

en/Raptured contexts - a position

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The following text is the result of multiple discussions about what it means to enter into enRaptured con/text, the title of our first issue. Rather than merging our often diverging ideas into one single form of argument, we plotted a different pathway, one where we would try to move in-between texts. Although we definitely explore what it means to us when we speak of the language of the journal and the discourse of our education projects, we have both embarked upon it differently. In that sense, this article is an expression of a type of enrapture of context we hope scholars will enter into. In the following short piece, we begin by stating a common paragraph and then leave along our own separate pathways only to end once again with a common paragraph. Neither one of us planned nor anticipated the other's writing other than to say that in approximately a thousand words, one would explore the hermeneutics of context and the other the hermeneutics of text. The point is to let a third space of text emerge, a con/text whose authorship actually resides in the reader. The order of authorship expresses the fact that the first author wrote the left column and the second author the right.

*"not walls of cement, but...
the melodies of your temperature"*
Eugenio Barba

"It must be said that we understand ourselves only by a long detour of signs of humanity deposited in our cultural works ... Henceforth to understand is to understand oneself in front of the text ... exposing ourselves to the text and receiving from it an enlarged self."

Paul Ricoeur

The task of re-conceptualizing an on-line graduate student journal appears, at first glance, to be simply a matter of reorganization. How will we encourage scholars of all levels of experience to participate? Who will be on the editorial board? How will the peer review system work? Those of us assigned to the task, take a breath, ready to deal in matter of details, when the first question is posed. *Yes, but what is our purpose?*

Educational Insights was first started in 1990 as a publishing venue for graduate students. In 1995 the then co-editors, Gary Rasberry and David Penberg, decided to move the journal from hard copy to cyberspace. Originally in response to funding concerns, this decision has proven prophetic in terms of 21st century communications and hermeneutic meaning-making. While the initial journals were limited to linear text presentation, there is now the opportunity to explore pedagogical and curricular positioning through sound, video, linear and non-linear text. The journal anticipates from its contributors/ authors ways of writing anew, presenting, performing on-line between, above and beneath the lines. The challenge becomes a practice of restraint; the intertextual opportunities are so pregnant with possibility.

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Purpose? In the matter of details, purposes stump us, for purposes invoke the Cartesian *cogito* which seduces us into doubts, and doubts make us say silly things like: “We think therefore we know,” and we crave for immediate answers which makes us scramble and stumble in turns, all the while mumbling: “Give me a method! Show me a method! for we wish to know more about building an academic journal.” And no sooner do we say this, that the journal-as-concept encroaches the journal-as-imagined, and more mumbblings follow until the soft voice of a poet in our midst whispers: “Imagine a meadow of wild flowers.” A cheer erupts, “Hurrah for poets! Hurrah for wild flowers!” and in a quick poetic pose we grow silent to imagine the glorious meadow that the poet invokes.

The editors of the journal take a

Seated around the table, language snags our opening conversations as we reinvent *Educational Insights*. The first item on the agenda is the review of the Editorial Board. The words are barely out of my mouth, when I am interrupted. "Let's rename it. Editorial Board is too conventional: it speaks of hierarchy, structure, standard academic text."

"I like it!" protests one participant, "Editorial board has a nice constructivist ring to it." What about Editorial Commune? Or Gathering? Collective? Each word carries its own history, metaphorical, theoretical, and experiential meaning, irritation or opening. A word like collective, we learn through our conversation, has a different meaning for those who understand it as communal practice, than for those who experienced first hand the restrictive impact of the collectives established during communist rule. Finally, Editorial Circle is chosen, "non-hierarchical, all-embracing" and yet, even this seemingly innocuous label becomes suspect, when, for a short while, the on-site editorial/production team begins referring to itself as the "Inner Circle."

The Editorial Circle, as we move from conceptualization to production, emerges as a valued source of encouragement, conversation and generation of ideas for proposed issues. Evolving is a conversation that refuses to delineate

breath, and after a while two questions arise: What are our discourses to be, such that we preserve the fullness, the copiousness, and the irreducibility of the various uses of language? How are we to gather together the diverse forms and flavours of the game of language – the copia of storytelling that informs none other than our educational projects? And once asked, these questions erupt a polysemy that leads us through a troubled Camelot, and like the virtues of courage and lionheartedness that once thrived in such places, language attempts to recover its own virtues in a dialectical waltz with its temporal twin – Discourse. Together as one, it begins to question our quotidian existence and our assumptions; question itself and stretch its own codes and laws from phonemes to sentences to texts and beyond into myth and narrative, urging the speaker-writer-reader to dwell at the limits of language and its animus.

It seems almost naive to assert that in such excursions, our discourses become charged with not only exposing the permanent spirit of language in the way it refers to our manifold ways of being in the world, but also with the capacity to open up the *mythos* of communities – the mythic symbols that have become rooted

conversation that refuses to delineate between graduate student and tenured faculty. Borders and boundaries are crossed: this is an inaugural issue, it is but the beginning of a conversation for which we have great hope. We are on an intertextual journey; there are stumblings, slippery deadlines, editorial misreadings....but slowly, patiently, there is evolving a sense of a new space of possibility, even within moments of the seeming impossibility of rebirth.

*Hand over hand hauling
in the netted light,
the holes in the representation,
the holes in the visible.*

Peggy Phelan

How is it that our first themed issue came to be *enRaptured con/texts*? Initially, the desire was to rupture text, to break with standard academic forms of writing research. In the intertwining of hope with subversive action, the word rupture was replaced with enraptured, so as to speak to the enchantment of new academic positioning.

"Yes, but we must remain vigilant. Not all texts are enraptured." We are stopped. *A moment of risk. A moment of opportunity.*

"What if we place Ted Aoki's backslash between con and text?" And with this metonymic interruption, *enRaptured con/texts* names our intent.

within cultural frameworks. We come to better understand ourselves and our projects, and our biases and prejudices, and perhaps become ready to engage anew our political and social institutions that our mythical structures have founded.

As language wishes to make itself festive and rebellious once again, it whispers, and then shouts for those who wish to hear: "Never cease to challenge the already-said; always seek out the yet-to-be-said; never cease to find other ways of re-reading human history; never close-off the plurality of human interpretations; and always hold up high the virtue of human praxis." Such a language desires a free and shared movement of a social, political, and cultural *imaginaire*, and gives permission to its finite disciple – the speaker-writer-reader – to subvert the regulating order of language, to dig deep into its unexplored resources and articulate paths of discourses that are guided by "an ethic of the word."

"the smallest act in the most limited circumstances bears the seed of the same boundlessness, because one deed, and sometimes one word, suffices to change every constellation."

Hannah Arendt

*"Between closing and beginning lives a
gap, a casesura, a discontinuity.
The betweenness is a hinge that belongs
to neither one nor the other.
It is neither poised nor unpoised, yet
moves both ways...
It is the stop."*

David Applebaum

Our intent is to give recognition to the "con" that is the business of academics; that our texts are lenses on the multiple rewritings possible of education; the wanting and seeking of desire and heart within curricular pursuits; the rewriting of texts that breathe, weep, explore new ways of being in pedagogy. And always, the gentle reminder that we ourselves must be wary of being charmed by our own pedagogical stance. And so it is that enRaptured con/texts becomes the ambition of *Educational Insights*, and the theme of our relaunch issue.

Who we choose to be as educators, theorists, researchers and practitioners is revealed in our praxis and in our writings. Influences may be the children who have moved us to care; personal experiences that sharpen the focus through which we view education. In a heartfelt essay. Sylvia Wilson. chal-

To enrapture text is also such a moral and political effort, and cannot be engaged by alienating the hermeneutics of the context and the ethics of the word. Such an alienation almost dooms the educational project at hand into oblivion, for the paradigm of text always speaks and writes out of the confluence of an original community of interlocutors. It is in this original community – distinct in its own culture and ways and yet plural in its human ways – that the notion of *polis* arises and to which the text refers as its first order of duty. *Polis*, that Greek word of antiquity is more than just a space of a physical gathering. In Arendtian thought, *Polis* is an organization of people arising out of acting and speaking together. *Polis* is a moving Camelot. It resides in family gatherings as much as it does in academic journals and it can manifest itself 'anywhere and any time.' Here speech is much more than two or more subjectivities communicating with each other through speaking. In an Arendtian *Polis*, speech is also action, never one without the other.

And as the spoken discourse of a *Polis* moves into the written discourse of a

In a heartfelt essay, Sylvia Wilson, challenges educators with her question, what does an education based on progressive development have to say to a child who is living another reality? when the prognosis is loss, and hope of a future is the sharing of a journey between mother, caretakers and child, day by precious day. What does education have to learn from such a child?

*"Singing the space
there are meetings
and I am transformed ..."*

Eugenio Barba

So it is that Dennis Sumara invites us to *enlarge the space of possibility* by paying attention to detail, to the ordinary, to ritual. He speaks to the need to pause, and see again the pedagogical eloquence of a worn-out shoe, or how the extraordinary can shift perspectives, and encourage us to see anew.

And in the shifting of perspectives, *walljamming: a project to reimagine academic community* reminds us of the larger project of the university, and the academic discourse that shapes and

cyber *Polis*, the reciprocal expressions of speech and action are no less important. At the core of this movement, however, alterations of the language occur and the **word** and the **world** undergo transformations. Here, the text finds its second order of duty, although the first-order reference to the world of experience is never entirely lost. The textualized dialogue – fictional or otherwise – seeks to emancipate the reader from a synchronous discourse of the here-and-now, of the *vis-à-vis*, and into a diachronous discourse of the has-been of the past and a yet-to-be of the future. We are after all heirs to both. The intentions of the author are transcended into the intentions of anyone who can read and a vast polysemous laboratory of multiple fields of experiences and readings emerge. The new world of the text enraptures the context of the being-who-speaks.

“Who are you?” says the text as it confronts the being-who-speaks. “Who are you in your human praxis? Who are you in your virtues and your projects?” The desire for a new discourse in education arises, one that never ceases to ask the “Who” to account for and be responsible for its actions and speech lived in the world. Such a discourse re-enters Camelot to once again claim the lion-heartedness, the original courage, and ‘be ready to risk disclosure.’

is shaped by our presence. Walljamming is a collective graffiti, alternatively an angry and hopeful rant against the academic walls that restrict; in search of fissures that let the light come through...

*"but tell me,
where do the children play?"*
Cat Stevens, 1970

Educational Insights seeks to create an opportunity for discourse that welcomes new ways of being in scholarship; to publish work that provokes, evokes, and shifts perceptions and conceptions of educational research, pedagogy and curriculum. This, our first issue then becomes one that writes anew interruptions, imaginings, diversities of expression in education. enraptured con/texts is to be understood as a multiplicity of possible conversations that will be realized in future issues.

"quaestio mihi factus sum."
"a question have I become for myself."

Saint Augustine

And such becomes the ambition of this Journal.

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