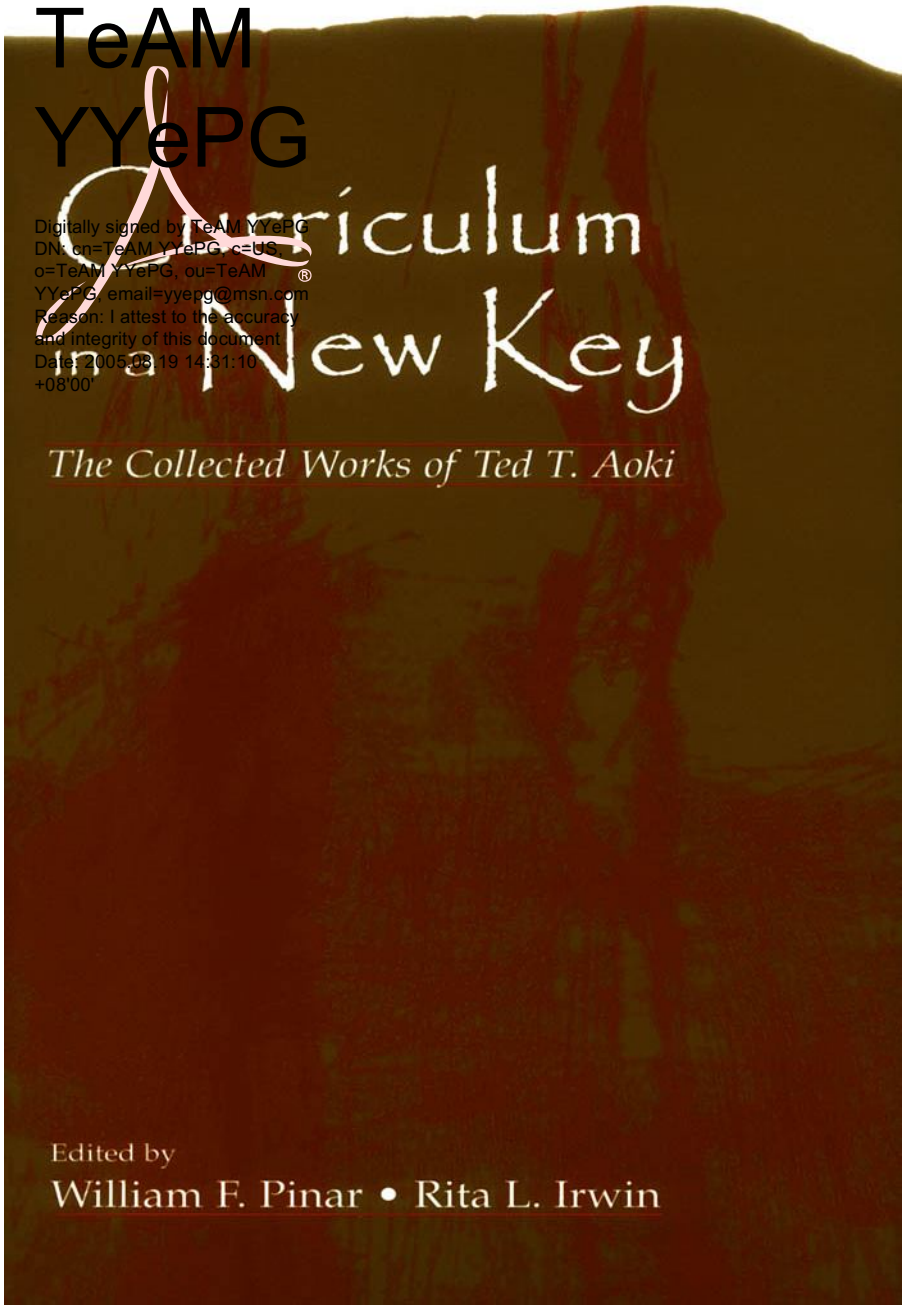

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The Collected Works of Ted T. Aoki

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The Collected Works of Ted T. Aoki

Edited by

William F. Pinar
Louisiana State University

and

Rita L. Irwin
University of British Columbia

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Ted T. Aoki

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William F. Pinar
President, International Association for the Advancement of Curriculum Studies

Rita L. Irwin
President, Canadian Association for Curriculum Studies

March 2003

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Foreword

There is a problem with an American doing this work. Ted Aoki is a Canadian scholar, uniquely so. To be grasped in terms of Canadian intellectual life, his work must be situated within Canadian history and culture, specifically, within Canadian curriculum studies. I lack the expertise for such a project, and nor am I appropriately situated to undertake it. (I am not reiterating the view, held by some in cultural studies, that subject position is a prerequisite for expertise. But, of course, it matters.) I think Aoki's work is extraordinarily important for American as well as Canadian curriculum studies, as I trust the attention I gave to it in *Understanding Curriculum* testifies. In that textbook, I focused on Aoki's intellectual leadership in the effort to understand curriculum phenomenologically. Although acknowledging there the movement in his work from phenomenology toward poststructuralism, I confess I did not grasp the full extent of it.

Why? I attribute this lapse in judgment to the fact that, although I had access to a number of Ted's essays, I did not have access to them all. A number were in fact unpublished; and many were published in journals not readily accessible in the United States. Several of the most brilliant, in fact, I had not yet read when I composed the passages on Aoki's work for *Understanding Curriculum*. Now, thanks to Ted and to Rita L. Irwin, we have access to the entire body of work, entitled *Curriculum in a New Key*.

Aoki's leadership in the effort to understand curriculum phenomenologically is legendary. After having read everything now, I conclude that it is only part of the story. Aoki's scholarly work cannot adequately be described as "phenomenological," despite the strong and enduring influence that philosophical tradition exhibits in these collected essays. Aoki is enormously erudite; he is well read not only in phenomenology, but in poststructuralism, critical theory, and cultural criticism as well. Even these four complex intellectual traditions fail to depict the range and depth of his study and his intellectual achievement.

In my introduction to the collected essays of the man who taught us to "hear" curriculum in a "new key," I emphasize the range and depth of the work. I focus too on the deft pedagogical moves Aoki makes in these essays, most of which were speeches. I know of no other scholar who took as seriously as Aoki did the scholarly conference as an educational event. Often working from conference themes, Aoki takes these opportunities to teach, and with great savvy and subtlety. Of someone we might say that he or she is a fine scholar *and* a superb teacher. Of Aoki we must say that his brilliance as a pedagogue is inextricably interwoven with his brilliance as scholar and theoretician. It is the unique and powerful combination of the three that makes Aoki's work absolutely distinctive.

In taking seriously the scholarly conference and thereby construing our coming together as an educational event, Aoki acknowledges the centrality of the social in intellectual—and academic—life. In a time in which careerist self-

interest and self-promotion animate and, for many, define professional practice, Aoki's generosity in acknowledging the presence of others is exceptional. It discloses not only his utter intellectual honesty, but his profound sense of the ethical as well. "There are new curriculum researchers," he tells his fellow conference goers in 1973, "with whose ventures I can strike a vibrant and resonant chord. Although not too long ago this chord sounded strange deep inside me, that strangeness is fading. I think it is partly because in being at a conference such as this, I feel a sense of emergent becoming." Already, in this early essay (the title essay of the collection), we hear the auditory characterization of education as "resonance." The last phrase—and its notion of "emergent becoming"—underscores the dynamic, developmental, and dialectical character of Aoki's intellectual formation.

I intend my introduction to the collected works to function in two ways. First, I hope it inaugurates a series of scholarly studies of Aoki's *oeuvre*. To situate Aoki's achievement within Canadian curriculum studies is a project I trust will be undertaken by several; to those of you reading, please know there is at least one (but, no doubt, not only one) book series editor committed to supporting such an effort. There should be comparative studies as well, such as of the intersections of (and differences) Aoki's and Huebner's work. As well, there need to be studies of Aoki's influence on generations of younger scholars, and not only in Canada. I would like to see extended studies of Aoki's intellectual life history. And certainly there is room for a biography of this uniquely Canadian intellectual and public pedagogue.

Especially in this time when the academic field of education is under savage attack by politicians (Aoki once described it as "open hunting season for education"), it is incumbent on us to maintain our professional dignity by reasserting our commitment to the intellectual life of our field. Such a reassertion of our intellectual commitment includes, perhaps most of all, the study and teaching of curriculum theory and history. Study in neither domain can proceed far without the careful consideration of the work of Ted T. Aoki.

Second, I trust my introduction will function as both teaching aid and study guide. This ambition may seem redundant, given how brilliantly Aoki himself teaches in these essays. Although that is the case, it is also true that Aoki's work is complex, nuanced, and profound, and students without backgrounds in phenomenology, poststructuralism, and critical theory may well benefit from my sketching of the thematic and pedagogical movements in Aoki's work. I hope that my long and "lingering note" will stimulate students to engage Aoki's essays more actively than they otherwise might.

As students of Aoki's work know, the title of the collection derives from an early essay that was widely read, including in the United States. But its visibility and familiarity were not the only reasons why Rita Irwin and I proposed it to Ted as the title of the entire collection. The concept of "key" is an auditory rather than visual one, and it is the primacy of the auditory in Aoki's work that constitutes one of his most important and unique contributions to the field. It is Aoki's critique of ocularcentrism in Western epistemology and his honouring of

the auditory, and specifically the musical, that enable us to hear curriculum in a new key. Almost alone among curriculum theorists, Aoki appreciated that after the "linguistic turn" comes an auditory one.

Note that the organization of the essays is thematic, not chronological, and that the categories (parts A, B, C, D) and the sequencing of the essays were chosen by Aoki himself. Allow me to acknowledge my ambivalence regarding the length of my introduction: Although I wanted to honour Aoki's brilliance by taking seriously and slowly each essay, I worry I have "lingered" too long. Students and teachers of the text will be the judge of that. Allow me to note, too, that although Rita Irwin (whom I tried to persuade, without success, to list her name before mine, as this work would not have occurred without her) and I are editors, the royalties go to the Aoki family.

I am grateful to you, Ted, for allowing Rita Irwin and me to edit your life's work. Your collected essays make crystal clear that are you a master scholar, theoretician, pedagogue. Your life's work has influenced and will continue to influence those who encounter it. If there were a Nobel Prize in education, you would be a recipient.

William F. Pinar
Louisiana State University

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Preface[1]

In the mid-1980s, I read an article that would influence my academic and personal life for all time. This article came to me with little fanfare. In fact, it was not given as a class handout or suggested to me by a professor. As I reviewed several monographs loaned to me, I happened on the article entitled: "Toward Curriculum Inquiry in a New Key" by Ted T. Aoki. Little did I know then that this article, its author, and the author's lifetime body of work would make such a profound difference to my life. I remember to this day my first reading of this article. It resonated with my very being. Suddenly, everything I had been learning came together in an elegant yet transformative way. It offered me insights into the worldview of others, myself, and the selves I was becoming. It provided a safe space for me to take on the role of interpreter and critic. But most importantly, it legitimated for me that art education was the powerful learning force I knew it to be. For this paper was originally written for a conference entitled "Phenomenological Description: Potential for Research in Art Education" hosted by the Fine Arts Graduate Studies Program at Concordia University (April 6–8, 1973). Some time later Ted would craft the paper into published form for the Curriculum Praxis Occasional Paper Series, No. 2 (University of Alberta). I am today, as I was then, quietly pleased to witness a curriculum scholar bridging curriculum concerns with art education, not only for those of us in art education, but for everyone interested in curriculum studies.

I did not know Ted then, but I came to learn of his teaching and leadership at the University of Alberta and the University of British Columbia (UBC). As a doctoral student at UBC I soon learned that Ted's work influenced generations of education scholars, some of whom taught me. In reading the article "Toward Curriculum Inquiry in a New Key" I realized that Walt Werner, an important curriculum scholar at UBC, had been another doctoral student of Ted's. In time, I came to appreciate that several scholars at the University of Victoria, where I completed my master's degree, also studied with Ted. These are only a few of the scholars Ted mentored who would in turn influence me, and many, many others. I am sure I am not exaggerating when I say that Ted's incredible ability to teach ideas through personal and theoretical inquiry has more than touched thousands of learners: his pedagogy has changed their thinking, their being, their lives. He embodies curriculum.

As I carried "Toward Curriculum Inquiry in a New Key" with me throughout my doctoral student and professorial life, I was reminded of the day when the excitement of Ted's ideas made me search out new directions for my

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[1] An earlier version of this paper is published as: Irwin, Rita L. (2003). In a New Key: Ted T. Aoki *Educational Insights, 8*(2). [Available: http://ccfi.educ.ubc.ca/publication/insights/v08n02/celebrate/irwin.html]

work. The excitement was never boisterous, but then I am not boisterous. The excitement was teeming inside me, nurtured by an extraordinary human being, sharing his being, and his becoming, with others. Being in the presence of humble greatness inspires one to find one's own inner greatness. Ted's writing did that for me, and I am certain that Ted's mentorship of his graduate students and his many colleagues nurtured an excitement for curriculum that has never been replicated in Canada.

Although I first read Ted's work in the mid 1980s, it would be the mid 1990s before I met him. I have never been one to make myself known. I would rather do the work that needs to be done and, through the context of that work, meet and work with others. As I look back, I realize that Ted and I shared several institutional homes: Lethbridge School District 51 (he also taught in Rockyford, Taber, and Foremost, Alberta), where he was a teacher and vice-principal (he taught for 19 years across these school districts); the University of British Columbia, where he was the Director of the Centre for Curriculum and Instruction (3 years) and later, an adjunct professor (17 years); and the University of Alberta, where he obtained his bachelor of education degree (1949), his master of education degree (1963), was an assistant, associate, professor and chair of the Department of Secondary Education (18 years) and now holds professor emeritus status. One institutional home we did not share was the University of Oregon, where Ted completed his PhD (1969). Despite sharing some of the same institutional homes, our paths did not cross. Although I was a student, teacher, or professor in the same educational settings, I kept him on the pedestal I created for him. Then one day, following a talk we both attended, a colleague introduced us. Here was a gentle, soft-spoken man, who was shorter than me (and I am not tall). Yet his extraordinary reputation as a curriculum scholar imbued his aura: In front of me stood a great man.

In the intervening years Ted and I have been on a number of thesis committees together and have shared tales of leading a university department. He often writes me handwritten memos in which he shares his latest thinking or the latest book he has read or the connections he has made at a recent event. And several times a year, I slip away with Ted and June for a sushi lunch at their favourite restaurant. In these moments, his wisdom almost pours out of him. Although not the only reason, Ted's dedication for Canadian curriculum studies played a significant part in my personal recommitment to curriculum studies, a commitment that lead me to become active in the Canadian Association for Curriculum Studies (CACS). Through my conversations with Ted, I knew that the next surge of scholarship in Canadian curriculum studies would only happen if curriculum scholars took up the task of (re)conceptualizing the forgotten spaces lingering within the etymology of the words we hold dear, as well as the very premises from which we understand curriculum today. Inspired and energized, I took on the role of president of CACS, a position I hold today. I do not make any claims to changing curriculum scholarship in Canada, but in the compiling of this anthology I feel that Canadian scholars are recognizing a giant among us, a man whose career as a classroom teacher, vice-principal, scholar,

teacher educator, and chair of a university department has touched the lives of countless Canadian educators and students. His influence has been felt not only in Canada, but internationally as well, and especially in the United States,

One of the most impressive attributes Ted has is his abiding dedication to curriculum studies and curriculum inquiry. Now in his 80s, Ted has continued to teach at the University of British Columbia, give talks at national and international conferences, mentor graduate students, and, perhaps most importantly, nurture inquiry in the many spaces experienced in a lived curriculum. Witnessing his passion, intellectual curiosity, and amazing pedagogical capacity even today, keeps his Canadian colleagues spellbound. In the 1970s when some considered curriculum studies to be moribund, Ted took up the challenge to reimagine what curriculum studies could become. He opened our minds to reconceptualizing curriculum, moving us away from curriculum-as-plan to the lived curriculum. He made room for curriculum to come alive in any learning opportunity. He had, and still has, the ability to move our minds and our hearts in amazing ways.

Although I was never fortunate enough to take a class from Ted, I know the power of his teaching. Over the years I have sent many students to his classes and lectures. In every case, students came back to me saying they had been in the presence of a profoundly amazing teacher. Ted's greatest gift was, and remains today, his ability to call out of each of us deeply felt teaching and learning concerns that are transformed through penetrating inquiry. He is a pedagogue of pedagogues, and because his pedagogy is so profound, it lingers with us as we go forward and teach. The genealogy of his powerful pedagogy is the legacy that Ted leaves in the minds and hearts of countless curriculum scholars, particularly in Canada. In celebration of his legacy, Ted has been recognized for his achievements, influence, and impact in a variety of ways. Ted holds honorary doctor of laws degrees from the University of Lethbridge (1988), the University of British Columbia (1991), the University of Alberta (1992), and the University of Western Ontario (1999). He is particularly proud of being given honorary Elder status by the Four Band Council, in Hobbema, Alberta (1975). Ted has been given a certificate of appreciation by the Korean Educational Development Institute (1984), the Distinguished Service Award from the Canadian Association for Curriculum Studies (1985), the Phi Delta Kappa of the Year Award by the University of Alberta Chapter of the Phi Delta Kappa (1985), the CEA Whitworth Award for Research in Education presented by the Canadian Education Association (1985), the Distinguished Service Award from the American Educational Research Association (1987), the Curriculum Theory Project Award presented by the Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge (2000), and a Mentoring Award from the International Institute for Qualitative Methodology (2001). In addition to these awards he holds honorary memberships in the International Honor Society in Education (1994) and the Social Studies Council of the Alberta Teachers' Association (2001), and was inducted into the Professors of Curriculum Circle (limited to 125 members) through the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (1988).

One other award Ted received, the *Journal of Curriculum Theorizing* Award, deserves special attention (1985). On this award may be found the following citation: "The *Journal of Curriculum Theorizing* honours Professor Ted T. Aoki for distinguished contributions to curriculum studies in the United States and Canada by establishing the Annual Aoki Award." This citation states what virtually all of the other awards seek to celebrate: the lifetime work of a distinguished and exceptional scholar whose practice has changed the landscape of curriculum studies. These accolades are particularly poignant when one considers that after Ted completed his first degree (bachelor of commerce, UBC) in 1941 he was subjected to the federal government's policy to evacuate Japanese Canadians from the west coast of British Columbia to southern Alberta immediately following the Japanese attacks on Pearl Harbor (1942).

Ted's ideas came into my life with little fanfare. Today, as a friend and colleague, I know that Ted never wants fanfare. It is his pedagogy that matters, his interactions with individuals, and his pursuit of new ideas. Even so, there is a community of scholars, now and in the future, who would benefit tremendously from reading Ted's body of work. Although it took some time to convince Ted of this, it is with his blessing that we bring to you his contributions to the field of curriculum inquiry. Although his scholarship is his own, Ted would be the first to acknowledge the love and support of his wife June, his sons Doug and Edward, and their wives and children.

This volume has given me the chance to work with two of the greatest curriculum giants in our field, William Pinar and Ted Aoki, and for that I am truly grateful. Through their generous spirits and intellectual rigour we have found profound professional respect and a lasting affectionate friendship.

In closing, the Canadian Association for Curriculum Studies stands as a national organization to which Ted's commitment to curriculum change was often directed. His national pride is very strong. Through him, and alongside him, Canadian curriculum studies became a field of study. In the past, Canadians often denied the power of their own ideas. Today, that has changed. We want to celebrate those who have made a difference and we want to conceptualize, perhaps reconceptualize, Canadian curriculum studies. What better way to do this than to celebrate the life's work of Canada's own Ted Aoki? Through this volume we pay tribute to Ted Aoki and his achievements. In the act of doing this, readers will witness the development of Ted's ideas over time. This could be the greatest contribution of all: to see firsthand how ideas developed, lingered, and found depth in the cracks within words most of us never knew existed. In his lingering notes, he nurtures continuous inquiry through the passions that ground our dedication and curiosity.

Ted, on behalf of countless teachers, administrators, and scholars in Canada, the United States, and a host of other countries, allow me to express our deepest gratitude, admiration, and affection.

Rita L. Irwin
University of British Columbia