

**Introduction: Curriculum Windows To Tomorrow – Openings for Curriculum  
Theory and Practice Today Despite Hauntings and Zombies**

By Thomas S. Poetter

**Getting Started, Opening Windows**

In 2006, my doctoral advisor and close friend – Norman V. Overly, Emeritus Curriculum Professor of Indiana University – decided to donate a significant portion of his professional library of curriculum books. Norm contacted my friend and colleague at Miami University, Robert Burke, also one of Norm’s former advisees at IU, to arrange for the books to be brought to Miami University in order for them to be made available through my office to students of curriculum. When I received the books, over 100 of them, I couldn’t believe my eyes. There were copies of famous texts, some of which I had read, but many I had only read “about.” Many volumes of ASCD’s Curriculum Yearbooks all the way back to the 1940s were there, along with Dewey’s *Democracy and Education* (1916), Bobbitt’s *How to Make a Curriculum* (1924), and Stratemyer’s *Developing a Curriculum for Modern Living* (1947), for example, dotting the landscape diversity of texts that I sorted and ultimately made available to students for use through a dedicated bookcase in my office. Some of them were first editions; some were autographed by the author. A treasure trove.

As I made my way through the project of sorting through the books, putting my eyes and hands on them and giving them a home, I felt a certain excitement and some melancholy. I felt excitement because the books represented a vibrant history of knowledge and action in the curriculum field, one that I had been close to through my

association with Norm, who himself witnessed the transformation of ASCD in the 60s, the reconceptualization of the curriculum field in the 1970s, and the founding of the World Council on Curriculum and Instruction (WCCI), and his impact through his advising at IU of well-known curriculum scholars like James Sears and Patti Lather. But I also felt a certain melancholy, knowing that this moment marked a “passing of the torch,” that is, that Norm was finished with the books and passing them on to the next generations of scholars. I felt a responsibility for making the books available, for honoring his legacy and contributions to the field, and for making sure, in some way, that many of the books that I hadn’t read on that shelf found their way onto my own reading list.

After all, it is humbling for anyone professing to be a curriculum scholar to read William Schubert’s treatment of the field in his *Curriculum Books: The First Hundred Years (Second Edition, 2002)* and realize that Schubert has read almost all (if not actually all) of the books listed, annotated, and discussed there! I read Schubert’s first edition of *Curriculum Books: The First Eighty Years (1980)* in a curriculum seminar with Norm at IU in the summer of 1990 and felt overwhelmed by Schubert’s work way back then. How could it be that someone had read all of these books, and how would I make sense of the field and continue working in it without reading all of them myself? Over the years, I made peace with the fact that I wasn’t Bill Schubert, but I also took seriously the gaps in my knowledge and attempted to read at least as many curriculum books from the 20<sup>th</sup> century that interested me.

Just a few years ago, I reached for a volume from Norm’s library in my office and a sudden thought gripped me, mostly unformed at that point, but powerful nonetheless. I

was using Schubert's second edition of *Curriculum Books* in a curriculum seminar, and probably as a result of thinking of the books by decade, I had noticed that several from the 1970s had been grouped together on the shelf such as Goodlad's *Curriculum Inquiry* (1979), Tanner & Tanner's *Curriculum Development: Theory into Practice* (1975), and Zais' *Curriculum: Principles and Foundations* (1976). I began sorting the books by decade, on a whim in that moment, and as I piled the 1960s books together and re-read portions of Schubert's chapter on the 1960s, I began to feel like I hadn't read nearly enough, in particular, from that decade. There were so many ideas and possibilities wrapped up in the texts from that period that continue to resonate, at least with me, that I began to wonder what curriculum scholars and practitioners today could learn if the books were re-read and appreciated by today's scholars/students of curriculum. Suddenly, as I peered out the beautiful arched window in my office, I thought of the heuristic device that has guided this project from its inception: *Curriculum Windows*.

I wondered: How might a review of key books from the curriculum field of the 1960s illuminate new possibilities forward for us today? How might the theories, practices, and ideas wrapped up in curriculum texts of the 1960s still resonate with us, allow us to see backward in time and forward in time, all at the same time? How could these figurative windows of insight, thought, ideas, fantasy, and fancy make us think differently about curriculum, teaching, learning, students, education, leadership, and schools? How could they challenge us? How could they help us see more clearly, even perhaps put us on a path to correct the mistakes and missteps of intervening decades, and today? And, how could I engage doctoral students in curriculum at Miami in a journey like this with me, opening windows to tomorrow by looking back today? How could I

get students of curriculum, perhaps on their first formal scholarly journey, to express themselves and new ideas in ways that could be consumed by peers and colleagues in the curriculum field?

After some past successes with students in doctoral seminars working on book publishing projects (Poetter et al., 2004, 2006, 2010, & 2011), I was able to incorporate the project into a doctoral seminar in the Spring semester of 2012 in our Leadership, Culture, and Curriculum program in the Department of Educational Leadership (EDL) at Miami University. Because of the excellent opportunity presented to me by then chair Kate Rousmaniere to teach a new doctoral core class in curriculum, I was able to generate a large class of participants. This commitment by leadership in our department to assign me to this class created the possibility for not only the authors showcased here to participate in this project, but for future students in 2013 and 2014 to generate Curriculum Windows books about the 1970s and 1980s. Michael Dantley, our current chair, assigned me to teach the course through 2014, when I will hand it over to esteemed colleagues Dennis Carlson and Denise Taliaferro-Baszile. As you can see, everyone associated with this project is in good curriculum company.

I followed a “formula” for organizing the curriculum seminar for the 19 students who signed up for it that has worked well on past projects with doctoral students (Poetter, 2010). I decided that we needed several “grounding” texts in curriculum studies to read together. I chose three books that I thought would take us deeply into questions about curriculum and teaching, and immerse us in the field together around dialogue and questions for the first nine weeks of the course, and a fourth that would serve as a model for our class project: Bill Pinar’s *What is Curriculum Theory?*; Schubert’s *Curriculum*

*Books*; Pinar, Reynolds, Slattery, & Taubman's *Understanding Curriculum*; and Poetter et al.'s *10 Great Curricula*, as an example of doctoral student writing in chapter form. For me as the instructor, the dialogical work the students did on these texts and together in class impressed me. They engaged the topics deeply, critiqued them, brought new perspectives to the table, and developed several frames for thinking through key issues that informed this introduction. All at the same time, they began reading and doing background research on the book they chose to focus on for this project.

During the final seven weeks of the course, students spent their time working mostly independently on their own book chapters. I supported each student with an individual meeting about progress, and then one additional all group meeting to do some peer/sharing of rough drafts/outlines of the chapters. As with other book projects I have done in the past with students, the class had to agree that the course wouldn't end in May, despite the fact that they would receive a final grade from me then. Instead, all of them signed contracts with the book publisher to deliver a completed book chapter, and knew, of course, that it might take longer than the time set aside for the course to complete the chapter. I made time in my schedule to devote parts of the Summer and Fall of 2012 to working on chapter revisions with students, knowing full well that final chapter drafts would not be ready for submission to the publisher until the late Winter of 2013.

When I came to class on the first night of the seminar in January 2012, I had more than 20 books from the 1960s in tow in a large bag. I had chosen them based on my reading of Schubert's chapter on the 60s in *Curriculum Books* and based on what I had in my library from my own and from Norm's collection. I used Schubert's book as a sort of filter for choosing books that represented different movements in the curriculum

literature of the decade, but not exclusively. Also, selfishly, some of my choices were based on books I wanted to read and hadn't read yet! I certainly figured that if an author wrote a chapter for the book, then I definitely had to have read the book myself! I started reading the books in the course about two months ahead, and worked on the 18 that were chosen and highlighted here in separate book chapters throughout the semester (and beyond!) as we worked feverishly together on the project. I figured one of the more difficult things to do in the course would be to get so many students settled on a text without them fighting over them.

But I was rewarded with a cordial round of interest-sharing the first night of class. On a cold night, sheltered in McGuffey Hall, students met for the first time, pored over my descriptions of the books and the books themselves, then before leaving the room on that first night indicated a book or several that they might be interested in reading to me privately on a sheet of paper. When several indicated they were interested in the same book, I looked for alternatives over the next week to present at the next class. I thought it especially important to get each student settled on a book early on so that the seminar conversations would impact their reading of the chosen text and influence their meaning-making processes throughout the course. Multiple people having interest in the same books happened especially with Kozol and Kohl, two significant “romantics” from the 60s; so I added Holt and Herndon, which created a group of four students taking on these omnipresent and influential books of the 1960s that had a profound impact on the field and how we think about curriculum, teaching, and schools today.

I also felt that since the 1960s are under-represented in terms of authors of color and women in the curriculum studies canon reified by Schubert's work, that in addition to

Walton's (1969) *The Black Curriculum* we would include Dubois' *Manzart Builds a School* (1959), published as the second volume in a trilogy of novels from 1957-1961. My hope was that we would have a strong discussion in this book of issues of race, which are prominent in the curriculum field today and in our program at Miami University. I also included Berman's *New Priorities in the Curriculum* (1968) and Taba's *Curriculum Development* (1962) to reflect the rich contributions of women to the field in that decade. (\*all books read by students in the course for chapter drafting are starred (\*) in the references for this chapter\*)

Anticipating that students would see the models for student chapters embedded in *10 Great Curricula*, but that they still would have questions about how they might ultimately structure their own chapters for this different book, I created a sample outline (included in the appendix here) that I shared with students early on in the class. But when I shared it, I firmly stated that it was not to be used as a template. I wanted to give them security in terms of format, but I didn't want to over-guide them, or kill their creativity. What I wanted in the end, especially, were chapters that were voiced, meaning that the reader of each chapter could sense both the historical importance of the work but also get a sense of the personal stakes at hand through the chapter author's interests, hopes, experiences, and ideas. I wanted students to write themselves into the book, not out of it. I wanted them to see themselves as conduits for ideas and images and possibilities, that is as "openings," like windows, through which we might see more clearly ahead – or at least somehow differently – the educational possibilities of yesterday, today, and tomorrow.

Over the course of the semester, our group discussions in seminar yielded so much value to me and to students, at least in my opinion. The frames we discussed for interpreting the books have yielded several directions/themes that you will see play out here and throughout the book. In particular, we discussed 1) the nature of the heuristic “window,” and how it might be shaped for each individual’s chapter; 2) how the 1960s can be framed productively in educational, curricular, and pedagogical terms given that Pinar posits the death of the curriculum field in 1970 as a result of the “reconceptualization”; and 3) how critical it is to situate this text in the decade of the 1960s as a "window" to today, as we attempted to bring contemporary insight and meaning to these texts and ideas, now with us for nearly half a century. These three areas of conversation provide the substance for the remainder of this chapter by way of introduction.

### **The "Window" Metaphor**

The word "window," early 13<sup>th</sup> century, comes from the Old Norse "vindauga," or literally "wind eye." It replaced the Old English words "eagpyrl," literally "eye-hole" and "eagduru," literally "eye-door." Originally an unglazed hole in a roof, most Germanic languages adopted the Latin "fenestra" to describe the glass version and later in English used "fenester" as a parallel word until the late 16<sup>th</sup> century. (Online Etymology Dictionary, 2012)

The guiding metaphor of "window" for this project came to me literally in the presence of the beautiful arched windows of my office in McGuffey Hall of Miami University's main campus in Oxford, Ohio. This awakening – this "seeing" – happened simultaneously while in the presence of all of the books from Norm's donated collection as it took over my office. But over the course of the semester I spent with students

studying curriculum and these texts, we explored the dynamic metaphor or "window," and surfaced several ideas that we would like for you to carry with you through your reading. So, the impetus for the book may have been this "simple, insightful" seeing, but over the course of the project the work became more intellectual, and more practical; individuals brought to bear their own insights on life and the world and on the curriculum field as they studied a significant work from the 1960s, and as they participated in the seminar all together, then in small groups as the authors drafted and re-worked their chapters. Therefore, I'd like to approach the metaphor of "window" with more detail, building a narrative-like scaffolding here for the project and hopefully getting at some of the key issues the class surfaced during the course.

It's important to recognize that the metaphor of "window" is familiar to us and seems almost natural in terms of its serviceability as a metaphor. Meaning, we have experiences in our own lives of gazing out or into windows (or passing through them), whether they be in homes or cars or elsewhere. Sometimes these are typically present and pleasant memories and actions, tied often to the gift of free time or the opportunity to reflect, dream, ponder, and wonder. Krysmanski (2005) reminds us that metaphor – a figure of speech – grows out of our experiences with objects in the world and explains the unknown through the known. So "windows" had to be *there* before they could be used as metaphors. And literal windows are omnipresent, in our dwellings, works of architecture, the cinema, technology, as well as figuratively through literature, poetry, philosophy, religion, and the technology interfaces of present day computers.

For me, for instance, the literal and figurative notions of "windows" resonate in a very positive way and have had a soothing, almost therapeutic impact on me, and

represent, in almost every beat of my heart over 50 years, clarity, beauty, and hope. I remember as a child sitting on the radiator benches just under a picture window in our living room facing a busy street. The benches were decorative, with lattice on the sides to let out the heat, but the wooden tops never got too hot to sit on, even in the dead of the frigid northern Ohio winters. I spent considerable time sitting on those benches, that window seat, warming myself, and looking out of the window while taking a break from family action, or from study, or when thinking about next steps for the day or trying to get a grip on life, or dealing with loss, or just taking time to think. Busy and beautiful, the scene outdoors changed with the seasons, with rainstorms and snow, and sunshine, and familiar faces and characters walking up and down the street. I watched from the inside as my father walked home from church across the street, he was the pastor, at about 5pm each night. I waited for him many days. I can recall walking or riding my bike home from school or a ballgame now and then, and seeing my sister waving and smiling out to me, beckoning from inside. So the window worked both ways, calming and inspiring from the inside, and welcoming from the outside. And, I realized, I wasn't the only one who loved that window seat and its life altering powers of view.

I also recall the windows of our very large 1972 Chevy Impala as I looked out of them on long western vacation road trips with my family. Squeezed between my brother and sister in the back seat for thousands of car miles before video games and movies in the car helped the current generation of children pass the time, I soldiered on by taking in the landscape through the side windows. Perhaps that's why I dragged my own sons and wife out west in the car several years ago, in an attempt to show them the beauty of the great western outdoors I appreciated so much as a child myself. I remember saying

during patches of boredom for them as the miles rolled by in the car, even beyond the reach of the technology in use, "Just look out the window. There's something new to see every mile."

And on and on it goes, with the stained glass windows of my home church, especially the rose window behind the chancel (my father preached every Sunday of my youth in a large, impressive protestant sanctuary), majestic, beautiful, and luminous, playing an important role as I listened (or not) and meditated as a youth while surrounded by caring and loving adults and other children. Even broken windows of my youth turned out to yield life lessons, and grace, such as the time when I struck a baseball (a terrific line drive as I recall) through the large drive-up bay window of my neighbor friend's insurance business and ran for my life. Of course, since we lived merely steps away and all of us were friends, it didn't take long for his dad to find me and ask me how I intended to pay for it (my first early experience with the application of insurance, how apropos). He also said, "Tommy, it would have been much easier for me if you had just come in for your ball." It's the last time I ever ran from a broken window, both literally and figuratively.

But the metaphor of window, grounded perhaps in the crucible of "real" life experiences outside the sheltered, inviting windows of my own childhood in the 1960s, isn't always perceived or framed by others, necessarily, in such bucolic ways. In fact, while my experiences enrich me as a person, and make it possible for me to see, imagine, create, and interpret my reality and new realities, sometimes simultaneously, in ways that I think are not oppressive, they may simultaneously cloud my ability to see tragedy, suffering, and pain for others, though I've had my share of such and saw it all unfold on

TV and in real life as a child – assassinations, wars, the dead, family deaths, disease, dysfunction, grieving, mental illness, violence, prejudice, racism, extreme social unrest. What couldn't I see or what did I repress as I gazed out of those windows of my youth? What is it that I see now, or wish I had seen, or think I might have seen with different lenses, born of age, of experience, of context? And how do these images of memory reconstruct my self, my memory, and my current reality? How do I position myself as a child of privilege, who could look out of windows onto a street without fear of being shot at, or who had time to do so without the responsibilities of earning wages for the family or taking care of family members, soaking up the goods of free time and reflection when so many others my age as children and today as children rarely had or have a free moment to wonder? How enriched have I become at the expense of others as I soaked up the cultural capital afforded simply through the opportunity of looking?

These are philosophical questions about experience, the kind that might be asked reflectively given time, and the conflation of context, culture, politics, economics, and experience, and the understanding of privilege as they all bear down on our current concepts of reality as we study the curriculum field and practice it, too. Ultimately, as a result of this deeper "seeing," of course, it's possible that the window, psychologically, can act as a metaphor representing, alternately, the reality or feeling of being enclosed, shuttered, sheltered, hidden, in hiding, even imprisoned, whether there are bars across the panes or not (Shaw & Green, 2009).

In the seminar we surfaced images, frames, ways of seeing, windows if you will, into the curriculum field as we were "reading" it, and through the course's conversations and dialogues into our own self reflections (contributing to our accessing a Pinarian

"currere" individually and together), and through insights about the 60s books in particular. One of the most telling and helpful metaphors that emerged was of "haunting windows." Chapter author Rachel Radina revealed that while reading Schwab's (1969) *College Curriculum and Student Protest* she felt that the ideas and images in it haunted her in the sense that she felt as though the field, through its reverence for and acceptance of Schwab, continued to privilege certain points of view, certain groups over others (faculty over students in the instance of Schwab's work), especially those buoyed by positional power and experience.

How could it be that we still replicate Schwab's patronizing view of students in higher education, marginalizing them, controlling their democratic urges to resist tyranny, and squelching their opportunities of expression and voice? It's almost 50 years later and we either have ever-present structures in place that limit student voice or that even stamp it out so early that it can't emerge when necessary! We routinely demonize resistance or protest in our institutional structures, even criminalizing civil disobedience when it is obviously necessary and even when it is done in "law-abiding" ways. Worse yet, powerful alternatives of expression for students don't seem to have emerged, nor have more empowering roles and senses of agency among college students. How could curriculum have opened a window to change, and growth, instead of shuttering motivation and action through suppressive activities?

This question haunts Rachel and all of us as we try to make sense of the seeming lack of progress on ideas and possibilities surfaced in the past and ignored over time. Why didn't someone take on Schwab, and offer a different, more powerful curriculum of student protest for college students? And if they did, even unknowingly, why do the

openings they crack for us not transform knowledge and practice? And if they attacked the same structures that Schwab's students were prohibited from attacking, why did their voices and curriculum offerings not get heard, or read? Ultimately, why do we continue to oppress students and act like we aren't oppressing them? Or worse, why is it that we can't see that we do?

This haunted and haunting window, of course, opens to the parallel universe of Sydney Walton as depicted in his revolutionary work *The Black Curriculum*, published in the same year as Schwab's book but by a less mainstream press. Walton bucked the system of white higher education in order to liberate opportunities for African-American students in Oakland. He saw transparently through the structural barriers that white administrators threw up at every turn as he attempted to gain meaningful, just, and educationally defensible ends for Black students entering higher education for the first time in an attempt to make their way in a world that values post-secondary education but up to that point had not made it universally available to everyone. Chapter author Kyra Shahid asks us to take on Walton's fierce, indomitable spirit by continuing to question and to take to task the structures that limit opportunity and even the ability to raise an alternative point of view, or a question.

What Walton fought for, transparency and less structural control, lies in contrast to Schwab's curriculum based on scripted roles and perceived merit. Will we struggle to shake the cobwebs off the haunting windows of prejudice, racism, and oppression, and perhaps see a different way forward based on mutual respect, care, openness, and love? Can we see the critical, curricular implications of the view of structural power and suppression as advocated by Schwab, and the revolutionary, liberating, and voiced call to

immediate action described by Walton? Can we see the amazing opportunity for reflection, theorizing, and action that these two contrasting windows pose for us both yesterday and today? This tension, as one example from the course and the text, represents the energy and the potential of this work. Ultimately, it goes to the powerful forces at hand as we gaze, through openings at things we are at once interacting with – and shielded from – as we make sense of our world, its peculiarities and idiosyncracies, as well as its enormous potentiality.

Krysmanski (2005), a contemporary German sociologist, explores the history of the windows metaphor in a short work entitled, "Windows: A History of Metaphor," in which he sketches the development of the window metaphor through architecture, fine art, theater/cinema, literature, philosophy, religion, culture, science, and technology. Of particular note in his work are several concepts that may help as you read and interpret the chapters that follow. First is his recognition that the window as metaphor allows humans to use their powers of cognition, perception, intuition, and understanding to connect the seemingly mundane of everyday life with the literal and figurative essence of "light"; this interaction takes us out of our seemingly finite world and helps us connect or not with the infinite, the unknown.

Second is the connection between 1) the literal rise of the window in use in dwellings as a passage for light before the nearly universal access to glass and 2) the subsequent development of early "windows" as "screens." In the dark ages, glass was only available to the extremely wealthy, who could install the windows in frames of dwellings and look out over feudal landscapes at their "holdings." Before the mass production and affordability of glass, which came much later into the early 20<sup>th</sup> century,

"screens" over windows were held in place by "frames," and oftentimes painted and decorated, becoming works of art themselves even as they performed the function of blocking the elements that the window, as an opening, could not keep out (Krysmanski, 2005). Over time, screens became paintings, works of art in and of themselves, and paintings, for instance, served themselves as metaphorical windows, or screens, representing one reality for a reality in another dimension, simultaneously. Related is the architectural wonder of glass as art, in the case of stained glass windows, for instance, that became part of churches and other institutional structures across continents. Stained glass doesn't so much let light enter or escape as it does reflect or absorb it, making the glass itself more luminous as opposed to lighting another venue. One's eye is drawn to the glass of the window, and its beauty and/or the story it tells, and not to the inside or outside of the dwelling place (Krysmanski, 2005). Stained glass windows don't so much admit or shield light, in so much instead as they absorb and transform it.

All of this connects with a third point, which is that modern day windows – as they take shape and are framed in so many venues, even as complete walls of buildings, as mirrors in interrogation rooms, or as screens where multiple realities meet through digital technology – continue to act as powerful inspiration for metaphor, and representations of human possibility, growth, progress, and even enslavement, while also opening up the potential for post-modern use and interpretation, that is in the sense that positionality, identity, and perhaps even culture and ideology are subject to new frontiers given the transcending energy of emerging interfaces, or screens, or windows, if you will (Krysmanski, 2005). What might our journey to locate ourselves within the complex worlds, interactions, and experiences of curriculum reveal to us as we seek, explore, open

our eyes, shine the light, blaze new trails, recognize windows of opportunity? What might the process of looking back through time at past windows of meaning reveal to us as we deal with today and dream/act for tomorrow? How might the windows we open or develop serve the curriculum field in ways that lie beyond the "screens" that Tyler imagined, for instance, the ones that would serve to filter the value of objectives objectively for the classroom? And how might we acknowledge them, in truth instead, as subjective, value-laden, human, and experiential meanings/questions derived from normative interests at hand and our own lives, as opposed to some arbitrary, meaningless and indefinable truth that lies outside of us? (Kliebard, 1992)

### **Curriculum Development Is Dead: Pushing Forward, Zombie-like?**

Our project began with the assumption that the curriculum books of the 1960s contained meaning, and contributed much at the time to the field and continue to be worth looking at today, for insights, for ways forward, for locating mistakes, for identifying key concepts that might inform us individually and otherwise. But this perspective doesn't hold up very well with Pinar's (2002) proclamation that the curriculum field as it was known then, and in particular as it was focused on curriculum development, was born in 1918 and died in 1969 with the contiguous birth of "curriculum understanding" as the prominent, new perspective and approach to the field (p. 6).

This paradigm shift – embodied in the lives and work of curriculum reconceptualists, including Pinar himself – made our own book possible, in a way: our multi-voiced perspectives on curriculum in theory and practice, in and outside of

classrooms, resonates with a reading public for this type of material because of the breaking down of paradigmatic barriers in the field more than 40 years ago.

But still, the dates nagged at me, as the founder of this project. If the field died in 1969, weren't all of the books preceding 1970, by definition, trapped behind a dirty, darkened window of a haunting mausoleum, entombing a dead curriculum field? Could these curriculum books of the 1960s be resurrected legitimately, without making all of us, and the texts themselves – regardless of our spirited, modern, post-modern, and cogent interpretations of them and the entire project – appear zombie-like, floating around without grounding in anything resembling the modern/post-modern field, based on old and rather non-germane, perhaps even expired ideas, that is, in effect, though muddling around *alive* in the cognitive atmosphere, they actually and merely are *dead* in and of themselves?

Thankfully, while these questions tortured me from beginning to end and still do to a degree, Pinar (2002) gave us some relief in his analysis of the 1960s in the edited volume *Understanding Curriculum*, the tome we read and sampled as a class, noting the significant contributions, of course, that transformational curriculum scholars in the 1960s and before that made in terms of laying the groundwork for change in the field, noting in particular the work done by Macdonald, Huebner, Kliebard, Eisner, Greene, Berman, and Klorer in their usually quiet opposition to

behaviorism, scientism (a reduction of forms of knowing to quantifiable ones), dehumanizing technology, and oppressive, alienating bureaucratization of the schools. These curricularists first attacked behavioral objectives, then bureaucratization, the disciplines-centered orientation, and quantified, standardized evaluation and measurement of learning (Huber, 1981). The challenge – largely uncoordinated – represented the first stage of the Reconceptualization, as the traditional field, for a few, became static and limiting. (p. 184)

Pinar goes on to cite others, including Holt, Kohl, and Neill as part of the movement challenging the traditional paradigm of the field. Interpretations of their work – along with attempts at interpreting Eisner and Berman – appear in this book, right alongside chapters about others who might have been and still might be considered wed to the "curriculum development" paradigm during their careers. Of course, it's a fact that curriculum development didn't die in 1970, and that it continues to live on in multiple manifestations within official bodies of the curriculum field such as AERA, ASCD, and various other conferences, and also as a force in "school deform" movements of the day including the hyper-controlling phenomena and realities of high stakes testing, standardized curriculum (the Common Core movement and textbooks/canned programs), and programmed instruction/pedagogy (Pinar, 2012). So, curriculum development is dead, but it's not, it's alive! And the books that set the table for the reconceptualization came during a decade dominated by curriculum development, simultaneously transcending the powerful shackles of the existing field's ideological and practical dominance. Dead or alive, dead or alive... Sounds like zombie-land to me!

But, I suppose as I grow, I become more comfortable with the anomalies of the curriculum field and the difficulties with any attempt to play in it, taking the tensions and the misshapen categories in stride, seeing them not as impediments, but instead as openings, screens, windows for new ways of thinking or of approaching a subject, or at least not making the mistake of thinking something is new, like an idea, when it really isn't, when in someone's reality it is grounded historically in ideas and practices from a fertile, long ago decade. Perhaps for me this is the heart of the matter, that exploring joyfully and attentively the interplay of ideas, figures, books, and movements of the

curriculum field that may or may not lead to new insights and possibilities is the best way forward for me, and the one I ask my students to take on periodically for projects such as this one. One can only give it a try; maybe a new way of thinking, or new barriers, will erupt and transform, and contribute to the curriculum field as we continually know it anew.

This still leaves open the problem of dealing with works by Mager and Taba, for instance, among others here who perhaps fall out of the realm of contributing to the reconceptualization of the field or at least resisting the dominant paradigm of curriculum development. Mager's work is on behavioral objectives and Taba's book is entitled *Curriculum Development*, so there is no way around the tension, which has to be confronted head on. Taking on these works posed opportunities and challenges to the chapter authors. On the one hand, it's easy to bash the works as outdated and unhelpful, but that doesn't recognize the complex realities of when they were written and what their purposes were. So this process sometimes requires careful coaching, hoping that the authors will be true to themselves and what they think while also taking into account how complex the project of reading historical curriculum texts can be. Also, I left things open for writers to be supportive of aspects of these works, since it is intellectually possible and even responsible to be supportive of ideas and practices that may find their definitional location outside the mainstream understandings and even fringy discussions constituting today's field.

What all of this means is that we found the conflict presented by Pinar, that the field is dead, but alive, though it was enlivened by those with a foot in the dead era, to be perplexing and liberating. There's really no way around the conundrum except to play in

it, and take it on for what it is, that is an opportunity for inquiry and the playful entanglement with conflict. Sounds a lot to me like zombie-land, dead, but alive, but still dead, etc., in an endless, interesting regress. What we ultimately hope is that your reading of our work here will ground you in the historical, theoretical, and practical questions and implications of the past, while also offering a contemporary, hopeful, honest interpretation of what it all means and what might be possible as a result of engaging these complex people, ideas, books, theories, and practices.

### **The Context of the 1960s**

And, so finally by way of introduction, it's important to locate our work on the curriculum books for study here within the historical context of the 60s, while admitting that our perspectives are mainly grounded in the worlds of the millennial transition decades, the 1990s through the early 2010s. I asked the authors to spend little time trying to describe the 1960s, in general, in their own chapters, that is to not spend much space rehashing what might have already been said about the 60s in other chapters, or in this chapter, or in Schubert's book. I thought that would be overkill, at best repetitive for the reader. Besides, Schubert (2002) provides "Contextual Reminders" in his book, essentially overviews at the start of each chapter that are extremely serviceable regarding each decade's cultural, historical, intellectual, economic, and political events in an attempt to frame the reasons for the books, the ideas, the scholarship, the teaching, and the educational practices of the day, in general. These curriculum bits are helpful and accessible and can be looked at by the reader before or while reading here. So here, instead of trying to blaze new trails on the history of the 1960s, I wish to draw on the

main themes that guided our work in the seminar and that were manifest in the discussions and interpretations in the proceeding chapters about the 1960s curriculum books.

First, it has to be said, though it's rather a cliché now, that the decade was marked by social, cultural, political, and economic upheaval. The norms and standards of the 1950s were challenged and transformed throughout the 1960s. Just a few of the authors and participants in our seminar lived any part of their lives in the 1960s. I was born at the end of 1962, and consider the decade a time of growing up, thinking instead of the 70s as my decade of coming of age on my own journey through the teen years and high school. It's important to note, though, as we did in class, that while some of us were alive in this world, even at our earliest ages, racial segregation existed legally in the United States. Our parents may have stayed at segregated hotels, sat at segregated lunch counters, rode segregated buses, or used segregated public accommodations such as restrooms and water fountains. While we have come a long way in terms of social justice in this country, our lives still touch extreme injustice, just as they do in pockets of today's post-modern society. The Civil Rights Act of 1964 marks a critical historical marker, sure to be debated, supported, and criticized by all, but surely also to stand forever as a landmark turning point for citizens in this nation given all of the windows it has opened and closed in so many ways over the intervening decades.

Also, the build up to war in Vietnam and the resulting heightening of the cold war, with the Bay of Pigs and Cuban Missile Crises early in the decade and the continuing fight against communism in lands far away, all played a significant role in the politics, economy, and cultural heritages of the 1960s. At any moment, in ways far more

insidious and dangerous than citizens were led to believe and even were trained for in the 1940s and 1950s, nuclear annihilation had become a real possibility on top of ground war combat that claimed the lives of soldiers and innocent civilians alike worldwide but particularly in the Far East and here at home in ways marked by domestic violence, mental illness, and death (see for instance *The Deer Hunter*), the perilous vestiges of a continuous cold war.

On the education front, the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 set new standards for federal involvement in education and for expectations for educating every child in the United States at least through High School as a norm. The law's implications short and long term have long been studied, and we still engage with the re-appropriation of the act given the political climate around education in society each decade, the last being the NCLB debacle of 2001 and the subsequent damage done by the standardization and high stakes testing movements (Bracey, 2009). We also understand from the literature and from the input of Schubert himself (personal communication) that the federal curriculum projects undertaken Post-Woods Hole Conference (by Bruner et al., for instance PSSC and MACOS) marked the practical and symbolic end of school people holding the power in terms of curricular and pedagogical decision making for education on a local level. While teachers still acted and continue to act as the great arbiters of the curriculum on the ground in schools in many instances (Eisner, 2004), the rules, regulations, mandates, and directives from above, hierarchically, play an increasingly prominent role in terms of the curriculum, determining what does and doesn't get taught and how teachers spend their time. It's a fact that teachers spend less time developing and understanding curriculum today than they did in the 1960s.

Perhaps typical of any decade, at least educationally, there were tremendous ironies. For instance, given this push toward greater outside control, schools and teachers pushed back by developing progressive approaches to education, including open classrooms, alternative schools, and free schools, for instance. Many of the renewing approaches were created and implemented by teachers. The decade of the 1960s, after all, was also a period of experimentation, new values, openness, and hope; the embodiment of progressive ideas, at least humanistic ones, that privileged the life of the child and his or her development in the context of the community and that pushed what's best for growing a morally defensible, empowering democracy ruled in some places, at least in pockets of experience and on the continuum of the local/national narratives. This was the decade of challenging the morality of the system in terms of the quality of education made available to marginalized citizens (see Kozol, Holt, and Herndon, for example) while at the same time creating new opportunities for self-exploration and personal growth (see Neill, for example).

Also, it would be an error not to mention how the decade of the 1960s embodied the rapid ramping up of technology, as it manifest itself conventionally in military prowess on ground, sea, and air and through advanced nuclear capability, as well as the rise, literally, of the space program, culminating in Armstrong and Aldrin's walks on the moon in 1969. The development of the computer, advanced industrialization processes for the assembly and marketing of goods, and the advances in agriculture, among others, created whole new ways of consuming and exploiting for the American people and for people around the world. While classrooms have remained much the same since 1960 in many ways (see Jackson's *Life in Classrooms*, for example), they have also been radically

transformed by technology. In 1969, I assembled with my classmates in the dark basement room of my elementary school to watch filmstrips of the fictional first Thanksgiving, treated as fact. Students today watch women soaring through space and talk with them about their science experiments in real time, and Skype with students in Russian high schools. Technology has had a profound impact on what might be possible for 21<sup>st</sup> century learners, and many of these developments and understandings have their roots in 1960s technologies and experiences.

Last, the rapid changes in social and cultural norms, religious participation and understanding, and the industrialization and westernization of the world in the 1960s, mirror the rapid pace of change in 2013. I don't have a crystal ball so can't predict the future, except to say that the decades since the 1960s have provided plenty of change, bringing movements to commerce, politics, and education at breakneck speed. One approach is to slow down and study the trends, take stock of early attempts, and learn from the past. We attempt to do that with you in the following chapters. It so happens that our vantage point for today, the window through which we will venture to look, is through the lenses of curriculum scholars, teachers, and writers of the 1960s. I hope you enjoy the look back as much as we have and learn as much as we have along the way as well. Our futures, perhaps, depend on it.

\*Starred titles in the References are works that chapter authors examine in this book.

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