

**Book Review: Erika Hasebe-Ludt & Carl Leggo (Eds). Canadian Curriculum Studies: A Métissage of Inspiration/Imagination/Interconnection. Toronto: Canadian Scholars (2018). 319 pp. \$54.95 (paperback). (ISBN 978-1-77338-055-1)**

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ERIKA HASEBE-LUDT & CARL LEGGO (Eds). *Canadian Curriculum Studies: A Métissage of Inspiration/Imagination/Interconnection*. Toronto: Canadian Scholars (2018). 319 pp. \$54.95 (paperback). (ISBN 978-1-77338-055-1).

Inspired and nourished by the 7<sup>th</sup> Biennial Provoking Curriculum Studies Conference, which took place in 2015 at the University of British Columbia, this book blends together new and established researchers, diverse methodologies and research representations, this along with a panoply of subjects in order to heed the call to develop “curriculum theory that is written at home but works on behalf of everyone” (Chambers, 1999, p. 137). The subtitle situates this collection’s intent, which is to present contemporary Canadian curriculum research *as métissage*. Both editors are renowned for elucidating personalized approaches to curricular theorizing: Erika Hasebe-Ludt through life-writing as a methodology and Carl Leggo as one of the pioneers of curriculum research using poetic inquiry. Maintaining the editors’ commitment to evoking the personal as a means to understanding systems, histories, and experiences, this volume provokes readers, educators, and researchers into a deeper and broader investigation of curriculum research.

The book will be useful to scholars and students of curriculum studies for its breadth of approaches. It may also prove valuable to those with an interest in the integration of arts knowledges and academic research, as it presents images, poems, dialogues, and project descriptions, these along with traditional chapter formats. Although focused specifically on the Canadian context through recurring emphasis on place, history, and identity, many of the book’s methodological approaches will resonate for those outside of Canada who share an interest in approaching contemporary issues by resituating knowledge in the histories, environments, and identities of particular locations. The book aligns well with other books provoking the field of Canadian curriculum studies (Ng-A-Fook & Rottmann, 2012; Ng-A-Fook et al., 2016).

Any summary of this volume will inevitably leave out important ideas. Never prescriptive, the book’s 53 offerings could be ravenously consumed for a sense of the magnificent and complicated whole, or parsed out to be read as thoughtful approaches to curriculum, one for each week of the year (and then

some). Its *métissage* is organized as three strands of a braid, with each strand containing chapters and invocations with thematic resonances, although the individual pieces could easily find a home in the other sections, such are their interconnections. The editors have consciously created the book so that the reader can start from any point. The section headings invite readers to approach the textual and artistic offerings through the specific lenses of relationships to place, spirit, and interconnections. Poetic ruminations sit beside proposals for curricular ameliorations, interwoven with deeply theoretical research into curricular experiences. Throughout, invocations offer windows into contemporary practices for increasing the cross-disciplinary, personal, decolonized, and dialogic intentions of the Canadian curriculum field.

The breadth of participating authors speaks to the diversity of traditions that have been braided into Canadian curricular thought. Many of the writers invite readers to choose living poetry in their quotidian lives, setting examples through their autobiographical writing and connecting their experiences to Pinar's (2011) description of curriculum as a complicated conversation. Several key curriculum thinkers are repeatedly cited—Dwayne Donald, Cynthia Chambers, and Ted Aoki, as are concepts central to curriculum theory such as *currere* (Pinar, 1975) and *difficult knowledge* (Pitt & Britzman, 2003), this as authors work to understand the relationships between personal, social, historical, and environmental realities.

Here, I map out the three braids, with nods to selected contributors. The first braid, *Métissage A-Inspiration: Topos/Language/Sound*, is hopeful while acknowledging past pain, such as through the history of treaties and the systemic treatment of Canada's Indigenous peoples, the future challenges of global warming and living mindfully, and re-viewing (re-creating) the spaces within which we live.

The second braid, *Métissage B-Imagination: Identity/Ethos/Spirit* presents a different type of intimacy. The authors attend to interior lives by rethinking the discussion of "historical wrongs" (Hill, p. 128; this volume), investigating what draws the self into particular teaching / learning environments, searching out the roots of creativity, seeking resonance between Heidegger's and Aoki's understandings of technology, and finding spiritual / cultural belonging within the curriculum.

Finally, the third braid, *Métissage C-Interconnection: Relations/Healing/Pathos* lays out a variety of internal and ongoing structural tensions, offering perspectives based on personal navigation of global tragedies such as reckoning (from across the ocean, in Vancouver, British Columbia) with the 2011 tsunami that hit Japan or addressing the complications of education within the Dadaab refugee camp. Other chapters re-orient individual, and often hidden, pain

within a global context, situating eating disorders, grief, and assault within formal and informal curriculum discourses. Despite the difficult topics raised in each braid, the authors and editors guide readers towards possibilities of hope and peace.

As a whole, this volume leaves readers with an impression of Canada's breathtaking expanse, and the challenges Canadians face to reconcile their past and present. With texts that invoke diverse spiritual traditions, tease apart the complex heritages that brought immigrants to Canada and situate themselves in the land and spaces of Canada's physical boundaries, this book inspires reflection, empathy, and action on the part of educators and researchers.

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