

1 There are principles to defend. 2 Pedagogical hermeneutics. 3 From critical to post-critical pedagogy. 4 From cruel optimism to hope in the present. 5 From education for citizenship to love for the world.

Manifesto for a Post-Critical Pedagogy

Naomi Hodgson
Joris Vlieghe
Piotr Zamojski

MANIFESTO FOR A POST-CRITICAL PEDAGOGY

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Fig. 1. Hieronymus Bosch, *Ship of Fools* (1490–1500)

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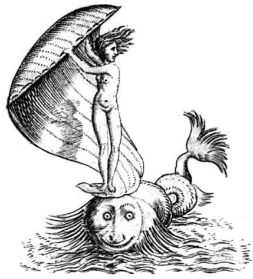
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Introduction

Naomi Hodgson, Joris Vlieghe, and Piotr Zamojski

The *Manifesto for a Post-Critical Pedagogy* was written in September 2016 and first presented at Liverpool Hope University on October 17, 2016. At that launch event, we heard a keynote response from Tyson Lewis and further invited responses from Geert Thyssen and Olga Ververi. From the outset, having made the manifesto available online in open access, we were encouraged by the enthusiastic response and the genuine interest shown by colleagues internationally. We therefore chose to invite further responses, to broaden the conversation, but did so specifically from early- to mid-career scholars. Hence, we also include here responses from Oren Ergas, Norm Friesen, and Stefan Ramaekers.

When seeking a way to publish the manifesto and the responses to it, we looked purposefully beyond the usual avenues taken in our field, for a publisher in keeping with the ethos of the manifesto itself. We thank punctum books and Eileen Joy and Vincent W.J. van Gerven Oei in particular for the confidence and enthusiasm they have shown in this project.

The strong commitment to open access publishing by punctum books is part of a shifting environment for academic publishing in which the demands of visibility and metrics compete with, and compromise, the public dimension of *publication* in academia. We are grateful to Liverpool Hope University for the Higher Education Impact Funding we

received to support the cost not only of publication but also of maintaining the book in open access in perpetuity.

We would also like to thank the Centre for Higher Education and Policy Analysis (CEPA) at Liverpool Hope University and the Philosophy of Education Society of Great Britain (PESGB) for their support in hosting and funding the launch seminar.

We provide no commentary here on the manifesto itself, or the responses that follow it in this book, other than to say that, as a manifesto it is intended to be short and to contain no references. The responses are more academic in style but still adopt a more conversational tone than a regular text, and they vary in length. The conversation form is taken up more fully in the final chapter in which we seek to address some of the questions they raise in ways that, we hope, provide further provocation and keep the conversation open.

**MANIFESTO FOR
A POST-CRITICAL
PEDAGOGY**

Manifesto for a Post-Critical Pedagogy

Naomi Hodgson, Joris Vlieghe, and Piotr Zamojski

Formulating principles, in philosophy of education at least, seems to hark back to a form of normative, conceptual analysis associated with Anglophone, analytic styles of philosophy. But poststructuralist and postmodernist philosophy — at least as they have been taken up in educational theory and in popular thought more generally — often brings with it a relativism, which while potentially inclusive, and certainly constitutive today of the possibility of individual choice, renders the defence of principles difficult. By stating principles in the form of a manifesto, we risk accusations of universalising, exclusive normativity. But, it is perhaps time to question the assumption that these are inherently and always negative. Below we set out principles founded in the belief in the possibility of transformation, as found in critical theory and pedagogy, but with an affirmative attitude: a post-critical orientation to education that gains purchase on our current conditions and that is founded in a hope for what is still to come.

The **first principle** to state here is simply that **there are principles to defend**. But this does not in itself commit us to anything further, i.e., that we ought to do x. This is not normativity in the sense of defining an ideal current or future state against which current practice should be judged. Thus, this principle might be characterised as the defence of a shift from **procedural normativity to principled normativity**.

In educational theory, poststructuralist and postmodernist thought has often been taken up in terms of the politics of identity, and so a concern with otherness, alterity, and voice. Respect for the other and for difference requires that educators accept that we can never fully know the other. Any attempt to do so constitutes “violence” against the other, so to speak. Thus, the possibility of acting and speaking is foreclosed; a political as well as an educational problem, perhaps summarised in the often heard (albeit mumbled) phrase “I know you’re not allowed to say this anymore, but...,” and the bemoaning of so-called political correctness. The acceptance that we can never fully understand the other — individual or culture — ought not to entail that we cannot speak. This rendering of “respect” overlooks that understanding and respect are perpetual challenges and hopes. Here, we start from the assumption that we can speak and act — together — and thus shift from the hermeneutical pedagogy that critical pedagogy entails, to defend a — **second principle** — **pedagogical hermeneutics**. It is precisely the challenges of living together in a common world that constitute the hope that make education continue to seem a worthwhile activity. Hermeneutics isn’t a (unsolvable) problem, but rather something educators need to create. We shouldn’t speak and act on the basis of a priori assumptions about the (im)possibility of real mutual understanding and respect, but rather show that, in spite of the many differences that divide us, there is a space of commonality that only comes about a posteriori (cf. Arendt, Badiou, Cavell).

This existing space of commonality is often overlooked in much educational research, policy, and practice in favour of a focus on social (in)justice and exclusion, based on an assumption of inequality. The ethos of critical pedagogy endures today in the commitment to achieving equality, not through emancipation, but rather through empowerment of individuals and communities. However, it is rendered hopeless — not to mention, cynical — by the apparent inescapability of neoliberal rationality. But, there is no *necessity* in the given order of things, and thus, insurmountable as the current order seems, there is

hope. The **third principle**, then, based on the assumption of equality (cf. Rancière) and of the possibility of transformation — at the individual and collective levels — entails a shift **from critical pedagogy to post-critical pedagogy**.

This is by no means an anti-critical position. It is thanks to the enormous and extremely powerful critical apparatus developed throughout the 20th century that we are aware of the main features of the status quo we are immersed in. But, unlike the inherent critique of societal institutions focused on their dysfunctionality, or the utopian critique, driven from a transcendent position and leading towards eternal deferral of the desired change, we believe that it is time to focus our efforts on making attempts to reclaim the suppressed parts of our experience; we see the task of a post-critical pedagogy as not to debunk but to protect and to care (cf. Latour, Haraway). This care and protection take the form of asking again what education, upbringing, school, studying, thinking, and practicing are. This reclaiming entails no longer a critical relation — revealing what is really going on — nor an instrumental relation — showing what educators ought to do — but creating a space of thought that enables practice to happen anew. This means (re)establishing our relation to our words, opening them to question, and giving philosophical attention to these devalued aspects of our forms of life, and thus — in line with a principled normativity — to defend these events as autotelic, not functionalised, but simply worth caring for.

Education is, in a very practical sense, predicated on hope. In “traditional” critical pedagogy, however, this hope of emancipation rests on the very regime of inequality it seeks to overcome, in three particular ways:

1. It enacts a kind of hermeneutical pedagogy: the educator assumes the other to lack the means to understand that they are chained by their way of seeing the world. The educator positions herself as external to such a condition, but must criticize the present and set the unenlightened free (cf. Plato’s cave).

2. In reality this comes down to reaffirming one's own superior position, and thus to reinstalling a regime of inequality. There is no real break with the status quo.
3. Moreover, the external point of view from which the critical pedagogue speaks is through and through chained to the status quo, but in a merely negative way: the critic is driven by the passion of hate. In doing so, she or he surreptitiously sticks to what is and what shall always be. Judgmental and dialectical approaches testify to this negative attitude.

Thus, the pedagogue assumes the role of one who is required to lift the veil; what they lift the veil from, however, is a status quo on which they stand in external judgment. To formulate more positively the role of the pedagogue as initiating the new generation into a common world, we offer the idea of a post-critical pedagogy, which requires a love for the world. This is not an acceptance of how things are, but an affirmation of the value of what we do in the present and thus of things that we value as worth passing on. But not as they are: educational hope is about the possibility of a renewal of our common world. When we truly love the world, our world, we must be willing to pass it on to the new generation, on the assumption that they — the newcomers — can take it on, on their terms. Thus, the **fourth principle** entails a shift from **cruel optimism** (cf. Berlant) to **hope in the present**. Cynicism and pessimism are not, in a sense, a recognition of how things are, but an avoidance of them (cf. Cavell, Emerson).

In current formulations, taking care of the world is framed in terms of education *for* citizenship, education *for* social justice, education *for* sustainability, etc. in view of a particular notion of global citizenship and an entrepreneurial form of intercultural dialogue. Although perhaps underpinned by a progressive, critical pedagogy, the concern in such formulations of responsibility for the world is with ends external to education. Traditional or conservative as it might sound, we wish to defend education for education's sake: education as the study of, or initiation into, a subject matter for its intrinsic, educational, rather than in-

strumental, value, so that this can be taken up anew by the new generation. Currently, the (future) world is already appropriated by “education *for...*” and becomes instrumental to (our) other ends. Thus, **the fifth principle** takes us **from education for citizenship to love for the world**. It is time to acknowledge and to affirm that there is good in the world that is worth preserving. It is time for debunking the world to be succeeded by some hopeful recognition of the world. It is time to put what is good in the world — that which is under threat and which we wish to preserve — at the centre of our attention and to make a conceptual space in which we can take up our responsibility for them in the face of, and in spite of, oppression and silent melancholy.

RESPONSES

A Response to the “Manifesto for A Post-Critical Pedagogy”

Tyson E. Lewis

First, I would like to thank Hodgson, Vlieghe, and Zamojski for inviting me to this event and for allowing me to engage with their ideas. But I must admit that I almost felt like this was a set-up or an ironic gesture. How can I give a critical response to a post-critical manifesto without immediately falling prey to the very problems of critique that the authors identify? If I provide a critical analysis, then would my response even be relevant? Could I not immediately be dismissed as symptomatic of a failure in educational philosophy to produce affirmative principles? And if the response cannot be critical without falling into a trap, need it simply be an affirmation, meaning a repetition of what has already been said? If this were the case, then I need not continue as my response would be redundant. I can merely pack my bags and head home. Both critique and simple affirmation seem unsatisfactory at this point, and would fail to take up the call for a creative hermeneutic that has to be produced. As such, my only real choice in writing this response is to utilize the principles of post-critique in order to care for post-critique. Such care need not simply be an affirmation. Rather, it can point to that which the authors have failed to care about in their own call to care, and thus can further develop an underdeveloped aspect of their post-critical turn. The resulting paper is my attempt to

respond to post-critique by caring for that which is present in the author's statement and yet remains marginal and peripheral: the question of aesthetic form.

Hodgson, Vlieghe, and Zamojski have provided us with an evocative manifesto for a post-critical pedagogy. They highlight the deficiencies with three dominant trends in educational philosophy: Anglophone/analytic; poststructuralist; and critical schools of thought. Analytic forms of educational philosophy fall prey to charges of exclusivity and/or ideal theory, which seems to foreclose on the possibility of the new from appearing precisely because principles have already been posited that define what the good is and how we ought to pursue it. At the other extreme of the spectrum, poststructuralism has left us with a world of only relative opinions and, thus, has eclipsed the common world of which we are a part. No longer can we posit any principles whatsoever, for all principles are the result of forms of power over and against someone or something. The result of this position is the splintering of the common into ever smaller and more selective sub-cultures and counter-publics, which might have had some progressive political and educational purposes at one time, but today, it seems that such fragmentation is part and parcel of the logic of global finance capitalism, which continually attempts to create niche markets for commodity exchange. Opposed to this logic of the market, we find critical pedagogy, which, as the authors point out, takes a transcendent position outside of the system of capitalism in order to denounce that which is. Here, we find the great refusal at work, a refusal that is predicated on dialectical negation in the name of a utopia to come. Such a position proclaims relative autonomy from circuits of capitalist production and consumption, yet, in this very same gesture, reproduces a kind of stultifying logic of inequality between the critical pedagogue, who has the correct political orientation and critical knowledge of how things really are, and the student, who is mystified by a naïve consciousness.

Hodgson, Vlieghe, and Zamojski offer up not merely an alternative, but an affirmative one at that. They shift the parameters of the debate from either a relativistic embrace of every-

thing that is, or a critical denunciation of everything that is, to a position of caring for and protecting the world — not in the sense of merely accepting the status quo, but rather in the sense of valuing the present as containing the possibility of renewal of the commons as an inherent good in itself. This is a commons that is (a) denied by poststructuralists and (b) deferred into the future by both the analytic and critical schools. What the authors want to highlight is the common as it exists in the present.

There is much that I agree with in this manifesto, and many aspects of it dovetail nicely with my own interest in study.¹ In particular, I find it praiseworthy that the authors have provided an outline of a new approach to thinking through philosophy of education that is bold and has the potential to reorient the field toward new possibilities. What I would like to do here is spend the next couple of minutes thinking about the form of address the authors have chosen — the manifesto — and consider the educational and political implications of this choice. My assumption is that we cannot neglect to consider forms of writing as having educational importance. My question to the authors is thus: Does the content match the form? Is the manifesto adequate for articulating a post-analytic, post-post-structural, and post-critical educational philosophy?

When we think of educational modes of address that attempt to articulate principles for change, three come to mind. This is not an exhaustive list by any means. Rather, it is an attempt to provide a topology of forms of writing so that we can begin to understand how different forms have different pedagogical implications. First, there is the educational creed. Perhaps the most famous creed was proposed by John Dewey. Published in 1897 in *School Journal*, Dewey's creed is important not so much in relation to its contents — which he more eloquently spells out in any number of other places — as its mode of address. The creed is a *personal testimony* to held beliefs. In this sense, the “my” in Dewey's title, “My Pedagogic Creed,” is redundant for

1 Tyson Lewis, *On Study: Giorgio Agamben and Educational Potentiality* (New York: Routledge, 2013).

all creeds are of a personal, and thus individual, nature. Groups and institutions do not usually have creeds. Each statement in Dewey's creed begins with "I believe x." Dewey thus emphasizes that each statement is not a statement of fact, or of a collective standpoint, so much as his opinion. Granted, this opinion is a learned one, but the point remains: the creed belongs to someone, it is someone's perspective.

The impact of Dewey's creed on current teacher education should not be underestimated. There are any number of articles describing its impact on the public's perception of the role of schools in promoting social change, as well as articles describing the relationship between the creed and Dewey's later, more philosophically robust, books on education, democracy, and the school. Yet, in my review of Dewey's creed, no one seems to have paused to point out the form of the creed itself, and to speculate why Dewey chose this form. As a formal statement of personal belief, a creed is not a philosophy, nor is it a set of laws, nor is it a set of scientific principles. Rather, it is a passionate conviction that one holds. It conveys faith in something or someone. As such, the creed can be traced back to religious confession. For this reason, it is not at all surprising that Dewey would end his creed (which testifies to the powers of science and reason) with a religious turn of phrase: "I believe that in this way the teacher always is the prophet of the true God and the usherer in of the true kingdom of God."

As strange as it might sound, we live in an era in which the creed has increasing popularity, especially in teacher education. For instance, at my former university, it was required that all undergraduate, pre-service teachers write their own educational creed. This was not meant to be a philosophical statement, but rather a testimony to one's individual voice as an emerging teacher. But if the creed has religious roots, why have we seen its return in a "secular" age? The popularity of writing creeds in today's colleges of education (at least in the US) might very well have to do with the strangely postmodern logic of the creed. While there have been any number of scholars attempting to define or redefine Dewey's relation to the postmodern, what I

find fascinating here is how the creed, which is a particularly Christian technology, can come to be reconfigured as a kind of postmodern pedagogic form that celebrates voices regardless of critical engagement with the content of the creeds. If the creed is nothing more than a personal set of beliefs, then how can one argue against it? Your creed is just as good as my creed. We seem to find ourselves in a state of relativism where creeds flourish, where personal belief triumphs. Everyone in teacher education must confess their creed, and we should all celebrate the creeds as statements of individuality. "I believe" overcomes "I argue" or "I have discovered."

And as creeds multiply, the commonwealth of the world withdraws, reducing educational thought to atomized, isolated confessions of faith. Another way of framing this would be to say that a creed cannot articulate shared principles to be defended, as Hodgson, Vlieghe, and Zamojski call for. When faced with opposition, the author of a creed can only say, "Well that is your opinion. You have your creed, and I have mine." As such, the world disappears behind a multiplicity of creeds; dialogue is replaced by monologue. For these reasons, there is something refreshing about Hodgson, Vlieghe, and Zamojski's turn away from the creed to the manifesto. Such a move reorients educators away from personal, idiosyncratic, and introspective creeds toward the world of shared principles, dialogue, and the commons. The struggle with one's self to articulate a creed is replaced with a collective struggle over the world and which principles best care for it.

Another major form of address found in education is the charter. These are familiar documents for those in the US, who have witnessed the rise of the charter school movement. The charter is composed of fundamental principles that guide the running of schools. Thus, unlike the creed, the charter is collectively oriented. It also has a normative weight not attributed to creeds. Yet there is a key difference between the charter and Hodgson, Vlieghe, and Zamojski's manifesto that should be pointed out. First, as I have already hinted at, the charter concerns what Hodgson, Vlieghe, and Zamojski refer to as "proce-

dural normativity.” Stated differently, the charter is always about what the school *ought to do* or what parents and communities *ought to expect*. Charters convey normative ideals that communities can then reference in order to determine whether or not a certain school is living up to its own promises.

Second, charters are written by a legislative or sovereign power, by which an institution is created and its rights, duties, and privileges defined. As such, it is a binding, formal document that is guaranteed by a sovereign or legislative body. It is a contract. The status of the charter is secured by the law, and the security it offers is legally binding. What I find most important about Hodgson, Vlieghe, and Zamojski’s manifesto is precisely its rejection of any certainty grounded in legislative or sovereign powers. Instead of legal powers, we have recourse to our common capacities for hermeneutic interpretations. This means that there are no guarantees; there is no recourse to higher powers over and above our own capacities for judgment and interpretation.

Third, Hodgson, Vlieghe, and Zamojski’s manifesto is not institutionally bound. Indeed, the gesture toward the common and toward the world speaks to a philosophy of education that cannot be institutionalized without, in some way, privatizing that which is collective in nature. Their orientation is to the commonalities of the world that defy any institutional attempt to control or police. While it might very well be possible to form charters out of this commonwealth, this need not be the case, as the commons might challenge the forms of legal and sovereign powers that bring the charter into existence.

But if the document that Hodgson, Vlieghe, and Zamojski have written is neither a creed nor a charter, is it really a manifesto? If we think to manifestos in the past, they are certainly collective in nature, often describing the commitments of political or artistic or educational movements. They are also principled. Unlike creeds, they are articulations of positions to be argued over and debated. And unlike the charter, they are often illegal, or extra-legal, challenging a sovereign power that is held over and above them. I am thinking here of *The Manifesto of the Communist Party* written by Marx and Engels. That manifesto is

exemplary in several respects. It is a collective endeavor to articulate not simply a personal set of beliefs but rather the standpoint of a class. It is polemic and, finally, it is illegal, transgressing any state or national laws. In these senses, the document produced by Hodgson, Vlieghe, and Zamojski does indeed appear to be a manifesto.

Yet at the same time, the manifesto is prophetic, future-oriented, and thus concerned with transformation toward some kind of alternative future state. Think here of Marx and Engels' manifesto. Its goal is to forecast certain trends in the ongoing class war in order to help shape and guide the revolution toward a post-capitalist state. The manifesto diagnoses, predicts, and ultimately orients us toward a dialectical negation of the present in the name of a communist future to come. The internal logic of the manifesto resembles the internal logic of critical pedagogy, hence the reason why the manifesto is the preferred platform for critical pedagogues such as Henry Giroux and Peter McLaren. To read critical pedagogy is to read manifestos, including "A Revolutionary Critical Pedagogy Manifesto for the Twenty-First Century" by Peter McLaren,² or "When Schools Become Deadzones of the Imagination: A Critical Pedagogy Manifesto" by Henry Giroux.³ Such texts are full of proclamations describing what teachers ought to do in order to undermine the system and help actualize the promise of equality, democracy, and communism in a better tomorrow. As authors, McLaren and Giroux take on the role of prophets who forecast certain economic and social trends in order to enrage and inspire protest, all in the name of critical principles that the critical pedagogue must safeguard. They are prophets of doom and salvation, both of which

2 Matthew Smith, Jean Ryoo, and Peter McLaren, "A Revolutionary Critical Pedagogy Manifesto for the Twenty-First Century," *Education and Society* 27, no. 3 (2009): 59–76.

3 Henry A. Giroux, "When Schools Become Dead Zones of the Imagination: A Critical Pedagogy Manifesto," *Policy Futures in Education* 12, no. 4 (2014): 491–99. First published August 13, 2013 at truth-out.org, <http://www.truth-out.org/news/item/18133-when-schools-become-dead-zones-of-the-imagination-a-critical-pedagogy-manifesto>.

are always on the horizon, always approaching and receding in equal measure. Here, hope and doom are synthesized into an eschatological theory that is always fixated on crisis after crisis.

In this sense, the manifesto must make manifest that which is not present, that which is deferred. It does so through the authority of the prophet or seer who can forecast dystopian and utopian possibilities from the current situation. Interestingly, we could argue that the prophet takes the creed and makes private beliefs into a kind of charter; this time, a charter guaranteed by history, or God, or some other transcendent power that only speaks through the prophet as a chosen emissary.

Yet, on my reading, the document produced by Hodgson, Vlieghe, and Zamojski rejects not only Giroux and McLaren as representatives of critical pedagogy, but also, more importantly, undermines the authority of the prophet as well as the function of the manifesto, which is always oriented away from the present toward the future. Of course, the collective nature of the manifesto remains operative, but this is a collectivity that is present, now, and only needs to be verified rather than conjured up. As the authors write, the role of a post-critical pedagogy is “not to debunk but to protect and to care” for what is good in the present. The result is not hope in some kind of future in which freedom, equality, or democracy can be realized, so much as hope in the present for the freedom, equality, and democracy that exist but only need verification. Here, the authors seem to draw inspiration from Jacques Rancière’s interpretation of the master-slave dialectic.⁴ At the very heart of a relationship that defines inequality (slavery), Rancière finds a disavowed reliance upon the equality of intelligences; for how can the slave carry out the master’s orders if he or she is not already capable of thinking and speaking? Likewise, the logic of the prophet is rejected as a stultifying educational position, a position that simultaneously

4 Jacques Rancière, *The Philosopher and His Poor*, ed. Andrew Parker, trans. John Drury, Corinne Oster, and Andrew Parker (Durham: Duke University Press, 2004).

(a) is predicated on an equality it disavows, while (b) continually reproducing an inequality that it needs.

In sum, if the manifesto is predicated on the authority of the prophet to predict a future that is guaranteed by God, or by the laws of history, then whatever Hodgson, Vlieghe, and Zamojski have produced cannot be called a manifesto. Their document does not make manifest in the form of a prediction, so much as it declares what is present in order to care for it. And this declaration is collective yet poor — poor in the sense that it does not have the recognition by the law or the sovereign or the prophet to support it and verify it. If this is a manifesto, then it is an inoperative one, or a manifesto at a standstill. Such a document does not tell us what to do, how to do it, or what will happen, so much as it opens the present to that which remains in potential and thus undestined for any particular use.

I would thus conclude with the suggestion that what Hodgson, Vlieghe, and Zamojski have produced is properly named a declaration. They are declaring that what is contains within itself a new potentiality that is not reducible to a personal belief, a legally recognized institutional form, or a prophetic vision of what is to come. Such a declaration does not tell us what to do, how to do it, or what will happen, so much as it maintains the open potentiality of the present for new use. This is what is most precious and fragile in the present. And for these reasons, potentiality is that which needs the most love.

If the authors simply embrace the form of the manifesto as their own and use it to articulate a post-critical pedagogy, then there is a danger that the formal elements defining the manifesto might return to undermine the content of their argument. I can see several ways in which the form of the manifesto returns to contaminate the content of this post-critical declaration. For instance, if the authors want a non-instrumental approach to education that does not submit education as a means to an external end, perhaps instrumentality returns in the form of responsibility, for it is unclear to me that responsibility is an inherently educational concept. Indeed, one could make the claim that it is, first and foremost, an ethical and political concern, which edu-

cation helps us strive to achieve. And because of this, a telos is reintroduced back into the framework. The work of post-critical philosophy is therefore not to care for what is present so much as to make manifest that which ought to be. And finally, while the authors are careful to distinguish between cruel optimism and hope in the present, I would still suggest that hope is always oriented toward something to come and thus away from what is present. The formal features of the manifesto — instrumentality, teleology, and hope — thus seep back into the content of the document in the shape.

At the same time, there is a danger that if the authors invent an entirely new form of writing, then they will fail to care for and love the present. Instead of the present, they would be opting for a kind of avant-garde position where, again, the absent future is privileged and made manifest through new aesthetic forms. Such a position thus lies in contradiction with the content of their argument, which wants to remain immanent to the present without introducing the transcendent.

Yet there is a third path here — a path that is neither the reproduction of the manifesto nor the production of something new. This is the path of the declaration. The declaration is not simply a manifesto nor its negation. There is nothing old or new about the declaration. The declaration is an *occupation* of the manifesto in order to deactivate its formal features — instrumentality, teleology, and hope — and thus redeem its declarative use. Unlike the creed, the declaration is collective. It belongs to no one in particular. Unlike the charter, it is not bound to the law or the state for its guarantee. It rejects bureaucratization. And unlike the manifesto, it is grounded in the present and reflects this present back to itself in order to expose that which remains in potential. Also, it has its own affective qualities. If the creed concerns religious reverence, the charter concerns respect for the law, and the manifesto concerns rage and hope for a future, then the declaration concerns joy for what is in the present. Thus, one does not say, “I hope that my teaching will transform the world.” This is a kind of future-oriented affect that leads to manifesto writing. Rather one says, “I find joy in the possibilities

of teaching right now.” This is a declaration of the potentiality that exists all around us.

On my reading, the declaration is a formal occupation of a space and a time of the manifesto by an alternative space and time that is most interesting, and in turn most educationally relevant. Yet when Hodgson, Vlieghe, and Zamojski fail to take into account the formal structure of their document, the form of the declaration remains underdeveloped and thus the spontaneous ideology of the manifesto seeps back in to contaminate the post-critical with the critical, the instrumental, the teleological, and the hopeful. In this sense, the form must be made into its own kind of content so that we can begin to understand how post-critique must take care of and preserve not only concepts but also modes of presentation.

As such, I would like to see the authors examine the following set of questions:

1. Is there not a need to conceptualize the relationship between form and content in order to discover forms of writing that can more adequately express our ideas?
2. Is the manifesto the form of public address most appropriate to post-critical philosophy of education? Or is there another form that is present yet occluded here behind the manifesto... something I am calling the declaration?
3. If so, what are the features of the declaration and how can these formal features come to shape your principles anew?
4. And is there perhaps something inherently educational about declarations? If creeds come from religion, charters from the law, and manifestos from politics, ethics, and aesthetics, then perhaps the authors have hit upon a form that is itself inherently educational, and thus needs to be cared for just as much as the content of the writing....

These questions are not meant to merely critique or affirm the project, but rather to love that which is most precious about it: the potentiality of the form. And it is my argument that this potentiality has yet to be fulfilled and must be cared for. Indeed,

it must be protected, for like all emerging forms, it is also at risk of being lost before it is even recognized.