An Obligation to Endure

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Fear is the main source of superstition and one of the main sources of cruelty. To conquer fear is the beginning of wisdom, in the pursuit of truth as in the endeavor after a worthy manner of life.
—Bertrand Russell, “An Outline of Intellectual Rubbish” (1943)

There is still very limited awareness of the nature of the threat. This is an era of specialists, each of whom sees his own problem and is unaware of or intolerant of the larger frame into which it fits. It is also an era dominated by industry, in which the right to make a dollar at whatever cost is seldom challenged.
—Rachel Carson, Silent Spring (1962)

With ever more demands from the education profession’s “Organization Men”¹ (and women²) for faculty labors over proliferating assessment protocols and clerical tasks, new technologies, fundraising and marketing initiatives, heavily documented application proposals to garner some institutional support for expected work now otherwise personally financed, and colleagues’ and students’ own related stresses, when can an educational foundations scholar even find time needed for that contemplation on learning and life so necessary to our calling? Educational foundations graduate students whom I teach and advise—simultaneously professional educators and mothers of infants and school-aged children, some also caregivers for family elders—tell me they read, think, and write primarily while their households sleep. So intense are their thirst and hunger for this foundational inquiry as educators and learners. They have survived sexual and racial oppression, religious abuse, symbolic and domestic violence, poverty and crushing debt, disability, cancer, eating disorders, rape, unintended pregnancy, and anti-intellectual bigotry. A few do wage-labors in and around schools, but most work today in colleges, universities, human service agencies, and various social movements. Their struggles as educators, for justice and joy, inspire and sustain my own sense of obligation to endure in this field.

Everyday, therefore, I wake up to the prairie train’s honk—eager to watch a new dawn-hour spectacle of growing light, lifting night away, unspeakably beautiful, emerging from behind that broad wooded horizon, maybe glowing like gentle fire, maybe clouded pale and silvery or tinted pink and blue. The sunrise beams through these silhouetted treetops; a neighbor’s dog barks; wind-chimes ring; mourning doves coo and peck the ground; finches and cardinals flock to feed here. I dare not take for granted this wondrous setting where I do my contemplative work as an educational foundations scholar—today rereading Rachel Carson’s classic in e-book for-

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mat, *Silent Spring,* from whose second chapter I borrow this essay’s title. For one urgent question fearsome material challenges to our field now: How to endure, wherever we are, as our climate changes?

**Two Climate Changes—Global and Educational**

Year after year, in this ecotone between the Cross Timbers and the Mixed-Grass Prairie, I am bearing witness to a dramatically hastening climate change, the worst drought and summer heat since the Great Depression, a feast for ants and other insects, easily controlled by pesticides. Before Europeans colonized the prairie, natural ecological processes included spontaneous fires that consumed vast reaches of landscape, renewing grasses’ growth by clearing out aggressive underbrush that stole their needed water. Drought and development render such wildfires more frequent, severe, and dangerous now; filling the air with smoke; flaming fast across roads and tracks; demolishing vehicles in transit; burning down homes, farms, and suburbs; killing all that lives in their path, trees, wildlife, and sources of the continental food supply, cattle and wheat. As this drought worsens, fear of wildfire intensifies here, “Where the wind comes sweeping down the plain.” Shorelines have receded substantially on lakes made here under the New Deal to prevent a future Dust Bowl. Trees’ thirst was evident last summer in unseasonable displays of “autumn” colors and many dead, leafless branches. The prairie remains magnificent, but songbirds are becoming less plentiful.

Unlike the Dust Bowl, which imprudent, profit-motivated, and weather-challenged agricultural innovations caused in the Panhandle several hours’ drive northwest from here in the 1930s, this life-threatening postmillennial climate change is no mere local problem. Texas, New Mexico, Kansas, and Colorado have suffered even more substantial wildfire devastation than Oklahoma; dust storms have plagued Texas and New Mexico. Farther away, Katrina’s and Sandy’s survivors have no less severe, albeit different, climate-change stories to tell. Much of the nation, indeed much of the world, has begun to experience this climate change in life-altering and deeply gendered, racialized ways that reach into politics, economics, religion, arts, philosophy, and education too.

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4. A region of transition between two biological communities.


Many elected leaders and representatives deny climate change still, and just before President Obama announced his commitment to address it, New York Times shut down its environmental desk to accommodate its publisher’s budgetary concerns. Yet the newspaper here is already featuring sober advice to home gardeners: “Shallow root systems will not survive the drought.” My city now enforces water rationing while its most aggressive developers continue to market rapid growth of suburban sprawl, and its mayor (a feminist professor of government) is working hard to promote both “smart growth” and a bicycling, recycling local culture-initiatives with scarcely considered implications for local schooling.

The foundations of earthly life itself, everything we do to feed, shelter, nurture, and heal ourselves and future generations must become open to question—and to learning whose necessity few education professionals have even acknowledged yet, much less tried to imagine. This agenda will require many diverse participants’ collaborations in highly various contexts, but even conceptualizing it poses many immense challenges. Questioning smartly in order to act with intelligent moral imagination as educators is, of course, the educational foundations field’s forte and raison d’être—as outlined in “Standards for Academic and Professional Instruction in Foundations of Education, Educational Studies, and Educational Policy Studies.”


22. Formulated in 1977-78 by the Council of Learned Societies in Education, revised in 1996 by CLSE’s successor, the Council of Social Foundations of Education, and undergoing CSFE’s further revision in 2012: http://csfeonline.org/about/csfe-standards/. Since the 1996 publication of the Standards, we have witnessed increased corporatization of state power and privatization of public services, including education, on a global scale. At the same time, the advanced technologies that enable immediate access to local and global communities, also contribute to corporate exploitation and unregulated production worldwide. These forces created massive political, social, and ecological devastation triggering global democratic movements struggling to address and redress the consequences of these capitalist excesses. This Third Edition of the Social Foundations Standards aims to
learners’ (and our own) multiple life-challenges complicated by global climate change (henceforth GCC), educators need more of this field’s intellectual resources for such practical questioning. Not fewer.

But, like journalism, institutional education has undergone another man-made climate change over the past two decades or more, a societal change that threatens to remove educational foundations from formal preparation for the education profession, as reported recently at University of Georgia. This educational climate change (henceforth ECC) has sustained general professional evasion of foundational questions about education that might respond more pragmatically to GCC.

This special issue is not questioning how to sustain life on earth or even just inquiring-life, but how to defend educational foundations. Countless symposia and panels have discussed this topic at various Council of Social Foundations of Education member organizations’ conferences over the past quarter century, so educational foundations scholars know our self-defense scripts well enough to recite them by heart to any colleagues, deans, state chancellors and state superintendents who might listen. No need to rehash them here. How to respond to this call for a “defense” without homiletic or polemical platitudes about educational wisdom’s obvious value, fraught with reasonable concerns about democracy’s future?

Much disciplined inquiry has already addressed this special issue’s topic, “the defense of educational foundations,” in other special issues of *Teachers College Record*, *Educational Studies*, and other journals—responding to its urgency both indirectly and directly with recent major productions such as the *Encyclopedia of the Social and Cultural Foundations of Education*, the *Handbook of Research in the Social Foundations of Education*, parts of the forthcoming *Handbook of Educational Theories*, and other similar volumes (including some focused specifically on philosophy or history of education), along with some anthologies on foundational pedagogy and curriculum. Schooling myself in that research literature, I have discussed issues related to this topic with colleagues here and elsewhere, in education and in arts and humanities—faculty, students, and administrators. This extensive reading and conversation have proven often provocative, sometimes exhilarating. But I must be frank: this searching, ruminative study in light of my experience over the past three decades has led me to a tough sore spot with this tired topic—which even my critical review of defensive research in, about, and for educational foundations could scarcely begin to theorize. This topic’s frame, the ECC now shaping our field’s internal struggle to endure, merits educational foundations scholars’ seriously strategic, sustained attention.

Educational foundations scholars promote often the value of pre-service teachers’ learning about school and society, yet how often do we consider likely comparable value in pre-service professors’ learning about university and society? Could neglect of such graduate education for the professoriate have contributed to this ECC that now threatens educational founda-

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23. On this point, see: Jim Parsons & William Frick, “Why Professors Hate Their Jobs: A Critique of the Pedagogy of Academic Disengagement,” in *Culture, Society & Praxis*, 7 (2008), 2: 30-46. (However, quite frankly I love my own job.)


tions? Founding and leading Oklahoma Educational Studies Association (OESA) with outreach both campus-wide and statewide, in connection with American Educational Studies Association (AESA) and now also with American Association of University Professors (AAUP), graduate students here devote substantial energies to some such professional learning, integral to their doctoral residency. Locally active myself in AAUP, upon whose conception John Dewey exerted famous influence, I regard its website, publications, and campus events as vital field-stewardship curriculum for graduate students. Toward that same end, The Chronicle of Higher Education, Inside Higher Education, Education Week, and other news media are primary sources also vital for educating about the ECC situation prompting this special issue—a situation that threatens far more than educational foundations—its entire institutional frame.

Rather than “defend” educational foundations as assigned, therefore, I want to question recent synergistic marketing of fear to educators generally and consider what responses to that fear-production this field’s morally responsible, sustainable development may require. Advocating generous engagement with ECC concerns that arts and humanities confront now also, I commend educational foundations’ substantial, transformative development of arts’ and humanities’ pragmatic value in myriad institutional and cultural sites of learning, including departments, schools, and colleges of education. Such an approach to educational foundations’ sustainable growth presumes the field’s conception as a variegated, peripatetic, simultaneously ancient and radical tradition of wisdom and inquiry, definitively and deeply rooted in arts and humanities while branching out in dynamic practical response to oppressive social situations and human needs—confronting ever-more-urgent needs to rethink education for those situations wrought or worsened by GCC.

Educational Climate Change (ECC)

Just a couple years ago the ivy-league, land-grant education department from which I earned my Ph.D. was shut down, not just its educational foundations program, but the whole education department—the same fate as education at University of Chicago fifteen years ago—and I hear grapevine reports that such large cuts continue to occur elsewhere, like wildfires, causing educational foundations scholars to be relocated in sociology or anthropology departments. Perhaps we should not be surprised: at the millennium, Ellen Condliffe Lagemann featured educational research as An Elusive Science with a “troubling history,” while scarcely glancing at educational foundations research in her critical chronicle of that practice, except to remark now and then upon Dewey’s educational insights and to conclude that her own field “history can become

28. OESA will host a conference at the Jeannine Rainbolt College of Education in Norman, OK, August 9-10, 2013, on the theme “Educating Activism: Reimagining the Future of Leadership and Stewardship in the Professoriate,” featuring Steve Tozer as keynote speaker along with events co-sponsored by the University of Oklahoma’s AAUP chapter that will aim to educate graduate students (and faculty) across campus and state about a variety of shared-governance issues. See http://www.ou.edu/oesa/.

29. Stacey Patton, “MLA President Offers A Sobering Critique of Graduate Education in the Humanities,” Chronicle of Higher Education (December 6, 2012): http://chronicle.com/article/A-Stark-Appraisal-of-Graduate/136171/. I emphasize arts and humanities in relation to educational foundations here because of my informal perception that, although social sciences are also vital to this field, the market society (discussed later in this essay) does make comparatively abundant (even if often distorted) use of social sciences to inform its myriad schemes for “reform,” “innovation,” and “assessment” while devaluing arts and humanities as sources of educational wisdom and as disciplined approaches to interpretive, normative, and critical inquiry on education.

an instrument of reform.” Diane Ravitch’s *The Death and Life of the Great American School System* may fulfill that hope, but has either celebrity historian’s landmark work had the aim or the impact of prompting education professionals to revalue historical studies in education?

Here climate-crisis gardeners’ wisdom cited above may resonate with metaphoric significance: “Shallow root systems will not survive the drought.” Educational foundations’ root systems are deep, in arts and humanities especially. Only two years ago classicist-philosopher Martha Nussbaum published *Not For Profit*, declaring “a crisis of massive proportions and grave global significance...a crisis that goes largely unnoticed, like a cancer; a crisis that is likely to be, in the long run, far more damaging to the future of democratic self-government: a worldwide crisis in education.” She grounded her argument in thought directly from educational foundations’ philosophical and literary traditions, and her forward to that book’s paperback edition reports her belief that “it has helped many people make arguments to administrations, communities, legislators, alumni, parents, and the public at large,” just as this special issue of *CQIE* aims to do. Rooted in arts and humanities, educational foundations’ struggle for institutional sustainability is integral to arts and humanities’ similar struggle, which Nussbaum has addressed here. In this brilliantly pragmatic, internationally researched inquiry, she has warned that

Radical changes are occurring in what democratic societies teach the young, and these changes have not been well thought through. Thirsty for national profit, nations, and their systems of education, are heedlessly discarding skills that are needed to keep democracies alive. If this trend continues, nations all over the world will soon be producing generations of useful machines, rather than complete citizens who can think for themselves, criticize tradition, and understand the significance of another person’s sufferings and achievements. The future of the world’s democracies hangs in the balance.

But still, lately, some state universities are deliberating whether they should charge undergraduates extra tuition to study humanities, and everyday there seems to be some news item about a politically motivated report on what’s wrong with the field of history, or a powerful speech about the dire situation confronting scholars of language and literature. Educational foundations scholars will continue to focus only on our own programs’ plight and ignore this ECC crisis in arts and humanities at our own peril. Other climate changes directly related to this

34. Ibid., 1 & 34.
35. Ibid., chapter IV.
36. Ibid., 145.
37. Ibid., 1-2.
market-driven devaluation of arts and humanities confront us as well. University presses and other publishers vital to our scholarship are struggling just as we are, as heavily marketed electronic media reshape academic publishing radically.

I expect, too, that we all have sat puzzled and frustrated through long, demoralizing administrative meetings in our colleges recently, not talking analytically and imaginatively with our colleagues about education’s changing meaning and value, or even about the democratic ethic of higher education’s shared governance, as we should be doing (and as we could be doing with intellectual leadership from educational foundations scholars). Instead we find ourselves sitting there amid our faculty colleagues’ mostly uncritical talk led by administrators, about tedious clerical micro-technicalities of high-tech assessment, assessment, assessment—clearly a corporate code word for fear, fear, fear. Facing this insistent ECC, some may advocate for obsessive high-tech assessment’s universal value in fearful pursuit of programmatic preservation and finance, but I beg to differ.

Yes, I have seen programs put productively at risk by just measures of poor performance, so I cannot advocate total disregard for reasonable (not obsessive, nor politically motivated) assessment. However, I have also borne witness over three decades to women’s and gender studies programs’ struggles for survival within colleges of arts and humanities nationwide. As intellectual leaders in the world-wide movement for sexual and reproductive justice, directly addressing campus women’s well-documented “chilly climate” with their own distinctively theorized “feminist pedagogies” (to which philosophers of education have contributed), women’s studies faculty practice a rigorously democratic shared self-governance (increasingly rare elsewhere in higher education) that involves constant collective strategizing for the field’s sustainable development, from time to time under threats of extinction or fiscal starvation at various institutions. That struggle has resulted in many theoretical debates (remarkably not foreign to the educational foundations field, either!) about comparative merits of “mainstreaming” their scholarship across various departments versus administering it from academic units of their own that focus on their central concerns—debates most prudently resolved by coordinating both approaches somehow, in mutually supportive, locally sensitive ways. Its leaders have often organized to focus their preservative energies on particular challenged programs by traveling directly to their campuses, where they explain, promote, and defend the field’s importance face-to-face, both singly and in groups, through public lectures to students and faculty and through consultations with deans, provosts, donors, and regents behind closed doors. I have had occasion to write letters defending

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educational foundations programs recently slated for shutdown, but have often wondered why educational foundations organizations have seldom applied that generally successful feminist field-stewardship strategy. Imperiled women’s studies programs have survived threats of shutdown as a result of such strategically organized in-person initiatives. But despite innovative leadership, prolific and diverse enrollments, ever-growing faculty participation and diversity, glowing local and national publicity, documentation of educational “impact” on students’ conscientious civic engagement, and well-triangulated external and internal assessment measures that indisputably justify strong support for its programmatic growth—adequate material support to sustain such programs at a level minimally sufficient to meet students’ demands for them is too often still not forthcoming. Hence my own deep cynicism about obsessive assessment’s possible salvific utility, especially for fields that want their demonstrable “impact” to be learning aimed intelligently at social justice—a definitive aim for any educational foundations program worth preserving.

In many locations, such impact can even be imprudent to document and broadcast. As Nussbaum has noted, “There’s no doubt that politicians have incentives that bode ill for their judgment when making decisions about higher education.”[^45] Last month Indiana’s governor, who instigated major education budget cuts, left the state house to become president of Purdue University.[^46] We do not yet know what his impact will be,[^47] but this nationwide trend in higher education leadership—not a new phenomenon, to be sure[^48]—underscores pragmatic wisdom in Nussbaum’s caveat about possible political disruptions of rationally formulated educational purposes and values.[^49]

What field in higher education has remained untouched by this ECC that corporatism has wrought across U.S. campuses over the past quarter century? I have even seen an article claiming that athletics programs need to rethink their purpose in these fiscally stressed times.[^50] Can their big-business budgets—supporting corporate profit-making ventures along with men’s spectator-sport coaches who make more and more millions each passing year and live like French kings—really be in such disarray that even they are caught up in the same terror of programmatic diminution that prompts this special issue? Educators’ terror of this or that possible program cut seems to be in ever-higher, market-driven demand these days. A few highly visible, well-

[^45]: Nussbaum, Not for Profit, 147.
[^47]: Helpful impact is sometimes possible in such situations. For example, David Boren, a former governor and U.S. senator, also a Rhodes Scholar, has provided politically savvy, economically resourceful, historically conscious presidential leadership for preservation and development of intellectual and aesthetic culture at the University of Oklahoma.
[^49]: My own dean at the University of Oklahoma, Gregg A. Garn, understands this phenomenon, having written a master’s thesis in educational foundations at Arizona State University, “The Influence of Politics on Charter School Reform in Arizona” (1996), which concluded Arizona legislators had passed charter school reform based on political rhetoric rather than empirical evidence.
[^50]: Brad Wolverton, “In Time of Austerity, Athletics Programs Need a Reset,” Chronicle of Higher Education, January 27, 2013: http://chronicle.com/blogs/players/in-austere-times-athletics-programs-need-a-reset/32403. Of course, athletics programs should be rethinking their purpose: DUH! When have you ever heard of an athletics program in higher education focused primarily on educating all students in and about diverse world physical cultures, including their traditions of training and practice in somatic arts and disciplines as well as games and sports, which might foster continuing intelligent activity for health, agility, strength, mindfulness, and grace in daily life throughout adulthood? Educational foundations scholars could help athletics programs rethink their educational purposes—brilliantly. See, for example, Richard Shusterman, Thinking Through the Body: Essays in Somaesthetics (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012); Richard Shusterman, Body Consciousness: A Philosophy of Mindfulness and Somaesthetics (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008).
targeted program cuts or shutdowns can produce enough terror among educators and students to afflict an entire field nationwide.

Some friendly colleagues in arts and humanities, in educational foundations, and in college administration at several different institutions fall often into shop-talk with me about online courses and for-profit universities, about public universities’ politicization and privatization, about their administrations’ costly runaway growth and corporate entities superseding faculty governance, about teaching and research incentives offered that are not really incentives, about myriad ECC issues reported by the Chronicle that lead to our long speculative conversations about what some whisperers have dared to call “the death of the university” itself. Last June, graduate students celebrated OESA’s tenth anniversary by hosting a symposium, “The Future of the Professoriate,” at which University of Oklahoma’s provost presented her shocking analysis and prediction of tenure’s bleak future, even as a prominent young educational foundations scholar from our adult and higher education program’s faculty spoke out for sustaining university commitments to the “public good.”

Voicing that latter commitment, James M. Giarelli observed in his George F. Kneller Lecture to AESA this past year, “I do not think one needs magical powers to see that the era of the school is quickly passing.” Of course, anyone reading news about high-stakes testing, alternative certification, teachers’ unions, vouchers, charter schools, school report cards, faith-based and corporate partnerships, parent trigger laws, virtual academies, and so on knows he is right about that—not even to mention The Shame of the Nation or Hostile Hallways.

Bearing witness to energetic cultural construction of what we might reasonably call “The Educational Apocalypse,” enjoining us to fear injury and death for all that we prize in our life’s ethically motivated work as educators, should we declare institutional turf war now in an end-times defense of educational foundations? In some places, such turf battles have been waged at our field’s expense already, producing enough fear to prompt this special issue. How should we respond to such market-driven aggression, framed as we are by this ECC?

Bertrand Russell’s epigraph begs for some contemplation here. In its light, the question Giarelli posed in his Kneller Lecture becomes most relevant: “What happens to educational theory without the school?…what happens to schools, colleges and departments and professors of education without the school?”

Educational foundations scholars might ask wisely also what becomes of educational theory when public universities build ever larger and more costly administrations while disabling shared governance, starving arts and humanities, and ignoring GCC? What does education come to mean at public universities that devalue arts and humanities?

Anyone who has read Mary Wollstonecraft’s compelling early modern argument in A Vindication of the Rights of Woman for universal government-funded day-schooling must ask also:

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53. See Education Week as well as local media documenting and explaining these developments.
57. Related to this question, see Dennis Carlson, “Conflict of the Faculties: Democratic Progressivism in the Age of ‘No Child Left Behind’,” 2007 AESA Presidential Address, Educational Studies, 43: 94-113.
What happens to children without public schools? Or to the next generation if they fail to learn how they might most wisely go about feeding, sheltering, nurturing, and healing themselves and their children through threatened and actual droughts, wildfires, and floods—and how they might go about reducing GCC’s destructive effects on their lives? Such questions evidence a growing, not diminishing, ethical need for foundational inquiry on education.

**Marketplace Questioning**

This ECC reflects a radical and morally problematic long-term social shift, remarked by several prominent educational foundations scholars, that political theorist Michael J. Sandel has theorized in *What Money Can’t Buy*: “from having a market economy to being a market society,” where the latter “is a way of life in which market values seep into every aspect of human endeavor. It’s a place where social relations are made over in the image of the market.” This special issue’s editors have solicited strategic responses to that specific political-economic context of corporatism which pollutes the air educators and learners breathe and seeps into our groundwater too—materially threatening both educational foundations and its taproots in arts and humanities, now urgently needed for cultivating new thought on educating ourselves and the next generation for GCC’s challenges.

In his Kneller Lecture, Giarelli reflected critically upon U.S. education’s past institutional reconfigurations—as theorized historically by Lawrence Cremin and philosophically by John Dewey. Meanwhile he drew upon Sandel’s moral critique of the market society’s “commodification of everything” to argue that “the direct and systematic corporate takeover of the educational system in the emerging configuration” is now changing “the deep structure of educational practice.” He constructed this last conceptual tool for future inquiry from Jane Roland Martin’s critical conception in *Education Reconfigured*—“the deep structure of educational thought”—which grounds education in assorted fallacious dualisms, divides, and splits. For that thought-structure also “awards a monopoly over educational agency” to the school, “an institution that from the standpoint of the individual is relatively short-lived.” Glossing Martin’s argument that “those who wish to transform society are well-advised to enlist school’s help,” but that “they are misguided…if they imagine that school can accomplish this task working alone,” Giarelli summoned educational foundations scholars to observe closely how “the deep structure of educational practice is changing” and to “rethink educational theory and the institutions of educational study in response.” Thus he has named vital new intellectual leadership tasks—a challenging agenda for inquiry—which educational-foundations scholars are best equipped to undertake in present struggles to meet our obligation to endure climate changes, both educational and global.

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65. Ibid.
Educational foundations’ long history of endurance through such radical reconfigurations should furnish some needed inoculation against debilitating fears occasioned by these dramatic climate changes. The field has a fund of intellectual resources for moral endurance in its own definitive dispositions and disciplines to inquire into education’s past, present, and possible future purposes, values, and meanings. This field’s primary gift to the education profession more generally may thus be what some have called “the art of possibility,” for such foundational inquiry on education is premised upon imaginative resilience against fear and despair—a determined eagerness to cultivate against all apparent odds some realistic and rational hope that “Every problem, every dilemma, every dead end we find ourselves facing in life, only appears unsolvable inside a particular frame or point of view. Enlarge the box, or create another frame around the data, and problems vanish while new opportunities appear.”

I am not an historian, but this journal’s readers can be expected to know—though some may forget!—that inquiry which defines what we call “educational foundations” is actually an enduring intellectual tradition that began in Athens’ marketplace about 2500 years ago. Such inquiry moved into universities only about two or three hundred years ago, but it became a professional field of study focused primarily on schooling just over a century ago. Women (often unschooled themselves until recently) have been pursuing such inquiry as self-educating public intellectuals, mothers, and ad hoc educators for at least five hundred years, perhaps much longer, even if seldom acknowledged by the field’s professional scholarship before three decades ago. Typically professional scholarship in educational foundations has been located in colleges, schools, and departments of education, educating teachers, other school leaders, and diverse scholars who pursue various educational research specialties, not to mention a substantial number of deans and vice presidents. But professional study of education began in a philosophy department, and since then has been housed sometimes within universities’ colleges of arts and humanities, as well as in most small liberal arts colleges. Meanwhile many of our field’s doctoral alumni and alumnae now pursue educational foundations scholarship within other programs primarily devoted to empirical concerns with practical pursuits of early childhood education, adult and higher education, curriculum and instruction, and educational administration. Responsive to both ECC and GCC, the next generation includes those who will pursue educational foundations scholarship within other professions too, such as architecture, law, nursing, public health, engineering, and fine arts. Educational foundations has grown as a field of study not so much by enlarging its own programs as by maintaining strong small programs within departments, schools, and colleges of education, from whose explicit inquiry-focus on education within a broad cultural frame, they have extended educational foundations’ reach quietly, even anomalously, across the professional and academic landscape. Taken-for-granted program assessment practices do not account for that impact. In this regard educational foundations resembles women’s studies structurally, which for many years developed “mainstreaming” initiatives across the university curriculum even while strengthening its own field identity through established academic units, journals, and a professional association devoted expressly to studies of, by, and about women.


Regardless of programmatic location, sustained foundational inquiry in and about education has sometimes become suspect among power elites and their followers, at certain historical moments subject to their withering satire and scorn, even punishable by death. But in the grand sweep of history such inquiry has proven nonetheless irrepressible, like grass growing back repeatedly after seasons of prairie wildfire. So long as people thirst, hunger, hurt, and struggle, some wise people among them can be expected to brave their own poverty, others’ derision, ostracism, and assorted punitive threats to ask: Why? Who profits at whose expense? What is a just society? How are we to live? What do we need to learn? From and with whom? Where and how?

Such foundational questions may be applied in either narrowly practical or broadly theorized terms, or both; present climate changes’ far-reaching effects make their parochial study necessary in multiple disciplinary, institutional, and professional locations, but still insufficient without their study also in much broader terms that comprehend educational changes more globally, as ecologically and economically significant cultural formation. Amid the market society’s climate-changing exploits, such large questions have become so urgent in everyday life’s overwhelming challenges that many folks are asking them now, with or without resources for deep study needed to think about their complexities consequentially—in myriad popular networks and idioms worthy of educational foundations scholars’ social research, “encounters” that Martin would likely recognize as educational, for better and for worse. How expedient it is for market-driven managers to let basic questions hang there in the air with toxic blame and apocalyptic urgency, seemingly everywhere—or better yet to polish them to a marketable high gloss, render them manageably shallow, and capitalize on them to generate fear and pugnacity, perhaps even with help from the state. Thus, unsupported by careful multi-disciplinary (macroscopic and microscopic) study rooted in arts and humanities, foundational questioning about education has become cheap in the opinion-spinning marketplace—especially for informal self-education, for profitable educational entrepreneurship, and for demonizing criticism of public schools and universities.

Nonetheless, in some quarters, we are told, foundational studies of education have become too useless and costly to support any longer. A climate of fear among both scholars and students in educational foundations is the result, whose ripples of discouraging impact on surviving programs that hitherto have flourished will doubtless be quantified and represented as their own decline in market value. Somehow, educators have to school both our selves and others to see this violent ECC’s contradictory shape, and remember: “shallow root systems will not survive the drought.” We have to re-learn how to inspire educational imagination in shared governance of our colleges and institutions, to refuse this political-economic ECC’s calculated seductions to fearful distraction from the morally pressing work of rethinking education for this GCC era that is far more likely to deepen than to level socioeconomic inequalities in learning.

With whatever resources lie within our grasp, can we respond to currently proliferating common-talk foundational questions about education that we spend our lives studying? And,
wherever we are, deliberately draw others into this study as well? I am thinking especially of the market society’s Outsiders: diversely thirsty, hungry, hurting, and struggling people whose minds are most intensely nagged by such questions, unheard by the market society’s professional educators and its policy leaders now technologizing public education. (Sadly, both educational thought and educational practice are often foreign to such policy leaders.\textsuperscript{74}) Educational foundations scholars do this conscientious uphill work already in various ways in diverse “marketplace” locations, often in poverty and deliberate obscurity.

**An Ad Hoc Society of Outsiders**

In sum, educational foundations scholars confront an obligation to endure despite two extreme climate changes—(1) global and (2) educational—both wrought by the market society’s radically demoralizing developments. GCC poses urgent moral demands for purposeful public education scarcely yet imagined, moral demands that ECC’s political-economic leaders often deny, overlook, trivialize, minimize, and otherwise discredit—but which some educational foundations scholars have begun to theorize, and which most of us should be studying carefully. ECC not only threatens to diminish, even abolish, educational foundations programs. It also devalues arts and humanities in which both educational foundations scholarship (regardless of its institutional location) and higher education itself have always been rooted. Meanwhile, as some foundations scholars have begun to theorize, this ECC is forcing radical reconfigurations of “education” as both a concept and an institutional practice to serve market values rather than moral values organized around our obligation to endure. Myriad forms of “cultural miseducation” have resulted from this climate change,\textsuperscript{75} worthy of educational foundations scholars’ extensive research. For example, public education’s well-documented chilly climate for women and other sexually, racially, linguistically, economically, and culturally diverse people represents another morally challenging dynamic, integral to the market-driven ECC—which many educational foundations scholars have begun to critique and theorize over the past quarter century, and whose difficulties GCC now well under way can only intensify. In sum, these climate changes make more work for educational foundations scholars, not less. For both GCC and ECC are posing new questions about meaning, value, method, fact, and historical direction at every practical turn—questions whose moral and cultural consequences mere psychometric assessments cannot address fully or sensitively enough to represent them responsibly.

However mired in, frustrated by, and responsive to the market society’s impacts upon both global climate and educational climate, educational foundations scholars who bring our conscientious sense of “obligation to endure” to these climate changes can only meet that obligation as deliberate Outsiders to the market society. We cannot get outside it, of course, because we swim in its toxic waters. But we can labor to avoid drinking toxins. We can act as the market society’s critical Outsiders in much the same sense that Virginia Woolf urged upon unschooled “daughters of educated men” in *Three Guineas*, as Outsiders to the British Empire living in Britain. Recall that on the eve of world war she urged upon them an ethic of cultural criticism and creativity, rather than cultural compliance and ambition, an ethic constructed from the civilizing, civilized values of their “unpaid-for profession,” household nurture, cultivated by “unpaid-for education” from their mothers’ four great teachers: poverty, chastity, derision, and subjection to

\textsuperscript{74} http://www.good.is/posts/an-open-letter-to-president-obama-from-bill-ayers.

government in which they had little or no voice. In 1938, Woolf recommended that they think of themselves as a disorganized “Society of Outsiders” transforming those oppressive teachers into a nonviolent ethic that involves pursuit of modest means for simple living, refusal to commit “adultery of the brain,” commitment to work in obscurity, and enactment of “freedom from unreal loyalties.”

Similarly, seventy-five years later, I propose that educational foundations scholars can best fulfill our present obligation to endure these two radically challenging climate changes by heeding gardeners’ instructive caveat: “Shallow root systems will not survive the drought.” That is, we need to preserve, sustain, and develop our field’s ancient roots in intellectual cultures worldwide with particular attention to their diversity—no matter what our location may be—while adopting the courageous ethical standpoint of Outsiders to the market society:

1. Pursuing our urgent inquiries and educational projects for social and ecological justice as resourcefully as we can, even if under-funded or not funded at all, aware that gifts of time for interpretive, critical, and normative contemplation on education may be the most vital currency for our timely purposes in this climate-changing era;

2. Seeking and accepting only those institutional and fiscal supports that cannot undermine our moral concerns about this era’s reconfiguring educational aims, practices, and policies and their likely effects upon both GCC and ECC;

3. Seeking no gain or glory from assessments of our work’s market value, content instead to witness, document, interpret, critique, and learn from meaningful educational movements, small and large, toward social and ecological justice, especially among those who do value such moral ends; and,

4. Working deliberately with various partners in arts and humanities and among local communities of the oppressed to create anomalous new cultural spaces strategically located both inside and outside schools, universities, and various other educational institutions—as the women’s and gender studies movement has done so brilliantly—spaces that can foster vital learning and foundational inquiry while strategically resisting and minimizing their climate-damaging commodification by the market society.

Such re-framing of educational foundations, wide-awake to both GCC and ECC wrought by the market society, implies the field’s necessary reconfiguration toward a future conscientiously intent upon our obligation to endure. That future is a topic for another occasion. But institutions whose leaders share educational foundations scholars’ moral concerns related to that obligation will hear our field’s self-defense, exert themselves to help us protect our work as Outsiders from deleterious market-driven impacts, and welcome chances to learn from our inquiries about education’s historical, conceptual, cultural, and practical reconfiguration for better and for worse. But, no matter how smart our scholarly self-defense in special issues like this may be, such effort will be wasted on those educational institutions whose leaders lose no sleep over moral sacrifices that the market society is demanding from them—at the expense of both the global climate and the educational climate, upon which depend our planet’s and our democracy’s powers to endure.

76. Virginia Woolf, Three Guineas (San Francisco: Harcourt, 1938), especially 109 ff.
Bibliography


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