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The Curriculum of Joy: Six Poetic Ruminations

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> *The poem, like love, is consciousness made flesh. It quietly wakes us: across brain, across skin, the wet line of the tongue.*
>
> – Michaels (1995, p. 183)

> *The poem is important,*
> *as the want of it*
> *proves. It is the stewardship*
> *of its own possibility.*
>
> – Berry (1994, p. 21)

> *The poetic is the basic capacity for human dwelling.*
>
> – Heidegger (1971, p. 228)

In July 2003, I returned to R. W. Parsons Collegiate in Roberts' Arm, Newfoundland where I began my school teaching career in September, 1976. The school was holding a reunion for all students and teachers who had been a part of the school's history during its twenty-five years. Like many schools in Newfoundland, R. W. Parsons Collegiate has been closed, and what continues to live are the stories once lived and now remembered by the students and teachers who once occupied the physical, emotional, and psychological space named *R. W. Parsons Collegiate*. In returning to the school building I was reminded, and even a little haunted, by how young I was

when I taught there—only twenty-two years old, the same age my son is now. My wife Lana and I were both teachers. Lana taught kindergarten, and I taught almost all curricular subjects in grade seven. I do not remember that I was a very good teacher. I especially recall that I was always preoccupied. At the time I was trying to complete a graduate thesis about the fiction of Rosamond Lehmann. Every evening and many weekends I holed away in a mostly empty room of the house we rented and worked on the thesis. Because I was writing a thesis, I couldn't help Pleaman who was building a house. Because I was writing a thesis, I couldn't help Glenn cut trees and haul them out of the forest with his Ski-doo. Because I was writing a thesis, I couldn't accompany Ralph to check his lobster traps. I couldn't do a lot of things because I was busy writing a thesis. I never did finish it. I missed numerous opportunities to learn from people with unique talents and experiences because I was compelled to complete a thesis about a minor British fiction writer almost no one has ever heard about.

What I remember vividly about my time in Roberts' Arm is that I worked hard. I coached basketball, participated in endless extracurricular activities, and went on field trips. I have photos of laughing students on Winter Carnival Day and hikes in the forest behind the school. But what I remember most about my teaching in Roberts' Arm is how, for the whole two years I lived there, I was keenly eager to leave Roberts' Arm. I often felt like I had been suddenly stranded in an alien land. I was convinced that I accomplished nothing. At the end of two years, on the second last day of the school year, I said to Lana, *I can't wait to leave*! Lana tempered my outburst with a few calm words. She knew that a final surprise was still waiting for me. That evening, with the excuse that she still needed to pack up some books and papers in her classroom, I went with her to the school. She said, *Let's take a final look at the gym. You spent a lot of time there in the past two years.* We entered the dark gym, and as I was about to turn on the lights, they flashed on, and my entire grade seven class shouted, *Surprise*!! They then invited Lana and me to a sumptuous dinner of roast turkey, and regaled us with stories and skits about our time together.

After more than twenty-five years, I remember most that during the whole time I lived and taught in Roberts' Arm, I was always intense and tension-filled about everything, all the time. I needed to complete the thesis. I needed to discipline Ricky Normore. I needed to learn how to use the Gestetner. I needed to please the principal. I needed to teach my students everything in the textbooks. I arrived in Roberts' Arm the day after a car accident killed four of the town's young people. A cloud of grief was draped over the town. And because I didn't really want to be there either, I carried my own grief. As a young man I didn't smile enough, laugh enough, relax enough. I was always looking over my shoulder to see who was watching

me; I was fearful all the time. Afraid of parents, the principal, students, the superintendent, who I assumed each held a long checklist of expectations and a sharp red pencil for evaluation. As a teacher, I always felt like an imposter who just couldn't get the pose right.

When I returned for the school reunion in the summer of 2003, I was eager to investigate how well I remembered my experiences in Roberts' Arm after a quarter century. I looked forward to meeting old colleagues and students, breathing the air of the school building, touching the walls, looking at old photographs, swapping stories. When I walked into the building, my first and persistent memory was the ache of fear I knew the first time I walked into the building in 1976. I quickly remembered that I had never really wanted to be a teacher. I slipped into teaching because I needed to make some money. I wanted to be an astronomer, a lawyer, a librarian, a pastor, or a writer (I have changed my mind many times regarding questions of vocation).

A recurring theme of my life is that I have always wanted to be somebody else or at least be someplace else. I always seem to be unsettled. I resonate with Jeanette Winterson's (1995) observation that "we know that the universe is infinite, expanding and strangely complete, that it lacks nothing we need, but in spite of that knowledge, the tragic paradigm of human life is lack, loss, finality, a primitive doomsaying that has not been repealed by technology or medical science" (p. 19). Nevertheless, I also agree with Winterson that "the arts stand in the way of this doomsaying. Art objects" (p. 19). So, I write poetry as a way of learning to be settled, a way of artistic practice that holds me firmly in positions where rhythm, hope, and creativity intersect. My practice as an educator and scholar is inextricably connected to poetry. I am not promoting a romantic view of poetry as a panacea for life's challenges and problems. I certainly do not want to sound like a television huckster with another scheme for rock-hard abs, or a cure for baldness, or a guaranteed recipe for a tender pot roast. I claim, like Winterson and countless others, that poetry is a practice of language and literacy that can foster hope and wisdom for living more effectively and productively in the world. Simply, my claim is that attention to words can open up possibilities for attending to the world and becoming in the world. As an educator, I am convinced that all of us—students, teachers, parents, curriculum theorists, educational leaders—need to attend to multiple ways of knowing and becoming. We need to acknowledge how we are all interconnected in creating the world by exploring and composing possibilities for living. Poetry offers significant ways for learning and practising our living in the world.

This essay is a work in progress, like all my writing, like all my living. As an education scholar and researcher, I am trained in the traditions of human science research, and as a poet I am always seeking to understand

the ways that poetry opens up possibilities for knowing and being and becoming. Winterson (1995) claims that "it is the poet who goes further than any human scientist" (p. 115). The Canadian poet Tim Lilburn (1995) echoes Winterson's claim: "Around everything is an epidermis of narrative, a layer of hypotheses, orders, causal grids by which the world is rendered intelligible. Poetry's fundamental appetite is ecstatic; its curiosity yearns beyond this barrier of intelligibility to know the withinness of things" (p. 163). As a poet, I am eager, in some ways, to embrace Winterson's claim, but I don't really want to argue that the poet goes further than the human scientist because I prefer to make the claim that the poet *is* a human scientist. Where many human science researchers focus on research questions and methods, conclusions and implications, as a poet I am often more intrigued with how language works to open up possibilities for constructing understanding. Therefore, I work with language in the kinds of ways that a sculptor works with stone, wood, bone, ice, steel, and bronze. This essay is shaped out of citations, poetry, exposition, narration, and rumination in order to evoke a textual space for both invitation and provocation. It is my hope that this essay, by performing an artful work of words, will invite readers to ponder issues of curriculum and joy by provoking readers to remember their experiences and by inviting readers to ruminate on their conceptions of curriculum, especially in the tangled complexity of each day's demands.

As I write this essay, I am living for a year on sabbatical leave in York Harbour, Newfoundland, on the south shore of the Bay of Islands, in a cottage near the Atlantic Ocean. Lana and I left our adult children, our neighbours, our colleagues, our church community in Vancouver and Richmond, and we drove across Canada (and learned among many curricular lessons that this splendid nation from the Pacific Ocean to the Atlantic Ocean is united by a passion for Tim Horton's coffee and donuts). We arrived in Newfoundland last summer and settled into the cottage in York Harbour in September.

I am focusing much of my energy on poetry, writing and reading poetry, as well as reading books about poetry, listening to poetry, above all, learning to live poetically. In my sabbatical solitude I am attending to the seasons and weather, to the light in the mountains and harbour, to the sounds of seagulls and crows and sparrows. And I am learning that I have lived too much of my life in prosaic ways when I really want to live poetically. In *To Be the Poet* (2002), Maxine Hong Kingston writes: "The Poet truly lives the happening moment, and gives the very bodily feeling of it to whosoever would read. To put myself into the state of poetry, I need to learn the habit of living constantly within the present moment" (pp. 10-11). Kingston decides that "if I were to make an hour for poetry every day, I would change my life" (p. 31). In a kindred way, Andy Patton (1995) muses that "we live in prose. A lifetime of reading it, the prose of daily life—street signs, news-

papers, magazines, prices, memos, narratives—accustoms us to moving so quickly through language" (p. 157).

Above all, I am seeking to live with joy. I live a privileged life as a husband, father, poet, professor. But much of my life I have not been joyful. Here in York Harbour in this year of the American and British invasion of Iraq, this year of terrible war, I am more attentive to violence, corruption, despair, destruction than ever before. There is no escaping a war like the Iraq war. Even here in York Harbour, my neighbour's son is stationed with Canadian forces in Afghanistan. When the son returned for a brief furlough, the first thing he wanted to do was hike in the forest behind his parents' house. While I have lived here, several friends have died, and several more are fighting cancer, and others have lost their religious faith, and others have broken up relationships. I am not hiding in York Harbour. This town is inextricably connected to the whole world. With television, and the Internet, and newspapers, and telephones, and the post office, York Harbour is connected to the same information network as anyone in the industrialized and/or wealthy nations of the world. But in this rural location, so different from my typical urban life in Vancouver, I am ruminating on the possibilities of a curriculum of joy, a curriculum that attends to wonder and creativity and rhythm and poetry. These days in York Harbour I am living this curriculum of joy. Of course, I will face a daunting challenge when I return to Vancouver and the urban busyness of my ordinary life. But right now, thoughts of returning are not part of this present day's commitment, experienced with Kingston's conviction about living in "the happening moment." During this sabbatical year I turned fifty years old, and I realized with a whipping gust of Atlantic winter wind in the face that if I want to live differently, I need to pursue it. Now.

In *Images of Love, Words of Hope* (1991), Jean Vanier provides sturdy wisdom for shaping the curriculum of joy. Vanier observes that "we give value to people by the way we look at them, by the way we listen to them, by the way we touch them, and care for them. We give value to them by the way we are present to them" (p. 12). This is what I seek to do in my poetry—to be attentive, listening with care, seeking to learn by heart. Moreover, Vanier notes that "parents, teachers, educators, ministers and priests must all remember that our responsibility is not to form, change or transform young people, but to be good shepherds. Our role is not to manipulate people or to make people in our image…. True education is to help people grow up to be themselves, walking in freedom" (p. 57). In the beginning of my teaching in Roberts' Arm, I was convinced I had to shape students in the idealized image of some unknown, unseen (really obscene) student. While I smiled democratically and diplomatically, I was really dreaming about how to get my way dictatorially. While I sought to present a compelling image of educa-

tion, I was consumed by a compulsion for control. I spent years learning the fundamental lesson that teaching and learning are always part of a process, much like the process of composing a poem, a process that involves commitment, attentiveness, patience, anticipation, and courage. As a beginning teacher I wanted control; I was afraid of any sign of a lack of control. In poetry I am not trying to close anything down; I am not trying to understand everything; I am not seeking control. Instead, I am open to the world, open to process and mystery, open to fragmentariness, open to understanding as an archipelago of fragments. This does not mean I am not trying to make connections in understanding, but I am no longer pretending that I understand what I do not know. I am fundamentally *agnostic*, knowing above all that there is much I do not know and will never likely know.

In *Pedagogy of the City* (1993), Paulo Freire, who always captivates me with his abiding sense of dynamic hope rooted in a vibrant heart, calls for the reformulation of curriculum in order "to build the public schools we want: serious, competent, fair, joyous, and curious—a school system that transforms the space where children, rich or poor, are able to learn, to create, to take risks, to question, and to grow" (p. 37). So, in this essay I ruminate on a curriculum of joy in an autobiographical, narrative, poetic text that seeks, above all, to breathe with joyfulness. I offer six poems written out of daily life in York Harbour and six brief ruminations on poetry as a contribution to an ongoing conversation about conceiving and shaping and practising a curriculum of joy in schools and everyday living. As Adrienne Rich (1993) observes eloquently:

> A poem can't free us from the struggle for existence, but it can uncover desires and appetites buried under the accumulating emergencies of our lives, the fabricated wants and needs we have had urged on us, have accepted as our own. It's not a philosophical or psychological blueprint; it's an instrument for embodied experience. (pp. 12–13)

A curriculum of joy is a lived and living curriculum, always generated by questing and questioning, by searching and re-searching. A curriculum of joy is always connected to experiences of the body, heart, imagination, and mind. Poetry is one of multiple ways to attend to "embodied experience" as a text that invites literate engagement of writing, narrating, and revising. The following six ruminations and poems generated in the sabbatical space of a year in York Harbour are a part of that practice of embodying experience and experiencing the body in ways that I have too often failed to do.

1. Poetry invites artful attending.

John Steffler (1995) advises that "poetry is first of all a state of mind. Before it's a verbal structure, it's a way of perceiving and interacting with the world,

including oneself, one's own life" (p. 48). Steffler observes that "poetry is a readiness for intensity and acuity and surprise" (p. 48). As a school teacher I was always entranced by a chimerical infatuation with order, with a relentless pursuit and propagation of sense, with a sense of being irrevocably sentenced to the sentential sentence. But as a poet I grow more and more enamoured with the echoes of wonder and mystery and strangeness and fantasy that I hear when I attend to the words and world all around me. But I still have a long long way to go in order to learn what the early twentieth century philosopher of mysticism, Evelyn Underhill (1999), claims is the necessary wisdom for living: "Action, effort and tension, then, are to be the outward expression and substance of such a life of spiritual creativeness; yet all this is to hang on and be nurtured by an inward abidingness in simplicity, stillness and peace" (p. 73). In middle age, and living on sabbatical leave in a small town, I am daily conscious of being constantly in process, always seeking to understand my relationship to the earth and the wholeness of past, present, and future. Poetry is integral to this curriculum of learning to live with artful attending, as I seek connections to the rhythms of weather and seasons and wind.

MIST

October 24, 2003

this morning, the mountains
around York Harbour grow gray,
and leaves like orange swallows
write light on the day's dark page

the harbour blows out to the ocean,
intent on going some other place,
and perhaps the whole harbour
will soon be a hole, a mucky basin,
with more mountains upside down,
the negative of everything I see

the air is warm, strange since
it is almost Halloween, and the ocean
churns and yearns while the wind
pushes clouds, waves, leaves, trees,
so everything, except me, is
rain-washed and leans into winter

B. B. King sings the blues
like he's watched storms come and go:
"You give me so much trouble, baby.

I don't know what to do. I ain't got nothing,
ain't got nothing now, baby,
and it's all on account of you."

if I had any sense, instead of feeling
trapped in a carwash, holed up
in a corner writing this poem,
I would bundle up in blankets
and watch the storm from the patio
but will later listen to a TV meteorologist
describe the storm with bated breath,
always seeking a mediated reality

I know I can't render what I see, must
surrender to the limits of language,
my words no more than an exasperated
expiration, a hint of impossibility,
everything seen in a mist

with a gasp, the storm is spent, now
the mountain I couldn't see is so close,
I can reach across the harbour and touch it
and Leonard Cohen reminds me
in his writing he blackens the page,
and countless crows ride the wind

2. Poetry invites balanced breathing.

In York Harbour I am learning to breathe, to attend to the way my lungs rise and fall like the harbour rises and falls, the way the gulls and crows and ospreys ride the currents of wind, the way the seasons roll into town on a circuit, both surprising and predictable, like winter arrived recently wrapped in windy whispers, enough to stop the heart in the circle of long months full of snow and ice. I agree with Donald Hall (cited in Ciuraru, 2000), who claims that "the primal material of poetry … is language that gives ecstasy to the body" (p. 101). In York Harbour I am learning to listen to the heart, to the systole and diastole of the heart's beat like a Norah Jones song. Vanier (1991) offers an invitation that I find more and more irresistible: "Let us simply stop and start listening to our own hearts" (p. 82). For so much of my life I have hurried here and there, out of breath. In poetry I am learning to breathe. As Kingston (2002) concludes, "I've discovered what stanza breaks are for. In the space, breathe. Before and after the poem, breathe" (p. 80). Instead of living breathlessly, I am learning to live breath-fully.

SNOW
January 20, 2004

we just returned from snow-shoeing
around the arc of York Harbour,
a quick-tempered, erratic day, at least
some of the time, since already the snow
has started and stopped a few times
like it is not sure its heart is in winter,
and the sun sometimes cast a Caribbean gold,
soon diffused by fog's quick stealth,
and now snow reduces visibility to zero,
except visibility is really expanded
inestimably to billions of snowflakes
(and somebody claimed no two
snowflakes are the same, a bold claim
since clearly no one has ever counted
and compared all the snowflakes in
the world's history of winter), and
visibility, the ability to see sure,
is magnified to billions, at least,
and I see snowflakes chase one another,
march together like obedient soldiers,
dance up a storm, while the scrawny
fingers of the birch tree try to catch
some with no more success than I
can catch the wide wild ways
of snow in this poem, or any poem

3. Poetry invites inimitable imagining.

I have always been both impressed and puzzled by Wallace Stevens's (1954) claim that the imagination is "the one reality/In this imagined world" (p. 24). In this privileged space of sabbatical silence and solitude, I am sensuously connected to the world around me, and I eagerly seek a new kind of literacy that can translate and understand the signs that comprise this rural world, different and still much the same as the urban world I know intimately. In this world my literate practice includes remembering, attending, and dreaming. In poetry I am researching autobiography, and I am asking unsettling questions about the past, but I am mostly learning to dream again, to challenge the images that have, for a long time, shaped me and my perceptions, in order to imagine other possibilities. In poetry I engage in a hopeful enterprise of imagination, not yet stymied by pressing demands of imple-

mentation, conscious that imagination, enthused by poetry, must precede practice. Walter Brueggemann (2001) advises that the "poetic imagination is the last way left in which to challenge and conflict the dominant reality" (p. 40). And so, in poem after poem, I seek to hear a call to inimitable imagining.

SNOW
January 22, 2004

three gulls, gray and white, gasp
in a gust of winter wind

spruce trees like stoic giants
guard the deserted house
on the hill next door

the day is a Gerry Squires lithograph,
lines of light etched lightly

in this place where we dwell
for a year before resuming our old lives,
we leave a swathe pressed by snowshoes

but our tracks fill up almost as fast
as we walk, we will leave few traces

while the gulls write a long story
with their wings like quills
filled with India ink and hoarfrost

4. Poetry invites hardy hope.

Classrooms are the locations where we can enthuse and infuse an ethos of hope. Cynicism is a destructive energy because it displaces hope. Instead of cynicism we need an indefatigable hopefulness, inspired by the community of radical educators that includes Herbert Kohl, Paulo Freire, and Ted Aoki. Brueggemann (2001) claims that "speech about hope cannot be explanatory and scientifically argumentative; rather, it must be lyrical in the sense that it touches the hopeless person at many different points" (p. 65). Classrooms can be filled with laughter, amazement, and joy. Classrooms can be locations where teachers and students know their feet are firmly rooted in the earth's present, even while they reclaim the long past and dream poetic possibilities for the future.

SNOW

January 24, 2004

yesterday we snow-shoed to Mad Dog Pond hidden
in a mountain valley on a trail that winds from
the post office over marsh through tuckamore,
even remnants of an ancient forest fire, in air
so still and cold we had no breath for talking

amidst alders and birch, tall, spare, spindly,
like Alex Colville's image of the elderly naked
Alex Colville, beauty seen where most won't look,
while spruce and fir trees wore snow like ermine
wraps on the shoulders of Chekhov's dowagers

and today dollops of snow cling to windows
like miniature starfish, and in the backyard I can
still see the wyes of birds' feet and the geometric
circles of a cat or rabbit or my imagination at least

while seagulls are suspended in northeast gusts,
attached to the sky by filaments of hope,
and snow slowly sweeps into waves,
rises up like sea spray, sparkles in the wind

renders the world unfamiliar, hides honed
edges, creates a world of curves, undulations,
and round echoes like Elizabeth Arden
make-up conceals crevices, gaps, stark lines

and Farley Mowat is wrong, once again, since
the Inuit do not have a voluminous vocabulary
for snow (Franz Boas was simply misinterpreted,
exotic fiction always more entertaining than truth)

only a poet with a neurotic compulsion for
control would try to embrace snow in the alphabet,
an impossible task since snow is no more
nameable or tameable in words than I can shovel
the snow in my backyard back into the sky

5. Poetry invites prophetic passion.

Can there be any teaching or learning without passion? I don't think so. Still I have spent much of my life, running headlong and heartlong into passion, then scurrying away from the inevitable fire full of threats. Some days, I have let passion pass because I was full of fear, but passion always returned. The poet's vocation is to seek the language that generates passion, and hold fast to the efficacy of the prophet's voice, full of courage. And, in turn, this too is the teacher's passion because as Brueggemann (2001) proclaims, "Where passion disappears there will not be any serious humanizing energy" (p. 32).

Even though I live in splendid rural solitude I write these words in the shadow of America's war in Iraq, faraway but still fought in my backyard. I write these words in the gruesome light of atrocities wreaked by smiling soldiers on prisoners of war, and I know there is no hiding from culpability, and grief, and the responsibility to speak in other languages, not yet owned by politicians and generals and propagandists. Always I return to Freire (1993) who asserts:

> I think the role of a consciously progressive educator is to testify constantly to his or her students his or her competence, love, political clarity, the coherence between what he or she says and does, his or her tolerance, his or her ability to live with the different to fight against the antagonistic. It is to stimulate doubt, criticism, curiosity, questioning, a taste for risk taking, the adventure of creating. (p. 50)

SNOW
January 25, 2004

this morning
we shovelled snow
for over an hour,
an aerobic workout
(surprising how much
one can perspire
even in frigid air)

we carved a path
for *The Western Star*
(urgent daily news)
and tramped to the cliff
to see the winter sea

this afternoon our path is
still a jagged serpentine scratch

in the backyard snow
like a sheet of vellum

soon more snow
will come and erase
the line we wrote
after breakfast, and
we'll clear more
paths like drafts
of writing, impermanent,
transitory traces, both
visible and invisible

the backyard is a text
scribbled by fluted flux,
flowing beyond bounds
of language and literacy,
writing in the moment,
an eternal present
like a palimpsest,
nothing ever lost, even
if no longer legible

6. Poetry invites light language.

In poetry I seek wonder and wisdom, and I know the surprising entanglement of the one with the other, like a dance and dancer, seemingly seamlessly one, and only one, in the singular performance that conjures the traces of reality that shape what we know and can know. So, in all my poetry I enter a performative space where the poem and poet are seemingly seamlessly one, and only one, full of wonder and wisdom for living with joy in the world. Steffler (1995) ponders:

> What, ideally, can poetry offer that other types of writing cannot offer, or at least not so directly or purely? It seems to me that at its best—and this is what we search for in poems all the time—poetry approximates, through the powerful use of language, our fundamental, original sense of life's miraculousness, its profound and mysterious meaning. (p. 47)

Have you ever seen a maple leaf after winter, filled with the sun, cut its shape in spring ice? The curriculum of joy is all about astonishing silence, giving attention to the salience of silence, approaching silence with held breath, inviting silence to flow in the body and imagination, and knowing the amazement of silence, another language too seldom heard, a fertile language full of surprise. This is the language of poetry. As Heidegger (1971)

suggests, "Poetry proper is never merely a higher mode (melos) of everyday language. It is rather the reverse: everyday language is a forgotten and therefore used-up poem, from which there hardly resounds a call any longer" (p. 208). We need poetry, the language of poetry, in order to attend to the lyrical resonances of language, the light-infused lines of searching, the conscious composing of hope, especially in the midst of stories that undermine hope.

SPRING
April 21, 2004

in brief eccentric moments
spring almost consumes
York Harbour with light etched
stories everywhere, even
in the winter-scribed mountains,
but most of the time
spring seeps and creeps still
into town like it doesn't
want anyone to know,
a cat's process of starts
and fits, interruptions

and surprises, glimpses
of blue sky and sunlight,
followed by sudden snow
and a gust of wind that takes
your breath away, knocks
you off your feet even

every few minutes
the sump pump shakes
the cottage, confident
no memory of winter
will flood the basement,
its vibrations a back-up
chorus, as spring gurgles,
creeks, swirls, and everyone
sighs with a final gasp
of relief, *spring is here*,

and today in the front yard
Lana found a violet crocus
with a brazen orange pistil
gaudier than a San Diego
bird of paradise poking

through the decayed grass
and faded brown earth,
so I danced a welcome,
only to hear the radio deejay
gleefully predict twenty-five
centimetres of snow:
erratic spring tease

Afterthought

September 11, 2004

I have now returned to the urban world of Vancouver, and the busyness of the University of British Columbia where I teach. I have revised this essay in response to the insightful and careful suggestions of several reviewers, and I am sure I will continue to revisit this essay many times. The sabbatical year ended only weeks ago, but it seems much longer, just like York Harbour feels much further away even than the vast expanse of Canada. I do not know what will be the residue and resonance and resolution of the sabbatical year with its poetry and poetic living, its attending to seasons, light, language, and rumination, but I am hopeful that I have learned some wisdom for living a curriculum of joy in the midst of urban demands. Perhaps in a year's time, I will write in frustration that I have really learned little about practicing and living a curriculum of joy. Of course, I do not know what the next year holds. But that is not a pressing concern right now. My goal is simple: to live this day with a sense of joy, to learn to live each day with joy, as I lived many days in York Harbour with joy. Of course, this is not the whole curriculum that infuses and generates my pedagogy, my teaching and living and becoming. Still, like a poem in process, I linger with words, literally and literately, confident that in language I can find the way, or at least an inviting way.

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