

Our Curriculum Oath

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What *is* curriculum? What unites curriculum theorists, disciplinary practitioners from wide-ranging subjects, constructs and practices? How might we be historically minded as we face the present and anticipate the past? Are discursive communities with diverse interests representing classroom practice, theory, teacher education, history, policy, and development, able to converse with each other? Are our conversations intelligible and open to the public at large? If they are not, why bother at all?

We began to pose these questions in our last editorial. We continue to probe at them here. As the editors of *JCACS*, we are committed to characterizing the multivocal and interdisciplinary nature of the complicated conversation that *is* curriculum. Likewise, we seek to refine that conversation and to ensure that it remains *open, inclusive, and committed to the public good*. Curriculum does not belong to academics

alone, even as it is necessarily confined by thoughtfulness, care, and careful analysis.

We are reminded of the Ephebic Oath, sworn by young Athenians as they entered the age of citizenship. Typically at the age of 18, the Ephebes, on the borderline between adolescence and adulthood, swore to leave their state better than they had received it.¹ Each generation of Ephebes served as stewards of Athens. Each was bound by duty to care for its preservation, health, and democratic wellbeing.

In contemporary intellectual and public discourse, the ethos entrenched within the words of this Oath is best expressed by the environmental lobby. The earth is ours, but for a very short spell. We are duty-bound to worry about generations to come, even as we must attend to the present and hearken to the past. The earth is to be nourished and cared for. Collectively, we are curriculum stewards.

JCACS embarks on its 11th year with this, its 21st, publication. We are no longer in our adolescence. We have a burden, and much responsibility, to bear. In this editorial, we ask curriculum scholars to think environmentally about the landscape of Canadian curriculum studies. We evoke the notion that the sustainability of our field is secured by and yet simultaneously challenged by its ecological diversity. We must care for this diversity and let it grow where it must through a democratic dialogue predicated on an oath of care and stewardship.

¹ The Ephebic Oath: The new Greek education of the Alexandrian age (c. 338-30 B.C.). (1972). In H. C. Black, K. V. Lottich & D. S. Seckinger (Eds.), *The Great Educators: Readings for Leaders in Education* (p.180). Chicago, IL: Nelson-Hall, p. 180.

Through JCACS, we wish to keep alive the conversation about the nature of curriculum — for it is that conversation which is important to the sustainability of our field. We solicit articles that highlight the diversity of our field and that foster generative dialogue that leads educators, curriculum theorists, and the public to engage in productive curriculum thinking.