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Editorial

# Editorial

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## Introduction

This special issue of *Currere and Praxis* coincides with the 2026 re-publication of William F. Pinar and Madeleine Grumet's (2026b) *Toward a Poor Curriculum* (hereafter: *TPC*). Issued by Routledge, this fourth edition of their 1976 work, which launched the Reconceptualization in curriculum studies, marks the 50th anniversary of that event. By 1976, Reconceptualization had already been simmering for several years. The question about the meaning of past and future to the present moment—of "why we are where we are" (Charles Taylor cited in Pinar, 2026c, p. 142)—was a curriculum question that could only be answered collectively, as a field (Pinar, 2026f, p. 6), Pinar made clear; not by one person alone—nor even by two, for Madeleine Grumet, then Pinar's graduate student (in the early 70's), was also mulling over how to describe "experience in the world without distorting it, to contain it without reducing it, to analyze it without atomizing it" (Grumet, 2026a, pp. 28-9). Given the times in which they were living—characterized by tendencies that remain persistent, like instrumentalization, bureaucratization, disenchantment, and disembodiment, most recently in the form of the visceral presence of AI—it entailed a return to the ground of asking how and where and with whom an educational journey begins. The answer was found in the individual; more precisely, in subjectivity. The "lengthy, systematic search of our inner experience" (Pinar, 2026d, p. 4) became the running of the course: *currere*. This history, well-rehearsed and alluded to here ever so briefly, draws attention to the close relationship between reconceptualization and *currere*; between *Towards a Poor Curriculum* and *Currere & Praxis*, a journal launched in 2023. This preamble is meant to forestall the objection: why have a special issue on *currere* within a journal already devoted to that subject? Important is the timing, specifically, the temporal unfolding, which provides an occasion to reflect on the interval between 1976 and 2026: *currere*'s timeliness then and its timeliness now, expressed here through the submissions that responded to the special issue call for papers and that were accepted for publication.

It might be averred that *currere*, timely then, is now late: too late. Edward Said (2006), in one of his last books (published posthumously), reflected on this very question of timing. He did so, coincidentally (as we consider the subject of *currere*) in relation to a "self-making process" (p. 4). His thinking might therefore prove useful in framing the question of *currere*'s contributions after fifty years. Reflecting allegorically as well as autobiographically—on history as well as his own biography—Said identifies three "problematics" or occasions for

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thinking on periods of time (p. 4): beginnings, continuity and late style. Beginnings respond to the need to locate a time and place (a "point of origin"—p. 4) when things may be understood to start. In *TPC*, Pinar (2026f) identifies the year as 1972, saying this "will be the beginning point" (p. 6). Beginning is a moment that is constructed, as Said (2006) points out, so "always subject to revision" (p. 4), and we see this in TPC, as the beginning year shifts somewhat, but where the publication of the book itself, in 1976, has been retrospectively identified as marking a key threshold from the point of view of the field. The second problematic period Said identifies is "continuity," which he also calls "exfoliation" (p. 5). As both names suggest, but especially the second one (ex-foliation), this period refers to what happens next once something is begun; it is what is, and needs to be, developed, deepened, sustained. Among the developments, Said includes patterns but also breaks and departures. Recursively, in *TPC*, we hear Pinar refer to *currere* as hypothetical, in the sense of: let's see where this takes us. If it is useful, let's carry on (Pinar, 2026c, p. 88). We have certainly witnessed a great "exfoliation" of the idea and practice of *currere*: explored, enacted, revisited, expanded, supplemented, challenged in such venues as the Bergamo Conference as well as AERA (Division B) and the Provoking Curriculum (Studies) conferences—and in the pages of *Journal of Curriculum Theorizing* as well as *Currere Exchange Journal* and *Currere and Praxis*; too, through series like Studies in Curriculum Theory (Routledge) (100 books and counting) and countless other places curriculum scholars find or create to share their work.

Said's (2006) third problematic he calls "late style" (p. 7), a phrase he borrows from Adorno, and that provides the title of Said's book. Why *style*? Style suggests an idiom, a manner. How do we wish to construe *late* style, Said asks. Ripeness? Maturity? Resolution? It could mean these, he says, but postulates two types of "lateness"—one focused on ripeness, but the other—the one that he finds infinitely more interesting—as "nonharmonious, nonserene tension, and above all, a sort of deliberately unproductive productiveness going *against*…" (p. 7; emphasis in the original). There is a felt "intransigence, difficulty" that is kept open by stirring the pot, re-opening questions (p. 7). Throughout *TPC*, in Pinar's and Grumet's conceptualizations of *currere*, we are reminded that its purpose is to ask questions, dislodge complacency, feel unsettled; the very structure of subjectivity, Pinar (2026g) points out, is *non*coincidence (p. 125).

Said's tripartite conceptualization could prove useful to help in locating oneself in relation to *currere*, as a field of theory as well as of practice. As scholars, students, teachers, we each come to *currere* in our own time. A first encounter can have the power to remind us of the almost revolutionary act that was *TPC* because *currere*'s place in the here and now—its recent discovery—happens to respond in ways that feel freeing, even exhilarating, in relation to individual and/or social quandaries that have become troubling or preoccupying. In such situations, *currere* might help to provide language as well as a process to grapple with what is difficult, insuperable, or simply unclear. Or, one may come to *currere* feeling belated—technically late, having known about it but perhaps never actually having moved through its phases. Such inquiry may have some of the characteristics, then, of beginning, but where knowledge of one's belatedness carries over and affects understanding in ways interesting to the field. Alternatively, there might be a return to *currere* after a lapse, and where the interval provides an occasion not just for renewed energy but also fresh intellectual insight. *Currere* might feel quite different when it has been re-visited several times, in scholarship and/or teaching; there, its tenets are 'old hat' because we know them well. The challenge then becomes how to justify its re-use: what quality is new—in oneself, in the method, in its use—that has

been invested? Or, perhaps the context has changed in profound ways—climate change, Indigenous knowledges, EDI (Equity, Diversity and Inclusion), Generative AI—calling for a re-visiting of the method itself in light of these pressing changing circumstances. Too, there may be times when *currere* is felt as impasse, as a last resort, and trails with it questions about the usefulness of *currere* itself; a mood of resistance predominates that requires critically re-evaluating its structure, perhaps even its place and purpose in the here and now. In short, Said's framework might translate into a continuum on which to locate oneself or one's curriculum work or projects in relation to *currere*, but also—and this is what has been attempted in the organization of the eleven articles in this special issue—in relation to *currere* itself as a field of curriculum study.

Some intellectual anniversaries are simply celebratory—late style in the character of: let's acknowledge the importance of this work to the field. However, with any kind of contribution that has impacted the curriculum field in the ways that *currere* has, and where it is Pinar and Grumet themselves (not others, on their behalf) who have taken charge in re-publishing this revised volume, the anniversary edition presents itself as "late style" in Said's second meaning of intending to unsettle. With the 2026 *TPC* edition, Pinar and Grumet are as if saying (with Said): let's "repeat, reinterpret, return to and revise" (Said, 2006, p. 139) materials we know may very well be highly familiar material to you. Let's re-energize what might seem old but still feels new; their 2026 preface says—the first, in their three *TPC* editions, of a *co*-written preface: two voices conjoined (Pinar & Grumet, 2026a). By re-positing a poor curriculum as useful in the present time, let's unsettle orthodoxies and complacencies. Let's do so (again, borrowing from Said on "late style") in a spirit "stripped of hubris and pomposity, unashamed either of its fallibility or of the modest assurance it has gained as a result of age and exile" (Said, 2006, p. 148); Said's characterization of Greek Alexandrian, Constantine Cavafy, would seem to echo Pinar's and Grumet's own radical notion of the poor curriculum.

As responses to the 50th anniversary, the eleven articles contained in this special issue might usefully be approached, then, in terms of Said's problematics: beginnings, exfoliations, late style. Therefore, they are grouped in light of these, but in reverse order: Late Style, Exfoliations, Beginnings, this to evoke that where we seem to be ending is precisely where we (and others) might begin, or begin again.

## Late Style

Touching base with the corpus of Pinar's work: its maturity but reiterated radical message that continues to make *currere* not only relevant but prescient, Chastine brings out the ongoing refusal in Pinar's work to reduce the human subject to "instruments, data, performances, or outcomes" (p. 2). Strong-Wilson follows, unsettling the previous trajectory of her own scholarship, stripping down to a poor(er) curriculum, taking a long and winding detour (as yet unfinished) into a subject—readers and reading—that would seem to be revanchist (fiercely claiming ground that might be thought nostalgically "lost" to books and reading in this electronic age)—but meant to stir the pot by re-visiting these questions and posing new ones. Deniz presses against cardinal ways in which the *currere* process has been interpreted and applied, instead arguing for—and setting out—*currere* as an analytical framework, which seems apt especially in countries where subjectivity is at risk. Downey chafes against and refuses any settledness that may be implied in *currere*'s synthesis phase, accounting for how and why. Wang and Li likewise push against *currere*, arguing for "reformulation" (p. 16) in

light of a highly diverse Asian context. Agreed upon is "inner transformation as the fundamental site of education" (p. 17); however, the relations between individuality and relationship are challenged and the synthetical moment recast as (im)possible: both possible and impossible. Turning now to each "Late Style" article in turn…

What knowledge is most worth? This question, as *Joyce Ann Chastine* points out, is one that predates Pinar but that he has returned to insistently. What has not changed across the more than fifty years of Pinar's thinking is that the answer involves the human subject; one that cannot be reduced to what is external (data, technology, performance indicators, outcomes; too: programs, materials, teaching techniques)—all that lies outside of and on the train window, as sitting in a train with Mrs. Brown, we gaze outside, we notice her in the window's reflection. Taking his cue from Virginia Woolf, study of whose writings deeply informed Pinar's thinking, resulting in inclusion of the inaugural chapter in TPC, "Mr. Bennett and Mrs. Brown," Pinar (2026d) concludes that the only way to really 'see' Mrs. Brown and for Mrs. Brown to 'see' herself seeing and being seen (to echo Grumet's (2026b) words) is to travel inward. "Many of us are lost in thought, in the conceptual," Pinar (2026) muses, in that essay (p. 3) and in the recent conversation he had with Joyce Ann Chastine, a classroom teacher as well as scholar at Georgia Southern University; this understanding, as she notes, is only "sharpen[ed]" (p. 3). Subjectivity is an "inner space, wherein the self resides, wherein we experience what we experience and reflect upon that experience (learn from it: educational experience), from where we can speak" (Joyce's personal communication with Pinar, June 18, 2026; p. 3). Out of this insight comes *currere*. In moving beyond critique (of curriculum studies, of the instrumentalizing of teaching and learning, of societal events and crises impacting education), as Chastine points out, *currere* has contributed the most to reconceptualization by proposing a way to systematically investigate subjectivity (p. 3). Chastine, distilling Pinar's words, usefully (re)clarifies that *currere* is not the story itself (viz., as outcome or product); it is "the deliberate cultivation of that inner space"; more: "the discipline of dwelling there long enough to learn something worth telling" (p. 3). Not the course, but the *running* of the course, as is reiterated across *TPC*. Across the article, Chastine threads through her experiences, in the here and now, as classroom teacher, as she re-visits in turn several of Pinar's major contributions. First, *TPC*, which relies on three connected steps that "form a single movement: estrangement, reflection, and return"—p. 4. *Understanding Curriculum* (Pinar et al., 2008; originally published in 1995) as well as *What is Curriculum Theory* (2019b, with previous editions having been published in 2004 and 2012), mapping the field while naming as well as responding to "recurring educational crises—crises that are never merely pedagogical but also political" (p. 5), further translated into "curriculum as complicated conversation" (p. 5); there is a beautiful vignette provided by Pinar of his always complicated conversations with his close friend and colleague, William Doll. Pinar's (2026a) *A Curriculum of Courage, Conviction, and Resolve: The Subjective Necessity of Nonviolence* traces what it might mean to "live ethically" (p. 6), a subject Pinar re-visited recursively (e.g., in *The Gender of Racial Politics and Violence in America: Lynching, Prison Rape, and the Crisis of Masculinity* (Pinar, 2001) and *The Worldliness of Cosmopolitan Education* (Pinar, 2009)) while a recent article "Clickbait Curriculum Theory" (Pinar, 2026b) re-engages with the issue of technologization that Pinar frequently addressed, notably in his in-depth study of George Grant (*Moving Images of Eternity*; Pinar, 2019a). Throughout, as mentioned, Chastine interweaves her own voice, touching base especially with her experiences as a classroom teacher. Among the most powerful is her engagement (with "Clickbait Curriculum Theory") in which she tells of how both Pinar and herself have turned to use the text of Jonathan Edwards's 1741 sermon to exemplify the engineering of alarm. The

creation of such a climate becomes justification for the unjustifiable. No other names are mentioned, but we might easily extrapolate to the present time. Refusal; this has always been Pinar's stance. Chastine emphasizes: refusal to be provoked; refusal to be swayed from the slow and "deliberate work of examining one's own experiences from the inside rather than submitting to definitions from without" that is *currere* (p. 10). Is that the last word? No, Chastine says. For Pinar, the questions are never settled. But the focus on the human subject remains: work that mattered then; work that still matters now.

*Teresa Strong-Wilson*, in choosing to research reading and readers, returns to her beginnings, but in starting again, she strips down to what matters: a subject cultivated, secretly yet in open sight, however one she has avoided as a focus of sustained serious study. While the subject or reading has already been treated in various ways in curriculum theory, most extensively by Wendy Atwell-Vasey (in *Nourishing Words: Bridging Private Reading and Public Teaching*; Atwell-Vasey, 1998) and Alan Block (in *Occupied Reading*; Block, 1995) as well as by Grumet herself (in chapter seven of *Bitter Milk*; Grumet, 1988)—and Strong-Wilson is building on that literature—reading/the reader remains a marginal curriculum theory topic. The article is placed here, in late style, because of the critical spirit that motivates the article: her recognition that she is operating outside of her own frame and, as such, taking risks, with a subject that may appear to be retro, even revanchist: a nostalgic exercise. While "Currere of a Reader" is not openly provocative, she is shifting ground from a "hermeneutics of suspicion" (on which her previous research of the critical analysis of literature used in classrooms has been largely based) towards being drawn back towards "affective engagement" (Felski, 2015, p. 177): of a reader, with reading; moreover, with reading books. In her article, she rebukes and refuses rhetoric on the decline of reading, the demise of readers, the death of the book. As Pinar and Grumet (2026a) remind us, "*Currere* is intended—one could even say designed…--to encourage self-questioning" (p. x), including of subjects that unaccountably come to preoccupy us, but which do so because they also tie in with larger crises, with what matters. "*Currere* as a Reader" is work that helps prepare the ground to be able to respond to a question no longer on a future horizon but already with us now: Reader (Human) or Readerbot?

Where are the autobiographical narratives? one reviewer of *Ünal Deniz's* text objected. *Currere* has often taken the form of autobiographical narratives, in the manner suggested by Pinar and reiterated in this anniversary volume in "The Method of Currere." Grumet writes about how such narratives have been elicited in her teaching (chapter 10); however, she also describes how theatre (for instance) can be a powerful vehicle for *currere* (TPC, chapter 5). While several of the articles in this special issue draw on narrative (e.g., Al-Madhoun et al; Bigloo; Bogotch et al; Prefontaine; Strong-Wilson), arts-informed work is very prevalent; we see it being used, alongside narrative, in Jack-Malik and Kuhnke as well as in Inver et al. (this special issue). Unal Deniz attests to how he has drawn on autobiographical narrative in previous scholarship. However, here, he is pushing back against that by positing a different way into a subject, and along with that, a different conceptualization of the *currere* process. Deniz embeds *currere'*s four moments—its temporal structure—in what he calls an "analytical framework" (pp. 2, 19). He uses *currere*'s four moments to help shape the narrative—an alternative one to the dominant one that Türkiye has told about curriculum. Application of *currere* as an analytic framework helps release insights. In the regressive, he looks at historical conceptualizations of subjectivity in Turkish education, such as through examination culture and a culture of performativity, while in the progressive, he considers opportunities for teachers to open

alternative spaces in which to imagine differently within pedagogy and professional communities. The analytical moment "brings past and future into productive tension with the present," focusing on the barriers "to reclaiming educational subjectivity" (p. 10). Key is his observation that "structural limitations are not merely inconveniences but fundamental features" to which *currere* might offer "structured approaches" from "informal conversations, private questioning, and subtle adaptations" to sustained or recursive spaces in which teachers can gather to reflect (p. 12). The synthetical phase is devoted to exploring the "conditions that might enable *currere* to unfold" (p. 13), and where potentially very useful for the field would be to develop "culturally responsive theoretical frameworks" (p. 14) that are attuned to local realities. Türkiye is not the only context to which such frameworks would apply. The real question, as Deniz points out, is how subjectivity can "be cultivated" in contexts hostile to it and "within systems designed to suppress it" (p. 14). This is a true testing-ground for *currere*, in finding different ways to intellectually engage with *currere,* especially in contexts where teacher (and student) agency is restricted.

*Adrian Downey* would like to see more refusing of the synthetic moment. In "Currere and (Il)legibility: Refusing the Synthetic Moment," he offers many reasons, among them being that synthesis is often taken for resolution and thus closure; or if not closure, then integration. Reviewers of currere-informed studies typically request a greater sense of synthesis: of coherence, he notes. Downey is quick to acknowledge that within *currere*, as elaborated by Pinar, synthesis was intended to mean a temporary interlude, a hiatus, a pause, a taking of one's breath, before continuing or re-engaging. However, even here, he suggests, there is already a sense of a certain ending, even if it is the prelude to a further regression, a beginning again. Too, he points out, *currere* has been around now for 50 years; even if the process itself can be unsettling, the method is not, at least not from the point of view of having now become part of an established body of work as well as a well-recognized qualitative methodology. In short, *currere* has become institutionalized even if, when it began, in TPC, it found itself on the margins. It is the old familiar problem: even the most ardent subversive argument becomes dogma once it becomes institutionalized. It can still bark, but has it lost its bite? After fifty years, is this where we find ourselves with *currere*? It is a provocative and useful question to ask. Downey lends further weight to his argument about the worth of this question by tying *currere* to legibility. Legibility, he says, refers "to the ways texts and writing can be understood, but also to the ways experience can be acknowledged within certain systems of thought" (p. 1). Legibility helps make known and public what was unknowable or not considered worth knowing. Part of the power of *currere,* Downey reiterates (with others in this special issue), is to make legible the lived experiences of teachers and any others who have been marginalized by society, school system, academia; it provides a language for experience, written in one's own idiom. Downey doesn't yet entirely believe *currere* "has run its course" (p. 14)—it has been integral to his teaching as well as his own formation as a scholar—but he suggests its synthetic phase—which most aligns with 'making legible'—has. Let's refuse "the pull toward legitimacy"; indeed, let's refuse "legibility" itself (p. 15). In 'closing,' he writes: nothing is settled, least of all for him: "It is fragmented, disjointed, and in tension, and as uncomfortable as it is to refuse resolution, I'd like to keep it that way" (p. 15).

*Hongyu Wang and Yiluo Li* also posit the (im)possibility of synthesis, although the brackets are intended as a both/and rather than an either/or. Their article, on one level, represents an 'exfoliation,' diving deeply into reverberations of and responses to the *currere* method in various Asian contexts; Asian here is understood as encompassing East Asia (China, Japan,

Korea, Vietnam) as well as the Middle East, here including Türkiye, as bordering the Middle East and Europe. The authors searched major databases, *currere* and curriculum journals, as well as book series for citations of Pinar's and/or Grumet's work. The search was not intended to be comprehensive. The authors acknowledge that a deeper search would entail searching by language. As it is, the article provides deep insight into how *currere* is echoing across Asian scholarship: as resistance to institutional and cultural conformity; in response to gender and autobiographical feminist theory; through transnational responses of international scholars or immigrants writing from host countries. One of the most important contributions comes in the second half of the article, where Wang and Li turn to consider *currere* in dialogue with Asian thought. They point out that while *currere* is often interpreted as four steps, they are more simultaneous than consecutive, as Pinar himself confirms (cited in Wang et al., p. 14). This understanding of the temporal in *currere* is in keeping with the Asian context "in which temporality is cyclic" as well as recursive (p. 14). There are other places where Asian thought pushes against *currere*, such as in reframing technology within a subjective process as "double-edged" (integral to nation-building but also, in generative AI, potentially more ally than foe) (p. 14). It is the "interplay between individuality and relationality", though, that provides the most "important site for reformulation" (p. 16). As the authors point out, the original postulating of *currere* was deeply influenced by Zen meditative traditions and practices (p. 15). The authors propose individuality and relationality as "bi-foci" that might be engaged with one another in various ways "to give particular shape to moment-to-moment, situated reconstruction" (p. 17). Such an "im/possible synthesis" (p. 16) would challenge as well as surpass a Western focus on individualism, thus opening greater space for "transcending psychic and social aggression" (p. 17). (408)

## Exfoliation

Through Jack-Malik and Kuhnke, Bigloo, and Bogotch, Schoorman and Peart might be heard going deeper into *currere*, pulling on and extending the method to respond to different crises, different contexts (e.g., non-Western), different disciplines.

As *Sandra Jack-Malik and Janet Kuhnke* have attested, they have used *currere* before because it opens a space that they have come to trust. However, the process changes each time. Sandra had recently retired as a professor in education and began to receive requests from families to tutor their dyslexic child in reading. She brought considerable expertise to the teaching. However, she soon began to feel frustrated. Parents were not stepping up to support their child through encouragement and daily practice. She reached out to her colleague and friend, Janet, to help sort through her dissatisfaction. The article is organized as a duo-ethnography, with their conversation with one another embedded within the four phases of *currere,* thus: Regression (Sandra); Analysis of the Regressive Moment (Janet); Progressive (Sandra)—here there is an introjection by Janet; then: Analysis of the Progressive Moment (this time, it is Sandra responding to Janet's introjection); and so on. In other words, the conversation is made to follow the bent of Sandra's inward journey, often as she actively resists Janet's suggestions (e.g., of considering a continuum of parental engagement). At a certain point, both also explore their experiences in the research through an arts-based approach. By this time, Janet also felt autobiographically implicated, extrapolating from Sandra's biographical situation to her own, as a nurse-practitioner who works with people, especially their feet. "I am thinking about human steps, feet, and the movement of relationally coming alongside (Estefan et al., 2016)"

(p. 11). The two co-researchers reflect, drawing on Dewey: there is opportunity for education, but also miseducation. A synthetic moment became symbolized in Janet's shoe last collage. A shoe last is the wooden structure that shoemakers use to hold the shape of a shoe in place while they repair it. Janet's collage happened to be in the same colour (blue) that Sandra had used in her painting to depict the learner. Blue, Janet mused, drawing on Merleau-Ponty's thinking, "draws the human gaze to another space, allowing for other possibilities" (p. 12). Synthesis (in *currere*) is (or can be) about integration—and Janet and Sandra attest to this: "both of us integrated what we learned from the previous moments (Pinar, 2012, p. 12)." However, what was learned was kept open; it was the idea of "possibility" for the student being tutored, for the parent(s) to support their child in ways that they could, for Janet in mulling over Sandra's situation, but most unsettling for Sandra, in being thrown back on herself as un- and re-learning what it might entail to be a more supportive tutor. (453)

In the course of wanting to understand how her life experiences contributed to her academic interests, Fay Bigloo unearthed key autobiographical moments: remembering smelling the "pale pink roses with wobbly stems" in front of her family's small house in Tehran (p. 4); counting dragonflies in Marvdasht in whose slender bodies she discerned a resemblance to her own and whose ephemeral summer presence signified how joy was tangible but fleeting; and being reminded of the gifts of breath going in and coming out, as first encountered in Grade 3 in Saadi, a famous 13th century Persian poet, a message then cruelly brought home in the brutal government killing of her brother, a university student. "In this complex discussion of my temporality, through the study *of* the pivoting experiences of my life, a single breath, a nafasi in Farsi, I have laid my experiences *of* the past one after another" (p. 9; emphasis in the original). The italicization of the word "of" draws attention to and draws out the inhaling and exhaling of breath as integral to Bigloo's arrival at conceptualizing cosmo-currere, as she moved through the four phases of *currere* to understand what knowledge was of most worth. Cosmo-*currere* is intended to highlight the breaths taken in the exchange between English and Farsi words (p. 14), language being closely tied to autobiographical memories, and the fact that this exchange happens on earth, between and among beings, in particular places. Vitally important is the "re-understanding and respecting the relations and the delicate balances between the two worlds of natural and cultural" (p. 16), Bigloo emphasizes.

*Ira Bogotch, Dilys Schoorman and Sheine Peart* are all established professors in leadership studies; Peart is in the United Kingdom, and Bogotch and Schoorman are in Florida, United States, both being highly beleaguered contexts for research for social change, especially Florida. They are relatively new to *currere,* so their first and most pressing question is: "What does the work of Pinar and Grumet offer us for the present moment?" (p. 1). They go on to describe the challenge of their present moment and reiterate their commitment to "counterhegemonic praxis" as well as to frameworks that help in discovering "how to live well together in societies" (p. 4). They comment: "Looking outside, however, is not the same as looking within" (p. 3). What follows are three extended autobiographical narratives that interweave regression with progression and analysis (past and future with present). One reviewer's suggestion had been to shorten them—a reasonable request; however, to do so might have obscured these leadership scholars' "different entry points" into *currere* and curriculum (p.6). The sustained narratives allow the authors to connect life events across time and spheres (personal; public; institutional) and contribute to a body of lived experiences that, as they attest, "are more than autobiographical; they also contribute to collective remembrances of the past, supporting creative and imaginative thinking for the future" (p. 6). The narratives evoke visceral, at times

stark, realities of going to school, becoming readers and writers, becoming and being scholars, including from minoritized communities, making important program changes, then encountering backlashes and institutional dismantling of social justice-oriented initiatives. Even though the three stories are quite different, in some ways, they tell the same story of "how hierarchical thinking works against prioritizing students' needs" in "McCarthy-esque" ways (p. 13). *Currere* is the path they walk on to arrive at this collective juncture but also the route that they recommend, moving forward. What they propose as "currere, part one" would consist of: remembering and pulling forward but also dreaming, currerean notions that they point out are also echoed in the African (Ghanian) concept of Sankofa (p. 14). "*Currere*, part two" is yet to be determined, they say, but "our minds are racing in terms of how to bring this work to a discussion without a definitive conclusion" (p. 15). We need to leave the door ajar, they conclude, for further debate on how *currere* can help them, their students, and communities. galvanize.

## Beginnings

Inver, Townrow, York and Leddy's article suggests an exfoliation: a stretching of *currrere* into places touched on but not yet delved into deeply, namely, Indigenous knowledges. However, their work arguably belongs with Beginnings, because it is not extension they are really after here, but a re-starting: a return to *currere* ground *so as to be able to* truly begin (or, begin again). The initial 'step' is to re-imagine and re-configure time, but then start with their own practices and lives. For his part, Prefontaine, in trying out *currere* to (re)launch both self/doctoral studies, and the article beautifully addresses challenges in beginning, including in finding community. We conclude this section and this special issue with Al-Madhoun, Ciftci-Sanal, Zhou, LaRoque and Strong-Wilson, who use *currere* to make present and real the place and feeling that study ought to assume in doctoral studies but who, through currere, recover/create a community dedicated to research and teaching. We thus end where TPC begins: with students (see Pinar's and Grumet's dedication of their 2026 book to their undergraduate and graduate students), which is where their own *currere* inquiry began: as students themselves. It is where we all begin, with *currere*: with study: "The unforeseeable future, the not fully accessible present, as well as the persistence of the past, converge to contribute to the gravitas of study": study of ourselves, study of humanity and of all that it means to be alive now (Pinar, 2026, p. 123). Each article is next described in greater detail.

"A/r/tographic *currere* beyond colonial time: Four learning stories" by Cate Inver, Brittney Townrow, Lori York and Shannon Leddy explores alternatives to the sense of urgency that seems to drive most of us much of the time. Theirs is a powerful example of "sister scholarship'' (p. 5)—a close, and close-knit, collaboration among women scholars, all living on the traditional, unceded lands of the Musqueam, Squamish and Tsleil-Waututh peoples but coming from different places: Brittany is Heiltsuk; Shannon, Métis Treaty Six, while Cate is of settler ancestry, as is Lori. They deftly weave across one another's stories of arts-based teaching and learning: Shannon in teaching pre-service teachers to crochet; Lori in co-facilitating with an Indigenous colleague a beading workshop for teachers; Cate in using art therapy during maternity leave; and Brittney, a (m)a/r/tography project with her daughter of connecting to Land and ancestors (pp. 8-9). In responding to the call of this special issue, they wonder how *currere* and Indigenous approaches to time can intersect and speak to one another. They look to Pinar and Grumet for insight on *currere*, and Indigenous scholars like

Marie Battiste, Gregory Cayete, Dwayne Donald, and Donald Fixico in conceptualizing Indigenous ways of thinking about time. As the title of their article indicates, they are interested in moving past Western, colonial notions of time that limit and restrict, exemplified (as they point out) by the Carnegie Unit, which is the system of credit hours tied to learning outcomes in which they (and virtually all of us) have been schooled (p. 12). They also speculate about whether and how the ancient Greek tripartite division of time (kronos, kairos, and aion) might disrupt the singular notion of Western time as linear (kronos/chronos). In kairos, time is recursive; it circles back on itself, which is in keeping with both *currere* and Indigenous thinking, while aion, as sacred time, would seem to come close to Indigenous notions of time immemorial. What would happen "if we invite attention to the mindful, reflective, and recursive practices that *currere* research has always nurtured, and then richly layer them across expanded notions of time and place," especially notions coming from Indigenous knowledge (p. 8)? They use their artmaking and responses to one another's narratives to listen for deeper approaches to time. Just like the "self-in-relation" (p. 16) that they enact through their stories and sister scholarship, the three methodological approaches they pull on—*currere* in relation to Indigenous knowledges in relation to a/r/tography—are made to actively engage in dialogue so as to open a productive conversation about transforming how time is felt, encountered, and imagined in teaching and learning. In short, the co-authors invite us to return to the ground (and to Land) so as to re-envision our *currere* practices through the eyes of Indigenous knowledges. (457)

"Experience is what one senses, one feels, one thinks: it is, in a word, one's living through one's life" (Pinar, 2026, p. 14). In "*Currere*, community, and self: The work of understanding and becoming," we accompany Ivon Prefontaine in experiencing *currere*. He specifies, "I hope to add to existing discourse related to how each person engages idiosyncratically with the method of *currere*" (p. 3). Undertaking *currere*, he notes, was a challenge, with the greatest success felt when in the company of others (e.g., at *Currere Exchange Retreats*). *Currere* entails intellectual grappling along with feeling its presence viscerally. Pivotal moments of understanding erupted spontaneously, as when Ivon was presenting at a curriculum conference, "describing how, as a junior high student over 50 years ago, I wrote a poem—*Win or Lose: What Difference Does It Make*? —from the perspective of a dying soldier only a few years older than me. Drawing their last breath, they question war and why they are there." If this was regression, more elusive was the progressive phase, that "capacity to imagine what is not the case, which brings with it radical freedom…" (Pinar, 2015c, p.11 in Prefontaine). Again, being at a curriculum conference helped open him to understanding, discerned through his teaching. He remembered he would ask student teachers: "What brings them back to teaching each day? What offers them hope in their teaching and learning," especially in difficult situations (p. 6)? These were the same questions he asked himself. He concludes: "imagining modest, situated actions allows the future to tentatively appear—not as certainty, but as possibility" (p. 8). Refreshing is this feeling of being with Ivon on his journey *with currere* occurring *through currere*. "I feel as if I am just beginning to learn how to use *currere*," he notes (p. 8). We are there with him.

With Dina Al-Madhoun, Ezgi Ciftci-Sanal, Zhiyun Zhou, Elizabeth LaRoque and Teresa Strong-Wilson, we find ourselves in the in-between created, through a *currere* process, by doctoral students' study and sharing of their research on their doctoral experiences. Their writing prompts will sound familiar, striking a deep chord with doctoral students: feeling stuck, feeling at a threshold, belatedness, hearing bells. Doctoral students are especially

vulnerable to liminal experiences and especially to atomization and isolation (which Prefontaine alludes to). There is a very real danger in the experiencing of a doctoral program of a dissipating élan vital (Pinar, 2026e, pp. 84-85). A dissertation is a journey into which students pour their "life-force" (Pinar, p. 84). Universities are neither well-equipped for nor oriented towards helping students to find ways to articulate and work through their experiences. Aoki's notion of betweenness afforded a place from which to *begin* to theorize where they found themselves, to embrace their feelings of ambiguity so as to arrive at a different place, experientially and theoretically, which they call the *in*-between: a heightened experience constituted in and through *currere* community. *Currere* provides the methodological process—the way inside to their doctoral experiences—through the generated betweenness prompts, prompts that draw both on regression (including that feeling of perpetual belatedness) and progression (with the prompt of 'threshold' capturing the feeling of being on the cusp of movement). They wrote short narratives, then shared them. Analysis, which was collective and recursive, pulled on affect theory and sideshadowing to help them (echoing Grumet) see themselves seeing. In their shared juxtaposed narratives, they became attuned to places where important "affective intensities" could be discerned (p. 13) as well as sites where the canonical doctoral narrative could be shifted to "dissolve the sense of inevitability that can obscure self-recognition" (p. 13). Synthetical? As we have seen (in different ways) in the various articles in this special issue, the synthetical is not marked by closure but instead, here, by aperture: an "undetermined futurity" (an idea they borrow from Morson; Morson cited in Al-Madhoun et al., p. 15) and where aperture stands in opposition to the over-determination of timelines and milestones, the neoliberal performative indicators characteristic of doctoral education. Aperture also signifies breath: the felt spaces opened through the inbetweenness—the community—that they themselves have cultivated using *currere*, and that, like *currere* itself, is ongoing: works in progress.

We hope you enjoy reading.

*Teresa Strong-Wilson*

## Declarations

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