

International Association for the Advancement of Curriculum Studies
The 5th Triennial Conference Call for Presentations

Hosted at the University of Ottawa
May 26-29, 2015

All educators attempt to shape the world; theorists should call attention to the tools used for the shaping in order that the world being shaped can be more beautiful and just.

(Huebner, 1975, p. 228)

The term *curriculum* is many things to many people.

(Aoki, 1980/2005, p. 94)

We are particularly inspired by the Blackfoot concept *aoksisowaato'p*, which refers to the ethical importance of visiting a place as an act of relational renewal that is life-giving and life-sustaining, both to the place and to ourselves.

(Blood, Chambers, Donald, Hasebe-Ludt, and Big Head, 2012, p. 48)

On behalf of the *International Association for the Advancement of Curriculum Studies* (IAACS) executive and in our capacity as conference chairs, we would like to invite you to join us for the fifth iteration of this conference. We are looking forward to providing a cosmopolitan refuge for each of you to share your research, stories, performances, and lived experiences with us during your stay at the University of Ottawa. Since its inception IAACS and its respective conference have migrated and inhabited several different continents and countries (China 2003, Finland, 2006, South Africa, 2009, and Brazil, 2012). Each place has provided a unique aesthetic, cultural, historical, material, psychosocial, and political “curriculum-as-lived-experience” for those in attendance (Aoki, 1991/2005, p. 160). Our institution is located within the downtown of our nation’s capital, which sits at base of the Ottawa valley and overlooks the confluences and tributaries of the Kichi Sibi (Ottawa River) that meander across and beyond the traditional territories of the Anishinàbeg who have lived and migrated upon this landscape since time immemorial. The cosmological, emotional, intellectual, physical, and spiritual topographies of this landscape have provided, and continue to provide, a place for hosting the contested histories of, and contemporary relations between, Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities here in Canada or elsewhere (Donald, 2012). This is, as Chambers (2012) reminds us, our common countenance as treaty people.

As some of you may or may not know, the first iteration of this conference began 15 years ago at Louisiana State University (see Trueit et. al, 2000). At that time, a community of curriculum scholars gathered to “talk about issues in curriculum, hearing what people do, how they do it, how they think about things” with the hope that we could learn from each other (Trueit, 2000, p. x). Like Aoki (2000) suggested then, the IAACS and its associated conference provided a potential “Third space” to provoke “semiotic signs wherein linguistic and cultural signs in interludic play could generate newness and hope” (p. 457). Even as we face, what some might call a world in political, environmental, economic, existential, and so on crisis, that (radical) hope continues to sustain our triennial gathering. And yet, during such real and/or imagined times of crisis, what should our tasks as curriculum scholars be, especially when the term “curriculum” remains many things, to many people? Whether here in Canada or others elsewhere, we are not the first to ask such internationally relevant curriculum question.

In 1975, Dwayne Huebner, asked us to reconsider the tasks of the curriculum theorist. Echoing his sentiments at that time, we might also ask, has any “progress” in response to this question been made in the last forty years? Since the publication of this essay, several other international scholars have sought to address this timeless question.¹ For example in 1982, a special issue of *Theory Into Practice* was devoted to the conceptualizations of curriculum theory (McCutcheon, 1982). In this issue a group of international curriculum scholars asked: What is curriculum theory? How might we get one? What is it good for? In part, the conference theme *questioning curriculum theory* at our last conference in Brazil sought to address similar and different curricular questions within and across the diversified vertical and horizontal topographies that constitute and contextualize the places we live, love, and work within.

At the turn of this millennium, Chambers (1999) put forth the following four thought-provoking challenges for Canadian curriculum theorists, policy makers, administrators, practicing teachers, and graduate students to reconsider in their thinking, theorizing and curriculum designs.

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

Indeed, these four questions are, we suggest, still relevant. They invite us to reconsider our tasks as international curriculum scholars, and in turn, how we might (or not) challenge the discourse of “social efficiency” and the current push to hand over our re/conceptualizations of “curriculum” to multinational corporations and/or certain governmental regimes.

These are exciting times for Ministries of Education, Universities, and curriculum scholars in Canada. In Ontario for example, major teacher education and curriculum implementation reforms will be taking place at the time of your visit. On the national stage, the Association of Canadian Deans of Education are set to officially release their *Accord on the Internationalization of Education* at our annual Canadian Society for the Study of Education conference this upcoming May, 2014. One of the key areas of practices put forth in the *Accord* is to understand the internationalization of Canadian curriculum. For the next conference theme, and with such thought-provoking excitement in mind, we might ask what are the local, national, and international tasks of curriculum scholars that *defy conventions* while responding to such times of real and/or imagined crisis? How ought we respond to, and/or question, this question as an ethical engagement with what Adrienne Rich (2001) has called elsewhere the *arts of the impossible*? While submitting ourselves to the impossible possibilities of such kinds of questioning, may we spend next spring visiting and conversing together as an act of relational renewal that is life-giving and life-sustaining to this traditional *Anishinàbeg* place, the conference, to each other, and to ourselves.

¹ The works of de Alba (2011), Egéa-Kuehne (2003), Le Grange (2010), Macedo (2011), Ropo & Tero, (2009), Pinar, (2013), Smits, (2008); and/or Zhang Hua & Zhenyu Goa, (2013) are some international examples that both professors and graduate students who are unfamiliar with the historical contexts of IAACS might consult prior to our gathering.

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Submission Process

Presenters may submit individual, panel, and/or alternative presentation proposals. Proposals should include the names of presenters, their affiliations, contact information, technological requirements, and a brief description that outlines the proposed presentation. Individual and/or alternative presentation proposals should not exceed 500 words (excluding references). Panel proposals should not exceed 1000 words (excluding references). The University of Ottawa is the largest bilingual university in Canada. Our two official languages are English and French. As such, we will review and accept proposals in both of these languages.

Priority will be given to presentations, which address the conference theme. However, topics and themes outside the conference theme are welcomed. All presentation formats are welcome. In order to secure a place within the conference program please **submit** proposals by **November 7th, 2014**. To submit proposals please visit the following link: <http://www.iaacs.ca/conference/>.

Prior to submitting proposals participants are encouraged to become members of IAACS. **Membership is free**. To do so, please visit the following website: <http://www.iaacs.ca/membership-registration/>.

If you need supporting documents for travel, please contact nngafook@uottawa.ca.

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