both regulated and realized. It is regulated through the formal rules of individual scholarly disciplines and scientific paradigms, and the institutions that support them (including the state) (pp. 7-8).

Research is also regulated through the informal rules, tacit conventions, professional networks, and taken-for-granted organisational practices through which scholarly journals are produced. In discussing the politics of academic writing, Edward Said (1982) asks: 'Who writes? For whom is the writing being done? In what circumstances? These it seems to me are the questions whose answers provide us with the ingredients making a politics of interpretation' (p. 1). The question of for whom the writing in the special issue of *Environmental Education Research* was done does not have a single or simple answer, but the composition of the journal's International Editorial Board (as listed in the August 2003 issue) provides some clues. There are 2 editors and 23 editorial board members of whom 21 are male and 4 female, with the following national/regional distribution of institutional affiliations: UK (7), Western Europe (6), USA (5), Canada (3), Australia (3) and South Africa (1). In composing our contribution, we did not think that it was unreasonable to read the geographic and gender composition of the editorial board as an historical trace of the underlying codes of imperialism, colonialism and patriarchy that regulate what (and to some extent who) gets published in *Environmental Education Research*. Understanding how such codes function historically helps us to read the neocolonialist and androcentric assumptions that linger in contemporary discourses and texts, including the discourses and texts produced in the former colonies. We thus argue that the purpose of a postcolonialist reading of environmental education research in southern Africa is not necessarily (or only) to oppose the contemporary institutional descendants of colonising cultures but, rather, to 'expose the latent colonial assumptions of normalcy sedimented into the cultural unconscious that (re)cites, appropriates, translates and (re)presents the other, and that have been perpetuated through discourse/text long after the commencement of formal processes of decolonisation' (Lyn Carter, in press). In this instance, there seems at least a *prima facie* case for interpreting the absence of Asian and South American members from an 'international' editorial board as an example of such 'latent colonial assumptions of normalcy'.

To nurture postcolonial moments we intend *TCI* to be polylingual, and we are currently exploring review procedures that will assure the quality of articles in languages other than English. We are developing manuscript review procedures that enact and facilitate transnational conversations in curriculum inquiry and subject the process of peer review to transparent peer review. We also are exploring alternatives to conventional peer review, such as peer commentary in open e-archives and the possibilities of adapting John Smith's (1999) notion of a 'deconstructed journal' to *TCI*'s purposes (see also Rowland, n.d).

Reworking the languages of curriculum

With new publics come new languages, and a need to rethink the metaphorical languages of curriculum work. For example, the 'acquiescence to a neo-Tylerian curriculum agenda' that Luke (2002) claims still persists in Australian curriculum work is reinforced by a metaphorical language that represents curriculum as a closed system of discrete components (objectives, content, process, products, outcomes etc.) interacting in linear cause-and-effect relationships. Many of these components, and the 'spaces' they occupy, are conceptualised as material objects. Thus the term 'content' suggests that a curriculum is like a *container* (an object with bounded spatial dimensions), while references to 'frameworks', 'standards' and the flow charts used to depict planning sequences invoke the technical languages of manufacturing industries.

During the last two decades, many curriculum scholars have used less mechanistic terms, epitomised by Madeleine Grumet's (1981) characterisation of curriculum as 'the collective story we tell our children about our past, our present, and our future' (p. 115). In some respects, this 'narrative turn' can be understood as a deliberate dematerialisation of curriculum-as-object into curriculum-as-text. Twenty years ago, the idea of curriculum as a 'collective story' could be resisted by bureaucratic curriculum administrators as being too theoretical, too nebulous, too abstract – and, of course, too threatening: how does one 'manage' or 'control' storytelling? Today, the concept of curriculum as story seems much less esoteric, since our growing familiarity with virtual reality technologies has changed our sense of the relationships between material and informational worlds. The idea of a virtual world of information that coexists with the material world of objects is no longer an abstraction or fanciful speculation.

William Reid (1979) once observed that 'the well argued essay' was the preferred genre of curriculum writing as published up to that time in the *Journal of Curriculum Studies* (of which he was then European Editor). But he warned that a preference for just one genre of curriculum journalism was inherently conservative if other possible forms were excluded without question: 'Thoughts on curriculum can be pointed, substantive and coherent even if they are only a few lines long; they don't have to run to 5,000 words… Nor need they be in prose, or even in words' (p. 17).

Wordless thoughts on curriculum are rather thin on the ground in Australian and international curriculum debates and even when alternatives to conventional genres are considered they rarely stray very far from the discourses of the academy. For example, Luke (2002), following the late Garth Boomer (who in turn followed Jean-Françoise Lyotard), refers on several occasions to the desirability of producing 'a new Australian epic poem' (p. 54). Although Luke (like Lyotard) uses 'epic poem' to mean much the same thing as 'metanarrative', I question the appropriateness of this metaphor for transnational, multicultural, postcolonial curriculum inquiry.

Strategies and perspectives drawn from the world's contemporary arts and popular media might provide new languages for curriculum work. Following Thomas Fox and Judith Geichman (2001) I suggest that we should attempt to 'apply more rigorously the capacity of art to stop us in our tracks, to break the momentum of current themes' (p. 34). An important function of art is estrangement, defamiliarisation or 'making strange' *(ostranenie)*, that is, reviewing and renewing our understandings of everyday things and events which are so familiar that our perception of them has become routinised. Defamiliarisation is based on the assumption that the tactic of surprise may serve to diminish distortions and help us to recognize our own preconceptions.

Maurice Holt (1996) compares the 'making of curriculum' in educational systems with the production of motion pictures in the Hollywood studio system, using the history of the making of *Casablanca* to demonstrate that analogous organisational processes shape both curricula and popular movies. Although some films are distinguished by the work of individual artists (we are unlikely to confuse John Woo's direction with Jane Campion's, or to expect a movie featuring Jackie Chan to resemble one that stars Gerard Depardieu), all are in some sense produced by organisations. The assemblages of people, resources and technologies that make up systems also change over time, although elements of them may persist in similar or modified forms. Thus, the studio system that produced films such as *The Matrix* and its sequels (Larry and Andy Wachowski, directors) in 1999 and 2003 is in many ways different from that which produced *Casablanca* in 1942, especially in terms of the skills, materials and technologies that were available in each case and the anticipated audience's expectations that influenced their selection and mobilisation. But there are also continuities between these different eras of movie-making: both *The Matrix* and *Casablanca*

had scripts and shooting schedules, employed costume designers and film editors, and accommodated and incorporated improvisations and adjustments as filming progressed.

I do not want to push this analogy too far, but it might be useful to think about curriculum inquiry in terms of continuities and changes in both the sociotechnical systems that produce understandings of curriculum work and in the publics for which such knowledge is produced. We still need the curricular equivalents of scripts and shooting schedules but we should no longer assume that curriculum ideas and understandings can only be expressed in print media and words any more than screenwriters today assume that their scripts will be materialised as reels of 35mm black and white film. Neither print media nor black and white movies are extinct – in some circumstances they might be the most defensible choices in their respective realms of curriculum inquiry and cinematic production – but they are no longer the norm and cannot be regarded as such. Perhaps more importantly, the studios that produce today's Hollywood blockbusters clearly work with different assumptions about their audience's desires and expectations than those that guided earlier generations of filmmakers. For example, I suspect that the makers of *The Matrix* movies would have wanted them to attract a younger, more culturally diverse and cosmopolitan audience than the middle-American patrons of US cinemas in the era of *Casablanca*. The global culture of contemporary science fiction cinema interreferences European and Asian traditions as well as Hollywood's conventions, as *The Matrix's* techno-Orientalism and the dominance of animé (Japanese animation) in children's television and games clearly demonstrate.

What all this means for transnational curriculum inquiry in general (and for *TCI* in particular) is a very open question, but I suspect that the most generative transnational curriculum conversations will not necessarily be conducted in academic English, in print journals, or aspire to epic poetry.

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