CHAPTER 14

Relocating Curriculum and Reimagining Place under Settler Capitalism

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Introduction

In the late 1990s, I took a course in the politics of curriculum at the University of British Columbia. Early in the course, the instructor relayed what is probably an old curriculum saw. He commented that if we were ever on an airplane sitting next to a dentist who asked the question, 'What is curriculum anyway?', there is a very simple answer that you can rattle off which will most likely satisfy the dentist and possibly lead to deeper discussion *if* either or both of you want it. The answer was: 'What to teach, to whom, and when'. At the time I was beginning to explore the idea of place to better understand my research site in rural eastern Canada. I remember wondering, what about 'where'? While I suppose, 'to whom' can and should involve 'context', I'm still wondering.

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In this chapter I want to try to move beyond the critiques of 'placeless' curriculum and schooling developed out of the place-based education movement (Gruenewald, 2003a, b; Greenwood & Smith, 2007), taking into consideration critiques of this very movement (Bowers, 2006; Corbett, 2020; Nespor, 2009). At the same time, I wish to address, at least in a partial fashion, the way that place has been situated in the curriculum studies literature in the United States, developing out of the work of Joe Kincheloe and Bill Pinar (1991),[1] and more recently in that of William Reynolds (2017a). I write from a position outside the curriculum field, as a rural education specialist and an educational sociologist. I begin with an analysis of Homi Bhabha's analysis of culture and/in space, moving on to an analysis of place and curriculum theorizing, concluding with a discussion of select emerging materialist social theory and speculating on its implications for reimagining curriculum theory.

My general argument here is that what Pinar (2009) has called the 'primacy of the particular' is important but potentially limited. I draw on cultural and social theory to make the case that culture, place and identity need to be understood more explicitly as material and discursive phenomena. I also argue that curriculum theorizing should engage seriously and creatively in current and emerging exigencies of global geopolitics, radical mobilities and the possibility of decolonial post-capitalist futures, as imagined in contemporary social theory and in fiction alike. I begin with an analysis of Homi Bhabha's idea that culture is at least partially unhinged from local and national anchors by global colonialism, before moving on to an analysis of the influence of modes of communication in globalized capitalism. I conclude by drawing on Bruno Latour and Donna Haraway's speculative materialist analysis that reaches towards new spatial stories.

Bhabha and the Location of Culture

Bhabha's principal target is the idea of culture as a unified 'container' of identity and subjectivity (Bhabha, 1994). His critique stimulated and

[1] I think it is also important to note the way that Kincheloe and Pinar (1991) diverged in their thinking, with the former moving in a more explicitly Marxist direction while the latter forayed into phenomenology. How each maintained (or diverged from) a focus on place and what Pinar calls 'the particular' is beyond the scope of this account.

reflected debates concerning the nature of multiculturalism and how this idea has played out in the West, in 'advanced societies' which have been shaped by colonialism and the globalization of capitalist accumulation. For Bhabha, the idea that culture is 'located' or contained within a particular national geography is complicated by the colonial experience. What this conflation of culture and place fails to understand is how a new *thirdspace* is created in all colonial interchanges. The myths of orientalism (Said, 1979), for instance, are complicated by the way that new hybrid identities are created in the colonial experience, and how dreams of domination, enculturation and assimilation are always troubled and refuted by the complexity of human agency.

The very idea of culture seems in this account to be emergent, hybrid and interstitial, evolving in unpredictable ways that generate cultural forms cut loose from physical geography, from the nation-state, to Bhabha's analysis of the family micropolitics caught in the historical and spatial web of colonial violence in Toni Morrison's novel *Beloved*. If more traditional ideas of culture rest on the relations between people and bounded places, Bhabha's idea of culture seeks to understand the ubiquitous movement of bodies, ideas and things around the globe (Appadurai, 1996; Bauman, 1991). Spatially it is both the space in-between, but also the mobilities, passage routes or 'stairways' and 'bridges', to use Bhabha's metaphors, that matter significantly in production and reproduction of culture and identity, but also in the production of knowledge itself. Here epistemological questions emerge from the particularities of cultural knowledge rendered unstable by hybrid intercultural and transcultural forms of knowledge constitution and production.

For Bhabha, there is more than a salubrious transcendence of colonial relations that separate people and places into the customary bins such as tradition and modern, self and other. Rather, what emerges from the colonial encounter is a fractal of improvizations, negotiations, translations, interpretations, all of which generate unpredictable emergent hybrid transformations. The maintenance of established structures of inclusion and exclusion do not disappear, nor do the resistances that dance along as well. Bhabha writes:

> Postcoloniality, for its part, is a salutary reminder of the persistent 'neocolonial' relations within the 'new' world order and the multinational division of labour. Such a perspective enables the authentication of histories of exploitation and the evolution of strategies of resistance. Beyond

> this, however, postcolonial critique bears witness to those countries and communities – in the North and the South, urban and rural – constituted, if I may coin a phrase, 'otherwise than modernity'. Such cultures of a postcolonial contra-modernity may be contingent to modernity, discontinuous or in contention with it, resistant to its oppressive, assimilationist technologies; but they also deploy the cultural hybridity of their borderline conditions to 'translate', and therefore reinscribe, the social imaginary of both metropolis and modernity. (Bhabha, 1994, p. 6)

Bhabha concludes his *Location of Culture* essay speaking to the desire for solidarity and what he calls 'the join', which I take to be the possibility of connection, communication and the possibility of something beyond modernity, colonialism, capitalism, and indeed the receding cultures of spacetime past. In the curriculum field, what might this desire signal and what kinds of spatial imaginaries might it work with in order to do so? In terms of curriculum as well, the emergence of cultural hybrids and the mobilities that produce them has also, perhaps ironically, situated culture and identity at the centre of curriculum discussions in North America and beyond. The culturally responsive pedagogy movement has developed out of the work of African-American scholars, whose work interrogates the longstanding marginalization of students of African descent. Drawing on both structural analysis of educational achievement and more poststructural and phenomenological work in critical race theory (Ladson-Billings, 1998) and intersectionality (Hill-Collins & Bilge, 2016), it has become increasingly clear that curriculum theory is compelled to address the persistent educational disadvantage experienced by racialized, Indigenous, second language, queer, disabled and working-class youth. Yet, culture, structural inequality, hybrid knowledges and emergent identities reside in places, and it is in places where curriculum can, and I think should, be located.

Locating Knowledge

Questions arise concerning how curriculum responds, or should respond, to difference in culture, race, ability, gender and social position. One part of this discussion relates to how school knowledge is formulated (Young, 2007) and how curriculum is implemented and indeed, the relationship between these elements. Green (2018) has situated the question of curriculum in the established binary of theory and practice, analyzing

the Anglo-American *Reconceptualist* tradition that has sought to establish curriculum studies as a unique intellectual field in its own right, and the *Deliberationalist* view.

Green points to the modernist roots of the Deliberationalist tradition, in which a pragmatic focus on system dynamics overshadows a critical analysis of the system itself and the social relation which produce and maintain it. In the United States, the pragmatist tradition develops from Dewey, through functionalist scientific management as in the work of Bobbitt and Tyler, and on into the 1960s and 1970s, when the tradition meets the reconceptualization of the field, beginning with Schwab's modernist critique and on into the phenomenological and poststructural critiques of Doll, Greene, Pinar, Aoki and others. In a sense, the Reconceptualists transform the curriculum field from a pragmatist/functionalist field of inquiry to a textual one. It is here that Green suggests that a rapprochement can be achieved by integrating textuality with materiality, which I read as incorporating the exigencies of place and the body, along with their material demands, including, presumably, the persistent demand for relevance in/of the curriculum field.

The colonial experience has structured education and curriculum theorizing—internally in Britain, for instance, in terms of differentiated education for different social classes, sexes and racialized groups, and externally, in the empire and beyond. The same may be said by extension, in former colonies like India, Australia and Canada where questions of culture that preoccupied Bhabha are central to the educational enterprise. Here as well, we can see the persistent importance of place in the curriculum conversation. Schooling and its content have long been understood as key instruments of modernization, cultural hegemony and linguistic domination (Willinsky, 2000); indeed, large parts of the sociology of education and curriculum studies intersect at the very nexus points that colonialism establishes and develops. The work of Cynthia Chambers (1999, 2008) along with other work in the curriculum field that has begun to focus on land and place (Ng-A-Fook & Rottmann, 2012; O'Connor, 2020; Scully, 2020; Tuck & Gaztambide-Fernandez, 2013; Wallin & Peden, 2020) has brought the Canadian curriculum field into conversation with questions of colonialism, place and indigeneity, focusing on the intersection of the ordinary skilled practices in communities outside the metropolis, and Indigenous lifeways. In Chambers' work and in that of Indigenous curriculum scholars, the question of curriculum,

culture and place emerge at the centre of educational policy discussions, following the release of the Canadian Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) (Canada, 2015).

The abstract, structural or vertical dreams of colonizers and curriculum-makers have always encountered the inevitably recalcitrant, non-standard local place-practices as a problem (Corbett, 2007, 2010, 2014, 2020; Theobald, 1997). Place is a problem that is never solved, for either colonialism or for curriculum and pedagogy. As Bhabha theorizes, and as Elsie Rockwell (2019) demonstrates in her historical research, educational problems associated with modernization and colonialism appear as messy problems of transaction, negotiation, strategy and tactics.

It can be argued, I think, drawing on Green, that the very idea of curriculum operates in a contested space between the particular and the general, employing *vertical* (abstract) and *horizontal* (spatial) discourses (Bernstein, 1999). Vertical discourse represents structural, asynchronous and often placeless 'powerful' (Young, 2007) knowledge which maps onto centralized colonial educational projects and imaginaries. Place and culture introduce multiple horizontal tension into systems of education designed in the nineteenth and into the mid-twentieth century for the purposes of colonial social engineering, eugenics, class and gender reproduction, cultural propaganda and population control. Understood this way, the work of the Reconceptualists can be taken as an effort to locate curriculum in social space, and to defuse its structuralist leanings, but also to support various social justice projects.

In a paper entitled 'The Primacy of the Particular', William Pinar (2009) has offered a retrospective analysis of his own impact on the field ('as I tried to imagine a future for the field after Tyler' [Pinar, 2009, p. 147])—identifying an emphasis on place as a central pillar in his thought. He writes: 'Theorizing place began as an effort to contextualize the curricular challenges posed by living – as I did for twenty years – in the American South' (Pinar, 2009, p. 143). This emphasis on place links with Pinar's autobiographical focus developed out of a preoccupation with the history and culture of the American south in his early work (Kincheloe and Pinar, 1991), moving subsequently to what he calls a 'reconstruction of place as planetary [that] animates my current effort to reconstruct humanism' (Pinar, 2009, p. 143).

As Pinar illustrates, the question of curriculum in relation to place and space is not new. Considerable work relating to place and the

American South, especially as this region relates to wider American educational imaginaries, has emerged, following Kincheloe and Pinar's (1991) *Curriculum as Social Psychoanalysis: The Significance of Place*. A good deal of this work has been catalogued by William Reynolds (2017b), and I will not recapitulate it here. What seems worth saying, though, is that much of this work appears—as does the American literature on place-based education—as a series of undertheorized and disconnected area studies focused squarely on the 'primacy of the particular'. I have also critiqued a recent collection edited by Reynolds (2017a) for its lack of connection to the broader field of rural education and, indeed, of scholarship beyond the United States (Corbett, 2018).[2]

What this work illustrates, though, is how curriculum theorizing deals in tensions between 'the particular', as Pinar puts it, and abstract vertical discourses that attempt to bind socio-educational space to produce common educational experiences and sensibilities (Tomkins, 1986). The technical problems envisaged by Bobbitt and Tyler in their functionalist vision of curriculum situate the field as an instrumental socialization mechanism (machine) whose central purpose is subjectivization and population formation for the modes of production and social relations present in a given (capitalist) time and place. The problem of curriculum in this sense is about the transmission of 'basic' functional skills such as literacy and numeracy, which form the basis for the sorting and selection that satisfies the needs of the job market. This curricular vision essentially ignores culture and place, setting it aside, in the way that Bissoondath (2002) describes as a show of food, clothing and nostalgia which reinforces the hegemony of the dominant culture. The chief business of curriculum is the real business of social reproduction, i.e. producing and certifying workers for capital. Knowledge is not powerful for any mysterious reason relating to the nature of the knowledge itself or to the special access to reality this knowledge confers; it is powerful because it allows its holders access to job markets, and it is powerful because it seldom challenges established power. Yet theory matters, and hegemonic knowledge

[2] Butler and Sinclair (2020) have recently conducted an analysis of the idea of place in educational research. While their approach is quite comprehensive and theoretically rich, drawing on scholarship across a wider range of philosophical, cultural and political literatures, the vast bulk of attention focusses on research and researchers working in the United States.

is always contested and troubled, as Bhabha has argued. In the Canadian context, the long-established French-English détente, contemporary immigration and the complex politics that surround it, as well as work emerging from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) (2015), have shifted the national cultural conversation to a more complex discussion which has been reflected in curriculum, as provinces work to retool school systems for multilingual students and for curriculum that tells a new story about Indigenous-settler relations.

Communication and/in Space

Relating to the complex challenges for colonial governance and inevitable hybridities explored by Bhabha, Harold Innis (1951) long ago pointed out how fundamental problems relating to the control of space and time are central to understanding how civilizations rise, operate, justify themselves, and ultimately fail or come to be absorbed into other polities. Phenomena of territorialization and deterritorialization are, as Deleuze and Guattari (1987) put it, a relentless flow, principally concerned with contestation and transformation of space through time.[3] Innis was concerned with the rise of literacy as a mode of modernist communication and the effect it has in the establishment of power; particularly, how vernacular language and alphabetic symbol systems created the conditions for the rise of the individual, the decline of monarchial and ecclesiastical power, the proliferation of epistemologies, and processes of governance and control that arise with forms of democracy that follow on from classical societies (Burchell, Gordon, & Miller, 1991; Foucault, 2010).

While Innis did not address schooling or curriculum, specifically, his analysis of communicative capacity and mode points to how power takes shape in modernity. The use of the press in the early twentieth century follows on from Innis' detailed analysis of the spread of literacy from papyrus, through parchment, through monasteries to the printing press, whose invention coincides, not by accident, with the Reformation, the emergence of globalization of markets, colonization and industrialization (Braudel, 1992). As the commodity emerges as a mass product for exchange, copied, distributed and traded, so too is knowledge given flight, copied and distributed as well. Indeed, the 'copy' itself, as Benjamin

[3] Needless perhaps to say that this production and reproduction of space was also the concern of Henri Lefebvre (1992) in his spatial analytics.

(2019) discerned and as Baudrillard (1994) developed, is a centrepiece of modernist ontology.[4]

Innis describes the emergence of modernity and the forms of time and space binding created in industry as well as in institutions of governances such as health and educational bureaucracies. Emergent communication systems particular to modernity, from the printing press, through radio and television, shape the conditions for mass literacy and the related demand for mass schooling in the twentieth century. Not only are vernacular literacies and democratization crucial instruments of power and control, but the capacity to copy becomes central not only to modernity itself but also to the project of mass schooling and the parallel curriculum studies movement which arise through the twentieth century. Innis can already see in the 1950s how radio as a communication system dispenses with power's need for literacy. He uses the examples of Hitler and Franklin Roosevelt as political leaders who were early adopters of audio and moving images to promulgate mass propaganda. In recent years, Donald Trump has, in his idiosyncratic way, managed emerging social media tools, probably in conjunction with other internet applications, as well as the predictive and manipulative potential of big data and manipulative targeted messaging, to surveille, propagandize and achieve political ends (Zuboff, 2019).

Innis' foundational analysis of how the means of communication embodies tools of regulation and the exercise of power and governance across spatial and temporal spans raises questions about contemporary communicative instrumentalities. By the same token, the spatial expansion/compression[5] represented by contemporary mobilities and the networks that support them (Appadurai, 1996; Castells, 2009; Urry,

[4]The mechanical reproduction of images lifts the image from the context in which it is produced and distributes it across space. This plays a part in massification whose "theoretical representation is found in statistics" (Benjamin, 2019, p. 173). Reproduction of the image is virtually co-terminus with both the development of statistical techniques and the idea of curriculum studies which can be traced to the early twentieth century in the United States in the work of Franklin Bobbitt which situates curriculum itself as a mass public project.

[5]The term 'glocalization' has been long used to describe the simultaneous shrinkage of space in the 'global village' is refracted by increasing focus on culture and identity and where global inequities challenge any notion that history was finished with the fall of the Berlin Wall and the Soviet Union (Fukuyama, 1992), or the global village is what has been called a "flat world" (Friedman, 2005).

2000), along with Bhabha's hybrid thirdspace identity[6] that has grown out of colonial encounters, further challenge established theoretical understanding, including those relating to curriculum.

While the focus on culture and communication/discourse have framed the central concerns of educational reform in terms of theoretical tools available and relevant to the particular time and places in which the Reconceptualist movement gained traction, new ideas relating to place, culture and curriculum have emerged. The complexity of contemporary geopolitics demands more than the linguistic turn in sociocultural theory was able to offer. Furthermore, key structural theories relating to social class, sex/gender, race/ethnicity, while resilient, have, it seems to me, proved insufficient for grasping the complexity of problems like the rise of populism, nativism, counter-globalization, pandemics and climate change, to name a few current problematics.

Curriculum in Trouble: From Cyborgs to Compost

In *Staying with the Trouble*, Donna Haraway (2016) has moved on beyond her ground-breaking analyses of situated knowledge (1988) and cyborg theory (1985, 1991). In her early work, Haraway develops a feminist analysis that focusses on the primacy of perspective in a way that is not entirely inconsistent with Pinar's poststructural project. Knowledge is always developed from somewhere, and that somewhere excludes women and their world-views and situations. This analysis developed into feminist standpoint theory, which draws on the foundational work of Marxist feminists (Harding, 2004; Hartsock, 1983; Smith, 1987, 2005), who critiqued both the structuralist bias in Marxist analysis as well as its assumption of an individualized economic rationality which did not take into consideration the social position of women and how the relational foundations and complexity of women's ordinary lives reveal starkly different rationalities and landscapes of choice and opportunity from those imagined by male political economists and sociologists. In addition,

[6] I am increasing convinced that 'identity' in its collectivist, constructivist and essentialist forms (Brubaker & Cooper, 2000) will be consigned to a similar fate as that which befell other similarly problematic concepts in sociology and psychology such as 'role'. Contemporary work in queer geographies, for instance, offers new ways of thinking about identity and the boundaries, restrictions and violence that identities can represent (March, 2020).

Haraway's early situated knowledges work takes up the poststructural invective (c.f. Foucault, 1980) that discursive practices, including those of scientists (see also Latour, 1993; Latour & Woolgar, 1986), generate or create truth, rather than neutrally revealing it.

As a biologist, Haraway has always been concerned, as well, with the way that social theory had tended to follow the Enlightenment separation of the human, the animal and the material to generate the Cartesian or Kantian subject. Haraway's work has explored the complex entanglements of humans and non-human animals (2007) and problems with the radical separation of the human and material worlds, which has created the conditions for a foundational insensitivity to the material earth that has set the planet on a course for ongoing ecological destruction and, ultimately, climactic disaster. In this respect, Haraway's work prefigures a movement in social theory that refuses the linguistic-material separation that has led to an unproductive and potentially disastrous territorial impasse with the natural sciences (Latour, 2013, 2018; Rose, 2013), as well as the decolonial and Indigenous critiques of the implication of Western intellectual traditions in genocide, land theft and the cultivation of divisive and destructive binaries (i.e. civilized/savage; advanced/primitive; premodern/modern, etc.) that operate under the guise of progress (Battiste, 2013; Smith, 1999; Tuck & MacKenzie, 2015; Tuck & Yang, 2012). The figure of the cyborg that she adopts from science fiction in the early 1980s (Haraway, 1985) represents a final break with naturalistic notions embedded in humanism, and particularly what she sees as the oppressive way that common binary categories structure (rather than describe) the world. Additionally, cyborg imagery proposes the integration of the human and the machine, and a deep ontological critique. This has been developed in feminist new materialism (Groz, 1994, 2017), actor network theory (Latour, 2007), agential realism (Barad, 2007), posthumanism (Braidotti, 2013, 2015), and in a widening variety of perspectives challenging the linguistic foundations of early generations of much poststructural thought.[7]

The imagery that emerges in Haraway's cyborg world is also evident in the entangled 'mess' of the contemporary age which has been variously described as the anthropocene, the capitaloscene (Malm, 2016),

[7] Well-known exceptions here are the work of Foucault and particularly that of Deleuze and Guattari, which contained significant materialist and spatial formulation.

and the plantationoscene (Haraway, 2016), among other nomenclature. Haraway's framing of this present epoch rejects anthropocentric implications of common nomenclature by inventing what she calls the Chthulucene. This notion imagines a world in which the human and non-human are intimately interconnected and ideally engaged in an intentionally symbiotic process of world-making made possible by theory that refuses to separate people and things into neat conceptual containers. This work echoes classic science fiction cyborg motifs in the work of Octavia Butler (2000), Phillip K. Dick (1968) and William Gibson (1984/2000), as well as emerging posthumanist themes in contemporary fiction (Powers, 2018; Tokarczuk, 2018) and popularized social-scientific analysis (e.g. Harari, 2016, 2020; Tsing et al., 2017). The performative challenge articulated by Haraway (2016) in *Staying with the Trouble* is for a committed engagement with life, sustainability and survival in a damaged world. Rather than retreating from the enormity of the challenges of global poverty and inequality, ecological degradation, habitat and species destruction, climate change, pandemics, global inequalities and the ravages of colonialism on Indigenous people, it is Haraway's vision that we apply both the tools of scientific realism and those of language, myth and imagination to think through and act intentionally and collectively to create a different world than the ubiquitous TINA imaginaries offered by neoliberalism.

This project focuses on both place and movement, and its 'curriculum' reveals a bold and controversial thought experiment that creates a mythic family (the *Camilles*) who lives through five future generations between an imaginary rural community in Appalachia devastated by mountain-top removal mining, and a location in Mexico. For Haraway, 'staying with the trouble' is represented at a number of levels in the multigenerational Camille story. First of all, the first of five Camille characters is part of a utopian community intentionally developed in a place ravaged by industrialization. Rather than starting fresh, this utopia is not an escape but a deep engagement in a horrifically damaged place. Secondly, the Camilles choose a totem animal and are genetically integrated with these animals, becoming what Haraway calls symbionts. This move obviously extends the cyborg metaphor into the realm of non-human animal species, to generate a new level of connection and entanglement. Thirdly, since the original Camille chose a monarch butterfly as her symbiont, she and her family not only inhabit and work to 'renovate' their industrially ravaged

Appalachian home, they also migrate through the corridor of the monarch's seasonal migration, living part of the year in Mexico. Across five generations, the Camilles and their families work to create 'kin' across space and species. Haraway's chief metaphor in this more-than-human kinship myth is the mundane idea of *compost*, or the twin ideas that all beings and things both 'compose' (create, c.f. Bateson, 2001) and return to earth as humus.

This story projects forward to the year 2425 and it is far from simplistically utopian, containing challenging prospects such as a reduced global population of three billion and ongoing species destruction. Haraway's writing is controversial and disturbing, but she defends the idea of fewer human babies and a greater range of kinship relations with non-human species, using the slogan 'make kin not babies'. Drawing on the work of Canadian Inuit artist Tania Tagaq, Haraway writes:

> It matters which concepts conceptualize concepts. Materialist, experimental animism is not a New Age wish nor a neocolonial fantasy, but a powerful proposition for rethinking relationality, perspective process, and reality without the dubious comforts of the oppositional categories of modern/traditional or religious/secular. Human-animal knots do something different in this world. (Haraway, 2016, p. 165)

Haraway's controversial thought experiment at the very least opens up new vistas which suggest new ways of conceptualizing the relationships enmeshed in place, in ways that challenge dominant ways of thinking about the curriculum question with which I opened this chapter. Under the sign of the new materialism, agential realism, flat ontology and actor network theory, this perspective raises new questions about knowledge that matters (what to teach), to an increasingly neoliberalized, identity-focused 'student' (to whom), in the face of both temporal issues relating to development, and others relating to the time we are drawn into together (when) via the productive processes.

Latour's Terrestrial Turn

While Haraway's symbiont thought-experiment plays out against the backdrop of what is euphemistically called climate change, Bruno Latour's (2018) recent imaginative theoretical work develops what seems to me to be a compatible analysis of terrestrial politics. This work extends his early work in actor network theory (2007) and science studies (1986,

1993), through his 'anthropology of the moderns' (Latour, 2013) in which he began to focus on the challenges and complications of speaking and translating across world views. This work reiterates his ideas about the way that modernity is a dream that has never arrived and how its key spaces of activity (notably in the science laboratory) are social sites in many ways like any other, which confront knowledge practices and world-views operating on entirely different ontologies, myths and standards of evidence.

In *Down to Earth*, Latour (2018) creates an argument about how the material earth responds forcefully to human activity, exercising agency through climactic, bacteriological and viral activity that cannot be ignored. In his analysis, Latour creates a spatial dynamic that counters the local and the global as complex countervailing forces that play out in multiple different ways. He develops, first of all, additive and subtractive versions of both the global and the local. Additive globalization (or 'globalization plus', as he calls it), for instance, is a formulation of the idea that focuses on the way that globalization attends to diversity and complexity made possible by a better-connected world. Globalization 'minus', on the other hand, reflects a vision that focuses alternatively on the development of unified world systems, centralization and coordination of control over economic and political processes, and what an older generation of sociologists called world systems or convergence theory. Latour offers the same analysis of localization, which also has additive and subtractive variants.

Importantly, globalization and localization operate as what Latour calls 'attractors', that provide alternate world-views that coalesce opinion, policy and social thought more generally. For instance, we can see how both additive and subtractive globalization create resistances in the form of localization as both nation-states (Trumpism, Brexit, right-wing populism in Europe) and individuals seek to escape from the compulsion to globalize. In this sense, the local, or place, is invoked as an alternative to the complexities and challenges of the global but also as a space of retreat, in which life is alleged to be simpler, promising 'tradition, protection, identity and certainty within national or ethnic borders' (Latour, 2018, p. 30). Similar forces operate in the other direction as localism is critiqued for xenophobia, and ignorance of how global supply chains operate, and the interdependency of places cannot be wished away.

Out of the tension produced in the interface between the global and local attractors, Latour theorizes the emergence of chronic instability, which in turn generates two responses that become emergent attractors

in their own right. The first he labels 'out of this world', and it is represented by Trumpism and the capricious emotionalism and illogic that he and other charismatic leaders represent. Because the local-global interface and the established left-right political categories can not contain or explain the tension, '[e]verything has to be mapped out anew' (Latour, 2018, p. 33). The mapping suggested by the out of this world attractor is a refusal to accept constraints, limits, scientific evidence, and which 'no longer claims to address geopolitical realities seriously, but purports to put itself outside all worldly constraints, literally offshore, like a tax haven' (Latour, 2018, p. 36). Climate change denial and capricious speculation that injecting disinfectants into sick people are illustrations.

Through the last half of *Down To Earth*, Latour develops a final attractor which he calls the Terrestrial, which represents a rejection of the three utopias represented by the aforementioned attractors (the global, the local, and the out of this world). Here he argues that the local is the most important of the three attractors because it is the only one connected to material reality, i.e. the land and water. Yet, he argues that neither the shining global of modernity nor the reassuring local any longer exist (Latour, 2018, p. 91). Here his argument converges with that of Bhabha, I think, in the sense that there is no cozy locale to which we can turn for a stable identity. Latour also draws implicitly on Indigenous and decolonial perspectives, speaking to the problematic and difficult defense of/by those who have been expelled from lands (Sassen, 2014). He writes:

> The negotiation – the fraternization? – between supporters of the Local and supporters of the Terrestrial has to bear on the importance, the legitimacy, even the necessity of belonging to a land, but – and here lies the whole difficulty – without immediately confusing it with the Local has added to it: ethnic homogeneity, a focus on patrimony, historicism, nostalgia, inauthentic authenticity … [there is] nothing more innovative, nothing more present, subtle, technical, and artificial (in the positive sense of the word), nothing less rustic and rural, nothing more creative, nothing more contemporary than to negotiate landing on some ground. (Latour, 2018, p. 53)

Conclusion: Place, Compost, Earth

In my view, Latour's conception of the 'terrestrial' resonates across the work of Haraway and Bhabha. This suggests, I think, what Indigenous

scholars have been promoting for decades: an honest appraisal of how we got to where we are (Truth) and a shared/negotiated path forward that seeks not only to create a more just future (Reconciliation), but also to 'acquire as much cold-blooded knowledge about the *heated activity of an earth* finally grasped *from close up*' (Latour, 2018, p. 74—his emphasis). This includes a deep critique of educational traditions and practices which are marinated in what Latour calls the 'perversity of modernism', which positions tradition as archaic. This analysis is consistent with the critiques of both Indigenous and rural scholars, such as those influenced by the Wendell Berry/Aldo Leopold communitarian tradition, which focuses on cyclical time, cultural knowledge of place, stewardship and communion with the non-human world.

In relation to place-oriented and rurally-oriented curriculum theorizing, as cited above, a vision of localism as escape from problems of modernity has devolved from American rural philosophers such as Wendell Berry, Kirkpatrick Sale and Aldo Leopold, anarchists such as Murry Bookchin and James Scott, ecological thinkers too numerous to name, and place-based education promoters like David Gruenwald/Greenwood (in his early work[8]), David Sobel, Jack Shelton and Paul Theobald. While I have tremendous sympathy with these positions and some of the ethics and politics they imply, they do not, even in their more sophisticated incarnations, adequately theorize the complexities of a networked and interconnected world. Fostering a deep experiential appreciation for local environments is important, but it is not enough.

The defensive politics represented in the southern US tradition in curriculum theory emanating from Kincheloe and Pinar (1991) to Reynolds (2017) also fail to grapple with the range of relations, unequal exchanges and mobilities that make the contemporary world. My own early work (Corbett, 2001, 2007) could also be subject to the same critique. The central problem is the way that localism, in relation to its global other, is invoked defensively as a protection of lives, identities and traditions, in the face of external threats. While this is important work, it is by now obvious that this approach can feed directly into, and inadvertently buttresses, the emergent politics of resentment that have supported the rise of irrational charismatic political leaders (Cramer, 2016; Hochschild, 2016; Wuthnow, 2018).

[8] I would like to thank David Greenwood (2009) for challenging my own thinking to take on the problem of colonialism in relation to rurality.

I use the language of truth and reconciliation deliberately above, drawing on the work of Canada's TRC, which reported in 2015 (Canada, 2016) following years of testimony from Indigenous Canadians who experienced residential schooling. The report documents Canada's history of colonial education, which was essentially that the instruments of curriculum and pedagogy, designed to marginalize, brutalize and erase a people, to destroy language and cultural knowledge practices, ushered in a Eurocentric capitalist modernity. In other words, it was a brutal project designed to destroy the lived curriculum of a people, the languages, beliefs and skill sets that sustained them by wrenching children from their histories, their families and their places. The general thrust of the TRC is for the Canada's thirteen provincial and territorial school systems to work towards reconciliation by imagining a curriculum focused on truth-telling, justice and the incorporation of what Indigenous Canadians have understood all along—that a damaged earth will ultimately fight back.

To locate curriculum in the realm of the Terrestrial, in the sense that Latour creates, is to attempt to move beyond critiques of place-based education that draw schooling and knowledge itself within the safe, familiar home space of the locale. It is to attend critically to the attractors of localization and globalization to problematise how a re-turn to nostalgic non-relational ontologies and epistemologies cannot help us understand well the curriculum questions: what to teach, to whom and when? It is my sense that curriculum theory must enrich the 'primacy of the particular' with a materialist ecological politics that integrates the human and natural sciences (Rose, 2013).

Contemporary social theory grapples with the complex relations generated under conditions in which all places and people alive today are drawn together in complex webs through which bodies, things (including commodities and pathogens) and ideas move. The challenge for curriculum theory, as I see it, is to develop relational understandings of culture, communication and materiality, and this will not be accomplished in the absence of complex spatial understandings. We need new imaginaries, new stories, to come to grips with the space we are in, and thus, I draw inspiration from Pinar's (2004) more radical and intersubjective formulations of *currere*, science fiction and the frontiers of social theory, as potential tools to confront both localized Heideggerian phenomenological retreats and the desperate and bizarre 'out-of-this-world' politics that provide a dangerous comfort.

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