CASES/TRENDS

#Stayathome #Fiqueemcasa: Opportunities for new governances of public education in Brazil

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Abstract   It is not possible to predict how we might re-exist/resist while most of our bodies fail to be hospitable to the virus. For now, what seems possible, and potent, is to make strange the solutions we have been putting into practice, while sharing the world and our bodies with this enemy / companion species. This article focuses on some solutions municipal and state education systems in Brazil have produced, in partnership with philanthropic foundations and educational businesses, to answer the demand for #stayathome #fiqueemcasa. Throughout the article, they are understood as the replication of proposals that have been circulating for some time, with the aim of affixing particular meanings to education. The article argues that the pandemic constitutes an opportunity for these networks to further redesign education in economized terms. It also addresses the effects of such redesigns and argues for the recognition of alterity, without which there can be no education.

Keywords Curriculum · Curriculum policy · Curriculum theory · Brazil

> *Rose is a rose is a rose is a rose.*
>
> Gertrude Stein (1990)

Prompted by recent recollections of a college biochemistry class in which I learned that a virus is a virus, I begin here with Gertrude Stein's well-known line. In that class, the simple sentence uttered by the professor probably did not have the scope of Stein's memorable phrase; it (only) meant that the virus has no place in the taxonomy that modern science uses to classify the world. A virus is simply *not*: it is not an animal nor a vegetable nor even life. Perhaps it is the totally other, the foreigner, in Derrida's terms (Derrida and Dufourmantelle 2003). Perhaps it is the stranger who reproduces and lives only in the body it makes suffer by invading its cells. If the body is a good host, they will die together. In

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unresponsive bodies, the virus will disappear without ever having been. It is a question of symbiosis or war.

Use of the war metaphor is not uncommon in reference to viral diseases, as it expresses our difficulty in understanding the virus as a "companion species" (Haraway 2008). This metaphor itself is possibly a symptom of the global disease the pandemic has exposed: war against the stranger as totally other. It is impossible to predict the effects of such exposure. The barbarity of the inequalities that globalization continues to both generate and insist on hiding is exposed in the nationalistic responses that the virus—which is without a nationality—has produced. Borders that were already closed between and within countries have been closed again. There was no union in Europe to alleviate the problems of Italy, the first health-care system to collapse in the West, or in Spain. The United States even used war-time legislation to force US companies to devote all their production to the domestic market, even if their factories were outside the country. The World Health Organization was not capable of managing a war response that, in the face of death, exposed the rawness of global capitalism.

Besides deaths, the war brings recessive economic effects, whose devastation also will not be experienced in equal ways—either between or within countries. The US economic aid package to mitigate the effects of the pandemic, for example, is greater than the gross domestic product (GDP) per capita of 2019 for any country in the global south. If it seems surprising that liberal states find themselves injecting huge sums into the private sector, it is not unreasonable to accept Žižek's (2020) conclusion that capitalist and conservative governments are being compelled to act like communists, giving preference to the common good over market mechanisms. After all, neoliberal rationality has never been without the state; rather, it works by putting the state in service of the market (Brown 2015). If it is noteworthy that strongly neoliberal economies have created state financial aid for the least favored—the maps of deaths—from New York City to Rio de Janeiro, leaving no room for optimism.

The virus, as an invisible enemy, like Stein's rose, evokes senses and memories, among them fear. It is impossible not to remember Foucault's biopolitics and its many uses for understanding eugenic and hygienic educational policies, for example. Early during the Italian isolation, when the lethality of the disease still did not seem to be much higher than that of the ordinary flu, Agamben (2020) recalled how, under different pretexts, governments have created states of exception. Even knowing that isolation policies dispose of our bodies and antagonize those who do not allow themselves to be controlled, like most of the world, I #stayathome #fiqueemcasa. Indeed, I even feel a certain envy of South Korea, with its "pharmachopornographic techniques for biomonitoring" (Preciado 2020, p. 177), adapted to control an enemy advancing symbiotic with my neighbor. Perhaps privacy is of little value when the virus—and especially our fear of it—has been injected into our bodies. Although it is not easy, I see myself accepting and even calling for "limitations on the freedoms implicit in these provisions", as well as relativizing, at least to a certain (unkown) extent, the "degeneration of relationships among men [these limitations] can produce" (Agamben 2020, p. 33). Fear keeps pushing the boundaries of what is thought possible.

Preciado (2020, p. 168) offered a great clue by asserting that "The virus…does nothing more than replicate, materialize, intensify, and extend to the entire population the dominant forms of biopolitical and necropolitical management that were already working on the national territory and its limits". After all, Preciado recalled (quoting Espósito), "all biopolitics are immunological" (p. 165), based on the exclusion of some protective acts. The images of humans/viruses piled up in refrigerated trucks and mass graves show the same old targets of necropolitics that already existed. These images

may be reassuring for those whose lives are deemed, in Butler's (2018) words, "grievable"—to the extent that these grievable lives are even able to leave their isolation to take a walk. Over and over again, the news reminds us that the victims are the elderly-virus, who have already lived long, and sick bodies-virus that have not taken good enough care of themselves. Meanwhile, statistical data expose the un-grievable, the invisible people: the Black, the poor, and the marginalized. As the geography of those who are more exposed to and those who are most protected from the virus becomes better known, #stayathome #fiqueemcasa, which has never been easy, decreases and brings a new normal that is, in fact, really an old acquaintance.

Throughout #stayathome #fiqueemcasa, there indeed was no doubt about the closure of schools, for the protection of the grandparents with whom many children live, and/or because protecting children is a tradition in our society. In late March, UNESCO reported that, in 138 countries, 80% of students #stayathome #fiqueemcasa, totaling almost 1.4 billion people (UNESCO 2020). In Brazil, where the president attacked the very idea of "stay at home" (but was not able to eliminate it, because the Supreme Court prevented that), surveys indicated that many parents wished to send their children to school only when they were sure their children would not be infected. The reopening of schools in countries that have come out of isolation may have increased this hesitation. For example, strategies that would continue isolation seem unlikely to be put into practice in Brazilian schools. Apart from infrastructural difficulties, any attempt to control the bodies of adolescents and children, which has been claimed as a requirement of the new normal, is highly unlikely to succeed.

While schools are closed, with no data available to predict the length of that closure, governments feel under pressure to find solutions. Even though some experts have advocated that children and teenagers focus on other activities for now and resume their schooling only after the pandemic is finally over, multiple ways of bringing school into the home have cropped up. Again, the challenges are unevenly distributed between and within countries.

The Brazilian educational system has both free public schools, which are managed by states and municipalities, and private and confessional schools. Eighty-two percent of enrollments are in the public system, with most private schools attended by children from middle- and upper-class families (IBGE 2020). Thus, it is not surprising that most challenges arise in Brazil's public schools: How can we think of remote education when large families live in a one-room house? When houses do not have computers or Internet coverage? When the school level of the surrounding adults is low, often lower than that of children? Perhaps it would better to wait for the pandemic to pass, but that also means leaving students without contact with their teachers, who often are their only source for reliable scientific information, as well as without peers with whom to learn and to play. After the pandemic, it is possible that many of these students will not return to school (World Bank 2020).

It is not possible to predict how we might re-exist/resist while most of our bodies fail to be hospitable to the virus. For sure (do we have any surety now?), the virus will die, leaving, like the rose, many evocations and memories. For now, what seems possible, and potent, to me is to make strange the solutions we have been putting into practice while sharing the world and our bodies with this enemy /companion species. Throughout the remainder of this article, I focus on some solutions that municipal and state education systems in Brazil have produced, in partnership with philanthropic foundations and educational businesses ("edu-business"), to answer the demand for #stayathome #fiqueemcasa. I take them, as Preciado (2020) suggested, as the replication, materialization, and intensification

of proposals that have been circulating for some time, with the aim of affixing some meanings (but not others) to education.

Indeed, the examples I cite in the first section are part of an empirical research project for which I have been mapping the governance networks of recent Brazilian curricular policies. During the elaboration and implementation of the common core, the new governance networks have produced pedagogical materials, some of which are presented as solutions to deal with the demands posed by the pandemic. As was the case before the pandemic, these solutions have increased the colonization of education by "exclusively managerial and technical-rational orientations [that] seemingly have returned with a vengeance" (Miller 2014, p. 18). In this article, I argue that the pandemic has offered an opportunity for these networks to further redesign education in economized terms. In the second section, I address the effects of such redesigns and argue for the recognition of alterity, without which I believe there can be no education. In a more essayistic tone, I make an analogy between the assault on our bodies that the pandemic has produced and the scanning and measuring procedures fostered by economized education.

Pandemic and opportunities

Since schools closed in response to the pandemic, in Brazil as across the world, strategies to deal with the situation have focused on remote education, in synchronous and asynchronous activities, with the massive use of not only the Internet but also television and printed materials. The problem is that, in contexts where technology is still the domain of a few, the managers of these educational networks do not know how to deal with the demands generated by the strategies that are presented. At the other end of the network are teachers without expertise, as well as without the minimum in technological resources—and often with an enormous resistance to technology. Thus, opportunities are created not only for business but also for the expansion of a new governance of public education in the country (Ball 2012) through strengthening of the political networks that have been at work in Brazilian education in recent decades.

The 1980s were, for Brazil, a long decade marked by the slow exit from the military dictatorship that began in 1964. The approval in 1988 of the Constitution for the new democratic state created a need to rethink any normative apparatus within different areas. In education, a new general national law was enacted in 1995; this was followed by a long and contentious process for the design of a national curriculum. In 2017, a compulsory common core (Base Nacional Curricular Comum, or BNCC) for the whole country was approved, after a discussion that took place throughout different governments. A retrospective look at this nonlinear process shows the relationship between demands for equity and social justice and for accountability (Macedo 2019b). Although these demands were championed by distinct political groups, they were not antagonistic in many issues being discussed. For example, both demanding groups advocated for a common core that, at the national level, defines what students need to learn. In general, only curriculum studies scholars and, ironically, far-right groups strongly opposed the common core.

The main point of contention was over the link between curriculum and assessment (national and international), a conceptual issue with implications for the common core's content as well as format. After a long political struggle, as expected, the document ended up incorporating the language of accountability by listing competencies, skills, and objectives. After all, over the past 25 years, the establishment of a centralized assessment system, as well as the country's participation in the Programme for International Student

Assessment (PISA), provided public policy with the greatest degree of continuity, spanning governments with differing ideological stances (Macedo 2013). The dispute, however, generated a generic, global description of the 10 major competencies, with emphasis on general premises about school education. Of course, the dispute did not end at that time; it continues during the current implementation phase of the approved document. In this section, I focus on this dispute as well as on the major role new forms of governance are playing in the process of public education. I argue that the pandemic has created an additional opportunity for the intensification of the language of accountability.

Like SARS-CoV-2 (the technical name of the virus that causes Covid-19), recent policies do not recognize borders—they probably never did—even though their effects are felt differently by various nations and within each nation. Ball (2012) sought to create tools for a more topological understanding of how global governance networks both affect and enact national policies. He defined such networks as decentralized "political communities" (p. 5), articulated around common problems in view of their solutions. In education, according to Ball, global governance has involved a set of social actors and has produced "new forms of sociability" (p. 9), whose stable core is the production of "new narratives about what counts as good policy" (p. 6). This governance is no longer carried out only by international organizations (e.g., the OECD and the World Bank), although there is no doubt about their participation in and influences on global policies; this is part of my central argument of this paper. Nevertheless, their actions intersect with the actions of other actors and, to a certain extent, are accomplished through them, resulting in a less directional style. Some of these actors are named and their actions are analyzed, by Ball (2012) and Ball and Junemann (2012), in different national policies: new philanthropy (i.e., corporate and familiar) and edu-business in particular, but also think tanks and hybrid actors, such as advocacy networks. Throughout the examples, Ball and Junemann (2012) traced global governance networks that put in place a new public management that allowed private companies rationality to colonize public policies. This process not only produced supposedly new solutions to problems but defined those problems and their relevance. The role of the state in these networks can be described as that of a mediator who puts forward solutions, while blurring the classic distinction between public and private.

Global governance networks in Brazil have mostly been formed by new corporate and family-owned philanthropic entities, as well as by networks formed and fomented by them. The global edu-business has little presence in these networks, probably because of protectionist legislative norms and a traditionally centralized state. In the field of large-scale assessments, for example, the presence of giants, such as Pearson, whose impact on PISA was highlighted by Ball (2012), has been controlled in Brazil by a centralized policy carried out by the Ministry of Education. Even so, in 2010, the conglomerate "established a strategic partnership with the Brazilian educational system" (Avelar 2016, p. 201). However, although edu-business was essentially restricted to local, family-owned companies and textbook publishers a few years ago, its performance has been expanding in terms of scope, especially through the formation of national and international public holding companies.

I do not intend, because it is neither useful nor possible, to construct an exhaustive mapping of the networks that have been created during the pandemic to offer solutions for state and municipal educational systems, and by this means, to reinforce their governance over educational and curricular policy. Rather, I present some examples of the private actors (i.e., philanthropic and edu-business) and their actions at this time, focusing on how these intersect with current curricular policy. Like Ball (Avelar 2016), when considering the relevance of these actors in the policy network, I do not want to

reduce the central role of multilateral agencies, such as the OECD, in this process. In effect, I operate from the premise that the quantitative and economical rationality of the OECD finds resonance with the new governance produced by the network of public and private agents. In this sense, I take philanthropic foundations, as well as edu-business, as relevant partners for the expansion of OECD's "governance through concepts" (Mausethagen 2013).

Before moving on to the examples, however, I think it is relevant (especially for an international audience) to make a brief digression to points out that the governance networks at work in Brazilian educational policy are not homogeneous in political terms. I am not referring to advocacy networks to the left of the political spectrum but to networks formed around what is conventionally called *neoliberalism*. Like the United States, Brazil faces a strong political polarization that was brought about the extreme right, which was dormant until the mid-2010s. Although it appears to be polarized with the center-left Partido dos Trabalhadores (Workers' Party) governments, the effective space of dispute for this group has been with a more center perspective—represented, for example, by the social democracy that ruled the country from 1995 to 2002, and that practically disappeared from the national political scene in recent elections. From an economic point of view, both positions operate by putting into practice the principles of neoliberal rationality—principles that, incidentally, were also incorporated in the third-way policy adopted by the Partido dos Trabalhadores from 2003 to 2015. Still, as I have argued (Macedo 2019a), the country has experienced a polarization in recent years between an inclusive version of post-war neoliberalism (which recognizes, for example, the effects of climate, minority groups, and some regulation of labor relations) and an ultra-liberal discourse referenced by Milton Friedman and Friedrich Hayek. I do not mean to imply that neoliberalism is effectively inclusive, only that it presents itself as such. I agree with Butler (2018), who argued that neoliberalism does not deliver the moral promise it makes but rather transforms, in economic terms "all members of the population as potentially or really precarious" (p. 20). Since 2018, Jair Bolsonaro's victory has represented the coming to power of a coalition that merges ultra-liberalism and religious conservatism and the denial of so-called globalism. Bolsonaro used strategies very similar to those of Donald Trump, also counting on the support of Steve Bannon, and many of the main actors in this election participated in what Mayer (2017) called the *Kochtopus*. It should also be noted that these two networks have intersected at many different times in Brazilian politics.

The majority of the governance networks involved with education operate with what I call "inclusive neoliberalism", while the extreme right has produced a rhetoric that disqualifies education. This does not mean, however, leaving the political discussion in this field, but rather entering into it with the clear intention of replacing the state, even while counting on its financing. This is the case with the educational package called Escola Mais Digital (School Plus Digital), which is the first example I present in this section of a solution offered to the state by edu-business during the pandemic. The educational holding company Bahema, formed in 2016, created this package in collaboration with national and international think tanks. The head of the company is also the director of the Rede Liberdade (Liberty Network), which espouses precepts of far-right think tanks. In the educational field, this network has been fighting for homeschooling and for voucher policies, justifying them by arguing for families' freedom of choice. The network describes itself as "a horizontal, decentralized, non-partisan and transparent thinking platform that brings together groups of liberal/libertarian activism" (Instituto Liberal 2020). The term *libertarian* is a reference to the American political movement started by Koch (Mayer 2017). The network articulates the ideas of, among others, the Atlas Brasil, which is part of the Atlas

network, and the Mises Institute, which is an ultra-liberal think tank dedicated to spreading Hayek's ideas.

The Escola Mais Digital is the digital version of the Escola Mais (School Plus), a project that offers an elite version of schooling to the lower middle class, using the institutions of São Paulo as its models. Until the beginning of the pandemic, the Escola Mais package was acquired by different private institutions; however, pandemic conditions enabled entry into the municipal public system in its digital version. Although the holding company had a good reputation for acquiring and managing a set of experimental schools, the Escola Mais Digital is a classic example of what new governance is fostering in Brazilian education. It operates with a curriculum described as "a matrix of knowledge and a matrix of competencies that focus on the integral development of our students, with special attention to socio-emotional development" (Escola Mais 2020). In Brazil, as well as in other countries in which the English "new sociology of education" has had a strong influence, curriculum policy discussions are usually polarized be Young's (2013) defense of a knowledge-centered curriculum and the American Tyler-related tradition with objectives, and more recently, competencies and skills. Even if the latter has prevailed in current policies, references to knowledge are usually present. The notion of competency refers explicitly to the 1999 UNESCO report and to the network P21, an initiative of Battelle Memorial Institute (2020), even though the formulated competencies are presented as behavioral learning goals. The package offers a set of study guides; live classes produced by the service provider; and didactic material, consisting of a collection of books available in the virtual environment, described on the publisher's website as "the great ally of schools in guaranteeing universal rights to education, in the current scenario of advancement of Covid-19" (Plurall 2020).

Although Escola Mais Digital is just one example of the advancement of edu-business over public education systems in Brazil, it is worrisome. In addition to mobilizing the large global networks that orbit around OECD rhetoric, we see its growth as the preferred edu-business model, in which the state becomes a consumer of products about which there is no public debate. As I highlighted, this has not, however, [yet] been the privileged model of action by global governance networks in Brazil, for which philanthropy is much more broadly used. Today, numerous foundations in the country remain dedicated to education, linked to both to the productive and financial sectors, and legally described as familiar, generally professing what I called *inclusive neoliberalism*. They act alone, as well as collaboratively, preferably in partnership with public systems, as well as directly with teachers, whose work they recognize and explicitly value. They offer technical expertise and financing to the public systems, while providing training and tools—and in some cases, financial support—to teachers. Thus, through philanthropic aid, these foundations are sponsoring adherence to their platforms and displacing the existing forms of governance in education. Unlike edu-business, however, the proposals they take up are subject to debate in the public sphere, albeit with unequal positions of power.

Since the beginning of the pandemic, foundations have been very active in education: providing material for remote education, training teachers and managers to act online, offering educational projects for schools and municipalities, funding remote educational experiences, and creating hotlines to help teachers use remote methods of education, among others. The vast majority of these actions have adapted, or just compiled, existing material so that they refer explicitly to the pandemic. Under the coordination of the Lemman Foundation, for example, a portal entitled #ParaoFuturoAgora (#ForTheFutureNow) gathered and made available its own materials as well as those of a network of 22 foundations that produce materials on the common core. The Fundação Lemman defined itself as

"a non-profit organization that collaborates with initiatives for public education across the country and supports people committed to solving major social challenges in the country" (Lemman Foundation 2020, para. 1). It is the most active foundation in the country in the area of education, having played a leading role in the preparation and approval of the common core. It coordinates with international universities and research centers, as well as with other national and international foundations (e.g., The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation). The portal brings together "distance education initiatives that seek to guarantee learning for children and young people from all over Brazil in times of Covid-19". The Foundation explicitly states that "no [remote educational initiatives in which we collaborate] are intended to replace the actual classes, but to provide resources and support for minimize the impacts of the new coronavirus on education" (Lemman Foundation 2020).

#ParaoFuturoAgora offers countless materials that are beyond the scope of this article. My interest is in understanding how the selection of what is made available during the pandemic reinforces a view of education that the Lemman Foundation and its partners have been seeking to hegemonize. For that, I follow some possible paths through the portal. The first offers classes and pedagogical materials on line—via WhatsApp (AprendiZap), on its own platform (Simplifica/Simplify), and on YouTube—for teachers, students, and parents. Even though the activities are not organic, refer to isolated contents, and do not relate to the common core's competencies and skills, they are presented as explicitly in accordance with the common core. Thus, the common core is remembered, and the idea of its mandate is consolidated at a time when its implementation is still starting in most states and municipalities.

The second path I want to discuss in a little more detail is the repository Aprendendo Sempre (Always Learning), which offers, among other things, "a selection of materials aligned to the BNCC for all educational grades" (Aprendendo Sempre 2020), leading to the Movimento pela Base (Movement for the Common Core). A huge number of links explain different aspects of the BNCC to teachers, as well as provide examples of how to use the document: "Lesson plans aligned BNCC…now adapted to be used at a distance". Although concepts of competency, for example, differ between foundations, all operate within a very active vision of education. Movimento pela Base (2020) is a social organization that brings together "entities, organizations and individuals from different educational sectors, who have in common the cause of the BNCC". Although references to the pandemic are perfunctory because the materials were produced before SARS-CoV-2, the possibility of circulating them among teachers when they need help amplifies its reach and reinforces the understanding that the Foundation wants to build on the document.

The notion of competency gains privileged space through courses on the subject, explanatory texts and videos, as well as tools are offered to "support networks and schools to better integrate the general competencies in their curricula" (Movimento pela Base 2020). As I highlighted, this notion has worked as a great metaphor around which the meaning of school education in Brazil has been disputed. The materials available in the portal, therefore, are part of the dispute over the meaning of education. One strategy the networks have used was to redefine the general competencies, which were formulated in a broad and non-operational, non-quantifiable way in the common core. In all the materials produced by the Foundation to help implement the BNCC, all 10 competencies have been replaced by "titles, which summarize its main features", aiming toward "facilitating understanding" (Nova Escola 2020). The instrumental approach is completed by platforms that allow for the "discovery" of combinations of competencies, skills, and school subjects for the various grades. In doing so, the foundations alter both the sense of competency and the competencies that were approved as constituting the common core, allying them with

the OECD's discussion, based on quantification and comparison (Popkewitz and Linblad 2016), as well as on the link between education and human capital.

The examples I have presented thus far function overtly or covertly to rescale the global policy networks for Brazilian curricular policy, emphasizing the movements produced during the pandemic, which are taken here as an opportunity to expand the action of these networks. I understand that the performance of such networks has resulted, even if in non-unitary ways, in narrowing the meaning of school education through the emphasis on teaching, and more especially, through the networks' control via quantification and economization. In this regard, they operate, through their own forms of governance, to strengthen policies that also rely on multilateral organizations (e.g., the World Bank and the OECD) with great influence on education. The strength of this governance is such that the Conselho Nacional de Educação, which legislates education in Brazil, when officially addressing elementary education during the pandemic, asserted, "What must be taken into account is the fulfillment of learning objectives and the development of competencies and skills to be reached by students in exceptional circumstances caused by the pandemic" (National Education Council 2020, p. 14).

Faster than the virus, it seems that standardized, testable, and quantifiable teaching/learning is colonizing policies and the imagination of parents and educators. Educational policies isolate knowledge and subjects—much as SARS-CoV-2 does to our bodies—and little by little, it tries to normalize the idea that isolation is the best strategy: #stayathome #fiqueemcasa.

The commitment of curriculum theory

Gradually, the virus dies in a symbiotic relationship with many bodies, and is defeated. The #stayathome #fiqueemcasa has begun to dwindle at various times and in differing ways. In newspapers and social networks, we are being introduced to the "new normal"—produced by the virus?—with isolated and unidentifiable bodies behind masks. In school photos we don't recognize the people we see: acrylic protection everywhere, masks and face shields, recess times inside rooms and screened patios. I take this view of school as an iconic representation of what has been happening in curricular policies [in Brazil] for some time: scanning and quantification. For this, I steal, in a very free reading, a statement by Preciado (2020, p. 179): "One of the central shifts of pharmacopornographic biopolitical techniques that characterize Covid-19 is that the personal domain…now appears as the new center of production, consumption and biopolitical control". This is nothing new, the author argued: in the control of individual bodies, "the border policies and the strict measures of confinement and mobilization that, as communities, we have applied during these last years to migrants and refugees are being reproduced" (p. 175). It is the only or the best solution, they say, in relation to the virus as well as to the common core. But could ethical and political violence, with its perverse effect on the recognition of the other, ever be the best solution, even if it were the only one? In seeking to address this question, I welcome as potent the strangeness that the school's new normal causes us to feel.

The governance produced by global political networks is based on premises that are not new to the field of curriculum. Possibly, the distinction is, as highlighted by Addey (2016), that "global governance…extends the global space of commensuration in education" (p. 311) by "sharing a political enterprise" (p. 690). With the promise of passports for employability and development, the idea of learning something scanned, accountable, and classifiable is created through the administration of the relationship between normal and

pathological. In the words of Appadurai (2001, p. 177), the "numerical representation is the key to normalizing the pathology of difference", producing generic individuals, as well as their other—both equally decontextualized. Strangely, in producing its rankings, the new governance hierarchizes to differentiate, but it does so at the expense of recognizing difference itself. Masks and face shields, behind which faces are hidden, make invisible the same smiles and eyes that quantified learning had already turned into skills and numbers.

Through quantifications and classifications, life is economized (an expression that Brown borrowed from Foucault) to characterize neoliberal normativity. For Brown (2015), the neoliberal economization, which fully replaces politics with the economy, dismantles the tension that pervaded the relationship between state and market, and thereby prevents the control of anti-democratic forces. Even the struggles for difference and their recognition do not seem to escape when "the neoliberal rationality's economization of the political, its jettisoning of the very idea of the social, and its displacement of politics by governance diminish significant venues for active citizenship and the meaning of citizenship itself" (p. 210). They end up intertwined in "relations of appropriation and ownership", since the very notion of recognition "imports a notion of the propertied subject; a subject for whom certain qualities or properties are prefigured as the bounds of intelligibility" (Bhandar 2011, p. 228). Bhandar discussed recognition in indigenous communities in Canada, and I use her work very openly to reflect the idea of ownership of knowledge and of competency. To the extent that the right to recognition involves the right "to debate the terms of recognition" (Modood 2013, p. 122), its economization ultimately paralyzes it. In Preciado's (2020, p. 172) formulation, the pharmacopornographic biopolitics are precisely the biocontrol devices that operate in economized lives "by inciting consumption and production of an adjustable and measurable pleasure".

The promise of the policies proposed by the new management is that of wide recognition, taking the form of a generic notion of equity. The common core will guarantee everyone the right to learn competencies and skills, reducing educational inequalities in a broken country. What is offered, however, is knowledge (or competencies) as an epistemological object external to the subject, whose consumption distinguishes students and qualifies them as equal. This promise of universal recognition is, however, paradoxical, as Butler and Anastasiou (2013) asserted, because property is the basis of dispossession. Thus, forms of action that "depend upon a valorization of possessive individualism" (p. 7) can hardly guarantee any recognition; they just keep "processes and ideologies by which persons are disowned and abject by normative and normalizing powers that define cultural intelligibility and that regulate the distribution of vulnerability" (p. 2). In the economized world order, "the only subject that can be recognized is one who is always-already proper to existing frameworks of cognisability" (Bhandar 2011, p. 241). Quantified learning, like masks and face shields, will not provide security for all children, just as actions derived from health policies will not prevent some humans-viruses from death. There is no way out, as Bhandar (2011, p. 241) pointed out, if we do not avoid the kind of recognition based on "'restricted economy' of meaning, history and life, caught within a logic of appropriation and reserve.

There is no doubt that an ethically responsible curriculum theory cannot close its eyes to the perverse effects of economization. Thus, I want to suggest that astonishment at the schools' new normal—which will not work in Brazil, we are sure—is made up of the memory of what does not fit into this recognition in the same faceless universal, which can only be experienced as ethical-political violence. After all, what fun is it to go to school and not be able to strongly hug the teacher or get that wet kiss from the school cook? If I argued that the warlike response to the virus materialized and enhanced possessive individualism,

I also want to revive this astonishment as potent for curriculum theory. What has been called schools' anachronism may be an expression of the difficulty of capturing education in the restricted economy that Derrida (1989, 2010) talked about. They seem to be infected by an affective memory that prevents them from changing and participating, without resistance, in an economized curriculum. The anachronism can, paradoxically, reactivate the excesses, the blocked difference, what still does not exist. In Miller's (2014, p. 28) terms, "all of these excesses and more are a part of…any incredibly messy, unpredictable, un-measurable, uncontainable, partially incoherent, unable-to-be-fully known educational experience". They speak of being together at a time when being apart seems to have been the great metaphor since long before SARS-CoV-2.

Almost 50 years after criticism of the reconceptualization of the economicism of Tyler's rationale, it seems that it is still necessary to insist on a curriculum theory committed to celebrating the life that continues to exist in schools, the curriculum *currere* (Pinar 2004). It is a theory that refuses the war metaphor (i.e., being better than, being number one) because it kills many possibilities of being and is incompatible with education. It is a theory that bets on companionship, "on bonds that connect us to the other, that teaches [us] that these bonds constitute what we are" (Butler 2009, p. 48). Recalling my biochemistry lesson, as viruses, we only exist in relationship with the other, and a curriculum theory must deal with "the ontological condition of the subject being an ethical relationship with the other—including the liminal, the monstrous, the non human" (Miller and Macedo 2018, p. 959). If the hope of winning the war by eliminating the virus or by ensuring equity in education cheers up many, it also moves us away from letting ourselves be contaminated by the other.

Perhaps it is important to deal with our own frustrations as, unlike new governance networks, curriculum theory cannot offer solutions. I do not deny its normative character or its capacity to sanction legitimate experiences as educational and even to produce policies. After all, any theory exists to suture its own failure, to control excesses, and to define what must be thrown into invisibility. I understand, however, that this does not make it legitimate to constitute curricular theory from desires for control and to justify it by offering solutions. For this reason, everything we as researchers of curriculum have offered seems little in the face of the multiple demands promulgated today by the pandemic, as well as in the past by other events. We cannot, however, allow ourselves to be guided by the desire for order or by the belief in an earlier order—both "schemes of intelligibility that [as any] register as assaultive" (Butler and Anastasiou 2013, p. 80). On the contrary, it is necessary to maintain the spirit of questioning such schemes because the commitment of responsible education requires us to, like Derrida (2010), assume a sense of urgency, because it is "due to the other" (p. 49)

Throughout this text, as in life, I tried to be faithful to this commitment; at no time, did I intend to suggest what to do now or when the pandemic is over. This is, without doubt, one of the most massive, far-reaching events of this century, and as such, it heightens our desire to overcome and solve it. In reviving solutions presented by the new forms of governance of education—a contemporary reiteration of the rationality that has long colonized us—I have attempted to argue that the problem may be exactly such desires. Even if it were possible, it would not be enough to annihilate the virus that separates us (in classifications). There is no solution, because other viruses will come. That is why the political commitment [of theory] is, in my view, to continue deconstructing the touted efficacy of each and every solution, and with that, to make room for the otherness that pulsates and that such a solution tries to expulse. When the pandemic is over, we will follow re-existing/ resisting/ and ceding, as we do now (#stayathome), after all ceding is also existing. Possibly, it will

be even more difficult to negotiate a school for everyone that respects each one's face, after the masks and face shields, the insecurities, and the demands of #stayathome #fiqueemcasa have strengthened the desire to control. The way out may be the tight hug and the wet kiss that are, we must insist, a major part of what we call *education*.

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