

## Philosophy of education in a new key: Future of philosophy of education

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COLLECTIVE WRITING



## Philosophy of education in a new key: Future of philosophy of education

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### ABSTRACT

What is the future of Philosophy of education? Or as many of scholars and thinkers in this final 'future-focused' collective piece from the philosophy of education in a new key Series put it, what are the futures—plural and multiple—of the intersections of 'philosophy' and 'education?' What is 'Philosophy'; and what is 'Education', and what role may 'enquiry' play? Is the future of education and philosophy embracing—or at least taking seriously—and thinking with Indigenous ethico-ontoepistemologies? And, perhaps most importantly, what is that 'Future?' These debates have been located in the work of diverse scholars: from the West, from Global South, from indigenous thinkers. In this collective piece, we purposefully juxtapose (and do not categorise under forced headings) diverse takes on the future of these intersections. We have given up the urge to organise, place together, separate with sub-headings or connect the paragraphs that follow. Instead, we let these philosophers of education and thinkers who use philosophical texts and ideas to sit together in one long read as potentially 'strange and unusual bedfellows'. This text urges us to understand how these scholars and thinkers perceive our educational philosophical futures, and how the work and thinking they have done on thinking about what the future of that new key in philosophy of education may look like is embedded in a much deeper and richer literature, and personal experience.

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## Towards the Future of Philosophy of Education

Marek Tesar

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What is the future of Philosophy of education? Or as many of scholars and thinkers in this final 'future-focused' collective piece from the philosophy of education in a new key Series put it, what are the futures—plural and multiple—of the intersections of 'philosophy' and 'education'? What is 'Philosophy'; and what is 'Education', and what role may 'enquiry' play? Is the future of education and philosophy embracing—or at least taking seriously—and thinking with Indigenous ethicoontoepistemologies? And, perhaps most importantly, what is that 'Future'? These debates have been located in the work of diverse scholars: from the West, from Global South, from indigenous thinkers. In this collective piece, we purposefully juxtapose (and do not categorise under forced headings) diverse takes on the future of these intersections. We have given up the urge to organise, place together, separate with subheadings or connect the paragraphs that follow. Instead, we let these philosophers of education and thinkers who use philosophical texts and ideas to sit together in one long read as potentially 'strange and unusual bedfellows'. However, this potentially uncomfortable juxtaposition and the uncertainty of being together is also a productive act, allowing us all to consider philosophy and education (and methodologies and inquiries) as interconnected, interlined, producing productive liminal spaces, reaching and identifying those threshold places of difference. Furthermore, it helps us to understand how these scholars and thinkers perceive our educational philosophical futures, and how the work and thinking they have done on thinking about what the future of that new key in philosophy of education may look like is embedded in a much deeper and richer literature, and personal experience.

What is the future? what matters? what is important? and what will the philosophy of education look like? What complex societal and political relations will be privileged, and which ones should we leave behind? We have been reminded in the first two decades of the 21st century that despite all the knowledges, experiences, histories, painful experiences of the past century, we have carried over the same issues; they are just distributed and enhanced via different platforms, sometimes conflated, at other times amplified, but in certain way distorted. While some positive micro-practices have thrived, we struggled to scale them up. While we have developed great global values, policies and ideas, we struggle to implement them in our everyday and mundane lives. Philosophy of Education, as it slowly disappears as a subject from our degrees, and its foundations are no longer valued by managers and educational leaders (or are valued only if these foundations serve their managerial purposes and desired outcomes), has become perhaps more important than ever. Perhaps it is finally that time to hit that 'new key' and consider how genuine and true relations between the Western, Eastern, Global South etc. canons can be developed, including levelling the field with genuine partnerships the indigenous ethicoontoepistemologies.

In a way, this collective writing is closing the circle of papers that started with Peters (2020) exploration of the new key that philosophy of education could 'hit' with the scholars from PESA. It very soon was followed by other groups of scholars who have responded to these questions and identified the various 'keys'. As such we have contributions from Great Britain (Orchard, 2020); US and Canada (Jackson, 2020a), Iran (Varaki, 2021), South-East Asia (Hung, 2020), Japan (Kato, 2020) and various geographically aligned topics such as Education for Justice Now (Papastephanou, 2020), Ethics (Buchanan, 2021), Publicness and Social Justice via South-North Conversation (Biesta, 2021), Dignity (Roth, 2020), Radicalization and Violent Extremism (Sardoč, 2020), Coloniality and Violence in African universities (Waghid, 2020), and the environment after the pandemic (Jandric, 2020). All these texts strike an important new key; a new key within which the philosophy of education will thrive, expanding its potential beyond its originally

intended scope, becoming relevant and in-tune with all relevant people, places and things and also associated methodologies and enquiries (Tesar, 2021). It's already clear that the answer to the question what is the future of philosophy of education is idiosyncratic, diverse, multiple and hopefully different to the past. So let's start, as Hytten urges us, 'Beginning again'.

## Beginning Again

Kathy Hytten

University of North Carolina Greensboro

Writing about the current era of uncertainty and social unrest, particularly in the light of a global health pandemic that has disrupted everyday life as we know it, Arundhati Roy (2020) suggests that this is a time where we are forced 'to break with the past' and imagine a new world; the pandemic 'is a portal, a gateway between one world and the next.' The broad idea of imagining new possibilities, of rethinking our present so as to create a more desirable future, has gained much traction in the past year. Reflecting on deeply entrenched and ongoing racism in the United States, what he calls an enduring value gap between white and black people in the after times of slavery, Eddie Glaude (2020) argues is it time to 'begin again,' and 'to muster the moral strength to reimagine America' (p. 142) in ways that match our most deeply held democratic ideals of equity, justice, and freedom for all. In the sphere of education, Gloria Ladson-Billings (2021) calls for a 'hard re-set' of schooling; this requires rethinking purposes and goals 'in a society that is straining from the problems of anti-Black racism, police brutality, mass incarceration, and economic inequality. The point of the hard re-set is to reconsider what kind of human beings/citizens we are seeking to produce' (p. 72).

The question of the kinds of people we hope education will help to develop is a deeply philosophical one. More than simply passing on information and skills that we think are important to surviving and hopefully thriving as adults, schools shape habits, dispositions, and ways of seeing. They help us to consider what matters in the world, which values should guide our choices, and how to make decisions about our future, or at least they ought to do so. Education done well teaches us how to make a rich and meaningful life, not simply how to survive economically in a world where no amount of money ever seems sufficient. Yet swimming amid pressures of competition, standards, high-stakes testing, and accountability, most educators are not very good at thinking of schooling primarily as preparation for a life well lived. I see one important future direction for philosophy of education as recentring (or centering for the first time) the question of what it means to make a good life: to take ownership over how we occupy our time, actualize our dreams, and live peacefully with others while we work to restore this fragile planet.

The question of what is important to making a good life is one that educators don't reflect on nearly enough. Surely all people need some basic information, skills, and critical forms of literacy to navigate the world, but we also need to learn to look around us with wonder and reverence: to think deeply about ideas, find and pursue passions, engage in community with others, enjoy leisure time, and reckon with our own mortality. The time is ripe to think about what it means for all people to matter and thrive and how schools can be places where we build a foundation for meaning, not primarily for competition with peers for artificially scarce rewards. Philosophers of education ought to play a central role in beginning education again, contributing significantly to the hard re-set that Ladson-Billings maintains is so necessary. To do so, we need to ensure that at least some of the time (if not most of the time), we engage in philosophical work in education that is interdisciplinary, collaborative, applied, creative, and activist. Doing so can be a portal to a different world, one in which schooling is primarily about passion, joy, connectivity, and love. Philosophers are both thinkers and dreamers; in this uncertain world, we certainly need more of us to imagine and create schools as spaces that help all of us to live good and meaningful lives.

## **Ka Tangi Te Tītī, Ka Tangi Te Kākā, Ka Tangi Hoki Ahau!**

Te Kawehau Hoskins  
The University of Auckland

The idea of a ‘new key’ for the future philosophy of education is, I imagine, a metaphorical call for new disciplinary questions and directions in the field. A ‘key’ is central to the canon of western art music and refers to the dominant set of notes in any given song or piece of music—the place in the music where ‘home’ feels. Calls for a ‘new key’ in the philosophy of education are rightly made from within that home: all new philosophical work builds on and responds to what has come before. And yet the idea of the key itself, (new or otherwise) is questionable. Focussing always on the key, the dominating set of notes, has the effect of being unable to hear any others.

This line of thinking leads me to ask what the future relationship of indigenous and Māori thinking to the philosophy of education might be? But of course there is already a relationship. The work of Kaupapa Māori theory for example, which emerged in the field of education, has been interwoven with educational philosophy for some thirty years. Critical theory and pedagogy furnished Kaupapa Māori with power analyses and identity politics crucial to political and educational transformation and opened theoretical space in the academy.

Importantly, Kaupapa Māori is also inspired by its own home, its own set of notes. And while we can read western forms of logic at work in a binary privileging of ‘our home’, this is also an ontological home that resists exclusivity and opposition for relationality. Māori ontologies hear the unique tangi (sound, note, cry, song) of birds, love, tides, people and thunder as part of a vast network of kin relations. This ontology is expressed in the often recited tauparapara (opening statement of a speaker) that forms the title of this contribution. It announces an intention to speak as part of a kinship of speakers and voices to whom we listen and relate: The Tītī bird sings, the Kākā bird calls, and I too have something to say!

Here perhaps is a way of thinking about the future of philosophy of education. A future that, as part of composing new sets of notes, experiments with others approaches to relationship; that is to listening and responding to the distinct tangi of others.

## **A Posthumanist Future for Philosophy of Education**

Jerry Rosiek  
University of Oregon

‘Philosophy bakes no bread,’ is the old instrumentalist rebuke of more reflective vocations. In the field of education these days, that phrase might be translated as ‘philosophy of education raises no achievement test score.’

Of course, the equally old and equally pithy retort to those who prefer gluten over philosophy is that ‘people do not live by bread alone.’ Philosophers from Socrates and John Dewey to Cornel West and Gloria Anzaldúa, have argued that many important enhancements to our lives lie beyond easy certainties. Philosophy is the discipline that helps us ask better questions of ourselves and thus creates new possibilities for amelioration.

‘But how do you know philosophy enhances quality of life?’ comes the psychometrician’s counter. ‘Exactly’ says the clever philosopher, ‘that is a philosophical question! You are proving why philosophy is a necessary area of study.’

And so on. The grievances are all well-rehearsed and the debate is terribly boring.

Maybe, however, we could think about this differently. Bread, or wheat, is usually thought of as something humans discovered 8000 years ago in the Nile valley and learned to turn into a source of surplus calories. Those excess calories enabled portions of the population to be freed

from the toil of hunting and gathering. This gave rise to aristocracies, armies, elaborately organized religions, art of various sorts, and yes, even philosophy.

The book, *Sapiens* (Harari, 2014), however, tells a different story. Instead of seeing wheat as a plant used by humans to advance their interests, the equally plausible view is advanced that wheat colonized human communities. A mutation enabled the plant to addict humans to the calories it provided. In this way, the plant enlisted human labor in cultivating, caring for, and disseminating its seed. Human culture, identities, and activities were drastically reorganized around this work of cultivation. Human armies and migration spread the practice of wheat cultivation, till it now covers the globe. So who is using who?

The idea that plants have the power to shape humans is not new. Many Indigenous cultures understand the natural world as suffuse with its own active agency. According to these views, our relation to the natural world is ethically reciprocal and ontologically co-constituting (Garrouette & Westcott, 2013; Marker, 2018). In the last couple of decades, a similar view has emerged in posthumanist feminism and philosophy of science scholarship (Barad, 2019; Braidotti, 2019; Rosiek et al., 2020).

If philosophy of education has a future, this is where I think it lies. Not in trying to demonstrate its instrumental value by baking bread or increasing test scores. Nor in the relatively aloof enterprise of raising critical questions about beliefs and curricular priorities. I think a philosophy of education for the future will be both more affirmative and more protean. It will help us responsibly explore alternative ways of knowing about and being within learning. It will ask what our ways of knowing cause us to become and help us speculate about better relations with various agents in this world. Ultimately, this will be not be an exclusively descriptive, nor critical process, but a narrative and imaginative one.

## Reading with Love

Alecia Y. Jackson  
Appalachian State University

You see the book as a little non-signifying machine, and the only question is 'Does it work, and how does it work?' How does it work for you? If it doesn't work, if nothing comes through, you try another book. This second way of reading's intensive: something comes through or it doesn't. There's nothing to explain, nothing to understand, nothing to interpret. It's like plugging in to an electric circuit ... This intensive way of reading, in contact with what's outside the book, as a flow meeting other flows, one machine among others, as a series of experiments for each reader in the midst of events that have nothing to do with books, as tearing the book into pieces, getting it to interact with other things, absolutely anything ... is reading with love. That's exactly how you read the book (Deleuze, 1995, pp. 7–9).

Reading with love ... this provocative notion is at the intersection of philosophy and education. Reading, as an affective intensity, is no longer about comprehension, recall, meaning, or application. Rather, reading is a becoming, an encounter that spurs the unthought. What might education become if we are not taught a love of reading, but to read with love? The book, then, is one part of an assemblage that makes things work in a playful yet necessary opening to the outside. A school principal who reads post-structural theories of disciplinary power becomes unable to contribute to the normalizing tendencies of dividing practices that sort and hierarchize students. A college dean who reads post-structural theories of subjectivity begins to disrupt the unexamined assumptions that produce discourses and subject positions that privilege neoliberalism and harm students. School administrators, while encountering post-structural discourse theory, sit at the policy-making table to unravel the deficit-based discourses that produce the very problems that policy is meant to solve. These events flow alongside how a book is read, and when plugged-in, are made to work differently through a thinking-with (Jackson & Mazzei, 2012).

Reading with love is to activate circuits among all sorts of texts already in the world, in order to create that which is to come.

## **The Future of Philosophy of Education: A Call for Practitioner Alignment**

Michael Hand  
University of Birmingham

Some 40 years ago, Harvey Siegel set out an argument ‘against the notion that the professional philosopher of education qua professional has any special obligation to focus on questions relevant to educational practice’ (Siegel, 1983, p. 31). While some philosophical questions about education pertain directly to the work of teachers and policy-makers, others do not. Our professional obligation is to produce philosophy that is good, not philosophy that is useful.

At around the same time, on the other side of the Atlantic, Robert Dearden made a similar point in his inaugural professorial lecture at the University of Birmingham (Dearden, 1984). Dearden distinguishes two ways in which theories can be relevant to education. A theory is thematically relevant to education when it is ‘quite simply ... about education, somewhere or at some time’ (p. 9); it is pragmatically relevant when it has ‘a bearing on the solution of a current practical problem’ (p. 9). Thematic relevance is a necessary feature of any theory properly described as educational, but pragmatic relevance is not: educational theorists can be deliberately and properly dismissive of the terms in which current practical problems are couched. It would, says Dearden, ‘be very unwise for educational theorising to be entirely governed in its direction of interest by a strict criterion of pragmatic relevance’ (p. 10).

Siegel and Dearden are unassailably correct: philosophers of education are not obliged to focus on questions relevant to educational practice; and educational theories do not necessarily bear on the solutions to practical problems. But it is hard not to think that the philosophy of education community has taken these points a little too much to heart over the last four decades. Dispiritingly few of the articles published today in the leading philosophy of education journals address themselves to the practical questions with which teachers and policy-makers wrestle. And this despite the fact that many of those questions are manifestly, in part or in whole, conceptual or normative in character, and therefore precisely the sort of questions with which philosophers can help.

The future I would like to see for philosophy of education is one in which a much higher proportion of our work is practitioner-aligned (Hand, 2018, p. 13). A piece of philosophy is practitioner-aligned when the question it purports to answer, or the problem it purports to solve, is one recognised by and troubling to practitioners; it is practitioner-unaligned when the question or problem it addresses is one that practitioners either do not recognise or are not troubled by. To be sure, our philosophical horizons should not be limited by the difficulties of teachers: as Dearden warns, theory wholly in the service of practice can ‘easily become mere apologetic ideology’ (Dearden, 1984, p. 10). But nor should we disdain those difficulties. The challenges faced by our colleagues at the chalkface are significant, numerous, complex and daunting, and failure to overcome them has direct and serious consequences for the children they teach. To the extent that we are in a position to help, we should.

## **The Future of Philosophy of Education: Living on the Edge**

Peter Roberts  
University of Canterbury

For many years, philosophy of education has occupied a tenuous space in the academy. Across Europe, North America and Australasia, new university positions in our field have become



increasingly rare. Most contemporary teacher education programmes provide little in-depth work in educational theory, and government officials seldom seek the expertise and experience of philosophers of education when formulating policy. There are few avenues for substantial research funding when undertaking philosophical work in education. In some parts of the world, philosophy of education still has a place in the liberal arts, but often only indirectly, and such programmes are themselves frequently under threat. Philosophy of education, where it is considered at all, is not uncommonly regarded as a relic of a bygone era, of interest only to those charting the history of educational studies in the 20th century.

Yet, this rather bleak picture need not signal a kind of intellectual Armageddon, with the few remaining educational philosophers of the future dwelling in the crumbled, smouldering ruins of better times (usually, and not unproblematically, conceived as the period from the mid-1960s to the late 1970s). Philosophers of education have, in some senses, always lived 'on the edge', asking difficult questions and rubbing against the grain of political and institutional orthodoxy. Philosophy of education is meant to be risky, meant to be subversive. The 'edges' of existence often provide the most interesting and fruitful spaces for philosophical inquiry; they have something crucial to teach us about ourselves, our ideals, and our relationships with others. What we find in exploring these spaces may not make us any happier; indeed, it may, in some respects, make us unhappier, perhaps even despairing, in our outlook. But that too hints at one of the key contributions of philosophy of education: it is, or should be, a form of investigative existence that deepens and extends our understanding of the fullness and complexity of human lives (Roberts, 2016; Webster, 2009).

If philosophy of education is to be not just an academic subject but a way of life, the range of sources from which we draw cannot be confined to traditional non-fiction books and articles. We will also want to pay attention to literature, drama and film, painting and sculpture, and myths and legends (Arcilla, 2020; Roberts & Freeman-Moir, 2013; Roberts & Saeverot, 2018). We should certainly keep struggling to win more positions, and to gain a stronger foothold in university curricula, but even if these battles result in some successes, we should never become too comfortable, too settled; a philosophical life in education should engender a certain restlessness, a willingness to live with discomfort and uncertainty, always aware that there is more work to do. Philosophy of education can be demanding and difficult, but it can also offer some surprising rewards, often in those small, hidden moments of pedagogical activity, where a glimpse of what really matters is gained in an otherwise distracted world.

## **The Feminist Voice: Embarking on Family-Focused Pedagogy**

Gina A. Opiniano  
Faculty of Arts and Letters  
University of Santo Tomas

The unprecedented impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic transgress from economic to social disruptions including education. With the pandemic continuing to affect the education sector, serious and urgent attention must be given as education plays a vital role in the preservation of this generation and of posterity.

The Philippines, as may be the case for many developing countries, struggles yet strives to ensure that education must continue thereby shifting to distance learning. Students' technological capacity and preparedness is key to considering the options for learning delivery modalities for this approach particularly for the basic education. These include Online Distance Learning (ODL), Modular Distance Learning (MDL), and Self-learning Module (TV/Radio-Based Instruction). However, the 'new normal' in Philippine education heavily relies on the students' and their respective families' capabilities to sustain quality education with minimal to almost non-existent supervision from teachers (Marquez et al., 2020).



This kind of situation poses a challenge for the philosophy of education, requiring us to pause, rethink and reflect. It plays a crucial role in the management of what could be a worsening crisis in education. This pause is revealing, and we must use it to strike a new key in philosophy and education (Orchard, 2020), with urgency and priority.

The shift from teacher-led education to a student-led and technology-enhanced one has become not only necessary, but more apparent (Handog, 2020). This shift has proven the integral role of the family in the learning process. In the Philippines, for example, this new approach banks on students' and their families' capabilities to foster learning. Families must be included as partners in the educational process inasmuch as parents and families provide the primary learning environment for children of all ages (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). Filipinos are known to have strong familial ties. The family has long been regarded as an encompassing institution that puts other members of the family as the priority. This can hence be the core in framing a new pedagogy that is anchored on this familial value, not just of Filipinos, but of other races as well.

Furthermore, the family-focused approach entails a heightened appreciation of reciprocal care and relational needs and capacities which characterizes a care-based approach to education. Drawing upon ethics of care contributes a new theorizing that emphasizes providing a care-based concern to all the people involved in the learning process. This potential new pedagogy is perceived to address the aspects of learning that are not as maximized due to the limitations of distance learning. This also entails empowering the family which may have an ultimate positive result to the productivity of the society. Philosophers of education are therefore challenged to engage in revisiting and rethinking the current pedagogies towards those that not only serve as urgent responses to the crisis, but especially those that will ensure continuity of the true essence of education.

## What is the Future of Philosophy of Education?

Jacoba Matapo  
The University of Auckland

As a Samoan/Pasifika scholar, I wish to take up this question from a Pacific Indigenous perspective calling into question two presuppositions that ground the question and offer an Indigenous philosophical stance to address these themes. Firstly, the human subject that is implicit in western philosophy and the aims of education as anthropocentric. As an Indigenous scholar, intellectually and politically vested in Indigenising the academy, I have always wondered about the ancient unwritten Indigenous Pacific philosophers who exercised a very different way of relating, creating and living philosophy. I wonder how one might live to embrace an Indigenous Pacific philosophical tradition and how such a position may offer alternative insights to the aims of education as we know it. Can such a way of thinking be reconciled with the domination of the western canon in philosophy of education? Should it be reconciled? Thinking about the fundamental tenets of the human condition such as Eurocentric Humanism and Anthropocentrism (Braidotti, 2019), it seems to me that many postmodernists, poststructuralists and posthumanists continue to work with philosophy to disturb the presupposed conditions of Humanist ontologies present in education discourse.

Pacific Indigenous philosophy, considered alongside posthuman theory, challenges the notion of the universalised human subject (the individual, autonomous-self) taken for granted within universalised notions of education. The conventional European 'human subject' is historically associated with the 'great chain of being' itself anchored in Eurocentric patriarchal social structures and ideology. This particular human subject exists within a western view that places the human subject in a particular hierarchical order (Braidotti, 2019). The human subject in this hierarchical sense prescribes a specific subjectivity, one that is ontologically located within man's capacity to think rationally; this leaves other-than-human estranged from the rational man.

Indigenous scholars, for example Meyer (2014) and Smith (2012), have argued against this dominant position of the human subject, problematising the racialised and gendered 'others' who have yet to become fully human.

I recognise the tensions for Indigenous scholars having to validate Indigenous philosophies and other ways of being (human), from the edges of a molar or rigid lines (the line of consistency). These are the conditions of striation (the relation between state apparatus and its territories) and for Indigenous philosophy within the academy means working with and against its mechanisms to open lines and trajectories of difference in knowing and being in world (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987). Education philosophy and policy within New Zealand is fundamentally based upon the western canon, through which liberal and progressive ideals infuse learners with particular identities, mainly that of the learner as an individual, autonomous and self-directing. Pacific Indigenous philosophy challenges the notion of the 'individual' as not so clear cut. The individual is both collective, constituted within human and non-human relations, thus subjectivity in relation to philosophy is centred within worlded epistemologies (Mika, 2017). Mobilising Pacific Indigenous philosophy offers radical shifts to decentre the humanist, and anthropocentric core of philosophy of education as we know it to take seriously the co-existential and co-agentic relations between peoples and world.

## Methodology Trumps Philosophy

Elizabeth Adams St. Pierre  
University of Georgia

During 26 years in a college of education at a major U.S. research university, I have observed a shift in value from philosophy/theory to social science research methodology. My college, like others in the U.S., deactivated its educational foundations program, where the philosophy and history of education (and other foundational topics) were taught, and foundations faculty were scattered willy-nilly across and isolated in other programs. Courses I've developed and taught during that time (theoretical frameworks, postmodernism, Foucault, Derrida, new materialism, affect theory, second-wave feminism, post qualitative inquiry) are called 'boutique' courses by administrators who find the critical studies PhD emphasis area in my department 'a mystery.' My college's qualitative research program has, at during that time, been elaborated. It now offers both a PhD in qualitative research and evaluation methodologies and a popular certificate program that requires 15 hours of qualitative research courses (five 3-credit hour courses hour courses. It's highly unlikely that PhD programs in my college require five foundation courses. When I came to the University of Georgia in 1995, the reverse was true. The foundations program was strong, and there was no program in qualitative methodology—just a few scattered courses taught by a few faculty. What happened?

I believe the scientifically based research in education movement (SBR) invented by the U.S. Institute of Education Sciences (see St. Pierre, 2016) and authorized by the No Child Left Behind Act (2000), which mandated randomized controlled trials as the gold standard of educational research, delegitimated philosophy in education. After all, SBR is based on logical positivism/ logical empiricism which eschews speculation, claims to be theory-free and value-free, aims for the clarity and precision of mathematics, and promotes a brute empiricism. Steinmetz (2005) wrote that positivism is the 'epistemological unconscious' of the social sciences and education, so the rapid ascendancy of SBR in education should not have been surprising. Even so-called interpretive qualitative research was positivized, formalized, and scientized so that positivist qualitative methodology became common. And philosophy became not just irrelevant but undesirable.

Teaching the aberrant line of speculative philosophers—e.g., Lucretius, Spinoza, Leibniz, Nietzsche, Bergson, Whitehead, Simondon, Deleuze, Foucault—especially philosophers of

immanence, who had seldom been taught in educational foundations anyway, could certainly not be tolerated. As I have argued, the onto-epistemological arrangements of their approaches to thought/inquiry do not enable one to think pre-existing research methodologies. But those 'old' scholars are fueling the 'new' work of the ontological turn that originates in the humanities and not, typically, in education—new materialism, new empiricism, affect theory, post humanism, etc.

However, not teaching those philosophers has produced 'methodologies' (e.g., affective, post-human, new material, diffractive, Deleuzian) that are unthinkable if one has studied philosophy. This is what can happen when methodology trumps philosophy in education—philosophy can be set aside and everything can be methodologized. My desire is to spread philosophy everywhere so that methodolatry and scientism become unintelligible, so that a colleague cannot say, very seriously, 'I can methodologize anything.'

## Philosophy of Education as a Site of Decoloniality

Rowena Azada-Palacios

UCL Institute of Education and Ateneo de Manila University

Philosophy of education is a boundary-breaking field. It brings together, from across the world, philosophers with an interest in educational questions, educationalists and educational researchers who approach their questions philosophically, and those who identify both as philosophers and educationalists. Because breaking boundaries is part of the very spirit of the field, it tends to be open and agile, willing to explore new ways of thinking and doing.

For this reason, I think that philosophy of education will be a fecund space for the decolonization movement. The task of decolonization has both a political dimension, the continued struggle against colonialism and different forms of neo-colonization across the world, and an epistemic dimension, 'unveiling and undoing the "logic of coloniality"' (Mignolo, 2007, p. 503) as it persists in the global asymmetries of power that are the colonial legacy.

In the field of education, much has been made of the task of 'decolonising the curriculum'. This phrase can be interpreted, in its softest sense, as an attempt to diversify reading lists and sources of knowledge. However, to interpret the task as such runs the risk of disengaging it from the larger decolonial vision. It runs the risk of creating the illusion that once we start including more indigenous authors in our classrooms, we've won the war.

A more robust attempt at decoloniality would seek to interrogate the way coloniality continues to pervade education. This of course might include the way that coloniality persists in the curriculum, especially because curricula have, historically, been precisely the colonial tools used to suppress, dismiss, and sometimes erase the plurality of knowledge.

However, if decoloniality is ultimately motivated by a desire for greater justice, then decoloniality cannot be limited only to curricula. It might also entail decolonising relationships between teachers and learners, pedagogical practices, the structure of the school, and the world outside the school.

The discipline of philosophy of education can participate in this task in a number of ways. Firstly, philosophy of education can interrogate the professed aims of education, casting a critical eye towards the way that these are conceptualized and articulated, to uncover possible legacies of coloniality in them. Secondly, philosophy of education can decolonise itself, by drawing from wider sources of knowledge, including indigenous and post-colonial ways of knowing, and bring insights from these sources to bear on educational issues. Thirdly, philosophy of education can propose political decolonial directions, or aid in enacting these political acts by helping to envision different futures.

The task ahead is long. But the diversity and collegiality of the global community of philosophers of education indicate the horizon of new possibilities.

## What If: Thinking Otherwise in the Teaching of Philosophy and Science

Candace R. Kuby  
University of Missouri

I am currently teaching a philosophical perspectives in educational research course for doctoral students. This is my third time to teach it and each time students share a similar narrative of being afraid of a philosophy class or that they haven't had much exposure to philosophy. Usually about half-way through the semester or afterwards they articulate how useful the class was in thinking about how philosophies make (im)possible or (un)thinkable ways of doing inquiry (Kuby & Christ, 2020). Many say, the course taught them to think.

One component of the class is to disrupt the belief that philosophy is only by old, White Western men, by bringing in a range of philosophical traditions and authors of various identities. We also discuss how philosophy(ies) is a doing in our everyday, perhaps mundane livings. Inspired by Deleuze and Guattari (1994) writing on philosophy, art and science as a doing (Kuby & Aguayo, 2016), in several assignments, I invite students to notice how philosophy is enacted in the world—in the news, (social) media, policies, professional organizations, schools, relationships—and diffract these encounters with the philosophies we are reading. How did these (policies, news events, etc.) come to be in the world? How might they be experienced by different beings (human and more-than-human)? What assumptions on ontology, epistemology, and/or axiology are operating? As one student said, the course has her analyzing everything in the world.

I hear St. Pierre (2002) voice that it is dangerous to (attempt to) separate philosophy from science or to believe there is one epistemology, ontology or empiricism that governs all science. Yet, my daily experiences as an educational researcher and teacher show that the academy continues to attempt to do just that.

As for the future, I want to be hopeful. At the moment my colleagues seem to value a philosophy course. However, discourses are bubbling-up to make this course a choice, not requirement. It seems even educational scholars continue to perceive philosophy as separate from science/research and not needed. We are so used to operating in a thick atmosphere of (post)-positivist, empirical logics and a rush to application/method, many don't even entertain an otherwise.

I think we need more, classes on philosophy ... it helps you to question. It makes you question and wonder [...] the very things we all hold just as truth. If you can't see beyond that and not push yourself to different questioning and different ideas, then you just take the status quo as acceptable and you just swallow it down. [...] We're not taught to question, but philosophy classes teach us to question [...] gives you a space to struggle and not know (Josephina, doctoral student).

Not knowing. We need to believe in not knowing and the generative space(s) this produces for being/doing/living/teaching/learning otherwise. I connect this to a conversation with Ezekiel Dixon-Román (2021) who talks about the 'what if'. What if we had all (graduate) students take classes on philosophy and science? What might these produce for education? What if ... ?<sup>1</sup>

## What is the Future of Philosophy of Education?

Alison Jones  
The University of Auckland

I'm intimidated by this grand question, not least because I am not sure what philosophy of education is. The intimidated may seek refuge in Google > Wikipedia > 'Philosophy of Education'.

I find a noble genealogy of philosophers and philosophies: Plato to Kant to Hegel to Realism to Pragmatism down to Analytic Philosophy, Critical Theory, and 'Other Continental Thinkers'. Then some 'normative' philosophers such as Dewey, A.S. Neill, Piaget. I like to read all these old

dead white men. I know I am supposed to object to their dominance—and I do!—but I like their philosophies' clean lines, their self-confident expressions, and their certainties (even their certainty about uncertainty).

I notice that the question posed is not about the philosophy of education, just 'philosophy of education'. If we leave aside the idea of the Western canon, things get clearer and, at the same time, messier: we can abandon endless arguments about definitions of the philosophy of education and who does it and who counts as doing it, but without definitions the conversation can wander almost anywhere.

Maybe the question contains a concealed clause in its worry about the future: What is the future of philosophy of education at this time, when empirical research seems to crowd out the educational field ... when theory is unfashionably impractical? That is, when funded research is what counts, is the philosopher who does not require funding, only time, even doing research? When the educationist seeks time and not more money, how can she be doing something valuable in for schooling or learning or teaching? Will the graduate who studied the morality of assessment get a job over the one who studied how to assess?

These become political questions and thus the future of education philosophy becomes tied to politics—or, more precisely, to ethics (philosophy entangled with politics is ethics, after all). Ethics does not simply ask 'which questions are worth asking?' without actively engaging with the politics of that question: asking how power works in the question and its answers. And politics refers to 'touching the ground' or 'getting your hands dirty'—not usually the territory or action of philosophers or ethicists, who might have to look over the fence for the grubby sociologists.

Far from touching the ground, at least some education philosophy seems up in the cool air, above everyday concerns and interminably self-referential: Marx said that Feuerbach said that according to Hegel ...; Spanos argues that there is a strong connection between Heidegger's critique of the ontotheological tradition and Foucault's critique of ... Such floating philosophical methodologies, where nouns are rarely concrete, generally leave me cold. Or perhaps irritated.

What happens if we ask of every philosophical question how it might be an ethical-political question? In this provocation is movement, discomfort, difficulty and no escape to the refuge of ideas untethered to human life. In that lively tangle is the future of philosophy of education.

I sound so certain ...

## Philosophy of Education in a Minor Key

Lisa A. Mazzei  
University of Oregon

When I received the invitation to participate in this 'Collective Writing' I responded enthusiastically, enticed by the potential enactments and encounters with my own thinking and that of others. Could this philosophy in a new key be resonant with my thinking in a minor key (Mazzei, 2017)? Might it be, as Claire Colebrook (2017) has written, a return to philosophy as pedagogy, asserting the future intersections of philosophy and education impossible to think, one without the other? This language of a 'new key,' one that I am exploring in work with Laura Smithers (Mazzei & Smithers, 2020), posits pedagogy as acts of creation, oriented but not confined by teaching and learning.

Such a pedagogy, or inquiry, inseparable from thinking philosophy and education together, is provoked by thought made possible with concepts. Not in a metaphorical sense, but ontologically, framed as an attunement to difference and creation. Colebrook (2002) wrote, 'A concept does not just add another word to a language; it transforms the whole shape of a language' (p. 17). A concept is not a word, but is instead 'a creation of a way of thinking' (p. 20). It is, in other words, ontogenetic.

The task then is not to approach philosophical concepts as offering new words to describe education or inquiry, for thinking philosophical concepts in this way functions to merely reproduce dogmatic images of thought. Instead, Deleuze and Guattari (1994) assert that concepts are 'created as a function of problems' (p. 16) in order that new ways of thinking might emerge. Thus, we bring concepts together with the problem of education, beginning with concepts to incite thinking that opens a new plane of inquiry.

Without philosophical concepts, without difference, one is destined to endlessly repeat previously thought futures that are bound to a sameness that comforts, rather than an un-thought that jolts and unhinges. Concepts, Deleuze and Guattari (1994) tell us, are 'not waiting for us ready-made, like heavenly bodies' (p. 5) but instead are 'connected to problems without which they would have no meaning and which can themselves only be isolated or understood as their solution emerges' (p. 16). These concepts, not bound to the familiar, must be created, and in their creation, they enable new contours and lines of flight. In other words, I follow the invitation of Deleuze and Guattari's notion of a concept as a contour to bring philosophical concepts into the realm of education and inquiry in order that they might 'produce an orientation or a direction for thinking,' (Colebrook, 2002, p. 15) without which philosophy, inquiry, and pedagogical imaginings in a minor key are not possible.

How can we envision otherwise than our current predicament without philosophy? Deleuze and Guattari (1994) wrote about concepts as 'making us aware of new variations and unknown resonances' (p. 28). In this way, I think of this encounter of philosophy with education as such an attunement, philosophy of education in a minor key, necessary in order that we might think that which we have yet to consider.

## **Philosophy of Education After its Demise**

Yasushi Maruyama  
Hiroshima University

The ancient Greeks envisaged what is now called 'philosophy of education' without using the term. However, the practice of relating ideas of philosophy and education was not recognized as a distinct study called 'philosophy of education' until the nineteenth century (Chambliss, 1996, p. 462). The forms and functions of philosophy of education vary according to the historical times. Philosophy of education in the present day is changing. I shall explore here what is happening in the philosophy of education in Japan. We have, indeed, enjoyed its prosperity that institutional reforms brought about. However, we may be now witnessing the beginning of its decay.

The early use of the Japanese term equivalent to 'philosophy of education' appeared in the titles of translated books in the late 1880s at the time when the whole society was aiming at westernization. As the ideas of philosophy of education and philosophische Pädagogik were introduced through translations, Japanese educational researchers argued the necessity of philosophy of education to elucidate the nature of education and to provide the foundations for educational science. Despite the recognition, no one yet identified oneself as a philosopher of education.

The Philosophy of Education Society of Japan (PESJ) was founded in 1957, starting with a membership of 141, and now about 600. The foundation and expansion of PESJ were brought about by two related reforms of higher education and teacher education in 1949. Universities required more of academically qualified lecturers for newly established teacher training courses. PESJ was established to provide opportunities for academic exchanges and publications with graduate students and lecturers who identified themselves as philosophers of education. PESJ has been active enough to publish two issues of its journal per year and holds a two-day annual conference with about 250 participants in every fall.

PESJ has kept the number of members in last two decades but it would soon become more difficult to maintain these. Teacher education reform in 1998 changed the curriculum for teaching certificates: a subject related to philosophy of education is no longer required but optional. Furthermore, the curriculum of Teaching Profession Graduate Schools, which were established in 2008 as a part of Professional Graduate School System, does not include any subjects regarding educational foundations. These decisions were based on the criticism that there is a huge gap between what one learns in universities and what one needs to know to be able to teach in school. Japan's low birthrate makes the situation worse: universities, especially schools of teacher education, have been shrinking. Fewer graduate students are in the program of philosophy of education because of the difficulty in finding teaching positions.

The certain institutional system made possible the prosperity of philosophy of education in Japan. Since the system was modified, this prosperity may end soon. It does not mean, however, that the philosophy of education would be useless. As the ancient Greeks did, we, once trained as philosophers of education, can philosophically think of education as our reactions to social demands.

## Giving Birth to a World of the Future

Aislinn O'Donnell  
Maynooth University

How can philosophy of education give birth to, and care for, a world of the future?

Discourses of neo-liberalism, growth and of progress in education claim to be invested in the future, but their visions of the future are either projections from the present or involve a creature so intent on flexibility and adaptability as to be untethered and dis-oriented. Let's imagine a philosophy of education of the future through the lens of the speculative poetics of science fiction. Its task would be one of creating new concepts to expand the horizons of the possible.

1. *Experimental education and the transcendental project*: In his *Ethics* Spinoza (1996) argues that we must begin in the right way, that is, by understanding ourselves as part of, dependent on, and participating in God, that is, Nature. This gives a feeling for the dynamic and singular constitution of our existences and the diverse elements that 'make us' and bind us to the lives of others, animate and inanimate, alongside a feeling for the material conditions of existence. We are expressions of the world, bound up with this world, and thus responsible for our shared world.
2. *Cultivating an ethics of singularity*: An ethics of singularity invites dis-identification from imposed categories, claims the right to opacity, and opens to identity-in-relation and reciprocal exchange. It involves an ethic of creative attention and respect for singularity (haecceity).
3. *Learning to live (in) time*: Learning from Octavia Butler (1988) how to live (in) time means understanding that the past intimately haunts, troubles and materially exists in the present. Her speculative poetics of science fiction imagining futures beyond the pragmatic logics of present life, whilst tending to the harms and horrors of the past. Caring for the future in education means caring for the futures that might have been, the voices and existences that were silenced or disappeared. It also means tending to what does not yet exist—the in-existent—and opening the horizons of the imagination to new possible.
4. *Educating the senses*: Approaching the realm of ideas through the senses, affects and sensations allows us to feel and grasp how ideas move us and how they feel, how they cluster into diverse ecologies, when values and concepts hold us, where political aesthetics shape responses to different bodies, gestures, and voices, and so forth. Educating the senses



means bringing to awareness the movements by which experience comes into being, and assembling and constructing new possibilities of sensing, perceiving, feeling and existing.

5. *Giving birth to a world of the future*: The role of philosophy of education should not only be to care for the future but to give birth to the world of the future. But for philosophy of education to do so, it must be open to interrogating the genesis of its own fundamental questions and priorities, and open the field, including key contemporary concepts like the public and the commons, to the kind of critical and creative fundamental transformations seen in the writings of philosophers like Fanon, Jackson (2020b), Ferreira da Silva (2007), Mbembe, Wynter, Gilroy, and others.

## Education, Blackness & the Recursive

Ezekiel Dixon-Román  
University of Pennsylvania

If the COVID19 pandemic has accelerated the configuration of technosocial systems in education and society then so is the case of the recursive enfolding of paraontological difference. The COVID19 pandemic has forced what technocapitalist have long been interested in: the free reign to engineer the world toward its data capitalist interests, generate massive amounts of high dimensional data, while also continuing to develop and beta test technological 'innovations'. Here, technological solutionism becomes overdetermined in discourses of equity and salvation. From Zoom to Google Classroom, Canvas, Coursera, ClassDojo, Instructure, and so many more, venture capitalist educational technology companies have proliferated as saviors from the entropic disorder under the conditions of the pandemic.

Many of these educational technologies are designed based on some mode of autopoietic recursivity. Recursion is a concept from systems theories of cybernetics. In the most basic sense, recursion is the feedback loops of a system where the generated outputs inform or become the inputs to a computational process. Autopoietic recursion is a process of self-reflecting, self-regulating, self-adapting, and self-regenerating the interiority of a closed system. Recursion is the epistemic process by which colonial capitalism maintains a monologic universalism in the face of contingency or systemic entropy in order to preserve capital accumulation. Here, technology both reproduces the order of enslavement and displaces the enslaved subject, becoming an integral part of the logics and process of governance in racial capitalism.

Racial capitalism, as a system that emerges from the entanglement of colonial orders of racial classification with the social division of labor, capital, power, and being human, is what conditions paraontological difference (Chandler, 2000). Blackness, as we learn from Fred Moten (2018), is in part a paraontology, a metaphysics, that is both conditioned by the forces of racial capitalism as well as shaped by the creative indeterminacies of Black performances. The processes of racism and oppression are necessary in order to account for the paraontology of Blackness but not sufficient, as Blackness encompasses the infinite variability of Black performances or of being human. It is this infinite variability of being human that is conditioned by racial capitalism, the boundless becomings, that compose the creative indeterminacies of Blackness.

What if the recursive technosocial systems of education were not autopoietic, were not built on the entangled foundations of colonialism and capitalism, or based on closed self-generating, self-regulating, or self-determining systems where the transparent subject of the post-Enlightenment (da Silva, 2007) is perpetually reconfigured? What if those recursive systems of education were allopoietic, generative systems that are open to the infinite variability of know-hows and the production of difference in technoepistemology (Parisi & Dixon-Román, 2020)? How might the creative indeterminacies of Blackness become a transformative force of the epistemology of the system? And, how might such allopoietic systems have the potential to bring about the end of the world?

## **Moving Postmodernism from Pure Philosophy to the Philosophy of Education: Current Prospects for Education in China**

Wang Chengbing  
Shanxi University

Philosophy in China tends to specialize in abstract philosophy that is rather distanced from the world of actual experience. It is what I refer to as 'pure philosophy'. Philosophy of education according to the Encyclopedia of China is 'a discipline using philosophical ideas and methods to study basic educational issues' (1985, p. 185). Within the overall division of disciplines in China, philosophy of education belongs to a branch philosophy or applied philosophy, and thus is marginalized within the discipline of philosophy. However, it is popular among students who regard it as a useful educational discipline. Then we might ask how 'pure philosophy' enters into the philosophy of education as applied, to play a more important role? In providing an initial answer to it, I take postmodernism as an example to briefly illustrate my ideas.

Among the philosophies introduced into China over the past 40 years, postmodernism has been at the top of the list in terms of its dominance over the disciplines of both philosophy and education. At the level of practice, postmodernism has exerted more influence in the field of education than it does in philosophy. Why? Firstly, postmodernism is connected with issues of modernity. Chinese people who experience the so-called 'modern life' are particularly interested in it. Postmodernism reflects the era, and provides a practical base to expand from pure philosophy to the philosophy of education. Secondly, postmodernism allows for a style of representation that is favored by younger generation. Contrary to other pure philosophies that are potentially obtruse and abstract, postmodernism has a profound and interesting academic character, and it also fosters serious and open academic attitudes. This perfectly conforms to the habits of the 'post' generation with regards to appreciation and acceptance. The postmodern philosophy of education builds on this by rejecting the impracticality and narcissism of pure philosophy as it enters the pedagogical classroom. It is still filled with the vibrant breath of life. Thirdly, postmodernism moderates affinities within local culture. Postmodernism is naturally similar to and effortlessly compatible with the traditional Chinese philosophy of education, including its emphasis on the value of personal edification and its dependence on narrative style, both of which are central to Confucian education (see Wang, 2020), and this can allow the postmodern philosophy of education to more easily obtain a wider cultural identity in China. Fourthly, postmodernism has superior operability. Postmodern philosophy of education has demonstrated a certain explanatory power for the realistic challenges posed by university education. The postmodern philosophy of education has better practical effects, which we can also characterize as 'immediate effects,' due to its emphasis on context, dialogue, and experiential and case-based teaching. Such 'immediate effects' in this sense are usually seldom seen in pure philosophy. And there lies the future of the Philosophy of Education in China.

## **The Future of Educational Philosophy: Rethinking Relationship between Theory and Practice**

Zhongjing Huang  
East China Normal University

Under the circumstances of big data, empiricism, utilitarianism, and performance-oriented evaluation, educational philosophy in China has been transforming from metaphysics to pragmatism. The issue of educational philosophy is not only regarded as an epistemological one but also characterized as a practical one, hence the relationship between the theory of educational philosophy and educational practice has increasingly become the cut-edge theme of an era.

Chinese scholars of educational philosophy have been focusing on the tension which refers to the distance between educational philosophy, as a theory, and educational practice. Educational practice can be guided by wisdom from educational philosophy, however, the dilemma in educational practice can't be directly solved by educational philosophy. In other words, educational philosophy focuses on the reflection and illumination of education, rather than practice or action education.

There is an increasing new trend of educational philosophy that develops from educational theory to educational practice, from understanding education to changing education, and innovates educational theory in the practice of changing education. The significance of the trend lies in the mutual constructive generation between educational theory and educational practice. On the one hand, the theory of educational philosophy turns into practice. On the other hand, the practice also moves towards the innovation and reflection of theory. Educational practitioners are more and more inclined to innovate or construct theories through action research, rather than apply educational theories to educational practice. Teachers are researchers, which has become a resounding slogan.

This new trend brings enlightenment to the future of educational philosophy. Firstly, educational philosophy should be more interdisciplinary and problem-oriented than emphasizing the logical knowledge system of discipline. Secondly, educational philosophy should deal with the complicated relationship between globalization and localization, maintaining the tension between universal value and local knowledge. Thirdly, fully considering the profound impact of AI technology on human life and education, educational philosophy explores the educational value and ethical issues when facing the man-machine integration of artificial intelligence.

## **Wittgenstein's Philosophy of Education: A Rich Source for the Future of Academia**

Lei Chen

Beijing Normal University

2021 is the 100th anniversary of the publication of Ludwig Wittgenstein's *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*. Many philosophers in China are publishing papers to express their respect to this epochal philosopher. However, few Chinese philosophers and pedagogical experts have conducted any in-depth and comprehensive research on his philosophy of education. What can Wittgenstein's philosophy of education contribute to the future of this field?

Firstly, it is important to consider Wittgenstein's contribution to analytical philosophy of education. This analytical philosophy of education applies the methods of analytical philosophy to the pursuits in educational philosophy. Following Wittgenstein's contributions in determining the path, paradigm and core thesis of analytical philosophy of education, foreign scholars in the field also have done pioneering work (Peters & Stickney, 2017), but unfortunately Chinese philosophers have not yet begun to focus their attention to the subject in any detail. It is strictly necessary for Chinese scholars in the field of philosophy to focus on this topic and conduct cross-disciplinary collaborative research.

Secondly, it is important to consider the value of Wittgenstein's philosophy of education from the perspective of comparative philosophy. We may compare Wittgenstein with other representative Western philosophers of education who are already well-known in China, and uncover the similarities in their thoughts. For example, Dewey has an important influence in China's educational and philosophical disciplines, and thus it is entirely feasible to compare Dewey's philosophy of education with Wittgenstein's. In fact, although the thought of these two philosophers who were near contemporaries show no explicit and direct reference to the other (Garrison, 2017), Dewey's discussion about the role of language is strikingly similar to the late Wittgenstein's 'philosophy of ordinary language.' Both philosophers attempted to demonstrate that human language is open-ended and functions in a context that includes not only words

and sentences, but also the entire complex of the beliefs, assumptions, and activities that make up the context, and also, finally, that language is embodied in intercourse and communication, rather than expression (Bernstein, 1966).

Each of these propositions are significant for the future of the philosophy of education, and they can serve as a starting point for comparative studies that ought to facilitate further discussion about views on language in the Western philosophy of education. In addition, the mysticism that in Wittgenstein's philosophy can also be compared with the traditional Chinese philosophy of education, including Buddhist and Daoist philosophies of education, thereby to present the rich connotations of Wittgenstein's philosophy of education for the future of the field from a cross-cultural perspective (and not just Western one). And that is the Future of Philosophy of Education from my perspective.

## Open Review 1: Philosophy and Education

Michael A. Peters  
Beijing Normal University

Marek Tesar's reflection of the possibilities of philosophy of education, strategically places the disciplines of philosophy of education at the intersection of 'ethico-ontoepistemologies'—Western, Eastern, Indigenous and Global South. This is an important recognition of the role of culture and history as well as native philosophical traditions: education is not simply part of reproductive cultural transmission of core values, and philosophy is not simply a reflection on this process and the adequacy of its values. It was, therefore, with some anticipation that I approached the review task of this final piece of collective writing of a project initiated some months before working in partnership with Marek on principles of inclusiveness and diversity to provide a depth-sounding and snap-shot of philosophy of education at the beginning of the third decade of the twenty-first century. I wanted to disrupt the liberal paradigm and to critique its ethnocentric assumptions by raising the political question surrounding the rise of the far-right, white ethnocentrism, and the growth of conspiracy in the Covid-19 era—what could be more significant? In this paper I was delighted with the response to Marek's challenge and the range of possibilities that calls for a greater and more sensitive historical contingency recognizing the anti-Black racism and inequality in the US (Kathy Hytten), the significance of indigenous and Māori thinking to the philosophy of education (Te Kawehau Hoskins), posthumanism (Jerry Rosiek), 'reading with love' (Alecia Y. Jackson), 'practitioner alignment' (Michael Hand), 'living on the edge' (Peter Roberts), 'family-focused pedagogy' (Gina A. Opiniano), a Pacific Indigenous perspective (Jacoba Matapo), a resistance to 'methodologizing' everything (Elizabeth Adams St. Pierre), 'Philosophy of Education as a Site of Decoloniality' (Rowena Azada-Palacios), 'thinking otherwise in philosophy and science', a more political informed philosophy of education (Alison Jones), 'Philosophy of Education in a Minor Key' (Lisa Mazzei), 'Philosophy of Education After Its Demise' (Yasushi Maruyama), 'a World of the Future' (Aislinn O'Donnel), 'Education, Blackness & The Recursive' (Ezekiel Dixon-Román), postmodernism as the future of philosophy in China (Wanh Chengbing), a rethinking of philosophy and practice (Zhongjing Huang), and 'Wittgenstein's Philosophy of Education' in China (Lei Chen). Here are a series of glancing blows at a troubling question, each offering a distinctive response and each making the case for a way of thinking, knowing and being. I was impressed by the representativeness of the collective article—(Russia, Africa, Israel and Iran?)—embraced by a single collective writing piece. Its themes are fascinating: 1. Decentering of the western paradigm and recognition of indigeneity and non-Western perspectives; 2. Greater recognition of gender and cultural diversity, especially feminism and recognition of family perspectives; 3. The sweeping relevance of postmodernism, posthumanism, postcoloniality and the influence of French

thinkers, especially Deleuze; 4. Anti-method, anti-epistemology with a greater emphasis on understanding the extra-dimensions of textuality; 5. An emphasis on connecting with practice and practitioners; 6. A greater political sense seeking connection with politics on the ground; 7. A willingness to explore the relations between what philosophy of education has been and what it might offer in the future (Wittgenstein surely must help here). These are all gripping themes well explored in such a tight structure that leaves little room for elaboration and it is quite stunning that such diverse themes can be included in this nugget. If I have any contribution to the article it would be, first, to extend the boundaries of inclusion still further in relation to nationality, cultural traditions, gender and sexuality, especially gay and LGBT+ perspectives; second, to recognise what Covid-19 made plain and how philosophy of education might lead the attempt to understand the change of social media and its impacts on conspiracy thinking and public intellectuals; third, to develop a series of international and comparative dialogical exchanges—what might comparative or international philosophy of education look like?; and, finally, what pedagogies owe to philosophy, and philosophy to pedagogy. Thanks to these thinkers and others who have participated in this worthwhile experiment.

## Open Review: COVID Everywhere But in the Text

Liz Jackson

The Education University of Hong Kong

It is a joy to read the unapologetic mishmash of ideas contained within Marek Tesar and colleagues' article 'Philosophy of education in a new key: Future of Philosophy of Education.' Tesar provides his co-authors in this exercise with a set of questions to explore, including 'what' questions, of what is philosophy and what is education, and then orients them toward the future. In this open work, without Tesar systematising individual authors' replies, it seems that anything might be possible. Here, a variety of ideas and topics are considered, touching on such themes as sustainability of the natural environment, equality and the need to include diverse voices in the academy and beyond, gender and parenting in the future, and more common themes of philosophy of education, regarding methodology, educational research, and the value of philosophy today.

It is in an honour in this context to review to this piece, but that doesn't make it easy. How am I fairly and evenly evaluate parallel ideas, in respective but divergent theoretical framings, held together by short spaces on electronic pages? How am I to critique stances toward a future which seems unfathomable to me today, knowing how far the world has come (or strayed?) in the past few years? Typically peer review requires critical engagement with the thoughts and ideas presented in a work. However, all the authors have done their homework. The challenging claims made regard the future, an open-ended project. There are no weak interpretations provided about the past.

In this context I offer two observations. First, the sense of openness throughout the piece is striking. This openness has to do with a sense of going beyond small stuff: to think deeply, pursue passions, explore alternatives, read with love, help others when we can, live on the edge, pause and rethink, spread philosophy, decolonize, give birth to the world of the future. This is far removed from the bread and butter of academic discussions of philosophy of education up until this time. Joined together, a vivid impression is constructed in the words of these scholars: We are witnessing a new historical moment today. And we are aiming to rise to the challenge.

Second, curiously COVID-19 is only mentioned three times in the text, and only by two authors. In contrast, other articles in the circle published on philosophy of education in a new key (e.g. Jackson, 2020a; Orchard 2020; Peters, 2020), frequently cite COVID-19. However, while it is not named as such, it seems to linger underneath the surface of many discussions in the text,

and it is invoked in the urgent demands and desires reflected to think beyond, imagine, and see from a broader view.

To conclude, what this piece offers is not a practical guide forward, or a rigorously, systematically defended prediction about the future. Instead, it offers a distinctive window to a historical moment, where scholars think beyond mundane and banal routines. This is encouraging to me, as I agree wholeheartedly with the authors that we philosophers must think beyond the present to meaningfully engage the future. As such this is an inspiring, historically significant piece of work, and I am pleased to see it be published.

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