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EDITORIAL

Relational pedagogy and the drama curriculum

What we mean by curriculum

Trawling through the back issues of RIDE it is evident that articles which explicitly address the notion of curriculum are very thin on the ground. Early volumes contain one or two but in later years, there have only been those that formed part of the Special Issue on 'Drama for School Education: Global Perspectives'. While research into the reasons for this relative neglect lie beyond the scope of this editorial essay, it is tempting to speculate that the space for contemplating questions relating to drama and the curriculum was usurped by the turn towards pedagogy (cf. Bernstein) evident in educational discourse from the 1990s onwards. The work in this volume draws on a diverse curriculum heritage, encompassing the curriculum orientations proposed by Heathcote, Bolton, Courtney, Spolin, Neelands, Nicholson and Boal. Unlike most considerations of curriculum, these authors considered emotions, aesthetics, values, culture and embodied knowing as central to learning and pivotal underpinnings to curriculum, in contrast to the focus on purely cognitive ways of knowing evident in many other curriculum theorists. What is evident from the articles that follow is the power and influence of local contexts, of government commitment (or lack of) to access to an education in drama, of financial investment by governments or groups, and of the passion and commitment of individuals, alone and collectively, for access to quality drama education. This volume provides a baseline, a mark in the sand, a platform from which discussions of drama curriculum in the twenty-first century can be based.

The term curriculum is variously used to encompass the pre-active (Ross 2000) planned or intended (Pinar et al. 2002), evident in the written documents produced and disseminated by a ministry or education department; the enacted or operational (Eisner 1994a, 1994b) describing the selection of content, activities and assessment from the planned curriculum that teachers actually apply in classroom practice; the experienced or lived (Aoki 2005b) which incorporates the day to day learning experiences of the students; the hidden (Apple 2004; Giroux and McLaren 1989), including expectations of behaviours, gendered or otherwise, and ways of working delineated by the implicit power structures and values enacted within a school community; and the null curriculum (Eisner 1994b) which refers to content, subject matter, concepts and processes that are not selected as part of the course of study and hence excluded from the field of knowledge made available to students.

Marsh and Willis (2003, 13) define curriculum as 'an interrelated set of plans and experiences that a student undertakes under the guidance of the school'. We seek to move beyond such technical, prescriptive notions of curriculum as documents or plans and align with Pinar et al., who state that:

[Curriculum] is what the older generation chooses to tell the younger generation ... [it] is intensely historical, political, racial, gendered, phenomenological, autobiographical, aesthetic,

theological and international. Curriculum becomes the site on which the generations struggle to define themselves and the world. (Pinar et al. 2002, 847)

This definition runs close to the ideas of curriculum as cultural signifier propounded by Michael Finneran and the contextual curriculum highlighted by Kathleen Gallagher in the pages of this issue. Of particular interest to us are the theorists, Nel Noddings (Noddings 2012, 2006a, 2006b) and her idea of a moral and ethical curriculum based on 'caring relationships', and Ted Aoki's extensive challenges to the technical nature of most curriculum designs and practices. Aoki questions why we might have a 'child-centered' or 'teacher-centered' or 'subject-centred' curriculum suggesting that, in contrast:

these three (teacher, subject and child) form an irreducible triad that is at play in every pedagogic situation. So when we name any one of these as *the* centre, we risk becoming indifferent to the others. (Aoki 2005a, 282)

Noddings reminds us of the importance of participating in 'aims-talk' (Noddings 2003/2004, 2006b) by which she means holding vital conversations about what are and might be the aims of education. She suggests that curriculum aims should relate to the construction of a 'caring' society that values all its workers for the role they play in contributing to its complexity and wholeness. She proposes a *relational* curriculum where students and their carers/teachers build relationships with themselves, each other and individuals and communities in the world beyond; a curriculum based in an 'ethics of care' (Noddings 2002). She proposes that students be educated about politics and societies, and schools should aim to

reduce violence, to respect honest work of every kind, to reward excellence at every level, to ensure a place for every child and emerging adult in the economic and social world, to produce people who can care competently for their families and contribute effectively to their communities ... our major educational aim should be to encourage the growth of competent, caring, loving and lovable people. (Noddings 2006b, 18)

Like Noddings, Dorothy Heathcote argued that, 'we expect good fathers, husbands, honest citizens, fine, sensitive friends, tolerant and understanding neighbours to emerge from the classes we teach but we do very little to help these traits to come along' (1974, 4). As the contributors to this issue constantly affirm, drama is the ideal medium for encouraging the emergence of such 'traits'.

A proposition to place drama at the centre of the curriculum

In order to address this cavernous gap, the formal education of young people in the twenty-first century must be framed within the concept of relational pedagogics, as we will discuss later and, further, in order to deliver this pedagogy drama needs to be afforded a central position in any curriculum. Without such a framework young people will be denied education and, instead, continue to be given training to take their places in a world no longer fit for their habitation. At a moment when our very existence as a species is under threat from climate change, over-population and grotesque inequality in the distribution of material resources, education has a key role to play in intervening in the political *status quo* to sponsor the hope of fundamental change towards survival and social justice. We share with Paulo Freire the conviction that the

spurious notion of neutrality in educational policy is a device by which the dominant maintains its hegemony:

What is my neutrality, if not a comfortable and perhaps hypocritical way of avoiding any choice or even hiding my fear of denouncing injustice. To wash my hands in the face of oppression. (Freire 1998, 101)

The origin of our idea of relational pedagogy is to be found within the discourses of fine art criticism where the term relational aesthetics, coined by Bourriaud (2002), gained currency in the 1990s in order to express the need of art to forge active connections between the work and those viewing and responding to it. Jacques Rancière writing in *Problems and Transformations in Critical Art* (2004) established the key concept of art as resistance to commodity culture:

Yesterday's distance towards commodities is now inverted to propose a new proximity between entities, the institution of new forms of social relations. Art no longer wants to respond to the excess of commodities and signs, but to a lack of connections. (Bishop 2006, 90)

This 'lack of connections' is a major element in the inability of conventional curricula to educate young people for active citizenship. Not only are the various subjects on the timetable treated discretely and inequitably, but there is also a nearly complete separation of content from the lived experience of the learner. This double separation mirrors the commodification of knowledge and ensures the alienation of young people from the process of learning. Dewey's (1916) *Education and Democracy* relates this failure of connection to the centuries-old promotion of the individual at the expense of the community: a process inaugurated by the Reformation, developed by the Enlightenment, and reaching its full, destructive flowering in the abandonment of social democracy in favour of neoliberalism:

When the social quality of individualized mental operations is denied, it becomes a problem to find connections which will unite an individual with his [*sic.*] fellows. Moral individualism is set up by the conscious separation of different centers of life. It has its roots in the notion that the consciousness of each person is wholly private, a self-inclosed continent, intrinsically independent of the ideas, wishes, purposes of everybody else. But when men [*sic.*] act, they act in a common and public world. (Dewey 1916, 305–306)

Despite Dewey's highlighting of the discrepancy between models of learning and social reality, curriculum designers cling tenaciously to the sinking wreckage of individualised modes of thought that erect barriers between learners and between the learner and the world. The packaged commodity shaped for ease of assessment, testing and reporting has largely replaced learning experiences that evolve in a dialectical relationship with the business of living. Freire puts the case for inscribing values at the heart of the curriculum succinctly: 'If we have any serious regard for what it means to be human, the teaching of contents cannot be separated from the moral formation of the learners' (Freire 1998, 39). Noddings underlines the importance of sympathy and empathy as part of the relational process at the heart of moral education:

Many feelings are associated with caring as relation. A carer is concerned to realise a caring relation – however brief – in each encounter. She may feel sympathy (or empathy) even before the actual encounter. When we observe an accident, for example, we feel a rush of sympathy for the victim immediately. In other cases, sympathy is aroused when we listen to the

cared-for. Thus the condition – the expressed need – of the other moves us. It is this capacity to be moved by the affective condition of the other that teachers try to develop in students as part of their moral education. (Noddings 2012, 773)

Yet our curriculum constantly pulls in the opposite, anti-social, competitive, individualised direction, teaching atomised, individual young people how to succeed in a failing world. The leading educational philosophers of the twentieth century – Dewey, Vygotsky, Freire – have long since offered founding principles for a different, humane curriculum but those charged with designing and implementing school curricula, remain largely impervious to their implications for progressive education. For Freire, dialogue is the cornerstone of any educational process as it transforms the learner from the passive recipient of pre-determined, commodified parcels of knowledge into an active, co-intentional partner in the process of understanding, re-imagining and remaking the world. This process which should be operative in every classroom is both artistic and relational; the artistry emerging from the encounters between the learners as well as from those between teachers and learners. Dewey provides an important clue to the way in which the work of the classroom is transformed into art: 'Work which remains permeated with the play attitude is art – in quality if not in conventional designation' (Dewey 1916, 214). Though play is not the exclusive property of drama, it aligns most closely with it in all three senses of the word. A play is the performance created through the medium of drama. Play centres on the imaginative recreation of fictional worlds which are the products of lived experience or observed and acquired knowledge, as is the case with dramatic improvisations, workshops, etc. Play is also the movement residing in living materials; so a freshly cut piece of timber may be said to have plenty of play in it. This quality therefore relates to adaptability, flexibility and the capacity to change – all vital elements in making the most of the ever-changing process of life. Drama is the paint that turns life to art and builds the bridge between what this world is and what it might be. Writing of Bertolt Brecht's method in *The Poetics of the Open Work*, Umberto Eco says:

Here the work is 'open' in the same sense that a debate is 'open'. A solution is seen as desirable and is actually anticipated, but it must come from the collective enterprise of the audience. In this case the 'openness' is converted into an instrument of revolutionary pedagogies. (Cited in Bishop 2006, 29–30)

If we substitute 'learners' for 'audience' in Eco's words, we are being offered a structure through which to devise a curriculum for problem-posing education where young people are stimulated to educate themselves by trying out (rehearsing) different ways of being in the world and of creating different worlds to be in. Egan (2008) has argued that twentieth century Western education has consistently neglected young peoples' imaginations, dulling their intellectual excitement as a result. Learning becomes exciting at the point where the learner perceives the world, reality, as changeable and the process of learning as a means of intervening, enabling agency, to provoke change. This is what Maxine Greene long ago called 'futuring' (1977, 287) involving critical consciousness and attentiveness to the 'meaning of the world.' The world is seen, not as static but as a reality in process, and thus allowing the possibility for transformation.

In problem-posing education, men [*sic.*] develop their power to perceive critically *the way they exist* in the world *with which* and *in which* they find themselves; they come to see the world not as a static reality, but as a reality in process, in transformation. (Freire 1972, 56)

This notion of transformation prefigures Mezirow's definition of transformative learning which he sees as central to any educative process that takes account of the reality of change in both the particular learner and in the society to which that learner is trying to relate:

Transformative learning is learning that transforms problematic frames of reference – sets of fixed assumptions and expectations (habits of mind, meaning perspectives, mindsets) – to make them more inclusive, discriminating, open, reflective, and emotionally able to change. (Mezirow 2003, 58)

The aim that Freire articulates for his vision of education is, however, increasingly difficult to achieve in a world where the vast majority of the influences impacting upon young people – media, politics, banking, education, the culture of individualism – are pulling in the opposite direction. Even supposing a national educational system, and the teachers who implement it, share such a notion of education, they will still have to negotiate learning encounters with young people who, outside their schooling, strive to keep their heads above the waters of the dominant discourses. Bourriaud poses the vital question of how classrooms can be structured in ways that position learners within an aesthetic that enables critical participation:

'How can you bring a classroom to life as though it were an artwork?' asks Guattari. By asking this question, he raises the ultimate aesthetic problem. How is aesthetics to be used, and can it possibly be injected into tissues that have been rigidified by the capitalist economy? (Cited in Bishop 2006, 169)

Such considerations of embodiment, location, power, trust, empathy, and modelling 'core to relational pedagogy, have also long been central to teaching in drama' (Aitken, Fraser, and Price 2007, 2). Respectful relationships based on a foundation of trust and the willingness to undertake shared acts of imagination are at the heart of drama. Dialogue, discussion, enactment and reciprocity underpin the collaborative and creative participatory drama work which is at the centre of our discussion.

Drama as a relational pedagogy

We are claiming that drama is a relational pedagogy that opens possibilities for dialogue and shared imagining among students, teachers and community. Drama involves creating alternative presents and futures through processes of shared enactment, discovery and collaborative imagining. Students in drama participate in experiential storying framed by questions and issues of significance. The stories are co-constructed relationally with and between all participants, their teacher, the content of significance and the social, cultural, familial and economic contexts the students inhabit. This interdependence of the participants, teacher and students, students and students, content and context is essential to the creation of meaning. The web of relationships continues beyond the experiential moment and translates into new ways of knowing and being in the world outside the classroom or workshop space.

Within participative drama work, all participants collaborate to experiment with ways of exploring and understanding relationships and interactions between humans and each other. Through the exploration of past events, history can move from being a distant past, to an imminent present. Participants come to recognise alternative,

sometimes even conflicting or confrontational, perspectives and points of view. The safety of the participatory drama workshop space allows individuals to briefly step into the shoes of someone else, and share their emotions and experiences. Pre-conceptions are challenged and may be overturned, as the beginning of empathy is developed. The dramatic fiction permits a dual awareness 'I am me, and I am not me.' Thus, reflection in the moment offers opportunities for enhanced awareness and understanding of self and other simultaneously. Drama affords opportunities for exploration of critical perspectives relating to the interplay of power, authority and control, unravelling the 'fabric in which the facts are given, discovering their "why"' (Freire 2004, 22).

The process work of participatory drama animates cognition and emotions. Together participants think-and-feel, feel-and-think concurrently. Teachers move fluidly and consciously from teacher-as-authority, the one who knows, to a co-investigator stance, alongside the students. This disrupts the traditional authority interplay between teacher and student enabling new ways of working and disestablishing the role of the distant, detached holder of knowledge. As Felman (2001, 6) reminds us, 'Good pedagogy is up close and personal rather than intimidating and detached.'

As a relational pedagogy, drama deals with work that matters, is of significance to the life of the students. In the process of creating drama work, participants test out ideas and possible solutions. Sometimes these fail, but the process supports revisiting, re-investigation and refinement. As such, failure is temporary and seen as a valuable marker in the process rather than an end-point.

Drama develops a sense of personal agency, a revelation that students are able to make/do something rather than having something done to them. This point is highlighted in Hennessy's advocacy for drama in the secondary curriculum. They learn that they can act upon the world rather than only live lives as those that are acted upon. This is because they can take action *as if* they are other people; action that matters, and is urgent and important for the participants to determine and to manage. Within participatory drama, they face the consequences of their action. Later, and out of role, it offers a pivotal opportunity for reflection and learning. Reflection is essential within and following drama work as it permits the critical evaluation of human behaviours.

This is the particular quality that drama brings to a curriculum: the relating of creativity with criticality. As actor the learner forges a critical relationship with her character; one which combines empathy with distance. Out of this dialectical relationship come changed perspectives on the external world. No longer is there an impenetrable barrier between the individual, atomised self and the objectified other. Instead, the experience of the drama process offers moments of interpenetration between the individual and the collective, mutually engaged in the forging of alternative realities.

Indeed we would argue that, as an ancient and modern art form, as a mode of making and communicating meaning, an art that can imagine and communicate worlds and relationships that are better, other, more ethical and equitable, and importantly, an art form that can co-create such worlds and relationships so that participants *experience* alternatives, drama should be essential to any complex, moral and forward looking curriculum. As Maxine Greene says:

It is because I believe that encounters with the arts can awaken us to alternative possibilities of existing, of being human, of relating to others, of *being* other, as I argue for their centrality in

curriculum. I believe that they can open new perspectives on what is assumed to be 'reality,' that they can defamiliarize what has become so familiar it has stopped us from asking questions or protesting or taking action to repair. (Greene 1993, 214)

A call to arms

In all likelihood, the readers of these pages are well aware of the possibilities of drama for reinvigorating the curriculum and offering young people a learning space in which they may acquire the understandings and skills to engage in active citizenship. Some of our contributors (Al-Yamani and Alsawayfa, Osterlind) have referred to the DICE project as an example of comprehensive research that demonstrates the importance of drama to the contemporary curriculum. We need to draw on the extensive array of existing and quality research that provides evidence of the efficacy of our discipline as a means of learning. We need to find ways to obtain an audience at the courts of the government advisers, politicians and curriculum designers before drama disappears entirely from even the margins of curriculum documents. In this edition, Stinson and Saunders have charted the significance of lobbying in forcing drama onto the agenda of the national curriculum in Australia. That example highlights the importance of collective action in applying pressure for change. Today we have gone beyond the time when we can afford the former luxuries of sectarian debate and are faced with the imminent demise of our discipline within formal state education. It is, therefore, vital to forge alliances with all individuals and institutions that believe in a substantial role for drama in an educational process dedicated to the development of a more peaceful, more just, and more human-centred world than the one currently experienced by most of the inhabitants of this planet. The seeds of such alliances may be scattered among teachers within the school system, academics within higher education, politicians with a commitment to social change, trade unions, and activists and NGOs whose focus is upon a learner-centred educational vision, leading to the interventions of active citizens. That such seeds exist is confidently attested to by Ken Robinson and Lou Aronica in their recent book, *Creative Schools: Revolutionizing Education from the Ground Up* (Robinson and Aronica 2015). The contributors to this issue, both in the longer articles and the snapshots from around the world, simultaneously chart the assault on drama arising from misconceived approaches to curriculum design, and offer flickering candle-light emanating from the dogged practices of teachers and facilitators undaunted by the thickening gloom encircling them.

Drama and curriculum in a neoliberal world

Drama's position on the periphery of curricula in formal education reflects the wider political landscape of neoliberalism. Since the era of Ronald Reagan in the USA and Margaret Thatcher in the UK when monetary policy was elevated to the prime position in the political discourse, economics and those aspects of living which are most obviously related to them – maths, science, business – have held sway. To maintain any place at all in this dispensation the arts have had to repackage themselves in terms accessible to the neoliberal discourse – creative industries, cultural capital and the like. Value has been

replaced by price and judgement by the mechanisms of accounting. The reasons for demanding a central role for drama in the curriculum have nothing to do with material prosperity, improvements in gross domestic product or the balance of payments. It is, therefore, an ill-afforded luxury in times of austerity; the latter a code word for the transfer of wealth from the already poor to the already rich. Putting drama at the heart of the curriculum would signify a turning away from neoliberal values by empowering future generations to relate to each other and to take decisions about the quality of life predicated upon a different basis; different from the grotesque inequalities of today; different from a system that is destroying the planet in its greed for profit at whatever cost.

The struggle over values in the years ahead will determine whether or not drama is reinstated into the curriculum and then finds a central role there. As long as worth is defined in monetary terms life will be equated with doing business and success with accumulating wealth and its accompanying manifestations. In drama, value is associated with moral decisions taken in contradictory situations where money plays only one, if any, part among a complexity of roles. In these situations, the vague but all important notion of what it is to be human is the driving force behind the devising and improvising processes of the drama workshop. The call for drama to be restored to and sustained in the curriculum is no more or less than a call to put morality back into both formal education and the dealings between people in the wider world. Drama is a collective activity; it happens between at least one person and another. It is, therefore, a natural antidote to the individualism which has been gathering momentum since the birth of capitalism in the early modern period in Europe and which has reached its apotheosis in neoliberalism. The consequence has been a loss of social cohesion throughout the world and an atrophying of the 'moral imagination' without which it is impossible to put ourselves into meaningful relationships with others. This is manifesting itself in the promotion of the private over the public, the self over the other. From the gated communities of the super-rich to the apartheid wall destroying Palestine, to the return of nationalist politics to Europe, we are witnessing at macro and micro levels the destructive force of individualism and the withering of the capacity to form relations beyond the immediate comfort zone of the domestic sphere. As Freire expressed it: 'The fatalistic philosophy of neoliberal politics ... is a case in point of how human interests are abandoned whenever they threaten the values of the market' (Freire 1998, 93).

When the drama space takes over from the market place, relations are conceived in terms of dialogue and reciprocity, rather than the exclusively transactional process of buying and selling. The project with the MST described by Nogueira and Pereira is one such example. The basic instruction to the participants in any improvisation is 'accept; don't block'; that is take up whatever is offered by the other and work it creatively, play with it, before returning it with added possibility. This is a type of exchange beyond the capacities of the market and its importance to the development of humans as social animals is constantly denied when the market is the sole criterion of value. Market values have been particularly detrimental to curriculum design in the area of competition. The key business criterion of winning market share sets up a paradigm of competition where one business is trying to succeed at the expense of another. When this mentality is transferred to the realm of education the result is a system predicated on the requirement to test in order to grade so that some can succeed at the

expense of others, thereby setting pupil against pupil, school against school. The person at the next desk is your competitor, not your co-learner. In such a neurotic climate, there is little chance for the qualities of empathy associated with drama to flourish. Neoliberal curriculum models are fundamentally anti-democratic since they are hierarchical, leading to a political model of a pyramid where the strong leader, the oligarch is favoured at the expense of democratic processes which rely on an active citizenry capable of decision-making on behalf of the greatest social good. Naomi Klein has traced the close links between the neoliberal economic model and anti-democratic, proto-fascist regimes across the globe, ever since the overthrow of Salvador Allende in Chile on September 11, 1973 (Klein 2007).

The practical difficulty haunting the arguments we have laid out here is that of connecting them with the power brokers in the politics of curriculum policy and design. Those who work in the field of applied drama have long understood the possibilities for radical educational reform residing in their discipline. They have rarely been successful in raising awareness among school managers and fellow teachers, still less among those who determine the politics and poetics of national curricula. Whilst there is much that must be done within higher educational institutions and schools to campaign for a different kind of curriculum – one that puts human needs and values above economic imperatives – only very limited progress will be made until there are widespread demands for change from a public increasingly disaffected with neoliberalism. This disaffection may only be the catalyst for change at the moment when the contradictions in the present system become intolerable; a moment perhaps not far away given the increasingly dangerous ravages of climate change. As Brecht put it in a different context: 'Taught only by reality can/Reality be changed' (Brecht 1977, 34). There are many disgruntled voices among those who can now see that the dominant system is not sustainable and should not be sustained, both within the formal education sector and in the broader polity. However, complaint is an inadequate response to injustice and impending crisis:

Merely rebellious attitudes or actions are insufficient, though they are an indispensable response to legitimate anger. It is necessary to go beyond rebellious attitudes to a more radically critical and revolutionary position, which is in fact a position not simply of denouncing injustice but of announcing a new utopia. Transformation of the world implies a dialectic between the two actions: denouncing the process of dehumanization and announcing the dream of a new society. (Freire 1998, 74)

This is the dialectical problem that we live with every moment: living and surviving in a system that is dysfunctional and, unchanged, will finish off the species. Like a fish in a bowl of polluted water, we are being killed by it but cannot risk throwing it all out until there is a clean supply to replace it. The system is also us and therefore the change must be a part of ourselves. We cannot wait passively for the revolution; rather we must be the revolution through our professional practice and our personal relations. John Holloway expresses it like this:

Fight from the particular, fight from where we are, here and now. Create spaces or moments of otherness, spaces or moments that walk in the opposite direction, that do not fit in. Make holes in our own reiterative creating of capitalism. Create cracks and let them expand, let them multiply, let them resonate, let them flow together (Holloway 2010, 261).

A relational curriculum, based on the embodied learning of drama, is one such space that walks in the opposite direction. It takes that walk not in anger or bitterness, however, but with an attitude of playful irony. The learners, students and teachers, within this curriculum constantly have a question dancing at the edges of their understanding and know that there are probably several answers to it. Whatever the future looks like, when it arrives, it will have to be greeted as an object of play:

The greatest artists of all time had a knack for playfulness, for seeing life inside of things. Too much seriousness creates art with a message but rarely creates great art. There is no scientific evidence that seriousness leads to greater growth and maturity, or insight into the human condition than playfulness. (Lederach 2005, 60)

Such are the challenges we see taken up by the authors in this volume. Our aim, as editors, was to attempt to make this special themed edition as broadly representative as possible. As such, instead of offering only the traditional set of extended peer-reviewed articles, we invited a number of colleagues from across the globe to provide us with short 'vignettes' that illuminate the status of drama curriculum in each of their contexts. By doing this, we hoped to share an understanding of the diversity that is evident in approaches to drama curriculum worldwide and were able to include commentary from the USA, Colombia, South Africa, India, Philippines, New Zealand, Brazil and Greece. Peter Duffy discusses the fractured relationship between curriculum policy and curriculum enactments in the USA; Alejandra Cuevas Cardenas Gadehlo shares an insight into an initiative by local government in Bogota which aims to reduce social inequity by providing access to artists in community settings and, in turn, influence curriculum development in this region; Teri Elliott considers the confronting challenges of the white/black divide in South Africa, so evident in schooling and teacher education settings; Urvashi Sahni tells us about PRERNA: an alternative educational opportunity for young women in challenging circumstances, which deliberately promotes the transformative power of education; Alice Panares and Maria Cabangon, from Philippines Educational Theatre Association in Philippines (PETA), draw on the long history of work by NGOs and schools that has contributed to the vibrant- and community-based work continuing to progress despite ongoing challenges; from New Zealand, Peter O'Connor outlines the negative impact of the implementation of their national curriculum and changing governments, concluding that neoliberalism has produced a bleak outlook for provisions in arts education; and lastly, Panagiota (Betty) Giannouli decries the lack of teacher education for drama pedagogues in Greece, pointing out the need for trained teachers to undertake the process of conscientization and the enabling of an active citizenship. Time and space constraints made it impossible for us to include more vignettes; however, it is clear that global dialogue needs to continue. We hope this volume provides a foundation on which the conversation may grow.

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