

# Module 4

## Understanding Curriculum as a Political Text

### Introduction

### Objectives

By the end of this module students will be able to:

- Understand the various ways different political ideologies are taken up by curriculum scholars within the field of curriculum studies;
- Analyze different political ideologies that inform curriculum policy;
- Identify the possibilities and limitations in which the curriculum reproduces the political agendas of different organizations (government, special interest groups, corporations, etc.); and
- Begin to engage with the playful and aesthetic processes of curriculum theorizing.

### Activities



#### 1) Read

Read the required reading and at least one of the optional readings.

#### Required Readings:

Pinar, W. (2011). *What is Curriculum Theory?* New York, New York: Routledge. **(Read Ch. IV)**

#### Optional Readings:

Apple, M. & King, N. (1977). [What do Schools Teach?](#) *Journal of Curriculum Inquiry*, 6 (4), pp. 341-358.

Dillon, J. T. (2009). [The Questions of Curriculum](#). *Journal of Curriculum Studies*, 41 (3), pp. 343-359.

Giroux, H. A. (1990). [Perspectives and Imperatives Curriculum Theory, Textual Authority, and The Role of Teachers as Public Intellectuals](#). *Journal of Curriculum and Supervision*, 5 (4), pp. 361-383.

Lather, P. (1986). [Issues of Validity in Openly Ideological Research: Between a Rock and a Hard Place](#). *Interchange*, 17 (4), pp. 63-84.

#### 2) Watch the following Videos:

[Performing Feminist Poststructural Research by Patti Lather](#)

### **3) Discussion**

Be prepared to draw on the readings to discuss your interpretations of the authors' main arguments in relation to your peers' reader responses. How have the readings helped to challenge your prior assumption about the concept of understanding "curriculum" as a political text? A nice strategy would be to do the readings, and then utilize them to analyze the possibilities and limitations of the ideologies put forth in a curriculum policy document and/or a textbook. According to the authors, what role does the "curriculum" play inside and outside the larger educational systems either here in Canada or in the United States? As an administrator, teacher, or student what role has curriculum politically played in terms of your lived experiences at school? How might the authors in this module help you to make sense of such lived experiences? These aforementioned questions are just suggestions to consider while taking up the readings and responding to them.