Chapter 7
Hopeful Practices: Activating and Enacting the Pedagogical and Political Potential in Crisis

Rebecca Houwer

. . .climate crisis • environmental crisis • AIDS crisis • food crisis • humanitarian crises • refugee crisis • crisis of the subject • crisis of truth • crisis of representation • crisis of evidence • inner-city crisis • rural crisis • personal crisis • currency crisis • constitutional crisis • energy crisis • mid-life crisis • crisis of faith • civilization crisis • urban crisis • financial crisis • intelligibility crisis • housing crisis • cultural crisis • education crisis. . .

Ring the bells that still can ring/Forget your perfect offering/There is a crack in everything/That's how the Light gets in. ~ Leonard Cohen

Abstract This chapter explores the theoretical potential for education to provide learners with structures and processes that mitigate crisis and support "hope grounded in practice" (Freire P, Pedagogy of hope. Continuum, New York, 2008, p. 2). Instead of advocating for a definitive educational response to crisis, I examine the possibilities and challenges crises, when recognized as pedagogical, offer education. With a focus on public rather than private crises, I first situate my analysis within emergent matters of concern and care (Latour B, Crit Inq 30:225–248, 2004; Puig de la Bellacasa M, Soc Stud Sci 41(1):85–106, 2011) to practitioners and theorists of Science, Technology, and Society Education (STSE) studies. Second, I define "crisis" and examine how it is pedagogical. Next, I consider the challenges and barriers to learning through crisis. Fourth, I develop the opportunities crises offer education and finally, I conclude with suggestions that might support the potential for transformative learning from and through crises and considerations of why such learning is desirable.

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In the Age of Reason, many in society invested tremendous hope in promises of modernity that through the rigorous application of scientific rationality humans might emancipate themselves from the shackles of Nature. Ironically, the harder we have tried to flee Nature, the closer to it we have become; inadvertently the scale by which human fates are bound to the fates of natural worlds has expanded exponentially. In our pursuit of independence and disconnection, we have created a proliferation of crises. Still, we place our hope in 'the children', the future, and education. A recent keyword search of my university's library catalogue for 'crisis' returned 9,531 hits. A keyword search for 'crisis AND education' returned 596 hits. Alternatively, a keyword search for 'hope' returned 5,748 hits and 'hope AND education' returned 460 hits. Records of crisis outnumber hope by nearly a 2:1 ratio (9,531:5,748). However, when paired with education, the crisis: hope frequency ratio diminishes to 1.2:1. Paulo Freire (2008) claims that "hope is an ontological need" and that "we need *critical* hope the way a fish needs unpolluted water" (p. 2). Crisis and critical are both etymologically derived from the Greek word krinein which means "able to discern" (Oxford English Dictionary, Web, accessed 21 Mar 2013). In this chapter, I ask if there is something that education provides learners in its structure and processes that mitigates crisis and supports "hope grounded in practice" (Freire 2008, p. 2). I respond to the question, "given compelling evidence of an ecological, sustainability crisis, how might Science, Technology, and Society Education respond?" by asking, more generally, what opportunities and challenges crises, when recognized as pedagogical, offer education. I focus on crisis generally, instead of the "ecological crisis" specifically, because I believe that strategies for learning from and through the latter may be productively applied to former. Moreover, I contend that they are produced within similar power-structures. For this reason, I focus on public as opposed to private crises. The chapter is divided into five sections. First, I situate my analysis within emergent matters of concern and care (Latour 2004; Puig de la Bellacasa 2011) to practitioners and theorists of Science, Technology, and Society Education (STSE) studies. Second, I define "crisis" and examine how it is pedagogical. Next, I consider the challenges and barriers to learning through crisis. Fourth, I develop the opportunities crises offer education and finally, I conclude with suggestions that might support the potential for transformative learning from and through crises and considerations of why such learning is desirable.

Science, Technology, and Society Education (STSE)

In response to the many crises in our many worlds, we need not only all the tools in the toolbox (and those yet imagined, those forgotten, and those presently outside our frame of recognition), but appropriate tools, and competency using them. Since

its institutionalization, science education toolboxes have offered students conceptual and material instruments for gaining insights into and understanding about "the natural world". As governments, in particular the Canadian government, set about dismantling world class environmental research facilities, muzzling scientists, and divesting in sciences that are not intimately tethered to private market interests, citizen science for public purposes becomes increasingly important. In order to cultivate an informed, active, and reflexive citizenry, students need opportunities to develop connections between 'the school world' and 'the real world' (Sadler 2009, p. 38). Studies demonstrate that students are more motivated to learn about issues that they can connect to their everyday lives (Sadler 2009; Zeidler et al. 2005; Alsop and Bencze 2010). That said, the sciences have typically not been taught as situated within local contexts or as having more than a functionalist and instrumentalist relationship to students' everyday lives. Instead, the ontological and epistemological resources, and pedagogical technologies, that science education mobilizes are, more often than not, decoupled from their socio-political, cultural, historical, and affective origins (Hodson 2003; Jasanoff 2010). While STSE has taken steps to highlight and trace the intricate interrelatedness of science, technologies and society it "fails to overtly consider the epistemological foundations, moral and ethical development, and emotional aspects of learning science" (Zeidler et al. 2005, p. 371). A reasoned understanding of connective operations is qualitatively different from appreciating the implications of such connections and working to preserve, maintain or restore their integrity. Furthermore, Sheila Jasanoff (2010) contends that whereas "scientific facts arise out of detached observation, meaning emerges from embedded experience" (p. 235). Though a student may have a sophisticated instrumentalist understanding of science, it is very possible that its meaning is divorced from the students' political, or otherwise, experience. Moreover, multiple studies demonstrate that knowledge of a problem does not ensure action will be taken to address the problem. Harold Glasser (2007) portends "awareness of a problem, accessibility of extensive information on its origins and impacts, and, even, stated concern about [a problem] do not guarantee action or imply that, if taken, the action(s) will be appropriate or effective" (p. 42). Furthermore, Dana Zeidler, Troy Sadler, Michael Simmons and Elaine Howes (2005) reiterate that "researchers have confirmed the lack of coherence between the ability to form higher moral judgments and the likelihood of exercising that reasoning in varied contexts" (2005, p. 372). The crises listed at the outset are neither the cause of single individuals nor resolvable by single individuals. They are the products of collective work and they need to be addressed publically rather than privately. Science education, like most other disciplines, currently focuses on individual competency and achievement and not on collaborative work that can be mobilized for the public 'good'. Steve Alsop and Larry Bencze (2010) attest that "education in [socioscientific issues] tends to be an abstract and mostly individualized process – rather than one in which students reach out to communities near and far and act for change" (p. 181). With the proliferation of 'wicked problems' where causes and solutions are multiple, shifting, emergent, embedded in, and the product of, socioscientific enmeshments, we need to reach beyond knowing well to knowing *and* doing well. In recognition that humans are generally not motivated to political action through reason alone, I suggest

that we look to the opportunities interdisciplinary, integrative, situated, and participatory pedagogies offer us to *understand and respond* to crisis as offering possibilities for cultivating re-attachment and recommitment to the shared tasks of learning, working and caring for the co-production of a common world.

Understanding and Learning from Crisis

What constitutes a crisis? According to the Oxford English Dictionary (Web, accessed 31 Mar 2013), a crisis [def. 3] is "a vitally important or decisive stage in the progress of anything; a turning-point; also, a state of affairs in which a decisive change for better or worse is imminent" (http://www.oed.com.ezproxy.library.yorku.ca/Entry/44539). Further, Michael Mueller (2009) reminds us that "to have a crisis, there must be humans embedded in a situation to think it that way" (p. 1036). *Humans* experience crisis when our normative "frames of recognition" are disrupted. Judith Butler (2005) explains that frames are the normative conventions and categories "that prepare or establish a subject for recognition" (p. 5). She contends that a frame must circulate "in order to establish its hegemony" and break to "re-install" itself. Through reproduction – at times, in the form of schooling – the frame's fissure "exposes the orchestrating designs of the authority who sought [its control]" (Butler 2005, p. 12). The breakage indicates a "collapsibility of the norm" (ibid.). The disruption of the norm provokes a crisis that is pedagogical in at least two ways: (1) it can teach us that we are subjects; or (2) it can teach us that we are objects. How we respond to the choice crisis offers can be understood as a theory of pedagogy: regardless of how we choose, crisis has made us agents.

The challenges of learning through crisis are many. In the face of catastrophe and the choice crisis puts to us, we are often ambivalent: fight or flee; stasis or progress; desire or fear? We make heroes of those who act in crises. Conversely, those who are seen as unable to act are perceived to be morally corrupt. The firefighters who responded to the Twin Towers on September 11, 2001 are heroes. The then-president moved quickly to action (i.e. war) because to pause would (likely) have been met with accusations of ineffectiveness, or lack of valour and dignity. America's normative frame was ruptured by its own excesses. In order to restore intelligibility to their – and my formative – discursive world, the citizenry frantically sought stasis. The crisis offered a choice (or choices) and 'America' chose to zealously reinforce its normative discursive frame. This observation pertains to the climate crisis and can be generalized to other coexistent crises. These crises offer an opportunity to choose transformative praxis, or to resist learning and change and choose stasis. Schools, by their very design and purpose, preserve the status-quo by mitigating personal crisis to the exclusion of public crisis (Durkheim 1956; Bourdieu 1974). However, the micro and macro, private and public are a tangled together in a complex "assemblage of heterogeneous threads" (Latour 2010, p. 6). William Gaudelli (2008) notes that the question, "Why did I get this grade?" is just a few inquiries and a couple of social connections away from the question "What is the good life?" (p. 80). Due to the ascendance of standardized

testing and the importance so assigned to a narrowing definition of academic achievement, students are rarely encouraged to pursue such connections. As Zygmunt Bauman (2008) attests, "the secret of every durable – that is, self-reproducing – social system is the recasting of 'functional prerequisites' into behavioural motives for actors...[in other words it makes] individuals *wish to do* what the system *needs them to* do for it to reproduce itself" (p. 149). One need think only of the desire to get "good grades." Earning or proving self-worth in this way is not natural but naturalized within institutions of schooling. Educations' potential is narrowed by Neoliberal capitalist instrumentalism. Lori Patton (2008) illustrates another way in which schools conserve traditions, perhaps to the detriment of society at large. Interested in how university students make sense of local and global crises such as the genocide in Rwanda, the 2004 Tsunami in the Indian Ocean, the events of September 11, 2001, Hurricane Katrina, the Virginia Tech Massacre, Patton reports that the majority of students that she interviewed knew very little about these events. Students recounted being encouraged not to reflect but to "return to normal" as quickly as possible. Patton offers one students' response as summarizing "the prevailing group sentiment: We have to move on and can't dwell in the past. Life goes on" (p. 11). She argues that the return to normalcy forecloses the potential for transformative learning. However, the purpose of schools has never been social transformation; it has (nearly) always been the conservation of dominant social relations and values. Crisis stimulates learning insofar as it creates a gap between the old and the new. Bridging this gap is schooling's task. It provokes, scaffolds, and manages private micro-crises such that their excesses are seamlessly folded back into the normative public frame. This is called "learning" and students who do this well are rewarded (though differentially depending on class, racialization, gender, sexual orientation, disability, etc.). The primary function in the context of schools is not to connect "the world to the word and the world to the word" (Freire 1970, p. 87) or imagine it anew – as Patton hopes – but to manage the excesses of the conceptual frame through incorporation/absorption (Foucault; Gramsci; Bauman). Mueller, citing Bowers, asserts that learning relies both on metaphors and frames of reference (2008, p. 1035). To make new information intelligible we refer to our conceptual frame to see what it "is like." Similarly, Claudia Ruitenburg (2005) citing Jacques Derrida "contends that there is no such thing as direct unmediated experience...there is nothing outside the text" (p. 214). Crisis provokes deconstruction by providing access to non-normative perspectives that call into question the frame, the integrative hermeneutic that makes our lives intelligible; crises provoke instability and uncertainty.

A second challenge learning from and through crisis encounters is the sheer magnitude of crises (see opening list). Bauman argues that the tide of information, the production of emergencies that demand choice (a moral response), dissolves difference into an "undifferentiated sameness." Eriksen (cited in Bauman) posits: "when growing amounts of information are distributed at growing speed, it becomes increasingly difficult to create narratives, orders, developmental sequences. The fragments threaten to become hegemonic" (p. 164). Gaudelli (2008) argues that in the minority world, crises have become normative due to the daily deluge of

media-reported security threats.[1] Citing Sandra Ball-Rokeach, Gaudelli explains that daily reports of crisis produce a condition of "pervasive ambiguity wherein people lack credible information to define a given situation, leading them to attempt to reduce feelings of tension and seek information towards this end" (p. 77). The desire to resolve feelings of tension opens space for "rhetorical agents to define a situation and prescribe actions" (ibid). Bauman contends that the actions prescribed usually entail participating in the market economy as consumers. Instead of inviting agency, the perpetual and incompletely framed "crisis talk" objectifies us. Gaudelli argues that the steady stream of crisis reports "fractures public attention towards episodic focus and cursory awareness" (p. 75). Furthermore, it inculcates a culture of fear and conditioned passivity: we watch and wait and wait to watch (e.g. consume). Adams, Murphy, and Clarke (2009) argue that regimes of security have neocolonial effects in their materialization of anticipatory future risks. In so doing we cede our present, and our accountability to the present, to an imagined and fear-filled future. According to Brian Knowlton (cited in Bauman, p. 192) many are paralyzed and "unsure just how urgently, and fearfully, they should react" to the parade of crises. When crises are habitual ("business as usual") disconnection should come as no surprise. According to Harold Garfinkel's (1967) study decades ago, human trust is the bedrock of our social contracts (cited in Jasanoff 2010). Uncertainty, risk, and fear challenge trust and may erode social cohesion (Jasanoff 2010, p. 244). Feelings of trust are linked to feelings of security. Security can be generated through democratic collaborative practices. Adams, Murphy and Clarke suggest that "instead of ceding to the injunction to anticipate [risk], one might ask what kinds of desirable accountabilities to and kinships with the future might be fostered through [present] work" (2009, p. 260). Likewise, Mueller suggests that because crises induce "shock, confusion, and empty phobias" our time might be more productively spent "conceptualizing how individuals, communities, and environments work together as relational parts of the whole" (2009, p. 1053.). Similar to Bruno Latour's (2004) suggestion that in order to re-gain agency we need to move toward the crisis rather than away from it, Mueller insists "the closer the better." In order to get closer, we must make the implicit explicit; the process of explication reveals the complexity and fragility of our attachments (Latour 2010). Crises do not ask us to "get on with life" by moving away from the social and ecological systems that we take as natural. But rather, crises invite us to reconsider normalcy.

Crisis invites change. Extrapolating from Mario Blaser's (2004) discussion of the characteristics of resilience which "conserve the ability to respond to change" by "embody[ing] the inherently unpredictable and unknown outcomes of interaction between ecosystems and human societies" (p. 39), I suggest that learning from and through crisis cultivates resilience and social fitness, both of which are stated

[1] Whereas in the majority world and marginalized minority world, the crises are not mediated; they are accessed through direct experience, not representation.

aims of schooling. Instead of fleeing crises, it may be more productive to think of them as "arenas in which to gather" (Latour 2004, p. 246). As Latour suggests, in the gathering, the explication of attachments/associations, is the opportunity for renewal.

Learning from and Through Crisis: Opportunities

> I would venture to propose, today, that teaching in itself, teaching as such, takes place precisely only through a crisis: if teaching does not hit upon some sort of crisis, if it does not encounter either the vulnerability or the explosiveness of a (explicit or implicit) critical and unpredictable dimension, it has perhaps not truly taught. (Felman 1992, p. 53)

Felman further argues, as does Freire, that teaching must "make something *happen*, and not just transmit passive knowledge... information that is pre-conceived, substantiated, believed to be known in advance, misguidedly believed, this is, to be (exclusively) a *given*" (ibid). Similarly, Hannah Arendt (2006) asserts that political renewal is only possible through actions which are births in the world (natality). Passive transmission of inert information forecloses politics. For Arendt, politics are necessarily public, meaning in the company – or *gathering* – of others. In other words, without crisis there can be no action. Without action there can be no political renewal and without political renewal there can be no freedom. Both Felman and Arendt's concerns emerge from the events of the Sho'ah where a crisis was ongoing and yet the people of Germany were first unable to recognize it as a crisis and second actively contributed to its perpetuation. Crises, when accessed, familiarize normative frames of reference and provide an opportunity to explore the structural, historical and political roots of the situation. By challenging the normative structure within which our beliefs and actions make sense, crises produce a potentially pedagogical cognitive dissonance (Felman, p. 53). Without the crises, "life goes on".

While inherently pedagogical, crises are only transformative when subjects access their agency, when they retain the capacity to act. Political freedom depends on the ability to act. Freedom is made in the company of others. Again, I quote Bauman:

> Citizens' freedoms are not properties acquired once and for all; such properties are not secure once locked in private safes. They are planted and rooted in the sociopolitical soil, which needs to be fertilized and watered daily and which will dry up and crumble if it is not attended to day in and day out by the informed actions of a knowledgeable and committed public (p. 191).

For Felman, students of crises learn their way through it not by returning to a pre-crisis frame, a nostalgic home to which we can never return (Ruitenburg 2005) but by renewing/remaking the frame through testimony. Testimony does not flee from crisis' aporia but figures the frame's rupture, the excesses, and actively, partially, makes the world anew. Accordingly, Felman argues, the teacher's task is "on the one hand to access but not foreclose the crisis, and on the other hand contain it [such that it is not more] crisis (*sic*) than the class can sustain" (p. 54). Students must be supported by the teacher to "reintegrate the crisis in a transformed

frame of meaning" (ibid.). Likewise, Bauman opines that schooling should "resuscitate (sic) the skills of interaction with others – of conducting a dialogue, of negotiating, of gaining mutual understanding, and of managing and resolving the conflicts (e.g. crises) inevitable in every instance of shared life" (p. 190). To that, I believe, Felman would add "witnessing."

Crises are not transformative if they merely evoke feelings. Feeling, in the absence of thought and action, does nothing to challenge or change the conditions that illicit the feeling (Boler 1997). Whereas feeling may be a symptom or outcome of a crisis, transformative learning is only possible through *praxis*. Praxis requires both reflection and action (Freire 1970, p. 60). Freire calls action without reflection "activism" and reflection without action "verbalism" (ibid.). Laura Johnson and Paul Morris (2010) contend that Freirian critical pedagogy supports learning through crisis by "enabling us to both *perceive*, from historical, cultural, economic, personal and political perspectives, and to *act* upon the 'structures of domination'" (p. 83). As noted previously, the words crisis and critical both imply the need to make a decision, a choice. However, as Bauman argues, within liquid modernity the "structures of domination" have dissolved within a proliferation of individual "choices" which masquerade as freedom.

While Felman's treatment of "education and crisis" is insightful, particularly in her recognition that action is required and that the action needs to be supported in order for the crisis to be transformative instead of destructive, her unit of analysis is limited to the individual. Whereas crisis is experienced at the individual level, it also reveals structures external to the individual that produce the conditions for the crisis. Given that the individual did not produce the crisis, it makes sense that the actions required to resolve the crisis be focused on the structures which produced it. Here, I agree with Louise Chawla and Debra Flanders Cushing's (2007) assessment that "the effect of private actions is limited unless it is combined with organizing for collective public change" (p. 438). Drawing on Stern, Chawla and Cushing "distinguish [between] 'private sphere' and 'public sphere' environmentalism" (or "active political citizenship" for our purposes) (ibid.).

Reflecting on the failure of environmental and climate activists to influence negotiations at UN Climate Negotiations in Copenhagen in December 2009, Maryam Adrangi (2010) writes that Toronto activists recognized the need to link with other "struggles for liberation." This awareness emerges from the recognition that "the same power that manifests itself as resource extraction in the countryside, manifests itself as racism, classism, and human exploitation in the city" (p. 13). Each of the theorists I draw on in this chapter advocates, in one way or another, a transformative political pedagogy grounded in, what Mario Blaser calls, a politics of non-dominating partnership, a *gathering*. Mueller (along with others such as Donna Haraway and Sandra Harding) reminds us that knowledge is partial and situated. Moreover, "the climate crisis" is more accurately a crisis in the dominant minority's systems of power. The crises are the blowback from the excesses of capital for capital's sake. Because knowledge is partial, we are always already uncertain. This recognition immediately de-centres Western techno-rational-scientism or any other dominant "ism" for that matter. Uncertainty is mitigated though careful consideration of multiple perspectives. Mueller states, "If people did not

have limited perspectives, there would be little need for multiple stakeholders with different perspectives to participate in ecological decisions" (p. 1036). Similarly, Elizabeth Ellsworth (1989) argues, and Bruno Latour would agree, that pedagogy must move away from "oppressive simplifications" (what Cheney and Weston (1999) call "self-validating reduction"). Instead pedagogical praxis should "construct circumstances in which students of difference can thrive" (Ellsworth 1989, p. 324). The crises in educations (Britain, Italy, Montreal, etc.) and the climate emerge precisely because the normative frame of recognition privileges capital and marginalizes other ways of being that are too numerous to name (Mueller lists: other species, non-science derived knowledges, theologians, women, indigenous peoples, "poor" people, families, alternative social arrangements, diverse stakeholders, and there are more).

As a rupture of the normative frame of reference, crisis allows access to marginalized standpoints. Bell Hooks (1990) argues that from marginal standpoints we can theorize counter-hegemonic cultural and political practice. Similar to Felman's notion of "precocious testimony", Hooks posits that coming to voice in the margins, engaging in "the politics of articulation", "the oppressed struggle in language to recover ourselves, to reconcile, to renew" (p. 146). Moreover, and this resonates with Bauman's thoughts on the consequences of hurriedness, Hooks suggests that the politics of articulation from the margins are "a struggle against forgetting" (p. 147). Without crises, without access to the margins, "the past and the future as mental categories are threatened by the tyranny of the moment" (Bauman, p. 159). The anticipatory present is one characterized often by individual and hence collective political paralysis, whereby we cease to be agents or subjects hence producing an atrophied citizenry, an atrophied state. Our inability to participate in the politics of renewal and the creation of political freedom creates objects of us. Hooks argues that the margin is the "space of radical openness" and the normative centre is the foreclosure of possibility. However, as Bauman suggests, our analysis may need to complicate the binaries: centre/margin, freedom/oppression, self/other, past/present, inside/outside, past/present, near/far. Nancy Tuana (2007) suggests that frames are porous and that subjects "are constituted out of relationality" (p. 188). Citing William James, Tuana contends that "what exists are not things made but things in the making" (p. 190). Moreover, things in the making are dependent on both "social practices and natural phenomenon" (p. 193). Crises may alert us to the fact that our subjectivity is relational and emergent; that it is only possible because of interactive associations, gatherings. This has implications for education.

Thus far, I have argued that crises, by rupturing our normative frames of reference, invite the possibility of transforming the conditions that produced the crises. Crisis gives us access to "the margins," shifts our frontiers, and reveals our situatedness. It offers us the chance to critically examine our normative frames of reference and respond by either transforming or re-installing hegemonic structures. Learning through and from crisis requires support, time, space, and the ability to discern and differentiate one crisis from another so as not to succumb to passive ambiguity whereby we are objects of the crisis instead of agents empowered to

change the conditions that produced the crisis. As mentioned, the institution of education is designed and intended to resist crisis, to integrate the past, present, and future. Structurally, schools embody some of the supports required to learn from and through crisis. Mitigating the uncertainty crisis provokes requires the ability to explicate, communicate, and associate. These skills can be learned in the various subject areas schooling supports. Schools are adept at provoking and managing micro-crisis at the individual level. Strategies that support learning through and from private crisis might be applied to learning through and from public crisis thereby shifting educational "hopes" from the individual's private success to the pursuit of eco-social justice achieved through active public political participation. By taking a "stubbornly realist" approach to the crisis, Patton (2008) suggests that educators can offer students the opportunity to examine human crises from [at least] two perspectives: they can ask what is there and what is not there (p. 11). Examining "what is there" involves an explication of the frame and its discontents. Examining the omissions gives access to the margins from which we can begin to see the normative frame from a different perspective. Ruitenburg (2005) reminds us that inclusion is only possible through exclusion. Becoming aware of what is excluded by our normative frame opens the possibility of expanding, complicating, and changing the frame. Exclusion is not inherently harmful but when the crisis allows us to hear, for example, the testimonies, made possible through the politics of articulation, of the majority world and their accounts of increased risk and precarity which is produced by the minority world, our normative frame, it charges us with a question: can we choose? Can we create, as Baumann implores us to do, "the conditions that make choice available and within our power" (p. 193)? He argues that consumer societies are not societies of freedom: acting births the new whereas consumption is necrophilic. Crises are produced by the excesses of the normative frame. It signifies the need for change. Change requires resilience and resilience requires response-ability.

Conclusion

> [t]he present crisis calls into question not just the political, economic, social and ecological structures that came into being with the rise of the market economy, but also the actual values that have sustained these structures and particularly the post-Enlightenment meaning of Progress and its partial identification with growth. (Fotopoulos 1997)

I think it is important to remember that children did not cause these many crises. They do, however, live with and through them; they will inherit what remains. The crises ask of education, of schools, "what are your aims, values, and promises"? Furthermore, does education perform the values it is invested with facilitating in others (Bauman, p. 167)? Presently, the normative frame which education reproduces neither integrates private and public crisis nor supports the practice of freedom. Present practices perpetuate consumer society to the detriment not only of the children but to all the associations that make their life possible. It is a time of

precarity and uncertainty. According to Butler, precarity is a "politically induced condition" that calls attention to the frames "reproducible as social institutions and relations" that support the conditions within which life can thrive, is livable. However, precarity and uncertainty can be mitigated through gatherings, the politics of partnerships, the community-to-come. Gough and Scott (2006) suggest that education can help individuals to "understand and value their own perspectives while also enabling them to engage with the perspectives of others" (p. 287). By explicating attachments education can support transformative learning and the conditions within which real choices, real actions, real freedom is possible. Freedom must be constantly renewed through collective/public action. Karsten Schnack (1996, in Lundegard and Wickman 2007) advocates that schools create the conditions for students to develop "action competence" which he defines as "the capability – based on critical thinking and incomplete knowledge – to involve yourself as a person with other persons in responsible actions and counter-actions for a more humane world." I advocate for a variation on action competence which I call "coalition competence." Coalition competence links Boler's work on testimonial reading with Ellsworth's reflections on Coalition 101. In the face of crisis, coalition competence allows us to acknowledge and respect the power relations embedded in knowledge's historicity, and to stand in solidarity with diverse Others with the understanding that our knowledge is contingent, but that uncertainty due to its partiality may be mitigated in the gathering.

To conclude, I argue that crises are an opportunity for transformative praxis, for reflexivity. They defamiliarize our normative frames and allow us to see the structures that support their hegemonic reproduction. Crisis need not be debilitating if supported through mindful and cooperative attachments. Like the wild herb that can be both poisonous and medicinal depending on how it is prepared, crisis both provokes uncertainty and invites a gathering of diverse perspectives, earthly associations, the community-to-come. A birth is a crisis, the entrance of the new and the renewal of freedom, of life. Crisis reveals our situatedness, our relationality. Crises offer great teaching material! However, if we fail to respond to crises, we fail to learn; our world stays the same, making objects of us. Crisis is not a danger so much as the (1) failure to recognize crisis[2] and (2) the failure to learn through and from crisis. Crisis opens a crack and shines a light on the complexity and dynamism of our "earthly" attachments. Learning about and from our earthly attachments mitigates crisis. The urgent task for schools is not to respond to "the climate crisis." Rather, the task is to learn how to learn with and through any public crisis. To do so supports the conditions for the renewal of freedom, the renewal of life.

I began this chapter by asking after the relationship between hope and education. I questioned whether there is something about the structure of education that is

[2] At the December 4, 2010 People's Assembly for Climate Justice in Toronto, a participant commented that Canadians don't respond to crises which directly affect others because we are too comfortable. If we do not recognize that the crisis of Other's is also (soon to be) our crisis, we have failed to sufficiently explicate our attachments; this should be a task of schooling.

inherently hopeful. We invest educations with the ambivalent hope for change and for continuity. Learning marks the bridging of a gap between past knowledge and the unknown. Schools provide a structure that supports this transition. Theoretically, schools offer a place for gathering associations and explicating their attachments. In a time of information overload, of ever multiplying choices, education offers a place to focus and possibly to connect. Schools can be a place where we practice acting cooperatively and learn to shift between centres and peripheries. In order to renew the cultural and political purposes of schooling, students cannot be made objects for the markets' use. "Once state politics surrenders to the guidance of the 'economy,' understood as the freeplay of market forces, the balance of the two is switched decisively to the advantage of the first," contends Bauman (p. 189). Standardized testing diminishes our possible futures. It makes students instruments of the markets' needs. The controlling and assessment strategies brought to bear on children fail to prepare them to dynamically and creatively respond to change. Our collective capacity to act is diminished on the flywheel of consumption. Educations have the capacity to slow the flywheel. By making time to explicate attachments and support the integration of private and public crises, education can help us to develop the capacity to live and learn from and through crisis. In order to do so, educations will need to resist the tendency to encourage students to "return to normal." Rather, they must cultivate relationality, cooperative action (coalition competence), and diverse ways of knowing. Crisis shines a light on the hope that educations may yet enact.

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