32nd National Conference of the Canadian Association for the Study of Adult Education (CASAE)/ L’Association Canadienne pour l’Étude de l’Éducation des Adultes (ACÉÉA)

CONFERENCE PROCEEDINGS
Edited by: Colleen Kawalilak and Janet Groen
University of Calgary
PROCEEDINGS OF THE 32ND ANNUAL CONFERENCE (2013)

June 3 – 5 2013

Pre-Conferences
June 1 – 2 2013

Edited by: Colleen Kawalilak and Janet Groen
University of Calgary
National Library of Canada Cataloguing in Publication

2013 Meeting of CASAE. Proceedings of the 32nd National Conference of the Canadian Association for the Study of Adult Education (CASAE)/ L’Association Canadienne pour l’Étude de l’Éducation des Adultes (ACÉÉA) held at the University of Victoria from 2 June to 5 June 2013. Edited by Colleen Kawalilak and Janet Groen.

Copyright belongs to individual authors. Please contact individual authors for permission to reproduce and distribute their work. 1. Adult Education – Congresses. I. Kawalilak C. and Groen, J. II. University of Victoria in Victoria. III Canadian Association for the Study of Adult Education Conference

“Greetings”
CASAE Co-Presidents

Welcome to the 2013 CASAE conference! The conference has attracted a lot of attention and resulted in the highest number of submissions we have had, at least in the last few years. The keynote, panels, papers, symposia, roundtables, and posters will provide stimulating opportunities for engaging with current issues in adult education at a time when so many sectors of society are under stress. The topics covered during the conference reflect the diversity of our field.

Following last year experiment, this year we once again partnered with the Canadian Society for the Study of Education (CSSE) and the Canadian Society for Studies in Higher Education. While we have our distinctive program, we are also integrated within the larger CSSE and CSSHE program. We have also collaborated with the Canadian Association for the Study of International Development (CASID) and are looking forward to Dr. John Gaventa’s keynote address. Dr. Gaventa, currently the director of the Coady International Institute, is well known for his years as director of the Highlander Centre in Tennessee as well as his subsequent work at the Institute of Development Studies, University of Sussex as well as being Chair of OXFAM Great Britain. He is an adult educator and has been involved in citizen engagement and community development around the world.

This year we welcome a panel of adult education practitioners working in a diversity of community-based organizations and look forward to the enthusiasm and contributions of graduate students. Adult educators from other countries will also join us and we welcome them and hope they can find common areas of interest while informing us of their particular situations.

We sincerely thank Darlene Clover for her leadership of the conference; Colleen Kawalilak and Janet Groen for their generous contributions as co-editors of the conference proceedings; Maureen Coady for the management of the call for proposals and her review team: Karen Magro, Paul Kolenick, Hongxia Shan, Melissa White, Amanda Benjamin, Arpi Hamelian, and Maurice Taylor; Robert Mizzi for review of student papers; Jacqueline Warrell for the student preconference; and Kaela Jubas for her help with various aspects of the conference.

Enjoy!

Shauna Butterwick & Carole Roy
Co-presidents, CASAE
From the Editors

Welcome to CASAE 2013!

What a tremendous response to the conference this year. This will become obvious to you as you work your way through all of the submissions included in these proceedings. Indeed, a great conference has been planned and we have enjoyed being a part of this!

These Conference Proceedings represent a diverse array of perspectives, practices and approaches, interpretations, theoretical lenses, diverse contexts, and geographical locations within the field of scholarship and practice of Adult Education. Simply put, we all thoughtfully and intentionally, individually and collectively, contribute significantly to the ongoing discourse and larger narrative of adult education and adult learning.

These proceedings have been organized according to types of presentations: Papers, Roundtable/Panel, and Symposia. The Table of Contents includes a listing of all authors, in alphabetical order. Authors and their submissions are then hyperlinked to bring you to that particular submission. We encourage you to spend some time reviewing these proceedings; there is a richness and abundance of expertise, perspective, and practice, contained within.

We wish you all a wonderful conference. The presentations and dialogue over the next several days will be excellent, as will the many moments and opportunities we all have to connect with one another as active and engaged community members in this vibrant and thriving community of adult educators and scholars.

Colleen Kawalilak and Janet Groen (Co-Editors)
University of Calgary
Conference Proceedings CASAE 2013
TABLE OF CONTENTS

Papers

Catherine Baille Abidi, Susan M. Brigham, Elizabeth Lange, Evangelia Tatsoglou 2-8
Helping to Learn and Learning to Help: Service Providers’ Experiences and Perceptions Working with Refugee Claimants in Atlantic Canada

Omer Aijazi 9-15
Social Repair as Critical Pedagogy for Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Recovery

Natasha Bailey 16-22
“More than just a Course”: Tracking the Non-Economic Benefits of Learning

Mali Bain 23-29
Inter-national Service Learning in Canada

Deborah Bartlette, Joanne Lewis 30-37
At the Edge: Developing a Post-Colonial Model for Justice Training
Elizabeth Bishop  38-45
Transformative Learning through Self-Reflective Practice in the Helping Professions – A Qualitative Inquiry

Roger Boshier  46-53
Socio-cultural and Political Dimensions of the Yangpu (Shanghai) Learning and Innovation Partnership

Bob Boughton  54-60
What Can the Cuban School of Adult Literacy Offer in Aboriginal Australia? A Pilot Study in a Remote Aboriginal Community

M. Tanya Brann-Barrett  61-67
How Did We Get Here in the First Place? Exploring the Learning Significance of Perceived Local Histories in Ways Young People Experience Civic Engagement in Their Post-industrial Communities.

Shauna Butterwick, Kim Villagante  68-73
The Political Fashion Shows of Filipino Activists: Speaking/Wearing Truth to Power

Erin J. Careless  74-80
Critical Theory in 140 Characters: Using Twitter to Develop a Liberatory Pedagogy

Adrienne Chan, Rita Kaur Dhamoon, Lisa Moy  81-87
The Construction of Women of Colour Faculty: Teaching about Race and Racism

Aziz Choudry  88-89
Activist Research, Knowledge Production and Education for/in Social Action

Darlene E. Clover, Kathy Sanford, Lorraine Bell, Andrea Monteiro Fatma Dogus  90-96
A Study of Women, Adult Education and Community Development Work in Art Galleries and Museums in Canada and the United Kingdom (UK)

Mathew Cohen  97-103
From the Literature: The Dynamics Between Learning and Creativity Theory
Suzanne Cook
Volunteering during Later Life: Learning, Growth and Developing Wisdom Through Self-Reflection

Paulette Cormier-MacBurnie, Wanda George, Elizabeth Hicks
Learning Outside the Classroom: The Learning Passport

Stacey Crooks
Talking to Practitioners about Poststructuralism

Pierre Demers, Pierre Desjardins
Pour une Prestation et Une Gestion Efficaces des Enseignements aux Adultes des Premières Nations

Bassirou Diene, Yvon Laberge
Alphabétisation familiale et intégration des femmes immigrantes en contexte francophone minoritaire.

Nancy Doetzel
Complimentary Paradigms for Education: A Mind/Heart synergy

Claire Duchesne
Coming to Teaching to Find Meaning in One’s Work

Maren Elfert
The UNESCO Institute for Education and the Legacy of Immaterialism

Jonathan B. Fisher

Behrang Foroughi
Reading between the Lines of Participation: Exploring the Multiplicity of Perceptions and Assumptions in Creating Participatory Spaces within Toronto Community Housing
Tara Gibb  
**Workplaces as Sites for Social Imaginaries: Nation Building through Language Assessment Policy**

Patricia A. Gouthro, Susan M. Holloway, Erin J. Careless  
**Identity, Fiction Writing and Learning in Community**

André P. Grace  
**Global Perspectives on Sexual and Gender Minorities in Lifelong Learning and Constituent Adult Education**

Erin Graham  
**Using Storytelling to Understand Educational Policy – Can We See the Epic in the Mundane?**

Janet Groen  
**Earth as Sacred: The Role of Spiritual Retreat Centres in Environmental Adult Education**

Shibao Guo  
**The Triple Glass Effect and Immigrant’s Downward Social Mobility: Implications for Adult Education**

Cindy Hanson  
**Crossing Borders: Developing Collaborations with Indigenous Communities**

Elizabeth Henry  
**Learning our Neighbourhood Histories: A Search for Decolonizing Place-Based Pedagogies**

Loretta Howard  
**Teacher Education: Shifting Teacher Thinking?**

Cynthia Hucks  
**Non-formal Learning in an ESL and International Community Coffee House: Investigating Its Impact**

Catherine J. Irving  
**People’s Educational Spaces: Antigonish and Highlander as Institutional Cases Supporting Learning in Social Movements**
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Pages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Emotional Intelligence: Is it Important That Adult Educators Have It?</td>
<td>246-248</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Rochelle N. Johnston</strong></td>
<td>249-256</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kaela Jubas, Dawn Johnston, Angie Chiang</td>
<td>257-264</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Black + White = Lots of Grey: How Pop Culture and Place Complicate Understandings of Canadian Healthcare and Identity</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colleen Kawalilak, Jacqueline G. Warrell</td>
<td>265-272</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultivating a Culture of Care, Community, and Knowledge Sharing: Mentoring Relationships Between Elder and Newer Faculty Members</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jennifer H. Kelland</td>
<td>273-280</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understandings of Multiple Subjectivities and Positionalities of Women in Online Learning Contexts</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jennifer Kelly, Bruce Spencer</td>
<td>281-288</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Race, Representation and Public Pedagogy – From the CBC to Edmonton Public Library Theatre</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alyson E King, Shanti I. Fernando</td>
<td>289-295</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Work-life Experience and Learner Identity</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Economy and Beyond: The Benefits of Lifelong Literacy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paul Kolenick</td>
<td>296-302</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>From Classroom to Community: An Inquiry of Community-Based Action Research (Through Indigenous Storywork Principles)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sissel Kondrup</td>
<td>303-309</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Work-life Experience and Learner Identity</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Yvon Laberge, Bassirou Dienne
A Planning Framework for Adult Education in South Countries: Lessons Learned from the Development of a Masterplan in Adult Education in Ethiopia

Jon-Erik P. Lappano
Networking the Natural: Environmental Adult Education in the Digital Age

Anna Laros
Activation of Resources of Immigrant Women Entrepreneurs: Learning Processes in the Culturally Diverse German Society

Marc Legacy
Pedagogy of Law; The Hegelian Story of Community Based University Resistance, Research and Advocacy

Lichun Willa Liu
Learning for Self-Care and Self-Management: Chinese Ontarians Living with Cardiovascular Diseases

Henriette Lundgren
On Critical Reflection: Functionalizing “Levels of Reflection” within Empirical Transformative Learning Research

Paula Mannington
An Embodied Self Study Approach to Extrarational Professional Learning in Adult ESL Literacy

Li Mao
Linguistic Minority’s Identity Negotiation in ESL Social Networks: An Auto-Ethnographic Study of My Informal English Learning Experiences in Canada

Scott McLean
Hopes, Dreams, and Healing on the Edges of Adult Education: Readers’ Engagement with Self-help Books on Relationships, Careers, and Well-being
Marian McRory 378-384
*Reflexivity in Action Research: Does it Work Well in Music Education with Adults?*

Jackie McVicar, Behrang Foroughi 385-391
*Responding to Crisis through Healing and Transformation: A Case Study of Kaqla Maya Women’s Group in Guatemala*

Robert C. Mizzi 392-398
*Finding Love in a Hopeful Place: Unravelling Motivations, Mistruths, and Movements of Queer Immigrants at Work*

Shirley Morrison, Brenda Wastasecoot 399-405
*Anishnawbe Health Toronto Approaches to Aboriginal Identity, Spirituality, and Anti-Poverty Learning*

Kate Murray 406-414
*“They Were Aware”: Activist 'Invitation' and Knowing as Praxis*

Afroza Nanji 415-421
*Teaching Religion in Calgary Public Schools: Perspectives on Context*

Miya Narushima, Jian Liu, Naomi Diestelkamp 422-428
*Conservation Effects of Later Life Learning: An Exploration of the Association between Educational Participation and Positive Wellbeing Among Older Adults*

Tom Nesbit, Michael Welton 429-435 Adult
*Education in a Precarious Age: The Hamburg Declaration on Adult Learning Revisited*

Staffan Nilsson, Sofia Nyström 436-442
*Education, Employability, and Employment in Sweden*
Jeong Rok Oh  443-447
Community of Practice as a Theoretical Framework for Informal Learning in Trade Unions

Linda Pardy  448-454
Higher Learning, Radical Integration and Adult Education: Connecting Disciplines

W. James Paul, Colleen Kawalilak  455-462
Engagement in Internationalization – A Faculty of Education Perspective

Jay Penner  463-469
A Critical Multiculturalist Approach to Community Service Learning

Eileen Piggot-Irvine  470-477
Creating ‘Authentic Collaboration’ in Feedback to Program Facilitators

Elizabeth Pinnington, Roxana Ng  478-485
Learning with the Body and the Mind: Embodied Learning, Institutional Ethnography and Power Relations

Donovan Plumb  486-492
A Regional Emergent Ontology of Critical Reflection

Dianne Ramdeholl, Richard Wells  493-499
Against the Grain: Oral Histories from Adult Literacy Workers in New York City

Linda J. Rappel  500-506
Exploring the Connection of Transformative Learning to Teacher Authenticity in Adult Educational Contexts

Kapil Dev Regmi  507-513
Lifelong Learning in the Least Developed Countries: Towards an Alternative Model
Jean-Paul Restoule
Massive Open Online Courses and the Future of Adult Education

Carole Roy
Organizers of Cultural Events: Creating Community and Telling Stories of Resistance and Change

Kjell Rubenson
The Political Economy of the Collection and Classification of Adult Learning and Education

Kathy Sanford, Darlene E. Clover, Fatma Dogus
An International Study of the Adult Education Philosophies and Practices in Public Librarians in Canada and the United Kingdom

Joseph E. Sawan
Understanding and Overcoming Alienation Through Anti-Poverty Organizing: Considerations From Two Case Studies in the Toronto-Area

Hongxia Shan
Professional Learning as Spatilized Practices: Reimagining the Pedagogical Space for Immigrants

Jim Sharpe
Adult Learning Network: Is it Possible?

Suzanne Smythe
Incorporating Digital Technologies in Adult Literacy Settings: Toward an Equity-Driven Conceptual Framework

Ralf St.Clair
Data and Delusion in National Adult Literacy Surveys

Tom Stehlik
Higher Degree Studies in Mid to Late Career: Reasons, Reflections, Realities
Jennifer Sumner
Food for Thought and Action? Social Movement Learning and Food Movements

Nancy Taber, Vera Woloshyn, Caitlin Munn, Laura Lane
Exploring Fairy Tales in a College Women's Media Group: Stereotypes, Changing Representations of Snow White, and Happy Endings

Maurice Taylor, David Trumpower, Ivana Pavic
What Does Lifelong Learning Mean for Canadian Workers and Adult Learners Acquiring Literacy and Essential Skills?

Misty L. Underwood, Donna M. Chovanec
Falling into the Lacuna: Theorizing Intergenerational Political Learning

Tricia M. van Rhijna, Donna S. Lero
The Influence of Self-Efficacy Beliefs for Student Parents Attending University

Pierre Walter
Experiential and Transformative Learning in Community-based Ecotourism

S. Bruce Wilbee
Socio-Historical Constructivism in Adult Learning: Understanding Contemporary Research in Terms of Vygotskian Theory

Kristine Wolski
How Can a Story Change a Life?

Yidan Zhu
Problematizing Canadian Breastfeeding Educational Programs: Taking the Standpoint of New Chinese Immigrant Mother
Cheryl Zurawski 649-655
**Textual Visibility in the ‘Work of Work-Related Learning’**

Roundtables

David E. Allen 657-659
**The Impact of Previous Assessments on Adult Learners**

Adrienne Burk 660-661
**Comic Books, Curricula, and Conversations: Internationalizing A Canadian University, One Day at a Time**

Sara Carpenter, Shahrzad Mojab 662-663
**The Horizons of Criticality**

Janet Groen, Colleen Kawalilak, Budd Hall, Nancy Taber, Erin Graham, Andre Grace 664
**Locating Adult Education within a Faculty of Education Context: Opportunities, Obstacles and Challenges**

Denise Haugh 665-666
**Facilitating English Language Teaching (ELT) through Drama**

Jonathan Langdon, Behrang Foroughi 667-669
**Experiential Learners or Learners with Experience? Contrasting Coady International Institute and St FX’s Development Studies Program Approaches to Building Social Change Learning Contexts**

Devorah Maclean 670-672
**Entertaining New Approaches in Mathematics Education**

Catherine Mallet, Timothy Straka 673-675
**From Theory to Practice: Exploring Experiential Learning Using Outdoor Education**
Lilach Marom

Immigrant Teachers, Canadian Multiculturalism and Conceptions of the “Good Teacher”: The Case of Teacher Recertification Programs in the Greater Vancouver Region

Marjorie Mayo, Catherine Etmanski, Aziz Choudry, Darlene Clover, Budd L Hall, Ronald Cameron

Critical Perspectives on Learning and Social Movements: Recent Global Scholarship

Juliet Merrifield

Learning Journeys for the Green Economy

Kim Tomiak

Promoting Social Presence in Online Learning Communities

Meagan Troop

Transforming Higher Education: A Case Study of the Professionals in Rural Practice Course

Ericka Turley

Promoting Organizational Learning and Change through Participatory Action Research

Symposia

Helen Colley, Sara Carpenter, Thomas Saczkowski, Shahrzad Mojab, Rosalea Thompson

From Critical Consciousness to Praxis for Revolutionary Social Transformation: Putting Paula Allman to Work in Adult Education

Shibao Guo, Yan Guo, Hongxia Shan, Tara Gibb, Evelyn Hamdom

Lifelong Learning in the Age of Transnational Migration: Canadian Issues and Debates
Geraldine (Jody) Macdonald, Rose A. Dyson, William McQueen
**Facilitating Adult Learning @ The Edge: Exploring Threats and Contributions of New Communication Technologies, Engagement in the Arts & Media, and Creating Poetry Together**

Tom Nesbit, Edward W. Taylor, Donovan Plumb, John Holford
Patricia Gouthro, Stephen Roche, Michael Osborne, Jim Crowther
John Dirkx
**Adult Education Journals in Metric Time: Editors’ Perspectives**
Papers
Helping to Learn and Learning to Help: Service Providers’ Experiences and Perceptions Working with Refugee Claimants in Atlantic Canada

Catherine Baille Abidi, Saint Francis Xavier University
Susan M Brigham, Mount Saint Vincent University
Elizabeth Lange, Saint Francis Xavier University
Evangelia Tastsoglou, Saint Mary’s University

Abstract: Addressing one of the most underserved populations in adult education, this study is based on interviews and focus groups with fourteen research participants, all of whom work for organizations providing services for immigrants, refugees and refugee claimants in Atlantic Canada. In this paper we explore the role of adult education in the working lives of the research participants and their perceptions of the policies and practices that impact refugee claimants in the Atlantic Canadian region. We also identify contradictions and gaps in policies, practices and services. Key findings are presented in two themes: emotional labour and negotiating systems and services.

Purpose of the Study
Historically, the adult education field has served a wide range of learners including the most marginalized populations, often through social movements, community organizations, government and non-governmental agencies. While adult educators are still providing a variety of programs, including training to upgrade their skills, adult basic education and literacy programs, personal interest and leisure programs (Nesbit, Brigham, Taber & Gibb, 2013), the field has shifted over the last 40 years with a larger focus on adult education for the economy. Unfortunately, certain populations remain less served by our field, such as Aboriginal peoples, the working poor, immigrants and refugees, women and young adults (OECD, 2002).

This study is part of a multi-phased study exploring the experiences of refugee claimants in Canada, specifically in Atlantic Canada, and what the learning needs are for them and for service providers.

More broadly, the study examined the most pressing issues for refugee and refugee claimants, particularly since the dramatic policy changes in the last 20 years. Canada has had an ambivalent history in regard to refugees, turning Jewish refugees away during WWII which led to the death of most of them, and yet becoming an exemplary receiving country during the 1970s-90s. During this time, refugees would make up 15-21% of the annual inflow of immigrants (Canadian Social Trends, 1999; Simmons 2010) and Canada would become one of the world’s leading nations in refugee settlement.

In the past decade, Canada had granted safe haven to 150,000 people from refugee camps abroad – more per capita than any other country (Knowles, 2007, p. 223). Yet, since 9/11, there has been a significant shift toward the importance of the economic class, attuning it to neoliberal economic policy and productivity, and toward ‘designer immigrants’ who are selected according to their highly skilled knowledge base (Simmons, 2010). Further, while migration policies have always included elements of deterrence (Guo, 2010), the events of 9/11 escalated the securitization of migration resulting in harsh impacts on refugee claimants (Dauvergne, 2007). This shift in emphasis overall has been devastating for the refugee class, as many refugees have had limited access to formal education,
training or economic capital. Since the 1990s, then, the flows of refugees and protected persons to Canada shrank to 9% of immigrant inflow (Gates-Gasse, 2010).

This study traces the impact not only on refugee claimants but also those involved with them through immigrant servicing organizations. Our participants are service providers from Atlantic Canada, who shared their learning experiences and perspectives on policies and practices impacting the refugee claimant population and their struggles to meet needs while learning on the job.

**Relevant Literature**

It is perhaps an understatement to say that migration is a complex process. It has always been part and parcel of the human experience. People continue to move within and beyond borders for a multiplicity of reasons including environmental changes that are negatively affecting the sustainability of their communities, war or lack of security, the pursuit of economic opportunities or employment, or to reunite with family members who previously migrated. While migration may be a choice for some, forced migration is a reality for many others. The numbers of refugees, internally displaced, and stateless persons as well as those caught in trafficking are on the increase, in fact the number of refugees has been on the rise since 2002 (UNCHR, 2012). By the end of 2011, over forty-three million people were forcibly displaced (UNHCR, 2012). Among this population, over fifteen million were refugees and almost one million were people seeking asylum (UNHCR, 2012).

According to Article 1 of the Convention, a refugee is defined as someone who:

> owing to well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his[or her] nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself[or herself] of the protection of that country; or who, not having a nationality and being outside the country of his[or her] former habitual residence as a result of such events, is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to return to it. (UN General Assembly, 1951, p.14)

Refugees in Canada are typically considered in two categories by government and civil society: 1) overseas refugees or refugees previously determined by the UNHCR to be Convention refugees; and 2) in-land refugees. With regard to the former category, these refugees are processed outside of Canada. They may be government assisted or privately sponsored by groups or individuals in Canada. In-land refugees, also referred to as asylum seekers and refugee claimants, have arrived in Canada and are seeking protection but their claims have not yet been determined by the Canadian government (UNCHR, 2012). We use the term refugee claimants throughout this paper.

Despite public perception, Canada is not a top refugee hosting nation. Countries in the global South host fourth-fifths of all refugees (UNHCR, 2012). In 2011, compared to Pakistan, which hosted almost two million refugees, Canada hosted only 164,883 refugees and 41,852 refugee claimants (UNHCR, 2012). Eighteen percent of all Canadians are immigrants, but in the Atlantic region only 3.5% of the population are immigrants (Akbari, Lynch, McDonald, & Rankaduwa, 2007). Within the immigrant population, there is a higher percent of refugees in Atlantic Canada than the rest of the country (Akbari & Rankaduwa, 2010). Yet, refugees also encompass the highest rate of out migration from the region. The annual number of refugee claimants in Atlantic Canada over the last ten years has ranged from 91 to 168 (Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 2012).
Refugees’ experiences throughout their immigration process impact their individual and collective ethnic identities as well as their successful settlement. Although refugee laws and policies, especially in recent years, appear “deracialized” and neutral, particular provisions—like that of a “safe country” in Bill C-86—have, in their application, resulted in controlling the immigration of people of colour (Jakubowski 1997, pp.80-89). While fair protection has been provided to those refugees who gain access to the system, many barriers still prevent in-land refugees from gaining entry to make a claim, including Bill C-84, the Refugee Deterrents and Detention Bill (Creese, 1992). As a result, Canada has not carried its fair share of refugee asylum claims in the West (Adelman, 1994, pp. 63-91). In analyzing Bill C-86, Jakubowski (1997) has shown how racist ideas can be communicated through language that is publicly defensible, and how criteria for successful settlement are based on educational qualifications, job skills, official language knowledge and so forth. Gaps and inconsistencies are still found in refugee law, and problems in its interpretation leave the more vulnerable refugees less protected (Macklin, 1995). Overall, then, we may say that refugee policies have been based not only on racial, but also on class and gender biases.

Within the literature on refugee issues, there is rarely a distinction made between the different types of refugee classifications, contributing to the homogenization of refugees in general and the invisibility of refugee claimants in particular (Cohen, 2008; Gagnon et al., 2007). Refugee claimants share common experiences with refugees and other immigrants, but at the same time, their lack of status and lack of access to funded services create distinct vulnerabilities (Dyck & Dossa, 2007). Variance in experience also exists within claimant populations. Experiences vary based on the refugee claimants’ culture, education, religion, marital status, and gender (Chung & Bemark, 2002; Gagnon, Tuck, & Barkum, 2004; Mulvihill, Mailloux, & Atkin, 2001).

We found several gaps in the literature, which this study addresses: 1) the perspectives and experiences of service providers who work with a particularly diverse and unique population, namely refugee claimants; and 2) refugee claimant service provisions in the Atlantic region of Canada.

Theoretical and Methodological Framework
The purpose of this study was to explore the research participants’ perceptions and understandings of the policies and practices that impact refugee claimants in Atlantic Canada. We relied on a critical feminist and critical race theoretical framework. Critical theory frames research by challenging dominant ideologies in the hope of making positive changes (Brookfield, 2005).

The research methodology was grounded in a qualitative, critical feminist framework which challenges the idea that all refugee claimants have similar migration experiences. Feminist methodology informs research methods by identifying the complexity and depth of patriarchy that exists in society (Bloom & Swain, 2009; Mohanty, 2003; Zimmerman et al., 2009). The research design included a review of the literature on refugees, including refugees and refugee claimants as well as interviews and focus groups with fourteen research participants, all of whom work for immigrant servicing organizations in Atlantic Canada. The literature review involved internet researching using key words, such as refugee claimants and lifelong learning, consulting with government websites and advanced library searches. In-depth interviews and focus groups were used to allow for deep insight into perceptions, experiences and meanings (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Using a semi-structured interview process participants were asked open-ended questions about, for example,
the service providers’ experience in migration services which included their understanding of the vulnerabilities, challenges, and needs of the refugee claimants with whom they have worked, as well as the specific services and policies that impact refugee claimants.

Findings
For the purpose of this paper we focused our findings around the topic of the role of adult education in the working lives of the research participants. How do they learn their work as service providers? What is involved in their work and in their learning? Hart (1992, p. 1) reminds us that work “contains a net of relations into which the entire range of human experience is woven.” This is particularly true for service providers whose work is tightly woven into a net of relations, not only with their clients but with bureaucracies and social hierarchies that are historically situated. Within this net of relations are emotions, which “are an integral and inseparable part of everyday organizational life. From moments of frustration or joy, grief or fear, to an enduring sense of dissatisfaction or commitment, the experience of work is saturated with feeling” (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1993, p. 98). In this section we highlight two themes: emotional labour and navigating systems and services.

Emotional Labour
As with any occupation where providing service to others, service providers for refugees and refugee claimants require an emotional investment in their work. Hochschild (1983) referred to this as emotional labor. Hochschild (2010) acknowledges the under-rewarded and under recognized aspect of such labour by employers. Emotional labor can be both disempowering and satisfying. For our research participants, their work frequently involved a sense of disheartenment and frustration usually as a result of not being able to fully assist their clients because of restrictive and not well understood policies. For example, one participant stated “our hearts break when we talk to somebody and we have to kind of ask them to go away because there is nothing to help them here”. Participants described the emotional impacts of their work and the challenges of establishing a healthy work-life balance. Examples of the emotional toll of this work were illustrated as feelings of empathy and heartache for refugees who are experiencing “desperation”, “separation of families”, “instability”, and for “women who fled without their children”. Others expressed frustrations over the lack of options they have to support refugee claimants in their communities and the challenges of witnessing the aftermath of a negative refugee board decision. “Not being able to help” was the strongest source of the emotional tax of the service providers’ work.

Navigating Systems & Services
As noted above the history of refugees and refugee claimants in Canada reflects times of strong political will to aid and protect and times of reluctance to assist refugees. In the current political climate, refugees and refugee claimants are facing policies that reflect a distinct deterrence and securatization. Policy is a moving target and negotiating policy is a complicated process. In fact, navigating the federal and provincial systems and services available for refugee claimants in Atlantic Canada was described by all participants as an excruciating experience. Participants discussed frustrations about inefficiencies, lack of inter-governmental communication or clarity of policies, and silo operations. For example, one participant explained:

I think it’s more about who does what, and the lack of understanding that exists about whose responsibility it is. You know, we’re trying to get some kind of support and we’ve got both levels of government not knowing what their responsibilities are, and saying, well we don’t do
that. When in fact they do, and they just don’t know. So it’s about knowledge and understanding, and respecting existing policies and protocols.

Participants from all four provinces shared that they are regularly educating provincial and federal personnel on policy-related issues. A significant refrain in our data is indignation expressed by the service providers over what one referred to as the “bureaucratic nightmare” that they grapple with every day in their efforts to support refugee claimants.

Unlike service providers working in locations throughout Canada with larger populations of refugees and refugee claimants, in the Atlantic region the participants in our study work with a small number of claimants which meant they were often unfamiliar with the specific influences of federal policies. Despite varying levels of awareness of federal policies, our findings show service providers perceive that shifting public policy has negatively impacted claimants in Atlantic Canada, resulting in decreased services and consequently negative health and wellbeing effects for claimants increased complexity in navigating governmental systems, and enhanced deterrence for people seeking asylum. The participants highlight concerns around the dehumanization, marginalization, and criminalization of refugee claimants that are further exacerbated by federal cutbacks to essential services. Participants described the following in relation to navigating government systems:

“it’s just one of those things that seems quite simple, but doesn’t seem to happen…there doesn’t seem to be institutional knowledge”;
“the rules are not clear…I don’t know who is making the decisions”;
“the onus always comes back on us to make sure that other agencies make sure that clients’ needs are being met. And it shouldn’t be that way.”

Navigating policies and services within government department and between federal and provincial governments is challenging for immigrant servicing organizations and this complexity is also evident in the community. Health and language services for refugees in Canada have federal funding within provincial systems however the majority of this funding support is not accessible to claimants. The policies between the federal and provincial systems are often contradictory and, from the perspective of the participants, create disparities for refugee claimants in the Atlantic region.

While the majority of the interviews and focus group discussions centred on changing policies, one participant suggested that “it’s funding that has the biggest influence…it’s got nothing to do with policy. Policy is ignored for the most part”; ignored and/or perhaps not understood. Six of the fourteen participants suggested that they had limited understanding of the new legislation and a couple were unfamiliar with the IRPA. One participant stated that “I think they’ve cancelled that IRPA thing, it feels like it”, while another suggested that “we’re not up to speed on – we’ve seen a little bit of – I have, seen little bits and pieces of the legislation. But to be honest with you, I have not looked at it in detail. We’re too damn busy delivering services every day.” Despite their level of understanding of refugee law, all participants referenced decreased funding for services for refugee claimants and enhanced financial monitoring systems to ensure that they are not providing services for claimants.
Implications for Adult Education Theory and Practice

This study exploring immigrant service providers’ learning experiences and understandings of the impact of policies and practices for refugee claimants is a unique contribution to both the fields of adult education and migration/refugee studies. The service providers offer insights into how policies and practices are shaped by dominant ideologies and social structures, and how advocacy and navigation of systems and processes, leading to the enhancement of the settlement experiences of refugee claimants in Canada can be improved. Future research is needed to gain more understanding of refugee claimants’ learning experiences to paint a more holistic picture of the migration systems that exist in each province/territory and in Canada as a whole.

References


Abstract: I argue that social interventions without the intent of critical emancipation are essentially a colonial encounter. This is particularly evident in the context of ‘natural’ disasters, after which dispossession is accentuated especially for those whose lives were already bounded by inequality and marginality. I render a model of social repair for marginalized, disaster affected communities which actively recognizes structural inequities that predate disaster events and juxtaposes this recognition with existing narratives of disaster recovery and humanitarian response. This ‘disruptive’ model of social repair repurposes the concept of critical emancipation found in adult education for political transformation in contexts of societal and environmental collapse.

Introduction

Humanitarian interventions are a contested enterprise. There is abundant literature that conceptualizes international humanitarian assistance as a neo-liberal technology of governing borderlands. While such analyses do a good job of pinning the political sensibilities and processes of nation building that guide humanitarian assistance, they also limit other critiques and possible analysis of social interventions. Consistent with feminist thinking, I recognize that the relationship between the humanitarian provider and receiver is inherently violent. This “asymmetry is political rather than psychological” (Fassin, p.4, 2012) and disaster disrupted lives are not “defined in the absolute condition but in the relation to those who have power over them” (Fassin, p. 4, 2012).

Drawing inspiration from Hanna Arendt’s notion of inclusive solidarity: i.e. standing with people with the intention that they will stand on their own (Reshaur, 1992) and building on my experiences of humanitarian work in post-flood Pakistan, I seek to theorize and shift conversations within these spaces of social disruption. First I problematize the post-disaster humanitarian space and contest the notion of disaster recovery embedded within this space. Then I focus on the concept of social repair as a vocabulary alternative to that of disaster recovery. The concept of social repair is elaborated upon as found within post-conflict and reconciliation literature. I further modify this concept using a Freirian critical emancipatory lens and establish an orientation of social repair as a critical pedagogy for post-disaster recovery.

The Production of the ‘Neutral’ Humanitarian Space and the Agenda of Disaster ‘Recovery’

In regions of the world, where governments may not have the institutional capacity or political will to respond to large scale social disruptions such as natural disasters, such events are framed as ‘emergencies’ or ‘humanitarian crisis’. This triggers humanitarian aid networks that channel and navigate particular global liberal politics and governance sensibilities through the conduits of international aid workers and humanitarian projects (Duffied, 2002). The process of disaster recovery is therefore “intensely political” (Berke et.al, 1993, p.95) but is conducted in a space that is actively manufactured as being neutral and apolitical. This section contests the neutrality of the humanitarian space and argues that this claim of neutrality is essential for the enactment of a particular agenda of disaster recovery. Post-disaster recovery practices by humanitarian actors are system maintaining, that is, they simply restore communities to original levels of poverty and degradation leaving limiting power relations unchallenged. Communities may be trained to sandbag their villages near an
overflowing river but the more pressing question of why are they living in a flood plain to begin with is never tackled.

De-politicization of the Humanitarian Space
The limiting imagination of disaster recovery cannot be sustained without the continuing depoliticisisation of the humanitarian space. This is rooted within the Red Cross movement originating in 1862, which maintains that the humanitarian space has to remain neutral and maintain independence from any political inclinations to allow aid agencies unencumbered access to victims of war and natural disasters. Mouffe (1993) and Ferguson (1994) both argue that by promoting a depoliticised universalism and purposely omitting political narratives, relations of power and interests are concealed and remain politically unchallenged. Thus attempts to “separate out the political are inherently interested” (Kleinfeld, 2007, p. 174).

It is also worthwhile to look into the categorizations which separate ‘humanitarian aid work’ from ‘development work’ and how the separation of the two leads to a silencing of debates that could potentially enhance impact. Policy briefs and NGO discourse around humanitarian aid is that of immediate response at the onset of a humanitarian crisis (such as war, natural disasters) and is framed by phrases such as ‘resource transfer’, ‘distributions’, ‘scaling up’. The primary objective of humanitarian aid is to save lives and alleviate suffering (ALNAP, 2010), whereas development aid is positioned as seeking and resolving the underlying socioeconomic factors which may have led to such a crisis. This distinction is essentially unhelpful and implies that these two activities represent radically different practices. Slim (2000) argues that the “ethic of the humanitarian has been stereotyped as a sort of temporary, morally myopic project which limits itself to meeting urgent physical needs before hurriedly abdicating in favor of development workers and their much grander ethic of social empowerment and transformation” (p. 492). Often these identities are perpetuated by humanitarian workers themselves and also via program/project designs, opening the door to absurd questions such as; is humanitarian work only about saving life? Is development work ‘long term’ and humanitarian work ‘short term’? Is one apolitical and the other political? (Slim, 2000, p.492). Both humanitarianism and development are “concerned with saving life, both are short and long term, and both are political in the proper sense of being concerned with the use and abuse of power in human relations” (Slim, 2000, p.492). The “relief-development dualism is misconceived” (Slim, 2000, p.492) and limits the imagination of humanitarian practice by constricture the intended outcomes of interventions.

The Politics of Disaster ‘Recovery’
Ten years after a super cyclone devastated coastal Orissa, Chhotray & Few (2012) explore the notion of ‘disaster recovery’ in a context where recurring hazards and socio-economic vulnerabilities are part of daily life. They conclude that persisting conditions of inequity and marginalization undermine return to a pre-disaster state let alone a condition of greater resilience. Similarly Mustafà’s (2003) retrospective analysis of recovery efforts in the aftermath of a flood in the Rawalpindi–Islamabad conurbation in Pakistan, contests the notion of ‘recovery’ as a return to ‘normal’ when ‘normal’ life is characterized by extreme inequality and vulnerability to hazards. Ingram et.al (2006) examine the coastal buffer zone policy in post-tsunami Sri Lanka and similarly conclude that recovery processes fails to resolve root causes of vulnerability and, in the long term, can amplify the social and environmental disparities that transform natural hazards into large-scale disasters. Aijazi & Panjwani’s (2012) examination of communities recovering from the 2010 monsoon floods in Pakistan reveals that humanitarian interventions reinforce the status quo leaving the root causes of
marginality uncontested and perhaps deepened. They elaborate that disasters can in fact produce further marginality: communities who survive but are unable to recover and are forced to live in more vulnerable circumstances then before.

These studies raise concerns whether the depoliticisation of humanitarian action as a way to sanction insufficient recovery programming actually leads to the disempowerment of communities and whether the outcomes of humanitarian response should be a mere return to previous levels of depravation, destitution and oppression. Humanitarian organizations imagine an interventionist agenda that focuses on restoration and recovery. These interventions concentrate on the immediate suffering of communities, creating an ‘emergency situation’ which is seen as emerging out of nowhere. The de-historization and de-contextualization of suffering and the human condition is purposely done to enable a narrative justifiable for outside intervention which is ‘rapid’ and ‘life-saving’, thus giving aid organizations the moral right to sweep in and as abruptly sweep out. Such interventions presume that communities are helpless without aid; “having limited capacity to cope with losses and to participate effectively in redevelopment initiatives” (Berke et.al, 1993, p.94).

**A Social Repair Orientation for Disaster Recovery**

The literature on disaster recovery has been unable to move beyond the recognition that post-disaster recovery is not a sufficient agenda, particularly in contexts where natural disasters are recurring events, and conditions of vulnerability are a daily lived reality. To counter this and broaden the mandate of humanitarian aid organizations, I propose a social repair orientation for disaster recovery which creates the possibilities of social transformation. I manufacture a place for adult education within humanitarian aid praxis not as a standalone activity or program, but as embedded within a social repair model for humanitarian assistance to realize enhanced humanitarian outcomes.

**Social Repair as Found within Post-Conflict and Reconciliation Literature**

Post-conflict and reconciliation literature complements disaster literature because of the complex social disruptions that are manufactured and accentuated, during and after situations of mass violence such as civil war and genocide. Violence results in the breakdown of social structures such as social and economic institutions, familial networks and other intimate relationships that typically constitute community.

Conflict and reconciliation scholars recognize that national level responses are usually “insufficient to capture the meaning of the conflict for people living in specific villages, towns, ‘hills’ or other local spaces” (Arriaza & Arriaza, 2008, p. 153). They also realize that that top-down initiatives often ignore existing “local dynamics aimed at reinforcing or transforming the power relations that are often most relevant to peoples’ lives” (Arriaza & Arriaza, 2008, p. 153). Therefore a model of social repair is forwarded by these scholars as an act of resistance against the rigid mandates of formal processes and a response to address the gaps left out by such procedures. Social repair is configured as a combination of responses and interventions to address issues of community cohesion. The term is used interchangeably with ideas of community healing, social reconstruction, social reconciliation and post-conflict resolution.

Haider (2011) defines social repair as the restoration and rebuilding of relationships between historically differentiated groups. Quinn (2007) and Baines (2010), define social repair as the micro-processes of healing and renewal as enacted through customary mechanisms and traditional practices in the local space. The local is defined as a set of “micro-level relationships between everyday people
striving to get on with life, and along with each other, after mass violence” (Baines, 2010, p.412). They both argue that communities often already possess valid tools in their social worlds (Arriaza & Arriaza, 2008, p.187) such as spirit possession, ceremonial burials and ritual cleansing to reconcile past-atrocities and foster social trust. The underlying definition of social repair presented by these authors is restoration of relationships between individuals, communities and with institutions. Such works deepen the definition of social repair by insisting that healing with communities must “resonate with local cosmological beliefs about morality, social responsibility, and norms regarding appropriate behavior” (Baines, 2010, p. 412). Thus social repair is re-configured as a local process (Arriaza & Arriaza, 2008) and “state or institutional led processes can either support or hinder social repair” (Theidon, 2006, p. 456).

Embedded within the micro-processes of social repair, is the notion of restoring a person’s sense of worth, his/her trust in everyday relationships and confidence in daily routines. Das (2007) examines the way violence is enacted and lived within mundane everyday practices and how it also has to be processed and dismantled within the terrain of daily life. Reflecting on her ethnographic work in post-partition India in 1947 and massacre of Sikhs in 1984, she asserts that “life was recovered not through some grand gestures in the realm of the transcendent but through a descent into the ordinary” (p.7). It is also implied that the process of social repair is central to the study of the concept and social repair as an outcome offers limited theoretical contributions. She also reminds us the deep recognition of human agency that can be achieved by examining the processes of social repair as experienced, enacted and lived in daily life and warns that our “theoretical impulse is often to think of agency in terms of escaping the ordinary rather than as a descent into it” (p.7).

**Rendering Social Repair through a Lens of Critical Emancipation**

Arriaza & Arriaza (2008) argue that in most, post-conflict societies, “people are poorer than ever, the formal political system continues to be dominated by elites, discrimination and exclusion of minorities (or sometimes majorities) is rampant, crime continues unabated and the economy is largely dominated by large landholders, ‘warlords’ and various types of smugglers” (p. 153). Fletcher & Weinstein (2002) also conclude that, one major effect of mass violence is the feeling of many communities of a lack of power and control. Similarly, Mustafa’s (1998) case study of 5 villages in post-flood Pakistan concludes that a community’s vulnerability to disasters was largely a function of their disempowerment. In order for the concept of social repair to work in post-disaster communities, a more robust element of self-transformation is required.

Butterwick & Selman (2009) argue that social repair is not limited to restoration to something that was formerly acceptable. Instead they maintain it is about becoming something more “egalitarian and democratic than has yet been discovered”, and about “moving forward to a new position”. They also recognize that social repair, is not a moment but a process. Both authors refer to social repair as “moving towards wholeness” since “oppression can diminish people and deny their full humanity”. Butterwick & Selman (2009) also introduce the notion of “performing repair” which connotes that social repair is an active process. They point out that two things are key, “the action (the verb to perform) and that “performance assumes there is an audience, a communication between ‘performer’ and ‘listener/respondent’ ”. It is important to recognize the agency of the listener/respondent who too

---

2 Theidon (2006) further defines individuals and communities to include ‘intimate enemies’ that is everyday people such as neighbors, shopkeepers, and co-workers etc. who are forced to live together with full knowledge of each other’s complicity in violence.
is an ‘active’ participant in the process of social repair. Social repair is not a static process (Butterwick & Selman, 2009) and it is never fully realized as each rendition and transformation generates different perspectives and understandings. “Repair could be thought of as a kind of reconnecting of parts of self that have been disconnected, parts of self, and self to others” (Butterwick & Selman, 2009). Reconnection with ‘the self’ can be elaborated as “reconnecting (repair) with strength, self-assertion and self-efficacy”, to generate new ways of looking at current pain and oppressions (Butterwick & Selman, 2009).

The following points encapsulate some of the key features of the term social repair developed in this paper:

- Social repair is a **process**.
- Social repair is a **performance** with active agents (active ‘performer’ and active ‘audience’)
- It is a based on the idea of not just restoration of relationships but **re-imagining** and **renewal of relationships**
- Social repair is **transformative**, relationships with others as well as one’s own self are constantly negotiated and re-negotiated and new ways of dealing with oppression are actualized
- Social repair is **empowering**, it restores wholeness and lost humanity
- Social repair is enacted within **everyday** life and it is amongst these daily routines that life is reclaimed.

Social repair is a performance with active agents, which re-imagines and renews relationships in empowering and transformative ways in the realm of the everyday.

**Conclusion**

Social repair as an orientation to disaster recovery is an anti-oppressive pedagogy. It refers to a process of renewal of relationships in everyday life where relationships are not limited to intra or inter community relations but also with institutions and services. These relationships refer to all networks and connections with other bodies, objects, spaces, institutions, services and to the self, that help locate a person within his or her social world and allows the individual to navigate his/her complex social world in order to lead a meaningful life. Social repair is a process (not an outcome) which is actively performed with the help of active agents (active ‘performers’ and active ‘audience’). Social repair is transformative; relationships with others as well as one’s own self are constantly negotiated and re-negotiated and new ways of dealing with oppression are actualized. Social repair is also empowering; it enables individuals to build on their strengths, to understand and interpret structural inequities and challenge them.

A social repair orientation to disaster recovery therefore means that relationships must be restored and transformed as a result of any post-disaster intervention. For example if interventions are directed at reviving the livelihoods of an agricultural community then a complete analysis of all relationships (both positive and negative) in which the community is embedded must be mapped out for both before and after the disaster event. These will include all connections and networks that define their positions in the social world. These will include relationships to farming inputs (such as seed, water for irrigation, machinery and equipment) as well relationships with the landlord (in case of tenant farming), with local agricultural departments, with agricultural knowledge and skill, with local
markets, with cash, with credit and terms of credit etc. Negative or disempowering relationships will need to be noted, these can be embedded within the pre-disaster landscape or arise as a result of the disaster event. Crucial relationships that have been disrupted must also be noted. Therefore post-disaster processes should be evaluated specifically in their ability to transform negative relationships and renew those which have been ruptured. If the overall goal of social repair is implicit and embedded within recovery processes, the success and failure of these will be reflected in their effectiveness to do so. This will allow for a different kind of possibility in the ruptured post-disaster space and allows for a shift from charity towards solidarity.

References


“More than just a Course”: Tracking the Non-Economic Benefits of Learning

Natasha Bailey
AONTAS, Dublin, Ireland

Abstract: Responding to a lack of research about the wider benefits of learning, this paper presents a brief summary of a national evaluation of a type of adult learning in Ireland called community education where 683 learners were asked via a survey if they had experienced a range of civic and social engagement, health and progression outcomes as a result of their learning. The results presented show how community education contributes to equality at the collective level and the achievement of non-labour market policy goals. These benefits of learning are only made visible when the non-economic benefits of learning are tracked.

The recent past has seen a turn towards research on educational investment that attempts to track both the social and economic benefits of different types of learning, hallmarked by the publication of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development’s report, Understanding the Social Outcomes of Learning (OECD, 2007). It described a need to carry out projects looking at all the outcomes of learning so that its contribution could be seen across various policy areas and also described a dearth of research about the effects of adult learning. This paper will present a piece of research commissioned by the Irish national adult learning association – AONTAS - in 2009, which sought to address this gap in Ireland by exploring the outcomes and impact of a type of adult learning called community education.

Emerging from the tradition of popular education, a key difference between community education and other types of adult learning provision is that the rationale for provision comes from the needs of the target group and/or the geographical community and is, for the most part, run by and for the community. Disadvantaged learners accessed through outreach are prioritized, the learning process is participatory and historically in Ireland was seen as a radical type of adult learning, potentially resulting in collective development to address social exclusion. In Ireland, disadvantaged learners are considered to be individuals from groups targeted at national and European level by social inclusion policies, such as those who left school early, the long-term unemployed and women on a low income.

The benefits tracked through this research included civic and social engagement, health and progression outcomes. The neo-liberal learning agenda of western nations creates an imperative to render visible and track learning outcomes related to, as Giroux (2004) says, “forms of education that provide a new ethic of freedom and a reassertion of collective identity as central preoccupations of a vibrant democratic culture and society.” It also combats the trend of seeing the economy as a substitute for social well-being (Balatti and Falk, 2002).

This paper will briefly present a typology of community education, theory related to social recognition in education and the theoretical framework that was used to analyze community education’s contribution to the achievement of equality, all of which were the theoretical foundations for the research. It will consider the research methodology, the methodological challenges to tracking learning outcomes and the trials that presented for the research. As I present each theoretical consideration I will consider the key research findings in relation to it.
Methodological Reflections

The main methods employed to achieve the research objectives for the project described in this paper were a representative survey of 683 community education learners engaged in community education programs and 11 purposive in-depth case studies of community education providers incorporating past and present learner case studies, each one representing one of the target groups for community education. A survey was employed as the research was an evaluation of provision at national level and needed to be representative of all learners in community education. Case studies were used to explore the richness of learning narratives and provide data for cost-benefit analyses. Most of my reflections in this paper will refer to findings from the survey.

The survey was developed for the research and was innovative in itself, because at the time no national research had been carried out on the wider benefits on any type of adult learning. Where relevant, respondents could indicate if they had experienced disimprovement or if their experience of the outcomes was not because of community education. The attempt was to establish causality between community education and the outcomes presented. The survey also established the demographic characteristics of learners, including ones relating to European and national social inclusion indicators so that the research could assess the extent to which the sample was socially excluded.

The survey was plain English proofed by the National Adult Literacy Agency (NALA) and piloted with 36 learners before it was distributed nationally. It was also administered in a group setting so that learners could ask for assistance if necessary.

There are a number of challenges to researching educational outcomes that this research was cognisant of. They are:

1. Limitations in defining macro-social outcomes for community education, because illuminating the macro-social benefits of education involves modelling using time series data longitudinally and evaluation methods that look at the effect of, for instance, a national social programme on targeted social outcomes (Feinstein, et al. 2003).
2. Being aware that categories of outcomes are not wholly separate and can interact with each other. For instance, engaging in a CSE outcome like joining a community group can also result in health outcomes, or an increase in self-esteem can lead to further engagement in social networks (Feinstein et al., 2006).
3. Carrying out cost-benefit analyses of learning that are not related to increased income. There is very little costings research in Ireland related to prevention of health issues, for instance if an individual does not have to seek help for anxiety or depression. One of the things many learners surveyed through this research indicated was that they felt “happier and less depressed as a result of community education” (58% of learners) and they felt “they have more control over things that happen to them” (53% of learners). In Ireland, there is no verifiable monetary benefit assigned to such improvements and similar outcomes (as there is in the UK), so that the economic benefit of non-labour market outcomes could be tracked.

However, the monetary value of one non-labour market outcome could be calculated as a result of this research to show policy makers how investment in community education represented value for money. Many learners reported starting to volunteer as a result of participating and the return (in
hours assigned a monetary value) was equal to that of the resources allocated to community education by the State in 2009, around 10 million euro.

**Community Education Models**

What is community education? The Government of Ireland stipulates three primary aims for community education: enhancing learning; fostering empowerment, and contributing to civic society. The research described here sought to measure outcomes related to these aims in order to ascertain if they were being met.

It is seen as a distinct strand of State adult education provision in Ireland, which catered to about 55,716 learners in 2009 and is mainly funded through the Department of Education and Skills (DES). It entails groups of learners coming together in dedicated community education centres or more informal settings in local areas. A tutor with specialist knowledge of the topic chosen by the group facilitates the learning. She or he would generally need to know how to use informal, creative, and participatory methodologies to achieve learning outcomes. The ultimate outcome of provision depends on the theoretical approach to community education taken by the provider.

Fletcher (1980) describes this debate as one of a distinction in belief about whether community education is *liberal* and is about ‘free’ people becoming ‘freer’ or whether it is *liberating* and is about people living in bondage or with discrimination being set free. Useful to this review is Lovett et al.’s (2003) analysis of the four models of community education summarised below.

- **The community organization/education model.** A liberal model that brings education to the people in their own surroundings on their own terms. Content could be purely for individual development such as vocational training, outreach from a third level institution or larger adult education centre. The tutor’s role is that of organiser. It is for any community member.
- **The community development/education model.** A liberal/reform model – local affairs work closely with local groups to improve local problems. Where the opportunity arises the educator provides more systematic learning arising from community needs and/or is a resource to community. Learners/educators educate service providers to the local area about community needs and wants. It is for any community member.
- **The community action/education model.** This model is educational process from Freire for local change – community action as educational process. It is radical political education to see how broader societal arrangements impact on the local with some instrumental education. Educators link the personal to the political. There is a focus on local solutions as opposed to broader social change. It is for working class community members.
- **The social action/education model.** This model is working class education. It is structured education provision, which strengthens the working class to take on a broader social change agenda, i.e. political economy. Educators act in solidarity with community.

The research presented in this paper sought to explore which model of community education was being implemented nationally. In the research, model designation was confirmed mainly through two survey questions. The first related to what topics learners were exploring in their course. The thinking was that if the community or social action models were in operation, the bulk of learning would be in topics like politics, history, community development or women’s studies. Only two percent of learners surveyed were taking courses related to these. Instead the topic area learners most frequently
said that they were engaged in was hobby learning, such as art, photography or flower arranging (41% of learners surveyed). These types of courses are usually seen as liberal education.

The second question in the survey that helped to identify the model learners were experiencing involved them completing a 45-item question where they selected adjectives that described their experience of community education. These adjectives were clustered into categories representing the four models of community education outlined above. Each model was given a score based on how many learners had experienced it.

The most popular adjectives chosen by learners were ‘friendly’ (78%), ‘interesting’ (71%), ‘useful’ (64%) and ‘social’ (62%). Of the positive adjectives the ones least selected by learners were ‘political economy’ (4%), ‘class analysis’ (8%), ‘changes community’ (12%), and ‘action’ (14%). The model with the highest score from the analysis of this survey question was the community organization model with a mean score of 3.03 out of a maximum of 6. The mean score for the radical social action model was 1.42 out of a maximum of 9.

This research found that the main model being implemented was a hybrid between the organization and community development models outlined above. Increasingly in Ireland, community education courses are seen as either hobby learning or as bridging programs to foster basic skills that will assist individuals to move into more formal education on a pathway to employment. This finding makes sense given the increasing policy focus in Ireland and elsewhere on adult learning for the labour market (Finnegan, 2008).

**The Politics of Social Recognition**

However, of note is that the research found that regardless of the model of community education employed one element of provision remains consistent. This element is that of fostering the social recognition of learners. In community education, this concept is implemented by raising learners’ self esteem through personal development learning, but also by creating a participatory learning environment where each learner’s contribution to the group and their life experience is honoured and respected as an essential resource for learning (Connolly, 2003).

This notion of recognizing learners is a political project when the learners are disadvantaged, and those in community education usually are. WERRC (2001, p. 24) summarizes the need for social recognition work in women’s community education, “women experience social disadvantage and so face inequalities of respect and recognition. This is internalised as poor self-esteem, which leads to isolation and to a lack of confidence and low aspirations and expectations.” As Amsler (2011, p. 54) says, “political injustices were internalised into the psychological structures of individuals.”

Honneth is well known for his thinking on the importance of recognition in relation to inequality and education and stresses that, “the worst kind of humiliation is not to see or notice another human being… all forms of social injustice are forms of the maldistribution of recognition.” (in Hottunen, 2007, p. 424) This struggle for recognition can occur at three levels, the family, civil society and the state. At the level of civil society exists the possibility for the individual to be recognised as having rights, autonomy and responsibility. Without this recognition, the individual has low social integrity, “one is not considered a subject of one’s action, but rather an object that causally reacts to stimuli. One’s moral responsibility remains at an undeveloped stage.”(ibid., p. 427). Recognition at this level...
fosters agency. Community education recognizes disadvantaged learners at the civil society level to cultivate agency by actively involving learners, creating ownership and responsibility for their own learning (Connolly, 2003).

At the State level, or more commonly understood as the community level, self-esteem is achieved through the recognition of one’s value to their community through work. In Honneth’s framework, work is understood as a contribution to the common good in some way. If this work is unrecognised then low self-esteem results. According to Honneth the individual suffers from a lack of honour and dignity. Therefore, the learning environment created in community education acknowledges the value of a learner's contribution and fosters their self-esteem so that they feel they have a further contribution to make. Thus, through the fair redistribution of recognition in the learning setting community education fights for social justice.

In the survey, learners were asked about a number of learning outcomes that should take place as a result of social recognition work in community education. The research found that the majority of learners experienced most of the social recognition outcomes tracked. None of the learners cited a negative change in relation to these outcomes. The top three experienced were a positive change in ‘self-confidence’ (85% of learners), ‘sense of purpose or hope’ (80% of learners), and ‘happiness’ (77% of learners). The majority of learners also experienced positive changes in relation to their sense of agency, a key outcome of fostering social recognition for learners. For instance, 75% said they experienced a positive change in ‘ability to do things by yourself’, while 73% indicated a positive change in their ‘ability to communicate with others’ and in their ‘quality of life’. Seventy percent said they had experienced a positive change in their ‘ability to tackle problems rather than ignore them’.

**Understanding how Community Education Contributes to Equality**

The research presented here also tried to understand how community education contributed to dimensions of equality at the collective level. In order to accomplish this task Baker et al. (2004) five-dimensional qualitative framework was employed. In order to show community education’s national contribution to equality, relevant outcomes tracked through the learner’s survey were grouped according to the equality dimension they belonged to. The proportion of learners experiencing that outcome was applied to the national cohort of learners (N=55,716) to get the national aggregate. The research found through tracking demographic characteristics that the majority of learners involved in community education were - as they are supposed to be according to national policy - from disadvantaged target groups. Therefore, benefits experienced by learners, which relate to the equality dimensions in the framework are seen as contributing to the equality of those groups nationally. It is not possible to consider findings related to all five of the dimensions here so a description of three is set out below with a brief consideration of relevant research findings.

**Respect and Recognition: Universal Citizenship, Toleration and the Private Sphere**

This dimension refers to being able to relate to each other as equals, with respect and tolerance, when interacting as citizens regardless of differences between us. Outcomes tracked in the research related to this dimension included being ‘more accepting and understanding of beliefs different to my own’ (64% or 35,658 learners experienced a positive change), and being ‘more accepting and understanding of other cultures’ (60% or 33,429 learners experienced a positive change).
Love, Care and Solidarity: a Private Affair
This dimension refers to equal entitlement to relations of love, care and solidarity and the valuing of work done to foster this feature. It potentially refers to policies that foster the creation of strong social networks and positive family relationships, which in turn promote well-being. A variety of the outcomes tracked through the research related to this dimension, including some related to family cohesion. For instance, 67% of parents (15,678 individuals) said that they had experienced a positive change in their ‘ability to be a positive role model for my children’ and 60% (14,040 individuals) in their ‘confidence in talking to my children about the importance of finishing school’.

Power Relations: Civil and Personal Rights and Liberal Democracy
This dimension is, at the basic level, about civil and personal rights, but it is also about equal participation in the democratic process through voting, seeking to influence public policy and other forms of active citizenship. The research found that community education had a limited impact in relation to civic and social engagement outcomes, which are related to this dimension of equality. However, if we consider the national aggregates of some outcomes they are not insignificant. For instance, 32% of learners (17,829 individuals) said they had ‘decided to give something back to the community’ as a result of community education and 25% (13,929 individuals) indicated that they had ‘volunteered in a community group’ because of their community education experience.

Conclusion
At this point it is useful to return to the title of this paper, which is actually a quote from one of the case study learners interviewed for the research. Because of community education's attention to social recognition through personal development and participatory learning, this learner indicated experiencing far more than 'just a course' and talked about how community education had a wide-ranging impact on her life and relationships. The survey results presented show that many learners also experienced benefits that went beyond the specific learning goals of the courses they had participated in. While this type of research is new and faces methodological challenges it is only by tracking the wider benefits of learning that we can show how adult education has the potential to contribute to economic and social well-being at the collective level, and see that it also represents value for money through its achievement of policy goals unrelated to the labour market.

References
Symposium, OECD: France.


WERRC,(2001), Women at the forefront: The role of women's community education groups in combating poverty and disadvantage, AONTAS: Dublin.
Inter-national Service Learning in Canada

Mali Bain
University of British Columbia

Abstract: This paper reviews and connects the literature of (inter-national) service learning and decolonization literature, suggesting that program planning may provide a useful lens through which to view both. The paper has three parts – first, an exploration of researcher positioning in relation to this study; second, a literature review exploring service learning, program planning, and decolonizing methodologies; and finally a summary of the 'Community as Teacher' case study, exploring a university-Indigenous partnership on Coast Salish territory.

Introduction

Researcher Positioning

In keeping with Harding's call for 'strong objectivity' in qualitative research (Harding, 1995), and acknowledging the importance of relationality in Indigenous research (Smith, 1999), I have begun my study first by exploring my own connections to this research. My paternal and maternal great-grandparents have at several points held land title to pieces of the unceded land of First Nations in traditional Stó:lō, Sliammon, and Musqueam territory. None of my ancestors or relatives have to my knowledge been forced to attend residential school, been prevented from speaking their native language (English), or been treated as wards of the state. I and my family thus have a long history of being a part of dominant settler society in British Columbia. As a result of my upbringing, I know that I will tend to fall naturally into language and assumptions which aim to erase and forget the settler occupation of Indigenous land in BC.

My position of privilege as a visitor-settler on this land is the backdrop to my role involving Canadian teachers in summer workshops in Kenya through Education Beyond Borders (EBB). As I worked with subsequent groups of Canadian teachers on their first experiences in Kenya, I became increasingly aware of the ways that 'mzungus', settler colonialists from the 98% settler-colonial Canadian West, fit into Kenya, a British settler-colony with a settler population of 2%. I became concerned that Canadians such as myself were repeating at an international level a kind of 'colonial benevolence', that caused Indian residential schools and continue to cause devastation for First Nations in Canada (Haig-Brown, 2006). I have chosen to research program planning on Coast Salish territory research as a part of my growing engagement with the ways that I myself participate in settler colonialism on unceded Coast Salish territory,

Challenging Assumptions

The paper challenges several assumptions made by the White settler culture I grew up in, assumptions which are shared by dominant culture in Canada (Battiste, 2012). The assumption is often that the 'issue' or 'problem' lies with Indigenous peoples (Smith, 1999); my research attempts to turn the lens on the interaction between Indigenous and dominant culture. I have worked hard to avoid the automatic motivation to solve the problems of other people as my goal is to explore the relationships and dynamics created by service-learning partnerships, not to solve or even explore problems which may exist within communities.
Research Context (Literature Review)
The interpretive framework and concepts outlined below have been selected to help make sense of a partnership between a university and an Indigenous community on Coast Salish territory. This research falls at the intersection between three fields of literature – inter-national service learning, program planning, and decolonization.

Inter-national Service Learning
Service learning is defined as a credit-bearing educational experience which combines organized community service with structured reflection (Bringle & Hatcher, 1995). In the early years of service-learning research, there was an underlying assumption that communities would benefit from the 'services' provided by students. Recent research into community partner perspectives has revealed that service-learning allows community partners to foster a positive relationship with post-secondary institutions, increases its capacity to fulfill its mission, and expand existing services or programs (Blouin & Perry 2009). The costs of service-learning to partners include wasted time, inadequate student commitment, and requirement of supervision and project management (Blouin & Perry 2009; Tryon et al 2008). Service learning scholars (Clayton, Bringle, Senor, Huq, & Morrison, 2010) have developed and validated the Transformational Relationship Evaluation Scale (TRES) survey as well as a graphic involving a series of Venn diagrams as tools for differentiating relationships along a previously developed transformational-transactional scale.

Service learning in an Indigenous context. When constructed by and for indigenous peoples, some conceptions of service learning may provide a means of building community and civic responsibility. Kirkness & Barnhardt (1991) suggest that institutions adopt “The Four Rs-- Respect, Relevance, Reciprocity, Responsibility”. This bears an interesting parallel with service learning literature, in which Butin suggests a set of four Rs for service learning: respect, relevance, reciprocity, and reflection (Butin, 2010). This potential overlap between the '4 R's' of service learning and of indigenous perspectives provides a significant arena for further research, beyond the scope of my research, into the commonalities and contradictions between service learning as constructed by Eurocentrism and indigenous perspectives.

While experiential, community-based learning has potential resonance with Indigenous pedagogies, very few studies explore the connection within the context of service-learning. One author has explored the connection between service-learning module in Ojibway culture and Ojibway pedagogy (McNally, 2004). Steinman (2011) explores the ways in which university-Indigenous collaborations can allow for relationships and ways or knowing which are deeply counter-hegemonic and decolonizing. Drawing upon Regan's concept of 'making space' (2010), Steinman suggests that “incorporating sustained and holistic efforts to meet Indigenous people on their cultural terms” (p. 11) is at the core of meaningful efforts to decolonize service-learning partnerships.

Inter-national service learning. The Stó:lō welcomed European fur and salmon traders to their lands as international visitors trading partners, but have never signed treaties giving away their land or rights to sovereignty (Carlson, 2001). Defining international service-learning as learning that “combines academic instruction and community-based service in an international context”(Crabtree, 2008, p. 18), I will consider the possibility that service learning in Canadian Indigenous communities is inter-national service learning, as it engages participants in the settler-colonial nation of Canada with sovereign nations on their traditional unceded lands. The literature of international service-
learning offers perspectives on the ways that dominant-culture institutions engage with colonized peoples.

**Power Relations and Reciprocity**

Henry & Breyfogle (2006) differentiate between traditional and 'enriched' reciprocity, the latter involving deep collaboration and transformation of both stakeholders and activities. Reciprocity is significant not only in Western literature but, defined as mutual gift-giving, is an important part of many Indigenous cultures (Atleo, 2011; Regan, 2010). International service-learning literature has begun to explore Indigenous conceptions of reciprocity such as Anyi, a relationally-based view of reciprocity based in Andean cultures (Porter, 2001), and ngapartji ngapartji, an Australian aboriginal concept (Tur, 2012). Reciprocity is defined as one of the 'four R's for engaging with Indigenous communities, as discussed further below.

International service learning often takes place in the context of significant power disparity between service learners and community members. Practitioners recognize the power imbalance between the dominant-culture service provider and the recipient (Grusky, 2000). Service-learning is often conceived as a type of 'border-crossing', in which participants, often young and privileged, have an opportunity to cross the physical and conceptual borders that separate them from the experiences of others (Chesler, Ford, Galura, & Charbeneau, 2006). Taylor (2002) explores the ways that service-learning is construed of as a 'heroic journey' for young people or as 'war', as for example in the name 'Peace Corps'.

While research is limited in the emerging international service-learning literature, studies suggest that while service-learning can provide students with a greater sense of self-awareness and a more complex understanding of people from different class or cultural backgrounds, some participants deepened or reinforced their biases (Dunn-Kenney, 2010; Horn, Roxas, & Bell, 2007). While studies have begun to explore student biases or stereotypes (Prins & Webster, 2010), none have explored the ways in which university and Indigenous program managers understand reciprocity power dynamics, 'border-crossing' and stereotypes.

**Reflexive thoughts: service-learning**  
Given that international experiences first raised my awareness of own settler-colonial reality in BC, my use of inter-national service learning is in part an attempt to unsettle the tendency of myself and others to acknowledge forms of colonialism only when they occur outside the borders of Canada. I am conscious of the assumptions I may make by overly associating the experiences of colonization on territory within and outside the borders of Canada.

**Decolonizing Approaches**

Coast Salish peoples were dispossessed of their land without treaties, Indigenous children were required to attend residential, English-language schooling, and generations of Indigenous people are discriminated against with racist policies such as those enshrined in the Indian Act (Lawrence, 2004). While colonial governments claim to have established Indian residential schools with the 'best of intentions' (Haig-Brown, 2006), historical records show that residential schools were part of a strategy of extermination through assimilation, which aimed to decimate Indigenous peoples and thus legitimize settler-colonial rule (Haig-Brown, 2006; Regan, 2010). These 'best intentions' came from a paternalistic assumption that Indigenous peoples were somehow inferior, something that Smith
describes an 'imperial gaze' cast by explorers, merchants, missionaries, travellers, and researchers when they approach an Indigenous community with the assumption of privilege, power, and voice (Smith, 1999). Given the results of past supposedly 'well-intentioned' actions on the part of members of settler society, it is important to carefully examine the ways in which mainstream institutions engage with Indigenous communities.

I have chosen to use the term Indigenous to refer to “peoples of long settlement and connection to specific lands who have been adversely affected by incursions by industrial economies, displacement, and settlement of their traditional territories by others” (First Nations Studies Program at UBC, 2013). I will use the term settler in keeping with Paulette Regan's call for Canadians of non-Indigenous descent to acknowledge the destructive legacy of colonial relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples (Regan, 2010).

Decolonization in service-learning. There are some indications that service learning, could perhaps be a piece of a decolonizing approach. In Decolonizing Methodologies, Smith suggests that relationships amongst Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities can be characterized by reciprocal 'sharing' (Smith, 1999, p. 160). Battiste suggests that decolonization can come about when the focus shifts from the margins to the 'spaces in-between' the curriculum, structures, and institutions (Battiste, 2012). In 'Unsettling the Settler Within', Pauline Regan describes a personal path of decolonization which she has begun as a member of settler-colonial society (Regan, 2010). She explores the importance of 'truth-telling' by debunking the myth that Canada's history of relations with aboriginal peoples was peaceful or benevolent (Regan, 2010). Building on Regan's work, Steinman (2011) explores the ways in which partnerships, by 'making space', can in fact be a part of decolonization.

Indigenous Knowledges
Just as Western nations have a complex and culturally-influenced set of policies, institutions, and cultures, Indigenous nations have nuanced systems of justice, health, peacemaking, and service. Given my complete 'marination' in colonial ways of thinking (Battiste, 2012), I can begin to learn from Indigenous Knowledges but cannot claim to centre my research within that realm; instead, my research will aim to to consider ways that dominant-culture constructions, such as service learning, can be decolonized. I consider it part of my responsibility to frame a set of recommendations to dominant-culture units in the ways that they approach and engage with the Community as Teacher program.

Reflexive thoughts: decolonizing approaches As a non-Indigenous individual with significant intercultural experience, I am on a path of understanding the ways in I have been 'marinated' in settler-colonial perspectives. I will listen carefully for ways in which my own tendency to adopt what Smith calls an 'imperial gaze' in my research; my beginning attempt to do so is these recurring reflexive thoughts, which aim to dispell the myth that the author is somehow completed, unbiased, or unimplicated in the process of research and writing.

Program Planning
Sandmann, Kiely and Grenier (2009) have identified a lack of literature connecting program planning theory with service learning. Program planners have identified for many years the need for critical, feminist, and Indigenous perspectives on the planning process (Sork, 2010). Work such as that of
LaFrance and Nichols (2009) explores Indigenous conceptions of evaluation, and outline a set of four core values: being people of a place, recognizing our gifts, honouring family and community, and respecting sovereignty.

This study could be seen to belong to Sork's third domain of program planning research – understanding the 'messiness' of program planning as it actually occurs (Sork, 2010, p. 158). By exploring the perspectives of service learning program planners, this research looks to understand ways that the structures of service-learning interact with decolonizing approaches in the 'real world' of program planning.

**Reflexive thoughts: program planning**

Given that much of the program planning literature is written by dominant-culture individuals, my aim will be to focus on the ways in which the perspectives of research participants and other literature can inform program planning literature.

**Case Study: Community as Teacher**

The University of British Columbia is seen as a Canadian leader in the field of service learning, with over 1000 students participating in service learning projects each year (“University of British Columbia Profile,” 2011). UBC’s strategic plan recognizes a need to internationalize, to focus on community engagement, and to foster aboriginal initiatives (University of British Columbia, 2012). Where these efforts overlap, there is an assumed congruency but not research backing the significance of the overlap (Toope, 2011).

Beginning in 2005, a UBC unit initiated a partnership with a Stó:lō community services agency. Intended to be an opportunity for students to learn about and engage with aboriginal culture, the program immerses medical students into community-led youth summer camps for a 3-4 days and nights. Qualitative research conducted to date suggests that the students’ experiences have an impact on their later practice as physicians. Building on the literature above, I have begun a case study of the “Community as Teacher” program in order to provide an understanding of the ways in which UBC and a Stó:lō community agency interact to conceptualize and carry out a long-standing service-learning program.

The purpose of the case study was to understand the university and community processes of designing and implementing a health-related service-learning program in Coast Salish territory. Research questions explore the change in the program over time, the ways that multiple stakeholders describe the program and its purpose and objectives, the ways that stakeholders engage with important matters concerning settler-Indigenous relationships, and the implications of this program that might inform an understanding of similar university based service-learning programs taking place in other Indigenous communities.

The perspectives of university and community-based program planners in this study are a primary source for their own constructions of the way in which the service-learning program operates in relation to themes of reciprocity and decolonization. Initial findings to date suggest the significance of developing a shared vision on which the partnership is based, and the ways in which each partner sees the program meeting their needs as part of an understanding of ‘reciprocity’. A significant component of the study explores the complex ways in which university and community partners manage the power imbalances inherent in a settler-colonial university connecting with an Indigenous
community services organization. The case study is the story of one service-learning program, based on Coast Salish land, conducted as part of masters' degree research, and as such has been limited by time and framework.

Both this paper and the study have assumed a Western epistemological framework, including the definition of research, construction of methodology, and establishment of theoretical frameworks. This is both an honest reflection of the researchers' training in mainstream Canadian institutions and a significant limitation of the study. It is my hope that by drawing the connection between service-learning, program planning, and decolonizing approaches, this paper and forthcoming research may begin to contribute to a growing conversation amongst local and inter-national service-learning practitioners, researchers, and theorists.

References


At the Edge: Developing a Post-Colonial Model for Justice Training

Deborah Bartlette,
Yukon College

Joanne Lewis
Northern Institution of Social Justice

Abstract: For many years, the relationship between aboriginal peoples and police in Canada, including the north, has been highly problematic. Based on the historical issues, a report on policing in the Yukon and the partnership between Yukon First Nations, the RCMP and the Yukon Government, as well as a need for northern context, accessible training, a new approach to justice training in the north has developed. The Northern Institute of Social Justice, created in 2010, has developed social-justice focused training for justice- and human-service professionals in the north. This paper explores the work of this innovative new institute.

Policing, Colonialism and Social Justice
For many years, the relationship between aboriginal peoples and police in Canada has been highly problematic. Studies and inquiries, too numerous to be listed here have been conducted over the last two decades, each one calling for reform in the way police and other justice workers interact with aboriginal people. Most mid- to larger-sized police forces in Canada have some type of aboriginal liaison or community relations unit. However, the headlines continue, from not- or too-lightly investigated missing aboriginal women to aboriginal people dying in holding cells or being seriously injured or killed by police.

A significant report by the Ontario Attorney General’s office (Rudin, 2005), written following the Ipperwash Inquiry states the following:

In order to address this [the relationship between aboriginal people and the police], it is first necessary to understand what the major causes of the problem are. The three explanations that have been advanced as significant causes are: 1) culture clash, 2) socio-economic, and 3) colonialism. While all three explanations have their strengths, [this] paper agrees with the Royal Commission on Aboriginal People and other commissions and reports that it is the experience of colonialism that best explains the problem of Aboriginal over-representation [in the justice system]. (1)

The report goes on to discuss the problem of ‘over-policing’, i.e. the practice of individuals of particular ethnic or racial backgrounds being targeted for police attention. Combined with the police’s historic involvement in ‘pre-emptively’ resolving disputes over Aboriginal rights and apprehending children to attend residential school or support child welfare agencies, this has led to ‘a great distrust of the police by Aboriginal people (and) also leads the police to forming attitudes that view Aboriginal people as violent, dangerous and prone to criminal behaviour (2).

In spite of the considerable evidence of the role of colonialism, as evidenced in the examples above, in the relationship between police and Aboriginal peoples, most police and justice training programs focus on ‘public safety’. The International Centre for the Prevention of Crime defines public safety as the prevention reduction or removal of risks for an environment in which ordinary citizens live and
move free of fear. Taken together with ‘over-policing’, the common public safety approach to the training of police and justice workers can do little improve the relationship between Aboriginal peoples and the police.

A new institution in Canada’s north, the Northern Institute of Social Justice (NISJ), based at Yukon College, is piloting a new approach to the professional development of justice workers, based on a more social justice approach, i.e. providing training to those working in justice-related fields to assist them in understanding root causes and responding appropriately. This innovative initiative, a partnership between four different government departments, local Aboriginal peoples and a post-secondary institution, is based on the vision that northerners, working together, have solutions to the social justice challenges facing themselves and their communities.

With a mandate which includes research as well as training, the NISJ seeks to provide tools to help support community leadership, capacity development, and transformation of service delivery. Its guiding principles focus on:

- partnerships and collaboration to support program development, delivery and research;
- respect for cultural diversity and unique knowledge and skills, innovation, and evidence-based practice;
- holistic and creative approaches to social justice as part of overall community wellness;
- programs that are relevant, accredited, recognized and transferable; and
- learner-centred and community-based approaches to program development and delivery.

All of the institute’s programs, services and research are done around a core philosophy of social justice. By social justice, we mean a lens through which we see the challenges facing individuals, families and communities; and it is a way of responding to what we see, that: values working together to find solutions; is grounded in reality, respect and resiliency; and moves people from inequality to equality of opportunity and outcome.

A social justice approach promotes equity, fairness and inclusivity and directs attention to the root causes of inequity and works towards systemic and institutional change by first strengthening, and then empowering disadvantaged and vulnerable populations to address the social problems with which they are confronted.

A social justice approach to justice worker training and professional development is a significant step towards addressing the colonial legacy that still impacts Aboriginal people today. Taken together with a collaborative, community-based approach to curriculum development and delivery, this model offers a potential solution to improving the relationship between justice workers and the Aboriginal population.

The Northern Institute of Social Justice

Context

The Yukon Territory, one of the three territories in northern Canada, has approximately 34,880 people. There are 14 Yukon First Nations, 11 of which are self-governing. As independent governments, they deliver their own programs and services and implement policies and legislation. Yukon First Nations are the only First Nations in Canada with this level of self-government, which
includes settled land claims. Consultations and planning processes of recent years have highlighted a need for training that strengthens the capacity to deliver programs and services and have reinforced the importance of access to relevant continuing training and education.

In 2005, interest in creating a northern institute gained momentum at roundtable discussions involving northern governments and colleges. Participants recognized the need to better prepare northerners to administer justice-related programs and services in ways relevant to communities; to help individuals pursue and advance careers; and to help employers recruit, develop and retain a well-qualified workforce in this area.

In December 2010, Sharing Common Ground, a report on policing in the Yukon, was released. Based on the recognition by the RCMP in the Yukon, Yukon First Nations (YFN) and Yukon Government that some YFN citizens and non-YFN citizens had experienced racism and cultural insensitivity (p. 2), the report made a number of recommendations designed to improve the trust between the police and the communities they serve. “Effective policing is based on a foundation of trust” (p. 1).

Sharing Common Ground, together other strategic plans indicate that the Yukon has a range of training and education needs, including those which could be described as “social justice-related”. The needs cut across disciplines and careers in the Yukon Government, Yukon First Nations governments, non-government organizations and businesses and present an opportunity that invites a collaborative response. Yukon College, the Yukon Government, and Yukon First Nations responded to that opportunity by creating the Northern Institute of Social Justice, part of Yukon College.

In 2009-2010, as the concept clarified and interest grew, so did the interest in the name. In development, it was referred to as the Northern Institute of Justice. As the concept evolved, the institute was seen as a place to address the justice-related training and education needs of people working in a wide range of careers in and beyond the justice system. The issues they would encounter and address would not always be seen as “justice” issues. They needed to see themselves in the institute’s vision and attending programs. Clearly, the name mattered.

In September 2009 with three-year funding from the Department of Education, Advanced Education, Government of Yukon, the development committee became the Governing Council and the institute was named the Northern Institute of Social Justice (NISJ). Retaining the word “northern” reflected the intent to continue to develop pan-territorial relationships for program development and delivery that reflected northern contexts. Adding the word “social” responded to the desire for a name that was more representative of the Institute’s evolving mission and vision. In December 2009, the Yukon Government and Yukon College announced the creation of the Institute, with a Governing Council to provide the vision and priorities. The Council, chaired by the College President included the Grand Chief, Council of Yukon First Nations, two Yukon First Nations Leaders and four Yukon Government deputy ministers. In January 2010, the Institute opened.

The Institute’s name also raised a new question: What what does social justice mean to the NISJ?

Defining Social Justice
Clients, colleagues and community members often ask, “What do you mean by “social justice”? The NISJ defines the term as follows:

Social justice as a lens through which we see the challenges facing individuals, families and communities; and as a way of responding to what we see, that:
- values working together to find solutions,
- is grounded in reality, respect and resiliency, and
- that helps move people to equality of opportunity and outcome.

A social justice approach promotes equity, fairness, and inclusivity and directs attention to root causes of inequity and works towards systemic and institutional change by first strengthening, and then empowering disadvantaged and vulnerable populations to address the social problems with which they are confronted.

The NISJ applies this approach by providing training, education and research, some of the tools, for working through challenges facing northerners, and finding solutions that can move individuals, families and communities to equality of opportunity and outcome.

**Purpose**

NISJ was created to address two broad challenges facing Yukon employers and employees delivering social justice-related programs and services:
- the need for entry level training, generic training, and position-specific training; and
- the need to attract, retain and develop a well-qualified workforce.

The Institute’s role is to consolidate, develop and deliver training and education programs for careers with a social justice-related component; and to undertake related research.

The Institute opened in January 2010 and is currently focused on providing training to frontline workers in a wide range of fields (e.g. counseling, corrections, education, enforcement, health, justice, policing, social services, wellness etc.) in governments and non-government organizations. Training programs have addressed administrative justice, Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder, loss, grief and healing, regulatory enforcement, trauma, vicarious trauma and compassion fatigue, Yukon First Nations history and cultures, etc. Job-specific training has been provided for correctional officers and probation officers. Career orientation and exploration programs have targeted careers in corrections, justice, policing and regulatory enforcement.

Acknowledging and including the Yukon context is a key component in training program development and delivery. Subject matter experts, program and curriculum developers and instructors are drawn primarily from the college, government, non-government and private sectors. This diversity has resulted in a variety of partnerships involving one or several organizations, in order to target needs, develop and deliver programs, and engage in other initiatives to address a specific issue or develop a particular opportunity. Relationships have been formed and project partnerships developed with Yukon Government departments such as Education, Justice, and Health and Social Services; the Council of Yukon First Nations, the RCMP, Hospice Yukon, the Fetal Alcohol Syndrome Society of the Yukon, and the Yukon Workers’ Compensation Health and Safety Board.
Pan-northern relationships have been developed to focus on common interests. For example, NISJ participation in an inter-university cyber forum initiated and coordinated by the University of Alaska Fairbanks has led to opportunities to work together. A common interest in victim service worker training has resulted in participation in a working group with Yukon, Northwest Territories and Nunavut governments to develop a pan-northern training program.

**Mission, Guiding Principles and Vision of the NISJ**

The NISJ mission is that drawing on the North’s leadership, unique values and diverse cultures, the NISJ delivers integrated training and education programs and conducts related research in order to:

- help employers attract and retain a well-qualified workforce,
- help individuals develop careers, and
- provide tools to help support community leadership, capacity development, and transformation of service delivery.

The NISJ is guided by the following principles:

- partnerships and collaboration to support program development, delivery and research,
- respect for cultural diversity and unique knowledge and skills, innovation, and evidence-based practice,
- holistic and creative approaches to social justice as part of overall community wellness,
- programs that are relevant, accredited, recognized and transferable, and
- learner-centred and community-based approaches to program development and delivery.

The NISJ vision is a future in which northerners, working together, have solutions to the social justice challenges facing themselves and their communities.

**The NISJ and Community Partnerships**

Part of the philosophy of the NISJ is to work with community partnerships in the development and delivery of programs. NISJ has worked extensively with RCMP M Division in the Yukon, particularly related to the implementation of *Sharing Common Ground*. The Task Force that had undertaken the review was co-chaired by the Deputy Minister of the Department of Justice, Yukon Government; the Superintendent/Commanding Officer of “M” Division; and the Manager of Justice Programs, Council of Yukon First Nations. This in itself represented a significant commitment to working together to address the recommendations of the report. Other partners in responding to the training recommendations included the Council of Yukon First Nations, Yukon Government’s Department of Justice and Women’s Directorate, and representatives of women’s organizations.

The NISJ’s role has included:

- development and delivery of a Policing and Justice Careers Orientation Program for Yukon First Nations people and women interested in RCMP or other justice-related careers,
- inclusion of RCMP members along with frontline workers from other organizations participating in NISJ training (e.g. FASD Training; Trauma Training; and Yukon First Nations History and Cultures Training),
- participation on the committee that delivered the September 2012 national symposium on Policing in Northern and Remote Canada, and
• facilitation of a collaborative process for creating a police training and development framework. The framework will address training for RCMP members currently serving in the Yukon and those new to the Yukon.

In response to the request for Yukon First Nations history and culture training for its members, the NISJ facilitated a working group for program development and delivery. The group included the RCMP, Yukon Government departments of Justice and Health and Social Services, the Council of Yukon First Nations, and the First Nations Initiative, Yukon College, which developed and delivered the training. It was designed to reflect the learning outcomes jointly identified by RCMP and Health and Social Services representatives. At the request of both organizations, their staff trained together in the programs piloted in 2012 and 2013.

Once of the outcomes of the national symposium on Policing in Northern and Remote Canada, was interest in establishing a national research agenda, that would include northern issues. Locally, the NISJ, RCMP, and Department of Justice are interested in exploring this possibility.

A training need identified in Sharing Common Ground was also recommended by the Task Force Report on Acutely Intoxicated Persons at Risk. The Department of Health and Social Services became a partner in discussing and developing the Yukon First Nations History and Cultures. The Institute’s FASD Training and Trauma Training (which includes a residential school component) were also delivered to some staff.

The Council of Yukon First Nations (CYFN) partnered with the NISJ to develop the program outline and curriculum development for the Police and Justice Careers Orientation Program piloted in June 2012. The program was delivered with instructors/presenters from the Department of Justice, RCMP, regulatory enforcement agencies and consultants addressing a range issues, workplace visits, workplace preparation and training overviews.

CYFN Resolution Health Support Workers and the NISJ and others are developing a Residential School Awareness Program that can be adapted for delivery to frontline workers, specific workplaces, the general public or an intergenerational audience.

Yukon College’s First Nations Initiatives unit developed Yukon First Nations History and Cultures Training for the NISJ and collaborates with a local mental health consultant to deliver Trauma Training. YFN History and Culture has been delivered to a number of groups throughout the Yukon, including College staff, government workers and police.

In addition to involving the NISJ in responding to Sharing Common Ground training recommendations, the Department and the Institute have piloted correctional officer training, regulatory enforcement compliance training, career exploration training and on-line probation officer training.

Fetal Alcohol Syndrome Society Yukon (FASSY) and the NISJ have co-developed and co-deliver four FASD training programs for the public and for frontline workers in specific fields (e.g. education, justice, health). Hospice Yukon has developed and delivers Loss, Grief and Healing – Practical Tools for the Workplace for delivery through the NISJ.
Pan-Northern Partnerships
The NISJ is working with departments of justice in the governments of Yukon, Nunavut and Northwest Territories to develop essential skills for northern victim service workers. FASD Training was provided at the request of Nunavut’s departments of Justice and Health and Social Services. Trauma Training will be provided to the Northwest Territories (NWT) Department of Justice, in collaboration with an NWT consultant.

The NISJ facilitates Yukon participation in the University of Alaska Fairbanks annual Cyber-Symposium on Alternate Dispute Resolution (ADR). The NISJ is a member of the Editorial Board for the Symposium Journal and an advisory committee for a Master’s student.

Other Initiatives
The NISJ and the Yukon Research Centre, Yukon College participate on a territorial/federal Project Partners Board overseeing a study of the prevalence of FASD in Yukon’s adult criminal justice system. The project is led by the Yukon Government Department of Justice and Justice Canada and includes other local and national agencies.

The NISJ has hosted free public events to highlight social justice issues. The inaugural speaking event, on November 14, 2012 featured the Hon. Lloyd Axworthy, President, Winnipeg University; former National Chief of the Assembly of First Nations, and Peter Johnston, then Chief, Teslin Tlingit Council. The evening’s theme was local, national international pathways to social justice.

With Yukon College, the Institute has worked with the Applied Arts Division to adapt and offer the Institute’s Trauma Training and Yukon First Nations History and Cultures Training to students in the Nursing Program and is working with the Criminology Program to adapt and offer training for those students. The NISJ is interested in adapting some criminology programs for training programs. The Social Work Program is also interested in exploring possibilities for working together. The Institute collaborates with the Continuing Education and Training Division for client needs identification and to explore training opportunities.

Preliminary research is underway on developing a certificate(s) at the undergraduate and post-graduate levels in the Applied Arts and Continuing Education and Training divisions and the diploma level with Applied Arts.

Conclusion
Since start-up, the Institute has trained 1,539 students and delivered a total of 86 training programs. This training represents a significant number of social justice-related workers in the Yukon who are now more aware of the root causes of the challenges their clientele are facing. Residential school trauma, poverty and cultural differences are recognized and the need to tailor interactions and services to clients based on these factors is being incorporated across a number of human services professionals and justice-related professionals. Through meaningful community partnerships, the NISJ has begun to build healing relationships in the Yukon and beyond with a different approach to justice, that of social justice. There is yet much work to be done.
References


Abstract: This paper examines the potentially transformative learning process of a group of mental health practitioners as they engaged in an 8-week educational program designed to establish and enhance self-reflective practice. The study highlights a number of emerging themes related to the benefits, the establishment, and the facilitation of self-reflective practice in the helping professions that has the potential to contribute to both the academic preparation of those entering the field as well as the professional development/continuing education of established practitioners.

Introduction

It appears to be commonly understood that health care and human services professions have a high risk for burnout. While there is some emphasis on the importance of self care and self-reflection as a component of academic preparation in the helping professions, there is a tendency to focus more on knowledge and skill development related to the specific occupation at the expense of developing capacity for self-reflective practice. Once in the profession, there is often little time available within which to foster self-reflection, and at times, organizational policies and practices may act as a barrier.

Further, when reflection is encouraged both academically and professionally, it is often in relation to reflective learning and the integration of theoretical information into professional practice. So, the emphasis is often related to knowledge, theory, and prevention of burnout. It is equally important, perhaps, even more important, to consider the ways in which self-reflective practice might transform not only the experience of the practitioner, but also extend to the quality of service provision and to the enhancement of organizational culture. When asked, most practitioners in the helping professions indicate the desire to contribute to meaningful change in the lives of others and often expect that this will engender a sense of personal fulfillment. Once faced with high workloads, interpersonal dynamics, and ultimately, the challenge of witnessing another’s life struggles, practitioners may become disillusioned and overwhelmed.

To manage the emotional labour involved in helping professions, practitioners might vacillate between overextension and self-protection, which both potentially lead to a sense of alienation from their work and service to others. The hope in this research study was to gather information to support the idea that there is, in fact, another way.

This study contributes an expanded view of self-reflection to incorporate a holistic perspective that draws on all experiences of the learner and encourages the development of a self-reflective practice that challenges practitioners to consider personal attitudes, belief systems, values, past experiences, etc. that combine to create a personal lens through which all things are interpreted. This study was undertaken to identify best practices that might be applied to facilitate the development of self-reflective practice in the helping professions and potentially lead to transformative learning opportunities.
Background and Methods

The Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA), Thunder Bay Branch is a community based organization providing a range of services to individuals and families who are living with the challenges associated with mental illness. The 6 participants in the research project were part of larger teams that involved 3 separate programs within the agency. Participants actively engaged in 8 weekly 3 hour educational sessions with an emphasis on establishment of self-reflective practice, development of strategies and tools, engagement in group discussion activities which also involved coaching, and application of learning to real life situations through the use of transfer to practice exercises between sessions.

This was a qualitative research study using mixed methods designed to understand the perspectives of community mental health professionals as they engaged in a process to establish and maintain a personal self-reflective practice. The participants are actively engaged in the delivery of social services and community support for individuals living with mental illness. The study involved two phases related to data collection including a) a series of educational workshops designed and facilitated by the researcher to educate and increase understanding of reflective practices, and b) follow-up interviews to gather information related to the learning experiences of the participants. Data collection occurred at 3 levels and involved mixed methods including a) an ongoing survey during the workshop phase to gather feedback from participants which could be incorporated into subsequent sessions, b) the use of a research journal by the researcher in order to track personal learning through self-reflective processes and adjust material and approaches as required, and c) semi-structured interviews approximately 2 months following the completion of the educational sessions to examine the experiences of the participants as they continued to integrate self-reflection into their daily practice. One of the six participants was unable to engage in the interview process for unavoidable reasons unrelated to the research project; however, this individual’s input and feedback throughout the process has been incorporated into the findings. Content analysis is being used to identify emergent themes; however, this process is not yet complete. The preliminary findings are quite extensive. I have chosen to focus on a few key elements in this paper; namely effective curriculum components, helpful facilitative processes, and overall implications for adult education in the helping professions.

Participant Learning

All participants were experienced professionals in community based mental health services with varying degrees of experience with self-reflective practice. Participants were asked to engage in weekly sessions which involved experiential activities, group dialogue, and group coaching. Further, participants were encouraged to engage in transfer to practice exercises within their real life experiences. Feedback was sought from participants following each session and more formally in mid-point and final evaluation processes. Preliminary analysis of emerging themes indicates an overall consensus with regard to the benefits of self-reflective practice, the value of coaching, the importance of dialogue, the significance of real experience application, the worth of facilitating the process over an extended period of time to allow for development and integration, and the potential merits of self-reflective practice when integrated across the organization as a whole. Final results will incorporate the exploration of these themes as they interconnect to the literature related to reflective practice, transformative learning, the function of coaching in facilitation, and the role of spirituality in the process.
Components of Effective Curriculum Design
The content of the workshop sessions was an important element of the overall research project. Not only did it provide context for the group discussions, it was an impetus to stimulate consideration of alternative perspectives and further elicited the sharing of ideas and insights from participants that contributed to further refinement of the curriculum and content.

Specifically, the material discussed throughout the course of 8 weeks included adult learning principles with an emphasis on transformative learning opportunities; defining self-reflective practices and exploring various strategies for engagement; what it means to become an effective “agent of change” and contribute to building community within an organization; the elements of coaching and mentoring and the reciprocal nature of this role; and the examination of the philosophical foundations of human services and how this intersects with personal philosophy, values, and belief systems. Efforts were made to align the curriculum of the education sessions with the philosophies of the organization.

A key element of curriculum content included the investigation of philosophical foundations of human services and how this connects to personal philosophy. This included the examination of qualities such as respect, empathy, compassion, and empowerment, to name just a few. There was a high level of agreement amongst participants that the creation of a personal philosophy as one of the experiential exercises provided the opportunity to really think about their approach to work and how this may have changed over years of practice and further, how this philosophy is actually lived in their practice. This exercise began with an activity designed to identify those values integral to each individual and the ways in which these values are demonstrated in behaviour and the ways in which they might not be demonstrated. One participant shared in the Critical Incident Questionnaire (Brookfield, 2006) that she was most puzzled and surprised by,

> The discussion of values….came to the realization that I have never examined my values. It was hard to think of them, and then I censored myself at first, not wanting to identify a value that I don’t regularly demonstrate but expect to find in others. This will be on my mind for awhile!

Another participant offered this feedback with regard to the exploration of personal values and the development of a personal philosophy

> Discussing personal biases and philosophies was interesting. I explored those ideas in my 20’s and established a personal philosophy at that time. I’m at peace with those things.

There was general agreement that it was important to explore these foundational values as related to the profession as well as those guiding values specific to the agency to determine impact upon actual practice; the point being to assist practitioners to identify guiding philosophies and values that might serve as an individual blueprint for practice.

There was support for the value inherent in having a continual process of self-reflection as we evolve and grow over time both personally and professionally. It was also recognized that one might become “comfortable” with habits and potentially rigid in practice eventually challenging the practitioner to unlearn old ways of doing things. (Schon, 1983). Ultimately, I would describe this as a deeply spiritual process. The role of spirituality in adult learning is related to the ways in which
interpretation and meaning are attached to experience which is integral to the practice of self-reflection (English, 2000).

In contrast, another participant did not experience as profound an impact as a result of exploring foundational values in the helping professions within the context of the workshop sessions and had this to offer:

Some of the curriculum – reflective listening skills – was not necessarily new information. I’ve done the PSR (Psychosocial Rehabilitation) training and this material wasn’t new. What does it look like in practice? We all have a good understanding. This material is not new for this audience – a group of clinicians.

I expected to see this type of contrast in perspectives within the group as these principles and values are extremely abstract in nature and are very much open to personal interpretation. Again, the intention was to foster critical thinking and deep reflection about the ways in which these values were apparent in action for individual practitioners. The transfer to practice exercises suggested for application between sessions were designed to support this process. For some practitioners, these exercises were easily incorporated into their practice, while others experienced challenges and barriers in follow through.

Another key element of curriculum content included the introduction and practice of various self-reflective strategies. Participants engaged in meditation, journalling exercises, group dialogue, creative visualization, brainstorming sessions, “clearness committee” process (Palmer, 1998), and the use of music and quotes. These experiential activities provided the opportunity to practice various strategies with a view to developing a personalized practice. Participants were encouraged to integrate these strategies and others, such as exercise and yoga between sessions as a part of transfer to practice activities.

**Helpful Facilitative Processes**

**Coaching.** Part of my role as a facilitator involved coaching within the group process which included asking questions, providing alternative perspectives, and encouraging discussion. Further, and perhaps, most importantly, I was challenged as a researcher to ‘walk the walk’ in my own practice. I was certainly provided with opportunities to do so within the dynamics of the workshop setting and while, at times, uncomfortable, these occasions were integral to the learning process, not only for the group, but also for me. I maintained a research journal throughout the process and used it diligently not only to capture the details of each weekly experience, but also to reflect upon my own process and learning.

I believe that individual coaching between sessions would have been extremely helpful with respect to encouraging follow through on the transfer to practice exercises and to provide depth to each participant’s personal experience. This is echoed in the following participants’ comments,

Coaching is an integral component – very valuable – in between coaching would have helped – follow up and transition planning – (coaching) would be helpful to continue to incorporate

Self-reflective practice enhances the potential for transformative learning experiences – yes – could I have done it alone? I needed structure to keep things safe and secure. Sub alliances
with my co-worker helped. A coach doesn’t tell what to do, but offers choices, asks questions, redirects and offers support

**Group Dialogue/Peer Learning**

All participants expressed appreciation for the group dialogue that occurred each session with some noting the depth of personal sharing as particularly significant. The sharing of stories and experiences amongst colleagues was seen as a valuable part of the process and naturally stimulated critical thinking within the group exposing participants to alternative points of view. While the group dialogue process was seen to be of value, participants had different reasons for this and experienced satisfaction with the peer learning process at different levels. One participant shares:

I really liked the group work – learning from others and bouncing ideas off others. I felt safe in the group – it was safe to be vulnerable. I had a role in the group – sharing different experiences – getting feedback and processing past experiences. The Clearness Committee was a powerful process and everyone benefitted.

And further…

I felt I played an active role in group activities and liked listening and sharing within the group. I liked playing the role of devil’s advocate and often see 4 sides of any situation – not sure of the right side – often comfortable voicing different perspectives as a way of inquiring – asking questions. I had increased discomfort when ideas were very different from my own. Disagreement felt uncomfortable.

Creating a support network is an invaluable part of the establishment and maintenance of a personal self-reflective practice. This best occurs with a variety of options including group processes as well as one-on-one interactions. Ideally a blend of choices would be most beneficial, but ultimately, this is a personally developed plan with the most important element being that it meets the needs of the individual practitioner. These preliminary results have implications for organizations which will be briefly reviewed later in this report.

**Real Life Application**

The purpose of incorporating transfer to practice exercises was to provide opportunities for application of strategies between sessions within the context of real life in-the-moment experiences. Self-reflective practice is holistic and involves the more complex nature of emotions and spiritual elements, such as values, and beliefs. While simulated activities might trigger emotional responses or intense personal reactions, this is commonly heightened in the actual experience. The ability to apply self-reflective strategies within the context of real interactions and in the moments that might be personally challenging increases the likelihood of potentially transformative experiences. The opportunity to consider personal interpretations of events and align this with personal philosophy is most meaningful in real experience. Coaching can assist this meaning making process.

**Learning Over an Extended Period of Time**

Historically, training related to self-reflection or self-care has been considered a “softer” skill as opposed to the technical skills of the profession and is commonly afforded less time and importance. Ideally, self-reflective practice is something that is encouraged, established, developed and maintained over the course of the lifetime; a weekend workshop is not sufficient. It is important to provide the time required for transfer to practice and the integration of knowledge, strategies and
personal insights into practice. Further, this process is most effective when supported in a variety of ways beginning with strong personal commitment and responsibility on the part of the practitioner, the support of likeminded people in a group situation, and access to the ongoing support and encouragement of a coach.

Ideally, the goal is to encourage practitioners to progress from reflection-on-action to reflection-in-action, (Schon, 1983) implying the ability to be present, to be aware of triggers, insights, and challenges as they arise, which provides the opportunity to respond immediately, or perhaps, transcend the thoughts that are better left until later to ponder. Over time, the practitioner becomes more able to stay connected to the experience and the interaction which is extremely powerful as part of the therapeutic relationship and as a basic element of effective communication.

**Implications for Adult Education**

The implications for adult education occur at two levels – academic preparation and continuing education/professional development.

**Academic Preparation**

Adult educators involved in the academic preparation of the next wave of health care and human services professionals can integrate the results of this research into their programs and teaching practices. The preliminary results of this research suggest that the following approaches may be helpful:

- Create the foundation for self-reflective practice early in the learning process.
- Provide support and coaching immediately to establish a trusting relationship with learners.
- Incorporate real life application of self-reflection as early as possible. Field placement and group work in class are idea opportunities.
- It is important that reflection go beyond theory and concept, and learners are encouraged to really explore who they are as people as related to personal interpretations, biases, values, judgements, gifts, and learning opportunities.
- It is integral to the process that philosophical values and foundational ideologies are not left lingering as intellectual constructs, but rather are integrated into personal practice in ways that individual practitioners can benchmark their actions against their personal roadmap for practice.
- Eliminate “busy work” and ensure that all activities lead to meaningful and practical learning opportunities.
- Encourage focus on learning as opposed to grades. Use every experience as an opportunity to learn.
- Faculty members are most effective in facilitating self-reflective practices when they openly engage in a personal practice themselves. Share insights with learners – be authentic – learn in front of them – model the ability to engage in the process of self-discovery even when it might be less than graceful.

**Continuing Education/Professional Development**

Practitioners who are already engaged in professional practice may be prime examples of those who have to unlearn many things before the way becomes clear. On the other hand, I believe that there are many professionals in health care and human services who have a strong desire for deeper levels of
self-fulfillment and meaningful contribution within their work and are ripe for engagement in these strategies. The following suggestions may be helpful when establishing a culture of self-reflection in the workplace:

- Leadership must embrace the principles and actively demonstrate a commitment to a personal self-reflective practice. This is especially true for those who serve in a coaching capacity.
- Introduce new employees to the organizations’ commitment to self-reflection right from the start.
- Incorporate self-reflective activities into team meetings and welcome opportunities for spontaneous reflection.
- As a coach, adopt an open mind and challenge personal assumptions.
- Create learning and training opportunities centered on self-reflection.
- Incorporate processes into performance reviews and encourage practitioners to identify those areas in which they are most inspired to contribute and those areas in which they would most like to grow.
- Invite feedback about performance from those you might provide supervision/coaching to – make the relationship reciprocal.
- Don’t wait for employee recognition night to demonstrate appreciation; incorporate it on a regular basis.
- Introduce practices into leadership processes and communication that demonstrate commitment to self-reflection and personal responsibility.

Conclusions
This research supports the integral role of self-reflective practice in the helping professions and illuminates the highly subjective nature of this practice, both in how it is experienced and with regard to facilitative approaches designed to foster learning. These preliminary findings provide a potential framework to guide the development of self-reflective practice in both formal and informal learning settings for practitioners in the health care and human service fields. The completed research will be of interest to health care and human service practitioners and organizations, as well as faculty members in related academic programs across post-secondary institutions. Further, the results of this research are currently being incorporated into a larger body of work The Art of Conscious Service which will act as the foundation for future training, development and coaching programs in the helping professions.

References


Socio-cultural and Political Dimensions of the Yangpu (Shanghai) Learning and Innovation Partnership

Roger Boshier
University of British Columbia

Abstract: One of Hu Jintao’s farewell gifts to China was “Plan 2011” wherein universities were funded to form collaborative relationships with businesses and communities intended to foster innovation. Yangpu, an old industrial district on the Huangpu River in Shanghai contains many prestigious universities and their local government is energetically forming learning districts and innovation zones where universities are expected to lead. Yangpu officials are fascinated by Silicon Valley. But China is not California and, as explained here, numerous impediments stand in the way Yangpu’s desire to foster collaboration and be the leading “technology centre” in China.

Learning for Collaboration in China

Chinese like numbers and, as part of efforts to secure world-class status for elite universities, in 1995 the Ministry of Education launched a “211” project designed to improve privileged institutions. About ¥37 billion ($CDN6 billion) went into disciplines, digital campuses, faculty development and infrastructure at ten (and, later, 112) Chinese universities. In 1998 there was the “985” project – where 40 universities shared ¥14 billion and were told to become “world-class.” Another 30 were instructed to work on becoming “well-known.”

On April 24th, 2011, during a speech celebrating Tsinghua University’s 100th anniversary, Hu Jintao stood in the Great Hall of the People and called for creation of university-led zones of collaboration, innovation and learning. Following the tradition of “985” and “211,” the new collaboration initiative was called “Plan 2011.”

In “Plan 2011” Hu exhorted universities and experts on learning to create “mechanisms of collaboration” among universities, businesses and communities. Leaders were urged to study foreign models for guidance on how this could be done. Universities were told to:

- Carry-out in-depth cooperation
- Establish strategic alliances
- Share resources
- Jointly carry-out major scientific projects
- Make “practical achievements.”

Later, the Minister of Education called for “in-depth structural reform” of universities. Along with “Plan 2011”, Beijing also started talking about “academic freedom” and “independent thinking” (Liu, 2013). “Plan 2011” involves three phases and lasts only four years (China launches plan, People’s Daily Online, 9 May, 2012, 16, 31). However, it offered new money for municipalities willing to get involved.

Yangpu Jumps on the Bandwagon

Shanghai contains 19 districts. Yangpu is an old industrial district on the Huangpu River, has a population of 1.3 million people and contains about 60% of all universities in Shanghai. In the 1960s,
Yangpu had more than half a million industrial workers but began to struggle when the rival Pudong district got going in 1991.

Even though Shanghai does not resemble California, Silicon Valley is the model for Yangpu. Local politicians think innovation flows from California universities, research and development institutes and businesses in “clusters.” However, having different actors living cheek-by-jowl in “science parks” does not necessarily nurture innovation. There is more to it. Most important, China is not California. Even so, in 2003, Yangpu created a “knowledge innovation zone” (with a “Central Intelligence District” to rival the downtown “Central Business District”). Now, they want to create the leading technology centre in China. Doing this will require breaking “the gap between university and city,” fostering learning and “bringing together various innovation elements” (Yangpu Visiting guide, 2012).

Silicon Valley mostly arose from grassroots initiatives inside individual departments at Stanford University. In contrast, Yangpu universities have a Party-Secretary at the top and few incentives to lure faculty or graduate students into collaborative relationships with business or communities. Even so, in September, 2012, the enthusiastic and grinning Deputy Mayor of Yangpu flew to California for consultations. As a result, San Francisco-area companies are building businesses in the Yangpu “science-park.”

**Innovation Triangle**

Shanghai has long been open to the west and a haven for innovative Chinese (and foreigners) in search of refuge or adventure. Prominent Yangpu industries of the past include textiles, ship-building and papermaking. In the 1950s, Yangpu was producing 5% of China’s (and 22% of Shanghai’s) GDP. By 2011 there were 5,077 science/technology-oriented businesses in Yangpu.

While the rest of the world contributed to UNESCO’s Faure Report (1972), Chinese educators were immobilised by Mao’s Cultural Revolution. But, after Deng’s 1978 “reform-and-opening,” lifelong learning took root. Hence, during the first decade of the 21st century, a learning initiative was underway and there were attempts to build learning villages (Boshier & Huang, 2006; 2007a), townships, districts and cities. UNESCO is impressed with Chinese attempts to foster learning (in informal, nonformal and formal settings). Hence, in 2010, the Shanghai Bureau of Education and UNESCO cosponsored the “Better City, Better Life” international conference on lifelong learning (see Boshier, 2011; Yang & Valdés-Cotera, 2011).

It is difficult to get universities, businesses and communities working together. In particular, western academics value academic freedom and need for pure research. Hence, many are reluctant to get into bed with businesses and critical of university administrators in cosy (sometimes unseemly) relationships with government or business. Many universities killed extension, outreach or adult education departments but, with barely a glance backwards, recently discovered “community engagement”. The PASCAL Observatory ([www.pascal.org](http://www.pascal.org)) allied itself with university-community engagement efforts.

In China, “community” refers to party organisations and, as Wang (2012) said, China lacks anything like the western notion of “community.” Hence, Shanghai “is full of lonely and unhappy people who do not even know their neighbour” (Wang, 2012). After more than 60 years of Communism, Chinese are hard-pressed to understand western notions of “community” and even elite graduate students are
puzzled by NGOs (non-governmental organisations). In Hu Jintao’s “Plan 2011” “community” refers to “social organisations” of the Communist Party.

“Plan 2011” was elaborated during centennial celebrations of Tsinghua University held at the Great Hall of the People at Tiananmen. Having the ceremony there (and not on campus) clarified who is in charge. Hence, the Tsinghua President sat in the audience. While the Communist Party controls discourse and what’s possible in Chinese universities, not many administrators, faculty members or students will raise critical questions about collaboration. In China, universities (and thus collaboration) are under “leadership” of the Communist Party (Hayhoe, Li, Lin & Zha, 2011). When it occurs, collaboration does not spring from grassroots (like it did at Stanford). Instead, it is orchestrated from above. Even so, for many Party members and scholars, there is nothing troubling about Fig 1 (graphic representation of “Plan 2011).

Universities are publicly funded and, as such, morally obliged to assist businesses and communities. Westerners value academic freedom. But Chinese scholars have access to government and an historic duty to serve society. In the west, most people condone loose affiliations between universities, businesses and communities. But, in an autocratic Party-State like China, tri-partite collaborations (like those envisaged) create worries about the nature of academic freedom and university autonomy. Even so, “Plan 2011” opens opportunities for faculty to gain a foothold in business or open doors for graduate students destabilized by the collapse of danwei (the work unit) and need for a job.

For many westerners there is a fundamental incompatibility between the interests of universities, businesses and communities. It is not the mandate of the research-intensive university to run errands or do short-term applied research for businesses. Community “engagement” is more acceptable (even celebrated) but it too can lead to moral dilemmas (Inman & Schuetze, 2010). Getting universities, businesses and communities working together often involves a collision of cultures and Fig 2
portrays the typical (maybe optimal) relationship between western universities, businesses and communities.

Like many things in China, the innovation zone is an idea copied from abroad. In Yangpu, there is a decidedly different (and more top-down) context for learning and innovation than in, say, Vancouver or Silicon Valley. Yet, architects of the Yangpu learning and innovation zone are not overly preoccupied with contextual differences. They just want Yangpu residents and foreign partners to work in harmony and, in 2012, staged a lively international forum (involving Chinese and foreigners) (Collected papers, 2012).

![Fig. 2. Optimal Relationships Between University, Businesses, and Communities](image)

While the Communist Party directs almost every aspect of life and universities are run by a President and a Party-Secretary it will be a struggle to replicate the freewheeling intellectual atmosphere of the University of B.C. Science-Park or California’s Silicon Valley. Telling Yangpu citizens to be “innovative” may not yield much because of barriers impeding the ability of universities to form collaborative relationships (Leng & Wang, 2013). Hence, the remainder of this paper highlights difficult aspects of university, business and community culture pertaining to collaboration within the framework of Hu’s four year plan.

**Universities**

From 1966 until 1976 (when Mao died) Chinese universities were closed or in chaos. During the Cultural Revolution, professors (and intellectuals of all kinds) were condemned as the “stinking ninth” category. “Book learning” was labelled bourgeois and irrelevant to revolution. Intellectuals were humiliated and killed or had books burned by Red Guards (MacFarquhar & Schoenals, 2006).
These days faculty are still under-valued and poorly paid. In 2012 a lecturer with a Ph.D. at the Shanghai University of Sport (in Yangpu) got ¥4000 (about $CDN650) a month. A lecturer (without a Ph.D.) in a Hangzhou university got ¥2000 (about $CDN327) a month.

The desire to build world-class universities has put additional pressure on faculty struggling with consulting work and need to improve teaching, research and the student experience. University research usually yields few conclusions, only ambiguous answers and many new questions. Hence, businessmen wanting to launch products in the marketplace are often frustrated by the academic tendency to give ambiguous answers and point at areas for further study.

For Beijing, having universities in the top-100 on Shanghai Jiaotong rankings is a way of saving face and demonstrating the superiority of the Communist system. On the 2012 Jiaotong global rankings, Toronto 27th in the world, UBC 39th and McGill 63rd (www.shanghairanking.com). Despite having a pervasive Confucian ethic deeply committed to learning, no Chinese university has ever come close to entering the top-100. Top-ranked Chinese universities (for 2012) were Peking, Shanghai Jiaotong, Tsinghua and Zhejiang (all in the 151-200 band) of Jiaotong rankings.

Fudan (the top Yangpu university) was in the 201-300 band for 2012. It hosts science parks and incubators where the task is to turn small start-up companies into “normal” rather than “university-owned” entities (Leng & Wang, 2013). But even with numerous start-ups in the neighbourhood, university faculty members are uneasy about and hard-pressed to explain collaboration. For some departments, it means staging forums. Or giving talks in high schools or appearing on TV. But, despite the long history of adult education in old Shanghai, there is uncertainty about collaboration with the community and distrust of impatient businessmen. Hence, at the 2012 Yangpu forum (Collected papers, 2012) there was a noticeable presence of government officials but absence of top-researchers from Fudan and Tongji.

Tongji University selected urban planning, environmental protection and industrial design as central pillars of their collaborative efforts. Tongji incubators represent a “vivid case” of combining district and science-park development (Leng & Wang, 2013). In addition, “design-houses” in Chihfeng Street arose from fortuitous real estate developments. Even so, just like at Fudan, at Tongji there is uncertainty about the meaning of collaboration. Among difficulties is the fact universities pass over existing (orthodox) knowledge but rarely combine with businesses to discover something new. This is because of distrust, bureaucratic mean-spiritedness and other features of Chinese universities which hinder creation of a “friendly institutional environment in which favourable conditions for networking and deep technological learning can occur” (Leng & Wang, 2013, p. 231).

It will be a challenge to evaluate products and processes stemming from “Plan 2011” and almost certain officials will focus on money and ignore cultural-change, deep learning, trust-development and other potentially important processes and outcomes. Leng and Wang (2013) compared innovation zones in Northwest Beijing’s Zhongguancun and Shanghai’s Yangpu districts by talking with key players. They found both regions “struggling” with Beijing doing better than Yangpu. Elite universities were supposedly “engines of growth” but, especially in Yangpu, “visible and invisible walls … discounted their efforts to foster a university-centred innovation hub” (p. 219). Beijing was outperforming Yangpu because of “better institutional arrangements for linking various actors in the region” (Leng & Wang, 2013).
Businesses

Businesses have little patience with university researchers unwilling to give clear answers to urgent questions. In Yangpu, research clusters adjacent to universities are supposed to close the “gap” separating the university from the city. But there is more to it than bringing people together in a Microsoft, Oracle or Google-like “campus.” Proximity is good but only part of a bigger (and more complex) problem. The more important task is to create an open, dynamic, adventurous and democratic atmosphere where researchers have no fear and thus ask critical questions. Such as - Who benefits? Why are we doing this?

Businesses like money. For them, the best research is pragmatic, short-term and brings new products to market. Regarding research, business people are interested in “facts” delivered within a scientific (objectivist) ontology. Opinions or subjectivity are not dependable or scientific.

Business leaders get frustrated with academic tentativeness and cumbersome projects that take too long. They are also not impressed with speeches about context or the social good. As Deng Xiaoping said, get rich first! Worry about environmental and other consequences later. Business people have their own preoccupations and no time to engage with an explosive GINI coefficient, Shanghai traffic chaos, sullen migrant workers, a failing health-care system, bad air, water shortages, rising sea levels or social unrest triggered by land confiscation or corruption. These are governmental, not business questions.

As well as having different cultures, priorities, physical plant and time-lines, Yangpu universities, R & D institutes and businesses compete for funds. Unlike universities and R & D institutes who do basic (or “frontier”) research, businesses need useable mid-range knowledge. University faculty provide consulting services but not many have the interest, time or ability to launch large-scale or long-term R & D projects in partnership with business. Nor do they relish “community” surveillance. Universities can supply cheap (often unhappy) graduate students to local businesses but busy researchers would be hard-pressed to bring products to market.

Because each party in the triangle protects their interests, collaboration often involves only low-level training or minor hardware development. Despite mutuality vested in the innovation triangle, the most active participant is the local government (Collected papers, 2012). Top universities are noticeably absent. For good reasons, Yangpu officials focus on the local while top researchers at Fudan and Tongji delve into national or international questions. “Localization is not high on the agenda of prestigious universities like Fudan” (Leng & Wang, 2013, p. 232) and nor does it feature in global university rankings. Architects of Shanghai Jiaotong ranking scales like Nobel prizes. But these usually get awarded for fundamental research – not investigation of local questions.

There is also the problem of pragmatism, strategic (guanxi) relationships and lack of trust in China. When asked about partnering with other firms, businessmen (with whom we have discussed it) laugh and say “impossible.” Zhou (2005) attributed this to the danwei (work unit). During the Mao era, stultifying danwei controlled every aspect of a citizen’s life (such as work, education, health care, even marriage partners). The danwei has now gone but the tradition of only developing trust relationships with family or clan members remains. Distrust and refusal to collaborate in 21st century China also stems from the Mao era (with its nosy neighbourhood committees, catastrophic 100 flowers movement, widespread snitching, spying and betrayals). As well, there is intense competition
among software (and other firms) with similar products, technologies and services (Leng & Wang, 2013).

**Communities**

When the Chinese Communist Party points to “communities” it is not referring to clubs, identity, ethno-cultural or like-minded groups, NGOs, neighbourhoods or a “community of scholars” familiar to westerners. Rather, “community” refers to the lower ends of government.

According to the cadre quoted by Lemos (2012, p. 200) the community is “ultimately responsible for implementing the guidelines, policies and initiatives made by the Party and state government … it is the community that is responsible for organising the residents to drive civilizations with respect to production, politics and spirits and advance the drive to build a harmonious society.” In Yangpu, “community” refers to Party “social organisations.”

As such, these are not “suggesting” organisations; rather, they implement ideas from the top. At the third point of the innovation triangle, the “community” is in the implementation (not the suggesting) business.

**Critical Reflections**

Yangpu has historically hosted many adult education programs (such as in the silk filatures – Boshier & Huang, 2007b) and is today competing with other districts for a leading position at the edge of China’s modernization. As such, Yangpu officials are committed to replacing industrial-era textile factories with clean-green products of a knowledge economy. Knowledge – and its creation – nicely fits the ambitions (and political aspirations) of Yangpu officials. From 1949 onwards, Shanghai factions of the Communist Party have had considerable influence in Beijing and, when “Plan 2011” appeared as a parting gift from Hu Jintao, Yangpu lined up for its share.

Despite energetic leadership in Yangpu it is not easy to get competing interests to collaborate. Citizens have “campaign fatigue.” Few people have confidence in official exhortations and most Chinese no longer believe in Party orthodoxy (Cheek, 2013). The 1966-1976 Cultural Revolution created more-or-less permanent sceptism concerning the Party, not helped by Beijing’s unwillingness to admit errors. Lack of trust, unease concerning collaboration, coupled with doubts about the sincerity and abilities of the Party, could stunt the impact of “Plan 2011.” Even when dressed up in zany digitized special effects (such as at the Yangpu Urban Planning Exhibition Centre), slogans concerning collaboration are easily ignored by jaded citizens.

Four years do not give much time to accomplish the impossible task of having universities collaborate with others. But, on the positive side, learning is deeply woven into Chinese culture, the Party has a demonstrated ability to pull off big projects and, while lifelong learning languishes in the west, it is at the forefront of Chinese political life. As well, Yangpu officials are energetic and good humoured and Shanghai famous for importing foreign ideas and imbuing them with “Chinese characteristics.” Most important, within Yangpu, there are influential leaders and scholars committed to turning the Communist Party into a learning organization.

**References**


China launches plan to promote universities innovation ability (2012). People’s Daily Online, 9 May, 16, p. 31.


What Can the Cuban School of Adult Literacy Offer in Aboriginal Australia? A Pilot Study in a Remote Aboriginal Community

Bob Boughton
University of New England, Australia

Abstract: Mass literacy campaigns, once a common feature of anti-colonial independence movements, are again occurring in many countries of the Global South. In Australia, a group of Aboriginal leaders are investigating the feasibility of mounting such a campaign in their communities, where very low rates of English-language literacy have become a major obstacle to self-determination. This paper reports on an initial pilot study in a remote Aboriginal community, using the Cuban Yes I Can mass adult literacy campaign model.

Background
In a total Australian population of 21.5 million people, there are 500,000 Aboriginal peoples, of whom over two-thirds live in rural and remote areas. Overall education levels are low, relative to the non-Aboriginal population, and there is a mortality gap of 11.5 years among men, and 9.7 years among women. In the age range 35-44, mortality is four times the national average. On the United Nations Human Development Index, Australia ranks 4th; but Aboriginal Australia ranks between 103rd & 104th, well below Cuba (52nd), comparable to El Salvador (105th) (Cooke et al 2007). Since the 1960s, a new wave of Aboriginal rights struggles has resulted in the return of significant land areas to their traditional owners, and the establishment of Aboriginal community-controlled organisations. The Aboriginal leaders of this study argue that a major obstacle to translating these gains into effective self-determination strategies is the legacy of educational neglect, which has left 40% of their adult population without basic English-language literacy. Mainstream education policies focused on school education and small ‘catch-up’ adult literacy programs have little impact on this problem.

In the 1990s, an Aboriginal-led health research program into links between education levels and health identified several international studies of the beneficial effects of mass literacy campaigns and called for a new ‘popular education’ approach (Bell et al 2007). Direct experience of a mass campaign model was subsequently gained through involvement in the national literacy campaign in Timor-Leste, a newly-independent island state off Australia’s northern coastline. This campaign utilized the Cuban Yo Sí Puedo (Yes I Can) model to reach over 200,000 people, the majority in small isolated rural communities, over a period of six years (Boughton 2010). In 2009, a National Aboriginal Steering Committee (NASC) was formed to develop a similar campaign in Australia, beginning with a pilot study in Wilcannia, a remote community in New South Wales (NSW). This was to be the first of several exploratory pilots to test the feasibility of a larger campaign, and contextualize the model to the special circumstances of ‘fourth world’ communities. The pilot was funded by the Commonwealth and State governments.
Study Design

The Yes I Can model was developed by the Institute of Pedagogy for Latin America and the Caribbean (IPLAC). It has been deployed in 28 countries since 2000 and evaluated by the UNESCO Executive Board (2006). For this study, IPLAC provided the campaign materials and a Cuban adviser to work with the project team.

A pilot in one community is not a campaign, but it can put in place elements of the model, identify its strengths and weaknesses, and reveal aspects of the national or regional context which a campaign would need to address. We aimed to generate sufficient evidence to help the NASC decide whether and how a large scale campaign could be mounted. The data was collected and analysed through participatory action research (PAR), “a form of collective self-reflective inquiry undertaken by participants in social situations in order to improve the rationality and justice of their own social or educational practices...” (Kemmis & McTaggart 1988, p.5). This was consistent with the popular education philosophy underpinning the campaign model and with national guidelines for ethical research with Aboriginal communities. The participants included the author, the NASC, the project team, participants, community members, local agency representatives and funding body staff. Data was collected through multiple methods: a review of community data and previous research; a household survey, administered by local collectors; a database recording enrolment, participation and outcome data; pre- and post-testing against the Australian Core Skills Framework (ACSF); in-depth interviews; participant-observation of campaign activities; written reports by the on-site team; and primary source data including media reports, photographs and film of campaign activities, and minutes of meetings and workshops. A central feature of the design was the popular education process known as dialogue and systematisation (Carillo 2010), in which the evidence was analysed with the participants, to construct a collective understanding of what was being learned.

The Community

Wilcannia, located on the banks of the Darling River, is home to the Baakintji people (people ‘of the river’) of western NSW. The region has been occupied by Aboriginal people for millennia, and includes one of the world’s oldest burial sites. British invasion began in the 1830s as the pastoral frontier moved west, initiating a period of “sustained violence” against the local occupants (Goodall 2001, p.20). Proclaimed in 1866, by the 1880s the town had become a thriving river port, with a population of several thousand, and two hundred riverboat steamers stopping there to take on “the majority of the wool from North Western NSW” (Gibson 2006, p.14). Aboriginal people were the backbone of the pastoral workforce, but few lived in the town until after WW2, and most were then confined to ‘shanty town’ camps along the river’s eastern bank (Beckett 2005). In the 1970s, a national civil rights and land rights movement saw the rise of local Aboriginal organisations, and Baakintji leaders played a significant role in the movement across NSW. Government housing was eventually built in two areas, an old ‘Mission’ block on the eastern side of the river, and ‘The Mallee’, on the town’s north western edge. Title to this land and the houses was transferred to the Wilcannia Local Aboriginal Land Council (the ‘LALC’) in the 1980s. The 1970s struggles, however, could not avert a steady economic decline, resulting from drought, falling pastoral industry profitability, and reduced mining activity in nearby Broken Hill. Today, most of the grand old sandstone buildings of the town’s colonial hey-day are in an advanced state of disrepair. There is a small hospital, but no resident doctor. The schools, the hospital and the local government are the town’s only significant employers, and most families are reduced to a state of semi-permanent dependency on government income support. This decline has caused a rise in symptoms of personal and social disempowerment,
including chronic illness, substance abuse, and community and domestic violence.

The LALC, Wilcannia’s only elected local Aboriginal body, has responsibility under the NSW Land Rights Act to represent the community on matters of economic and social development. At the 2011 census, the population was 602, of whom 467 (78%) identified as Aboriginal. The Aboriginal population aged 15 and over, not in school or post-school education, was 280. Of this number, 170 (60%) had left school at Year 9 or earlier. The LALC was the lead agency in the campaign pilot, and its CEO, Jack Beetson, a member of the NASC, was the on-site Project Leader.

The Pilot

Phase One. Socialisation and Mobilisation
The pilot followed the three-phase model common to many literacy campaigns (Arnove & Graff 2008). The first phase, called ‘socialisation and mobilisation’, involved several months of basic community development work. Local staff employed through the Land Council were trained and supported to undertake a range of activities, including establishment of a local working group; meetings with community service agencies working in the town to secure support and sponsorship; interviews with local media; preparation of campaign promotional materials; and a household survey to identify people wanting to take part. The aim of these activities was to discover how the local community understood the problem of low literacy; to seek the active engagement of as many people as possible in the process of addressing this problem; and to establish local structures and processes which could sustain the campaign. As the Project Leader explained:

The key for this program is …, it makes illiteracy the problem of the literate, not the illiterate. I think that’s key to the success of this program… You mobilise the community behind it so that it is supporting the students who are doing it….. (Jack Beetson interview, 8/2/12)

Four weeks before the start of classes, a launch was held in the local park, attended by 300 people. By then, a majority of households (41) had been surveyed, and nearly 100 people had identified as needing assistance with basic literacy. Of these, 45 wanted to join the Campaign, and six locals had volunteered to be trained as literacy facilitators. On this basis, it was decided to run two intakes over six months.

Phase Two. Basic Literacy Lessons
As with most mass campaigns, participants attend regular classes for a relatively short period, to acquire or develop basic literacy skills under the direction of local trained facilitators. The Cuban adviser brought student workbooks and a set of DVDs, on which were 64 lessons recorded for a campaign in Grenada in 2007. Each lesson followed a similar format. Students would arrive, having been picked up by a campaign worker or having walked from home. They would socialise a little, then sit down to watch a DVD lesson, which ran for approximately twenty five minutes. During this time, the facilitator would turn it on and off, to allow the students to complete activities, including discussing what they had seen and asking questions.

On the TV, participants watched a literacy lesson being taught to a group of five people by a lead facilitator and an assistant. The people in the TV class are actors, working to a script. The actor-facilitator takes her class through each lesson, using a method the Cuban’s call alphanumeric in which they first learn to associate letters with numbers, following a ‘Guide Table’, and then
undertake exercises to build words, phrases and, eventually, sentences and texts of different genres. Each lesson begins with a ‘positive message’. This is a generative theme, a phrase using words containing the letters which are the focus of that lesson, but which makes a specific point or raises an idea. On the TV lesson, discussion around these themes with the actor-students is led by an assistant facilitator, with the help of film clips illustrating aspects of Grenadian life. The student-actors are of varying ages, men and women, and with different levels of confidence and expertise. Each lesson follows a predictable pattern, which the Cubans refer to as an ‘algorithm’, and the Wilcannia students quickly learned the sequence. There are ‘icons’ used throughout, which identify specific activities of observing, listening, speaking, reading and writing. The exercises in the workbook come up as projections on the screen at different stages of the actor-lessons.

Lessons are ‘taught’ by the local facilitator, who sets up the class, controls the DVD, sets and supervises learning activities and initiates dialogue:

It's not just locals learning form locals, but family learning from family, so they understood each other, they had an empathy with each other... that you just don't get otherwise. If you bring teachers in from (.other places), they don't belong in the community, they're not from the community (whereas) these people knew what they'd all gone through, they understood that and I think that was a key factor... (Jack Beetson interview, 10/5/12)

The advisers (one Cuban, one Australian) trained the facilitators to prepare each lesson, reviewed the previous class and the progress of each student, and discussed ways to contextualise the TV lesson to the reality of Wilcannia. This included finding local pictures, words and themes to use in lessons, either as a substitute for unfamiliar words used on the TV, or in addition. Over six months, out of two cohorts, sixteen students completed the lessons. The graduations, like the launch, were high-profile community-run events, in which participants and facilitators were honoured for their work and everyone was encouraged to continue the campaign. Cuba’s Ambassador to Australia attended both graduations, where he recalled his experiences as a high school ‘brigadista’ in the 1961 Cuban literacy campaign (Kozol 1978).

**Phase Three. Post Literacy**

Phase Three encourages graduates of the lessons to become part of an ongoing, sustainable ‘culture of literacy’, by engaging them in activities in which literacy and learning are central. This involved coordinating local organisations to provide the graduates with opportunities to consolidate and extend their newly-acquired basic literacy over a further three months. This emphasised the campaign’s underlying philosophy of solidarity, which requires the whole community to take responsibility for overcoming illiteracy and supporting the most marginalised people as they improve their capacity to contribute to community well-being.

There was over 75% take-up of post literacy activities, which involved ongoing classes or work experience or both. Two graduates were engaged to work as assistant instructors on post-literacy activities; and one then became a trainee facilitator for the second intake. The program included non-formal computing classes at the LALC; cooking classes at the Women’s Safe House; and a supplementary literacy and numeracy class delivered by the public post-school provider (Western TAFE) in partnership with the LALC. As the program gained momentum, the Men’s Shed and the Art Centre also encouraged the graduates to join their activities, and some first intake graduates
returned to continue in the post-literacy activities of the second intake group. As the pilot was ending, Western TAFE opened a Certificate 2 in Catering, based on their new partnership with the LALC, which employed a Yes I Can graduate to assist the TAFE staff. This course was proposed by graduates who wanted to start a small catering business as an income-generating project.

Community leaders said the outcomes represented a major breakthrough, as this group had never previously been able to sustain work or further study. The comment of a young leader, a facilitator of the classes, reflected sentiments expressed by many:

This is the best thing that ever could have happened for this little town. You know, I think it should expand to more other places along the Darling River you know, ‘cos it’s not only needed here. It’s needed in a lot of other Aboriginal communities.... Let’s keep going. Let’s keep it rolling on. You know, and as far as I can see, it’s going to keep going, and it’s going to get bigger and better. The message is going to get around.... You know, you’ve got to spread it along, spread the word, take it to other communities, and keep it alive. Keep it alive. (Owen Whyman, interview 26/7/12)

The Cuban campaign model was embraced enthusiastically by the local community, who took significant leadership roles, mobilising support for the campaign and in the actual delivery. The participants, facilitators and community organisers all demonstrated significant improvements in literacy levels and on other important indicators of individual and community well-being. This degree of community ownership and control, while essential to the model’s successful deployment, also brought many problems, arising from the nature of the community itself, formed through its historical experiences of settler colonialism and resistance. Consequently, the reduction in the proportion of the adult population with low levels of literacy, while significant, was not as great as other countries have been achieved in a similar timeframe using the model. This results from the specific ‘fourth world’ conditions of the community, but also from a lack of critical mass and momentum working in only one place.

Discussion

In the 1960s and 1970s, mass literacy campaigns became part of the iconography of popular education, through their association with anti-colonial and anti-imperialist independence movements, and with the work of Paulo Freire in Brazil, Chile and the ex-Portuguese colonies of Africa (Freire 1994). They briefly enjoyed the support of the United Nations, before a narrower focus on ‘functional literacy’ for economic development took over, reflecting the cold war politics of the time (Jones 1988). Declining academic interest in such campaigns since then was in part driven by World Bank studies which questioned their effectiveness (Abadzi 1994), studies which, it has have since been shown, ignored many successful campaigns (Lind 2008). Commentators have also expressed scepticism about the socialist ‘grand narrative’ of liberation which informed many earlier studies, and the New Literacy Studies scholars who utilise ethnographic investigation from within a post-structuralist paradigm have added weight to this critique (Street 2001).

Nevertheless, the extension of literacy remains a major goal of international agencies and national governments and many countries of the Global South continue to experiment with mass campaigns, with strong support from some scholars and policy makers (UNESCO 2006). Cuba’s education missions in Africa, Asia and Latin America which have taken the Yes I Can model to twenty-eight
countries have generated new impetus for the campaign concept, and some controversy, but almost no empirical studies (Artaraz 2012).

Criticism of top-down state-driven campaigns which ignore local literacy practices and specific community contexts, while assuming an automatic link between the acquisition of a specific form of literacy and improvements in social and economic welfare are perfectly justified. However, this is not a criticism that should be levelled at mass popular education in the tradition of Paulo Freire, nor at the iconic examples of national campaigns which accompanied social and anti-colonial revolutions. This pilot study shows that the Cuban school of adult literacy and its Yes I Can campaign model which grew out of practical experience in that tradition reflects a more sophisticated and nuanced understanding of literacy and how to improve it than some of the international commentary would suggest.

**Conclusion**

This paper has not covered the campaign in Timor-Leste, nor our subsequent research in Cuba, investigating the theory and practice of Yes I Can. But the experience of the Wilcannia pilot, combined with that earlier work, suggests three conclusions. First, the mass literacy campaign model embodies the spirit of combination and cooperation which has underpinned the radical tradition in adult education for two hundred years. Second, the model works in ways that conventional approaches to literacy in the west cannot hope to do, because its philosophy of human solidarity captures the imagination and hearts of poor and marginalised peoples all over the world. Third, the essential feature of the model is its South-South character which gives a very specific meaning to the concept of solidarity. The view of our Australian team is that this approach presents real hope for the communities with which we work, hope in the possibility of a better future, one in which the land they have won through past struggles can once again become the basis for a sustainable form of development.

**References**


Cooke, M. et al. (2007). Indigenous well-being in four countries: An application of the
UNDP’S Human Development Index to Indigenous Peoples in Australia, Canada, New Zealand, and the US. *BMC International Health and Human Rights*, 7(1), 1-11.


How Did We Get Here in the First Place? Exploring the Learning Significance of Perceived Local Histories in Ways Young People Experience Civic Engagement in Their Post-industrial Communities.

M. Tanya Brann-Barrett
Cape Breton University

Abstract: In this paper, I explore young people’s perceptions of their region’s pasts in relation to their present-day lives. I discuss their views of and emotional responses to the past, what they feel has changed, and what has remained the same. I consider ways their emotions are entry points for older youth and educators to critically consider the impact shifting cultural, social and economic arrangements have on young people and their communities.

Introduction
Long-held community practices can permeate citizens’ notions of civic involvement. When those citizens are young people living in disenfranchised post-industrial regions, it can be challenging to manage traditional civic expectations in the contemporary world. Given that local history in part shapes their civic engagement, what are young people’s perceptions of their communities in the past? How do they relate historical images with a present and future framed by different circumstances? An examination of young people’s perceptions of their region’s pasts in relation to their present-day lives may illuminate implications of negotiating the past and present when constructing civic identities.

In this paper, I examine young people’s historical perceptions of their post-industrial region in the early to semi-late (1980s) twentieth century. I discuss their views of and emotional responses to the past, what they feel has changed, and what has remained the same. I consider ways their emotions are entry points for youth along with school and community educators to critically consider the impact changing cultural, social and economic arrangements have on young people, their communities and global societies.

Daily Practices, Historical Place and Emotions in a Global Era
Here, civic engagement is described as actions and behaviours intended to influence decision-making and/or produce social good. A key argument informing this research is that some conceptions of civic engagement learned over time are narrow and privilege certain behaviours over others. Daily activities can reveal practices that reproduce existing societal conditions (Katz, 2004). Therefore, I surmise that what becomes ‘accepted’ through time as civic engagement may be evident through young people’s daily experiences and their perceptions of people’s daily lives in the past.

This research explores how circumstances of globalization merge with conditions of post-industrialization in the civic lives of youth. When engaging in such research local histories are important (Nayak, 2003). Patterns of reproduction are geographically and historically situated (Katz, 2004); hence the focus on the past in this ethnographic work.

A time of global social and economic restructuring is significant when understanding ways youth learn and experience civic engagement. While daily practices reveal social reproduction, “[t]he possibilities for rupture are everywhere in the routine” (Katz, 2004, p.xi). Globalization stirs changes
as community circumstances shift. This particular moment may reveal ways youth reproduce, protect, resist and challenge ideas of civic engagement.

Young people’s emotional responses to their perceptions of the past in relation to their contemporary daily lives are highlighted in this research. Emotions are not the opposite of reason (Sayer, 2005). Instead emotions are evaluative and cognitive and are about things ‘which are important to our well-being and which we value, and yet which are not fully within our control’ (p.36). In addition emotions are embodied (Ahmed, 2004) and relational. In other words, our emotions generate from our interactions with the world. They are experienced in response and relation to something. Here, emotions are doorways through which to critically examine the implications of globalization on experiences of youth civic engagement in post-industrial regions.

**Empirical Research**

This paper is informed by a multi-method visual ethnographic study with 39 male and female older youth, ages 15-27 from working and middle class backgrounds. The research examines ways young people living in post-industrial regions learn about, perceive, and experience civic engagement. A municipality in Atlantic Canada serves as the site for the piece of the study examined in this paper. The former industrial region has a declining population spread out over a small city, former towns, villages, and rural communities. The community is engaged in an on-going and challenging process of social and economic re-structuring. While public rhetoric calls for the inclusion of youth in community planning, uncertainty as to how to facilitate such engagement exists. A research objective is to explore ways education can help address such uncertainties.

Research methods employed are multi-media-based focus groups, one-on-one interviews, and informal discussions. Focus groups include photo-musical sessions (young people share musical selections and photos that reflect their ideas and experiences of civic engagement); arts-informed workshops (participants create art to convey their ideas of civic engagement); and historical photo/arts creation workshops (participants look at historical photos from the early to semi-late-twentieth century and create paintings to illustrate their connections and disconnections with the past). Participants can participate in all or some of the activities. Data is interpreted through a thematic analysis and further analyzed through the study’s critical-cultural framework.

**Emotional Response to Perceived Markers of the Past and Present**

*Economic Markers*

Participants note changes in the economic circumstances of their region as evident through changes in local physical landmarks. Historical photos and stories of shops, schools, hospitals, and industrial buildings were considered by participants to be markers of local economic success in the past. One young man stated: “[I’m surprised] that the community looked awesome at one point in time”.

In comparison present-day big box stores run by multi-national corporations with little investment in the local region are perceived to represent a local economic loss. A participant remarked: “I feel like all of these [local] businesses are going under once Wal-Mart and stuff started”. Expressing frustration, a woman said: “We forget about how developed we actually were….bigger doesn’t always mean better. We’re so consumed with our big box stores and corporations that it’s not helping us. It’s not helping our local economy”.


Participants suggest that along with indicating an economic downshift, a lack of visible historical buildings has an impact on their sense of connection with local industrial history.

It’s so strange to look at pictures from [the downtown streets] and see buildings and old schools and stuff that isn’t there anymore...I don’t know how to explain (pause) it’s like you can relate to it but at the same time it feels really distant.

Some participants feel as though the buildings and economic health of the past have been taken from them by older generations.

I feel disappointed because I see how vibrant it was in the past and it isn’t now. They made no effort to save landmarks. Maybe they have good reasons but they haven’t done a good job of explaining why...We had landmarks and nobody cared enough to save them for our generation. Leaders made decisions saying it was for the good of the community but it wasn’t. Those landmarks will never be ours now.

Farrar (2011) suggests that such responses are not just personal but have political implications including an impact upon engagement as landscapes and landmarks are important sites of political interactions.

Social Markers

Another marker of distinction between the past and present is the number of people visibly out and about in the community. In a region dealing with outmigration, the historical pictures of large groups of people at local events, on community streets and in parks sit in contrast with participants’ present-day images of the region. One woman sadly remarked: “[I]f only the region could still be doing so well with coal mines and with the steel plant. I can’t imagine living here with so many people! That would just be so cool”.

In addition to outmigration, some participants think youth might be less visible and engaged in public spaces because they spend more time engaged with technology like social media. Others suggest young people don’t hang out in public places because when they do they must justify their intention.

Participant 1: I remember a friend went [to the park]. And he got in trouble. Him and two other guys. The cops went up to them and asked them what they were doing.

Participant 2: Well the police take it as a place where people will smoke or ....

Participant 1: (laughing) Gatherings of over three people is too much.

Less has changed when it comes to public engagement at local sporting and music events. “[I]n the past and in the present it always brought people together. Music, sports…it brings people together, especially in small places like here”.

Many participants assume that life was more social and less stressful in the past than it is today. One woman remarked: “[In the past] it was just different. Less stressful. Today we put a lot of stress on ourselves”. While participants acknowledge there are benefits, some suggest that technology has made life more complicated:

Participant 1: Before technology came and screwed us over. [I know there are] a lot of pros to technology today but [it used to be] a simpler way of life.

Participant 2: Yeah my dad mentioned to me the other day people used to visit. Now all you do is text and he’s like, “that’s just not right”.

In reference to technological advancement one woman wondered if the world would be simpler if less had changed:
Participant 1: Would everyone be happier and less conflicted and stressed and all that stuff? I don’t know. It would be a different world that’s for sure….I know that my grandmother is [discouraged] at times. She thinks that the world is ending because all this crazy stuff is happening.

Their assessment of shifts in socializations and technologies role therein is in keeping with what are often considered implications of globalization. Interestingly, participants claim technology is a huge part of their lives. Yet when discussing the past and the present, they rarely mention technology as tools of engagement and downplay the positive ways they use technology. Beck (1992) may argue that participants’ attitudes are a response to the increased sense of risk and uncertainty that is characteristic of post-industrial times.

Value Markers
Reflecting on the past, participants imagine their community valued hard work, family (with clearly established gender practices), community care, a slow-paced life style and limited consumption. Most say they inherited a sense of the value of hard work and community care from their families and the broader community. They feel that younger youth today (early and pre-teens) do not share the same ethic.

Participant 1: I just picture everyone being really hard workers back then.
Participant 2: Yeah there was no laziness.
Participant 1: And I think that might just be where I come from because both my parents came from really big families. My dad has 12 brothers and sisters and my mom has 8 brothers and sisters and so they were really poor. My mom worked all through university, all through school and paid for university and everything. I just feel there wasn’t that sense of entitlement back then like there is now. I believe in working hard and stuff. You have to earn what you have. I feel a lot of kids now just take from their parents and they don’t work for anything anymore.

Participants suggest that family responsibility trumped individual needs in the past. They sense today people are less family-oriented and more individualistic.

Participant 1: You used to have your part to play and your role to play in the family. Now it’s more individualistic.
Participant 2: We care so much about ourselves now. But I was raised with [family-based] values, too. [Dad] was supposed to go to college. He was accepted and everything. He was the oldest boy of eight and my grandfather said, “Nope you can’t go. You have to stay and work on the farm. I can’t do this without you”. So we’re just raised with traditional values and it’s good in a lot of ways. But we’re losing that. I see kids now that don’t know work ethic. They don’t know any at all and we were raised with that and I feel like we are the last generation that was raised like that. I think it’s kind of sad in a way so progress isn’t always a good thing.

Another participant stated:
Family values, family morals were huge. Respect, it was just a whole different world than it is today. There were no kids doing drugs at the age of 13 or drinking under age. It was just really a peachy-keen sorta of thing but that’s just what I think... no cell phones, no internet. There was no stress… [It was] a lot less materialistic.

Given that family and community play a significant role in the construction of social identities (Wyn & White, 1997), it makes sense that many participants embody the attitudes and values that are part of both their familial and community history. Furthermore, the negative perceptions of younger youth
shared by participants reproduce commonly held attitudes levelled at ‘youth’ and ‘young people’ (see Wyn & White, 1997).

Robb (2007) asserts that transitioning to adulthood is “inescapably gendered” (p.109) and that may explain in part why almost all participants compare their gendered expectations with those of previous generations. Participants sense shifts in gender values noting gender is less defined today and more individualistic than in the past. Female participants are relatively happy with what they perceive as less-determined roles for women today.

A woman noted:

I feel that is a negative thing that roles were really traditional. Both my grandmothers don’t drive because that wasn’t expected of women. When my grandmother got pregnant she worked at a hotel but she left so she could raise her children. It wasn’t even a question it’s just like that’s what was expected so that’s what she did.

Another woman was not sure if the change was entirely positive.

[T]here’s a huge change that’s both good and bad. [S]ome of the families were probably closer back then because the kids were closer to their mother…

Reflecting on the shifting gender roles of men, some male participants surmise that historically, men were ‘handy’. One man stated: “[My grandfather] wasn’t a carpenter or anything but he was a handyman and he never took a course”. He regrets that he and his friends are not able to tackle manual work with what he perceives to be the same ease as his grandfather’s generation. “I feel like men aren’t as manly anymore. And I kind of feel bad about that, you know what I mean?” Some male participants agree with him. Others conclude that while such skills were tied to being a man in the past, they do not feel less manly. “I have different skills now. That doesn’t make us less manly”.

Some participants acknowledge the idyllic nature and potential inaccuracies of their historical perceptions. They express disappointment and frustration with a dearth of local history taught in their schools. Some participant said that a lack of awareness of local history accounts in part for what they perceive as a lack of community engagement. Others feel it is incumbent upon local leaders to have a grasp of regional history coupled with a future vision to help encourage engagement.

**Discussion**

Participants convey numerous emotions as they consider their perceptions of the past and their present-day lives. Acknowledging their perceptions are based on limited information, many express sadness and frustration that they are unable to experience what they imagine as the stability and simplicity of the past. Farrar (2011) may categorize their response as nostalgic citing John Urry who notes that de-industrialization has created a great sense of loss for technologies and social arrangements from the past.

Participants lament the demise of historical structures. Is the answer to preserve historical marker for the learning benefit of new generations? Farrar (2011) is cautious when estimating the potential of historical preservation. When it mainly represents experiences of dominant citizens, historical preservation can reproduce marginalizing power relations. She calls for porous spaces where the past and present merge. Educators and community leaders eager for youth to engage in their regions can extend the concept of porosity into their teaching and community planning. Envisioning communities as classroom spaces youth can see ways the past and the present intermingle. Research can explore
benefits of learning that involves physical exploration and critical interrogation of communities; not just museums, but sites of industries, businesses, schools, halls, houses of worship, parks and homes that have been restored or replaced with entirely new structures or landscapes. Participants suggest civic engagement is influenced by their awareness of local histories. Learning ‘in the community’ where the past and present interact may be one way they can learn about their histories and perhaps both challenge and confirm some of their historical perceptions.

Participants note that extensive commitment to local sports and music has endured through time. The success of long-held sporting and music events could be explored through an adaptation of Farrar’s notion of porosity—this time in social space. Investigation to see ways these events merge the past and present may uncover critical civic learning potentials that take place through the region’s music and sport cultures.

Some participants indicate technology plays a role in what they perceive as increasingly stressful and less social ways of life. If they are experiencing nostalgia, perhaps this can be examined more deeply from a technological perspective. Action research with youth can investigate the role technology has played in their community over the past century. Community and familial responses to changes may reveal ways their reaction is warranted and the degree to which suspicion towards technology reflects a cultural panic that is re-invented through time as technological advancement becomes part of our lives (see Sandywell, 2006).

Young people are often subject to adults’ concern, mistrust, and fear (Wyn & White, 1997; Kehily, 2007)—responses similarly conveyed by some participants. Moreover, participants differentiate themselves and prior generations from their perceptions of ‘younger youth today’. They do little to critique negative perceptions attached to young people. Accordingly, behaviors and attitudes exhibited by youth that are not aligned with more traditional locally-valued practices can be deemed problematic. Are participants inadvertently succumbing to a moral panic (see Kehily, 2007) about youth even if they are considered part of that demographic? Does this explain why some young people are reluctant to resist the surveillance to which they are subject when they gather in public spaces? What about youth that resist or challenge traditional ways of engagement? Given the sadness many youth express that values and practices are shifting, how do they reconcile their self-described traditional values and ethics with what they deem a dominant individualistic life model? Research to explore these questions may shed light on variations in ways young people navigate local and global expectations and their civic place in these communities.

Given participants’ attention to gender, deeper investigation is needed to better understand ways that family, schooling, local histories and local-global economies influence gender practices and attitudes of young people (Nayak & Kehily, 2008). Moreover, such insights can illuminate how shifting gender relations play out in how they envision themselves as women and men and ways they engage in their communities.

In a global society, citizenship and community educators cannot ignore and must utilize the learning significance of perceived local histories in ways youth transitioning to adulthood experience civic engagement in their post-industrial communities. Furthermore, feelings are more than personal (Ahmed, 2004). They have a collective and political nature as well. Hence, critical exploration of emotional insights may help youth and educators understand better why we accept particular notions
of engagement and distant ourselves from others and how our relationships with the past and present have an impact on our engagement. Such critical reflection may serve as a catalyst to challenge notions of civic engagement too narrow to accommodate the merging of old and new meanings of civic identities in globalized post-industrial regions.

References
The Political Fashion Shows of Filipino Activists:
Speaking/Wearing Truth to Power

Shauna Butterwick
Kim Villagante
University of British Columbia

Abstract: This research is a collaboration between the authors and the Philippine Women Centre in Vancouver (PWCBC) and is focused on exploring how the PWCBC’s three Political Fashion Shows contributed to learning, community organizing and politicization of participants. Following feminist, participatory and democratic principles of research, this inquiry seeks to understand how these creative projects subverted the notion of fashion to speak truth to power, that is, give voice to Filipino struggles with and survival of colonization and transmigration. Exploring the dialectic between identity construction and social action is central to this study and to the work of the PWCBC.

Background and Context
In Canada, Filipinos are the 4th largest immigrant group in Canada (.5 M), 65% of whom are women. Most live in Montreal, Toronto, or Vancouver. They are the highest and most educated of all visible minority immigrant groups. Despite their significant numbers, many remain poor and invisible, most particularly those who are domestic migrant workers, the vast majority of whom (98%) are Filipinas. These workers or ‘nannies’ have come to Canada through the Live-in-Caregiver program or LCP, a migrant worker program instituted in 1992, a time when Canada began to tap into the Philippine's vast pool of highly desirable migrant workers who were eager to find work given the limited economic opportunities in the Philippines. They were well educated, most have post-secondary education, and spoke English. In Canada, the LCP has become our default childcare (and elder care) program.

The Canadian and Philippine governments regard the LCP as a win-win program. It meets the caregiving needs of Canadian families; it provides employment for domestic workers; and it contributes in a major way to the economy of the Philippines. Over 8 million of the 90 + million Filipino population are working abroad in over 190 countries sending home remittances of $12 billion annually. While these workers are celebrated as “national modern day heroes”, such “opportunities” are in reality a “seduction of hope” in which citizenship is illusory (Rosca 2010). Filipino domestic migrant workers, Sassen (2002) observes, have become part of the “feminization of survival” as impoverished families and nations become increasingly dependent on the exploited labour of women.

While the Filipino and Canadian governments welcome the LCP, they refuse to acknowledge how it is directly contributing to the creation of a permanent economic underclass. As Kahn (2009, p.23) notes, such work is “low-status physical labour and proven to be intimately linked with social exclusion, abysmal working conditions, sub-standard living accommodations, sexual and racial discrimination, and exploitation on the part of employers, labour brokers, and employment agencies”. Examining the specifics of the LCP helps to reveal its injustices. Even before arriving in Canada, LCP workers are paying high fees (sometimes up to $5000) to private companies who offer training and brokering services to connect these women to Canadian employers. Some of these agencies set up loans so LCP workers can pay the fees. The quality of the training and services provided by these
companies is questionable. Then these workers must pay for airfare, an expensive proposition that sometimes equates to a year’s salary for some. Thus these workers, even before beginning their employment through the LCP are in major debt. Some arrive at airports and are not allowed entry as border officials have the power to block migrants if they perceive their paperwork as inadequate. Other arrive to find no employer and end up working for the brokering agency in slave-like conditions, trying to pay back their fees. Those that gain successful entry work under temporary work visas with strict regulations: they must live with their employer; they cannot bring their children; they cannot undertake any other employment outside their employer’s home; and they cannot participate in training or education, except for limited ESL programs. Their living and working conditions are not monitored and many work longer hours and do more tasks than are laid out in their contracts, doing extra favours for their employers. There have been cases where some employers have ‘shared’ their nannies with other families with no extra wages forthcoming for the worker. Many never get a day off. Their board and lodging (around $375 per month) is deducted from their already low wages and what remains is sent home as remittances.

The adjustment to Canadian culture is difficult. Many LCP workers are afraid to speak out as they run the risk of being fired or even being deported back to the Philippines. They are also reluctant to also tell their families as their loved ones are reliant on the remittances and so they too remain unaware. The LCP is also implicated in the deskilling of these workers as they must abandon their professions to care of Canada’s children and elderly (Mooros 2003). Despite these difficult circumstances, many LCP workers wish to immigrate and settle permanently as there is little opportunity back in the Philippines. To qualify for permanent residency (PR), they must complete 3900 hours of work within a period of 48 months (4 years), a challenge for many as employers can end their contracts before they’ve reached the required hours. While they wait for decisions regarding their PR application, most continue as domestic workers; they become what has been called “floating migrants” (Zaman 2006) who shift from one low paid job to another, continuing to send home remittances. Furthermore, the PR process is expensive with a $450 head tax, processing fees, and medical fees for the family to come to Canada. Acquiring PR can take several years and the separation from their families leads to more problems when their children arrive in Canada, strangers to their mothers (Pratt 2009, 2010a, 2010b). Those who have professional credentials when they left the Philippines and want to return to this work must retrain or upgrade and there are few bridging programs which are also costly. Many Filipino women make compromises, subjecting themselves to relationships of dependency just to have a roof over their heads. The strain and separation also has impacts on the families in the Philippines; husbands leave, and children’s relations with their mothers are strained.

**Grassroots Activism and Feminist Framing**

The LCP, the PWCBC has argued, is fundamentally a labour policy, one that is sexist, racist and classist, exploiting these women and undermining their human rights. The PWCBC has explicited these injustices through their own participatory action research (PAR) and through research conducted in partnership with academic allies (e.g. Pratt 1999, 2002; Pratt & Johnson 2009; Pratt, Diocson, & West 2007; McKay 2005). This inquiry, like much of the Filipina activist work, is informed by Marxist-Feminist, intersectional, and transnational feminist theorizing. Through a Marxist-Feminist materialist framework the relations between individual, the social and material reality are understood to be co-determined (Carpenter 2012), that is, the ‘material’ is socially organized through relations of gender and class. Filipino activists have long understood that their project is about “the radical and revolutionary reorganization of the social relations of production”
An intersectional analysis of gender, culture, race, ethnicity and class shows how Filipino domestic migrant workers struggle with competing loyalties that impede the recognition and exercise of their social, cultural, and political rights. As Kahn (2009) has argued, the LCP is fuelled by and contributes to the creation of a “singular feminized identity” of an ideal domestic worker as “obedient, nurturing, complacent” (p. 29), a process, as Rosca (2010) has observed that involves a “re-feudalization” of Filipino women through processes of “self-abnegation, self-sacrifice” (p. 6).

The transnational character of capitalism and production has significant impact on racialized groups such as Filipinos, who are overrepresented in the circulation and exploitation of migrant labour, all the while they are misrecognized and not considered citizens (Fraser 2005). Transnational feminist scholars such as Benhabib (2004) orient us to the global economy, transnational cultural networks, and transnational migration, revealing the limits of liberal notions of democracy. The resistance activities of organizations like the PWCBC are concomitantly national and transnational (Carrillo 2009).

**Methodology**

In this study, a feminist action-oriented approach has been employed, one in which knowledge and theory are understood to be co-constructed. The goal it to engage in methods such that the process and knowledge generated contribute to positive change. Interviews with 20 participants and two focus groups, one with the PWCBC’s Board of Directors (BoD), have explored participants’ experiences of these arts-based practices and how they shape identity and social action as well as the development of community and organizing practices. Arts-based methods were integrated into the BoD focus group; using lengths of fabric, the participants were invited create dresses or tableaus that told their stories. Dissemination of findings will include a variety of formats co-determined with the PWCBC. For example, an animated video focusing on story of the LCP is underway and a final video telling the story of this research is being considered. A key contribution will be the gathering together of materials (that have been dispersed) into one place, perhaps a website; such an archive is difficult for a grassroots organization with little or no funding to create and maintain. It will include all the photographs, scripts, plans, stories, and other materials from the three fashion shows and will include transcripts and some videotapes of interviews. By outlining the lessons learned from these activities that can inform future engagements, this project seeks to contribute to praxis, that is, action and reflection, which has been part of the PWCBC’s approach throughout its 20 year history.

**Political Fashions Shows: Speaking Truth /Wearing Power**

The earliest roots of fashion being used as a political tool by a Filipino political organization can be traced back to 1985, where in the Philippines, a political fashion show was organized by GABRIELA which stands for General Assembly Binding Women for Reform, Integrity, Equality, and Action. Most political fashion shows in the Philippines are linked to elections to spread political awareness amongst the masses. A fashion show in 2000 was part of a campaign initiated by various women’s groups, LBGTQ advocates, and student groups to press for the resignation of the past President Estrada. A recent show held in 2010 was called “Project Runaway” and included several well-known celebrities as models. Outside the Philippines, other organizations have also employed the genre. For example, in 2009, LA’s GABRIELA put on political fashion show staged at the University of Berkeley as well as at a mainstream mall. Entitled “Trippicked”, the show focused on the global sex trade. In New York, “In her Shoes” was another show using shoes decorated and designed to honor women defenders of human rights for International Women's Day.
The PWCBC was the first North American group to take up the use of this format. The first fashion show was held in Vancouver in March 2004 entitled Product of the Philippines: Made in Canada. It focused on Philippine history and grew out of work study groups examining precolonial times and Spanish and American colonization of the Philippines. Many artists got involved bringing their respective skills and there were also community people, board members and a writing committee. None of these participants had done anything like it before. The project ran on a shoe string budget with some donations from mostly Filipino businesses. Carlo, who has been involved in all three shows, remembers the first show as a huge self-education initiative “[We were] finding as many resources as we could for each other … we adopted film history work, previous theatre material about our history.”

The script followed a historical linear path, starting with the theme of Spanish colonization where the cross and swords were depicted symbolically to illustrate the violent undermining of indigenous peoples and the process of Christianization. In this first scene, part theatre and part fashion show, Marilou, a PWCBC board member, wore indigenous garb. Behind her were two soldiers, each wearing T shirts painted with swords and carrying what looked like crosses and behind them was another model wearing a long robe also with a cross. As Carlo explains: “we wanted to do was modernize the look so we’re wearing just a t-shirt with a sword on it and then we were wearing swords. And then we were wearing baseball caps that kind of looked like Spanish helmets”. As Marilou walked, the two soldiers flipped over their crosses which then became swords and took her by force. Others came on stage and removed Marilou’s indigenous garb and replaced it with the Spanish Maria Clara dress. She was given a bible and a rosary. While Marilou knew well the history of colonization in the Philippines, performing this scene was a transformative moment where she understood that, despite the 60 years since the Philippines achieved independence, the legacy of colonization remained in her body.

I stood there on the stage … a couple of the women removed the beads around my hair, the dress, the skirt, and then they sort of stood around me. I was in my longish underwear, and then they put the lace, the embroidered long dress. And then the clincher was then they put a crucifix necklace around me. So it was really, really powerful. And then they give me a rosary, a little bible, prayer book, and there I stood. I felt so vulnerable … [and] I felt more part of the history of the whole thing.

For an audience member, Christina, watching this scene was also transformative. She was born in Canada to parents who had left the Philippines looking for a better life; they did not want to talk about the past and she struggled to understand her identity. She speaks to how that scene was pivotal and led to years of activism.

I started bawling … I get emotional thinking about it still … It was Marilou, dressed in indigenous [Filipino] clothing. [She] comes out and she’s undressed and put in the Maria Clara. I was like, “Oh my God!” I felt that they were telling my story … to see other people say that the American and Spanish influence on the Philippines was not all positive, and these are the things that happened to us. That history is playing into our current situation. I just said to myself, “Wow. I need to talk to these people because this is what I’ve been feeling for so long.”
Another dress in the first show (which was also used in the second show) was called the Phone Card Dress, made with over 1000 carefully linked together phone cards. While we now have the internet and computers, at that time the phone card was so central to how LCP workers maintained contact with their families. The dress tells the story of Filipina mothers’ efforts to stay connected to their families. It is both attractive and restrictive evoking the desires of LCP workers for a better life for themselves and their families, and their experiences of how the LCP is implicated in a vicious cycle of economic marginalization. As one participant noted:

We asked all of the women to bring [their phone cards] in. So every time they would come in and give us the phone cards, they would tell a little story of who they were talking to [using the card they brought in]. I remember one of the women who basically said, “do you know the tears involved in this card?”.

Building on the success and momentum of the first show, the second fashion show, called Philippine Independence Re-veiled was held in June 2005. We learned that we managed to survive the whole process – learned to appreciate our contributions. We wanted to do another one – a sense of accomplishment. It was an eye opener - taking a medium and changing it to be used for another context - one of the earliest examples of taking an idea and adapting it.

This show included some choreographed dance pieces which grew out of engagement with a dancer/choreographer from Philippines who ran some workshops for members of the PWCBC. The third fashion show, held in 2008, was called Scrap: A Political Fashion Show to Stop Violence Against Filipino Women. For this show, all the dresses were designed by Jill a professional dressmaker who had also been involved with the first two shows; she describes how these productions were a pathway to her political engagement:

They really changed my life. I wouldn’t have been a part of this community if it wasn’t for them. prior to any involvement with the PWC I was just a fashion designer so I remember coming out to a lot of cultural events and being like, oh this is a lot of information but how can I really contribute since all I really do is make clothes?

The dresses were all made of unbleached muslin. The Burden Dress was floor length with long ties at the back pulling the “balikbayan box”, which Filipinos use to send goods back to their families. Cora who wore that dress, spoke to how it captured much of her experience as an LCP worker and spurred her activism.

I wanted to be a part of the change … to change the system … eliminating violence against women, eliminating of oppression and exploitation …Many people asked me how heavy was the Balikbayan box. I said the box itself is not heavy but if you connect to our issues, so many issues impacting women’s lives, it’s so heavy. Very heavy.

The closing scene included the Empowerment Dress with a huge brightly coloured sash upon which the participants had written words that expressed what empowerment meant to them. Ayex recalls how the process involved “all the women writing on scrap on the fabric [which was] transferred onto the sash”.

Reflecting on all three shows in which he had been involved, Carlo remarked on how much had been learned, how the processes opened up avenues for some to join the community.
We were able to get people involved at different levels from conceptualizing to gathering stories from people, and linking people who were designers or artists with community members who weren’t artists or designers and trade skills, giving education to those artists and then giving community members a chance at what they haven’t done before or a chance to do something that is different from their routine.

Ayex also noted the power of the grass roots and participatory process: “the different roles you were able to take in it, because there were like the focus groups, and then there was the transcribing and then it just turned into a dress. (laughs) It was so cool!” She was amazed at how the dresses would capture so much of women’s lived experience: “you can get the emotion and the whole story without really having to do anything else but just to look at it”. During the final show all of the dresses were modelled by the woman whose story was being portrayed. This was significant, breaking the silence regarding experiences once restricted to the private inner lives of LCP workers. Although the stories were of struggle and heart break, the women felt energized and empowered.

And to be able to have the women telling their stories, to be the ones to wear their stories. I think that was a very important thing that we were very conscious. Like, ‘if it’s your story, than you should be the one wearing it cos that’s also an empowering process, right? Because if you’ve been silenced for so long, than this the chance for you to tell your own story.’

**Conclusion**

We see these shows a “performative contradictions”, that is, acts of resistance undertaken in public spaces by those who have no status as citizens (Butler & Spivak 2007). The Political Fashion Shows were/are a powerful medium for conscientization (Freire 1970) and organizing. As the participants experiences show, these performances created spaces for dialogue and the construction of oppositional discourse, what Fraser (1997) calls ‘subaltern counterpublics’, enabling a politics of recognition, a shifting for many involved of a private and depoliticized personal struggle to a shared and political project. For some who would not have joined an advocacy or activist group, the fashion shows created an alternative pathway for political engagement and action. The shows can be viewed as communities of practice that included what Wenger (2000) sees as key elements: enterprise: the level of learning energy; mutuality: the depth of social capital; and repertoire, the degree of self-awareness (p. 230). These shows were in many respects popular education projects enabling what Freire (2008) called a pedagogy of freedom, liberation and hope. Sandoval (2000) has outlined a “methodology of the oppressed”, activities that lead to a form of differential consciousness that is flexible and diasporic. The PWCBC’s Political Fashions Shows are examples of such methodology, subverting fashions shows, a genre associated with women’s subjugation, into an “oppositional technology of power” that embraced both inner sensibilities and outer forms of social praxis.

**References**

Available from the author: Shauna.butterwick@ubc.ca
Critical Theory in 140 Characters: Using Twitter to Develop a Liberatory Pedagogy

Erin J. Careless
Mount Saint Vincent University

Abstract: Social media as a popular mode of communication has millions of identified users. Twitter as one form of this media allows individuals to connect through 140-character “Tweets”. With a much longer historical background than Twitter, capitalism has proved itself a dangerous shape-shifter – changing to meet the growth of society and impacting every sphere from the economic to the educational; imparting the needs of the elite onto the lives of the majority. To challenge the impact of capitalism in society, particularly in education, there must be space for critical discourse. Using a Marcusian-Freirian framework, this paper discusses the use of Twitter for educators as a way to promote critical thinking and revolutionize education for liberation.

Logging On

The term “Internet” was first used in 1974. In the year 2010, when the world’s population was approaching seven billion, two billion people identified as Internet users (Robinson, 2011). The rapid pace of growth in digital technologies has dramatically altered the way most people live, work, socialize, and learn. In terms of education, digital technologies can inform the methods used in formal settings, and have a profound impact on the way educators engage in lifelong learning, interact with other professionals, and shape their pedagogical practice (Ramirez et al., 2012; Sari, 2012; Conrad, 2008). Social media, as part of the burgeoning technological sphere, has become a popular and powerful tool for use in higher education (Rambe, 2012; Moran et al., 2011; Andrade et al., 2012).

According to a report published by Moran et al. (2011), “the term social media is a hazy one. And no wonder – for the first time, the world faces a medium that is by its very nature noncentralized, meaning that in both form and content, it is user created, user controlled, flexible, democratic, and both very transparent and very not so” (p.4, emphasis in original). Social media allows content to be transformed into conversation, providing the opportunity for critical discourse that transcends the space and time limitations of face-to-face conversation. Long before the emergence of social media, the rise of the industrial era set the stage for capitalism – a social system whereby a small minority of capitalists own the means of producing and distributing goods (Marx, 2009). Formal education in Western society has become deeply entrenched in the values of the dominant capitalist system, privileging standardization, skills acquisition, and consumerism over liberation, democracy, and critical thinking (Gouthro, 2002). The communicative sphere of social media may be the space needed for critical educators to form a collective voice that challenges the pervasive nature of capitalism in education, and to promote a critical, liberatory pedagogy.

The purpose of this paper is to initiate thoughtful discourse around the use of Twitter as a form of social media to facilitate and support critical, liberatory pedagogical practices in Canadian higher educational institutions. Influenced by Marcuse’s critical analysis of the Western “One-Dimensional” society and Freire’s writing on critical consciousness and dialogue, this discussion connects Twitter to critical social theory. While critique is the first step to changing the current order of things, lasting change requires a commitment to hope and the belief that a freer society can exist (van Heertum,
2006). Both Marcuse (1964; 1969; 1972; 1978) and Freire (1970; 1992) dedicated much of their work toward the development of a utopian society, and while Freire is often connected to discourse around critical pedagogy and liberatory education, Marcuse’s work is typically relegated to discussions around the emergence of the New Left in the 1960s and 70s (Kellner et al., 2009). However, Marcuse’s analysis of a one-dimensional society adds an important depth to the discussion of liberatory education.

What follows is: a discussion of the influence of capitalism on the formal education system; a description of Twitter as a communicative forum and its use in higher education; an analysis of the work of Marcuse and Freire as it connects to the idea of Twitter for a liberatory pedagogy; and then concluding statements and questions for further discussion.

Capital Education
According to Marxist theory (influential for both Marcuse and Freire), it is under capitalism that the value of work is commodified: “In a commodified world people develop their identity and calculate their sense of self-worth in purely economic terms” (Brookfield, 2005, p.70). Capitalists are concerned with building their empire, while others in this modern society are concerned with acquiring commodities, thus feeding the cycle. In the 19th century, when Marx originally wrote about capitalism as a dangerously powerful economic system, his focus remained on the exploitation of labour-power and production for the benefit of the established (or bourgeois) society. Now, in the 21st century, capitalism has proven to be a systemic chameleon – altering its appearance to remain virtually unchallenged (Collins, 2006; Giroux, 2005). The influence of capitalism is felt in economic, political, social, cultural, and educational spheres.

When society is primarily concerned with capitalist values of production, competition, and credentialing, the formal education system reflects this by focusing on standardization and skills acquisition, thereby producing the next generation of workers and consumers: “Education as an ideological state apparatus works to ensure the perpetuation of dominant ideology not so much by teaching values that support that ideology but more by immersing students in ideologically determined practices” (Brookfield, 2005, p.75). Practices that seem logical and universal in education, such as standardization and evaluation, and the segmentation of curriculum, actually validate dominant ways of interpreting and organizing the world.

To challenge this pervasive, capitalist influence in the formal education system, Western society must move away from the professionalization of teaching, and toward a critical pedagogy whereby teachers are cultural workers engaged in producing ideologies and social practices (Giroux, 2005). How can educators hope to create this discourse and pedagogical practice rooted in critical thinking? They must maintain spaces that support this type of education, promote discussion amongst other professionals, and that help students to discover and acknowledge the power they hold as individuals and agents of society (Giroux, 2005). Due to its availability and potential for global connectivity, Twitter may be one such space that can be used to promote such discussions and awareness.

Tweeting in Higher Education
Social media has dramatically transformed the way individuals experience the Internet. What was once a one-way information delivery system has developed into a participatory, collaborative, and creative communication medium (Selwyn, 2012). According to the official Twitter website, this
social media forum was created in San Francisco, but is now used globally, with 20 different language translations. Twitter enables its users to “follow” posts from individuals or groups that they choose: “Twitter is a real-time information network that connects you to the latest stories, ideas, opinions and news about what you find interesting… At the heart of Twitter are small bursts of information called Tweets” (Twitter Website). Tweets are a maximum of 140 characters, but links to other sites or pages can be imbedded in a Tweet. The decision to focus on Twitter specifically for this paper is based on the authors’ personal experiences with social media, where Twitter (as opposed to Facebook or other social media sites) is used to connect with other educators and academics. According to Moran et al. (2011), 91% of American higher education faculty surveyed claimed to use social media in a professional capacity. Although reporting American data, this study may be comparable to Canadian statistics. It is important to consider, however, that use of social media in general and Twitter specifically does not necessarily represent critical engagement with others using these communicative media. Information transfer or networking is useful, but alone will not create the space needed for critical discourse and action against damaging capitalist values in society.

While there is a significant body of educational literature around social media use in higher education, there are few studies that look specifically at Twitter as a communicative medium, which is why this discussion is important. Regarding social media in general, Selwyn (2012) states that many educators are now “beginning to consider the possible significance and likely implications of social media for education practice and provision – especially in terms of higher education” (p.2). The use of these media imply that learners and educators are active co-constructors of knowledge rather than passive recipients of knowledge based on established ideology. LaRiviere et al. (2012) look at the strengths and weaknesses of digital media in the organization of student activism, comparing this to student activism in the 1960 and 70s. Social media can facilitate a sense of empowerment for individuals, and “due to the seemingly infinite space of the Internet, it is a place that can host political organizations and movements without the guidance or influence of mainstream institutions” (LaRiviere et al., 2012, p.14). Perhaps this signifies the ability to foster critical, educational discourse that evades the influence of dominant ideology. While there are many factors to consider in using social media as an educative tool for social change (attrition rates, access, identity, etc.), LaRiviere et al. (2012) believe that there is a critical need for educators to use social media to discuss social concerns, activism, and civic engagement.

Germany to Brazil and Back Again
An appropriate follow-up to the previous discussion around activism today as compared to the 1960s and 70s is a look at the critical analyses of Herbert Marcuse and Paulo Freire. Known for his support of student activism and role in the emergence of the New Left, Marcuse’s work draws on Marxist critical theory and the phenomenology of Husserl and Heidegger (Critical Theory Website). His main intellectual concerns were with the dehumanizing effects of capitalism, the impact of modern technology, and he believed that false needs created by the desires of the established society resulted in a so-called “one-dimensional” society (1964). According to Marcuse, individuals in a one-dimensional (advanced industrial) society are bombarded with these false needs dictated by the elite. Presented through mass media, advertising, education, politics, and the economy, satisfying these needs becomes so encompassing that there is no room left for critical discourse and action in this one-dimensional society. In opposition to this controlled one-dimensional society, Marcuse (1964) promotes critical discourse, revolutionary action, and aesthetic education as central to a two-dimensional society.
The work of Herbert Marcuse is not commonly linked to educational research, but there are some who believe Marcuse to have great relevance for theorizing education (Kellner et al., 2009). Marcuse discusses education in terms of the progression of culture and the realization of individual human beings as opposed to education that prepares learners for participation in the production-oriented one-dimensional society. Education for the betterment of society, reflected in a two-dimensional society (Marcuse, 1964) is subverted by instrumental forms of schooling that view learning in terms of meeting the economic needs of present (Kellner et al., 2009). Education in a one-dimensional society is concerned primarily with market and military logic, presented under the guise of “democratic” education. The perpetuation of established ideology through education in a one-dimensional society becomes indoctrination into a way of life in a totalizing system (Kellner et al., 2009). Achieving the depth of a two-dimensional society and education system then, requires a movement of the people within that society, and this is where social media may play a role.

Marcuse was wary of the power of technology and mass media in his time, but the world we live in today is vastly different, particularly in terms of digital technologies and the emergence of social media. Marcuse felt that citizens of advanced technological societies were controlled and manipulated – in part through the messages of the mass media (Marcuse, 1964). As previously discussed, the Internet itself has shifted from a one-way tool of knowledge sharing to a co-constructed, participatory medium with revolutionary potential. Therefore, these newer communicative forums may provide the critical space Marcuse spoke of – the space to foster a more equitable, democratic society.

There is a trend in critical theory to focus on the negative – the “what is wrong” in society. One of the commonalities between Marcuse and Brazilian revolutionary theorist, Paulo Freire, is that they inject their criticism with optimism and hope for social transformation (van Heertum, 2006). Freire’s work is significant in educational theory, with a focus on dialogue and critical consciousness – the power of the individual in enacting change over their life. Like Marcuse, Freire also drew upon critical and Marxist theory in developing his ideas of radical social change, and believed that education played a major role in the emancipation and liberation of the oppressed in society (Freire, 1970). According to van Heertum (2006), Freire “argues for a reality founded on dialogue… where reality is constructed and negotiated in collective action” (p.46). Language and discourse are important in his theoretical framework.

Freire discusses his concerns for education and the significance of critical awareness in the process of learning (1970; 1992), with the idea that democratic popular education refers to the popular classes developing their own language. Critical discourse is a way of remaking the world and challenging dominant power structures, all within a spirit of hope for the betterment of society (1992). In thinking of a space for individuals to collectively discuss and challenge oppression while developing a “language of the people”, this space may be found in the conscientious use of social media in general, and Twitter as a communicative form in particular. Kellner et al. (2009) succinctly sum up the relationship between Marcuse and Freire as it relates to education:

Perhaps we could argue that in many ways he [Marcuse] provides revolutionary content while Paulo Freire (1970) provides the particular educational form (dialogic and problem posing) for constructing a pedagogy that fights for freedom, transforms students into active participants in the production of
knowledge, problematizes notions of educational neutrality, and emphasizes critical consciousness-raising and social transformation and activism (p.23).

As Marcuse and Freire have both made invaluable contributions to the development of critical theory, their work is equally significant for educators who claim a critical stance on the way capitalism has shaped, and continues to impact, the formal education system. The rapid growth and use of social media in the past decade indicates a new area in which to explore the possibility of revitalizing critical discourse on a global level; a discourse that is both shaped by individual agents and promotes a democratic, liberatory education for all.

**Click Here to Comment**

The purpose of this paper is to initiate discussion around the use of Twitter as a communicative forum by Canadian higher education faculty to challenge the oppressive, production-oriented values of capitalism that have infiltrated the formal education system. In the spirit of Marcuse and Freire, a critique of the way things are in the world is the first step to revolution – the second step is to develop and work towards an emancipatory, democratic alternative.

Although social media is frequently used by higher education faculty, it is important to distinguish between a critical purpose and a knowledge sharing purpose. I believe the potential is there for social media, in particular Twitter, to be used to foster this type of critical discourse among educators. There are however, several considerations that may impact the way these tools are used. In terms of participation in organized groups, individuals engaged in social media tend to “drop off the radar” more frequently than groups that meet in person, and although Twitter users create online profiles, the type and amount of information shared is up to the individual, so the level of commitment and identity can vary significantly (LaRiviere et al., 2012). Social media is an interesting mix of an individual activity and social engagement. One can be physically alone while engaging in discourse with others in different cities, countries, and time zones. These interactions may take away from personal face-to-face encounters, but social media defies the boundaries of these interactions (space and time).

Important for critical theorists to consider is the issue of access and marginalization. Who has access to these resources? Who is prevented from using these communicative tools? How do we learn how to use them, and how do we learn to use them critically? It is inevitable that some voices will be left out of the discussion when we talk about online engagement, and from a critical standpoint it is important to consider what and who is missing from the discussion. Marcuse (1964) believed that those individuals on the margins of society would be the ones to initiate lasting revolution as they were never fully accepted into the one-dimensional society of capitalism. However, in terms of online critical discourse, if those on the margins do not have access to the conversation to begin with, they will be left out of the chance for revolution that Marcuse speaks of. Freire (1970) also speaks of the power of individuals at the margins; that empowering people with the language of revolution is essential to social change.

One final point in this discussion is that we must consider the ability of the elite of the capitalist system to reappropriate social media for its own uses. With sites such as Facebook, there is a constant stream of advertisements filling the length of the page. Users are repeatedly exposed to product choices of other users and invited to “Like” the same products with the click of the mouse. Twitter
does not carry the same weight in advertising, but companies track conversation topics and will follow users accordingly. Marcuse (1972) talks about the notion of counterrevolution and revolt, and how dominant ideology can potentially find a way to spin revolutionary tactics to their own advantage. This will be challenging to identify in the world of anonymity that is social media.

I believe that Twitter as a communicate forum can be used by higher education faculty to create a space that promotes critical discourse around issues of social justice. With the rapid pace of individual lives in the 21st century, these media provide instant connections to others around the world, and the opportunity to raise awareness, challenge and critique dominant ideologies. Inspired by Herbert Marcuse’s work on the one-dimensional society of false needs and consumerism, and Paulo Freire’s educative theory that values dialectics and problem-posing approaches, I believe that this communicative forum has great potential for use in revolutionary change and in creating a critical, liberatory practice and hope for freedom.

References


Twitter Website. Retrieved from: www.twitter.com

The Construction of Women of Colour Faculty: Teaching about Race and Racism

Adrienne Chan, University of the Fraser Valley
Rita Kaur Dhamoon, University of Victoria
Lisa Moy, University of the Fraser Valley

Abstract: In this paper we examine the instructional roles that we undertake as female educators of colour in teaching ‘difficult’ content about race and racism. Our overall argument is that there are specific burdens and possibilities for both students and faculty of colour that arise from the simultaneity of our social locations and the critical race content we teach, whereby attention to power must be constitutive to teaching and learning about race. The paper identifies five distinctive roles adopted and/or imposed on faculty of colour when teaching topics on race and racism, which we intentionally formulate through metaphoric representations of the instructor as: curator and choreographer, tour-guide, puzzler, book, and catalyst.

Introduction

In this paper we examine the instructional roles and metaphoric representations that we occupy as female educators of colour in teaching difficult content about race and racism. Race is a subject that is often silenced in the discourses of higher education institutions, where issues of race and racism are discounted in the production of knowledge (Henry & Tator 2009; Ng 1994). Our overall argument is that there are specific burdens and possibilities for both students and faculty of colour that arise from the simultaneity of our social locations and the critical race content we teach, whereby attention to power must be constitutive to teaching and learning about race. While the experiences of women of colour in the academy are under-examined (Turner, Gonzalez, and Wood 2008), our findings contribute to this growing literature specifically in terms of student perceptions of instructors (Anderson and Smith 2005; Hendrix 1998), the uneven representations of female faculty of colour as both incompetent and expert (Gutierrez y Muhs et. al. 2012), and the classroom as a contested space of social change (hooks 1994; Picower 2012; Wagner 2005).

Attention to our roles in the classroom as a potential site for revisioning race and anti-racism is thickened by three theoretical influences that underpin this research. First, we are committed to the notion that the classroom is a transitional disruptive space where there are boundary-challenges as well as possibilities for transformation that generate “the practice of freedom” (hooks 1994: 13) and a pedagogy of hope (Freire 2004). For us, teaching about race and anti-racism is a political project (Wagner, 2005) that influences our pedagogy and our identities. Second, in our teaching about race and racism, we are committed to centering and critiquing concepts of power and the ways in which power is a circulating force that occurs in everyday social interactions (Foucault, 1980). The classroom is not race-neutral (Ahmed 2008; Friere, 1970; Picower 2009). Third, we are mindful about the complex history between multicultural education and anti-racist education while aligning ourselves with the latter's focus on power and the disruption of white subjectivities (Nicoll, 2004) rather than individual attitudes or cultural knowledge exchange.

We begin by outlining our research design. The rest of the paper identifies five distinctive roles adopted and/or imposed on faculty of colour when teaching topics on race and racism, which we intentionally formulate through metaphoric representations. As Jensen (2006, 13) illustrates, “metaphors are valuable research tool for gaining new insights into education practice and theory.”
Metaphors are not merely linguistic devices, but instead put forward another way of looking at the world and stimulate imagination and change.

Research Design
The overarching objective of our research project was to critically explore how students responded to ‘difficult content’, race and racism. ‘Difficult content’ was broadly defined as content that speaks to the often emotionally charged and controversial topics of subject positioning, power and identity. The initial objectives of the research included three aspects of teaching and learning about: an examination of pedagogical strategies; student engagement and disengagement within a curriculum of race and racism; and the ways in which student’s critique, assess and make meaning of/from their learning.

Students were recruited to participate in this research if they had taken one of three possible undergraduate courses: one in social work and two in political science. Forty-five participants completed the survey and eleven people were interviewed. The university is demographically composed of mostly white students, as well as notable numbers of South Asian, Aboriginal, and international students. As well, the majority of survey responses and interviews were with women. While in Political Science classes, there tends to be an equal number of men and women, in the Social Work classes, students are overwhelmingly women; less than 10% of Social Work students are male at any given time in the program. Of the interviews, only two participants identified as a visibly minority person and an Aboriginal or Métis person, while in the survey data, 20% or responses were male and 16% identified as a person from a ‘visible minority’ group (categories defined by Statistics Canada). Thus, the composition and dynamics of the classroom was certainly influenced by the demography.

As an ethical consideration, the instructor conducting the interview was an instructor from outside the School/Department of the student. This strategy of the ‘outside’ instructor as the interviewer was used to avoid any possible conflicts regarding instructor-student and power relationships. On completion of the interviews with students, the researchers interviewed each other in a group interview (hereafter referred to as the ‘collective interview’), to further reflect on our teaching experiences, strategies and theoretical connections. In addition to surveys, we also utilized semi structured in-depth interviews, which allowed for a reflective narrative approach (Gluck & Patai 1991; Hatch & Wisniewski 1995; West 1996) and gave student participants the opportunity to story-tell and interpret their experiences in the classroom.

Metaphoric Representations and Multiple Roles
In this section, we highlight five analytic themes that extend beyond the exploration of instructional strategies and focus instead on the ways in which instructors and students who teach and learn within difficult topic curriculums are ‘read’, constructed, and positioned.

Instructor as ‘curator’ & ‘choreographer’
Yes, we want to foster that dialogue but we know that the conversation is deeply traumatic to some people in the class…we feel the burden at both ends…that no matter what we do, the conversations in class will be experienced by some as violent. (Collective interview)
‘Curator’ and ‘Choreographer’ are not terms we choose lightly. We use the terms to point to the careful negotiations embedded in the teaching of courses about racism, especially in terms of navigating student emotions. In our classrooms, we work towards what Weis and Fine (2001) describe as “extraordinary conversations” that inspire reflection and action. With this objective, we seek out ways that might nurture dialogue and reflection, cautiously aware that course resources are accompanied by a 'Pandora’s Box' of potential emotional outcomes. We cannot ever fully or accurately predict who in the class will be comforted, pained, angered, saddened, traumatized, or inspired by the content and curriculum of our classes. This is, as Wagner (2005) argues, the work of addressing and preparing for the tensions, emotions, resistance and "visceral reactions" in our learning spaces (263).

Our research data is thick with the naming and describing of emotions and reactions that students connected to difficult course content. Student participants spoke and wrote about anxiety, empathy, guilt, vulnerability, anger, resentment, fear, loneliness, comfort, passion, and curiosity. Our collective interview reveals that we are, in our roles as choreographer/curator, hyper-vigilant to the emotional ‘temperature’ of each class, and this awareness is interwoven into the ways we prepare for our each week's class.

The interviews with students suggest that, at some level, the students construct a ‘good’ teacher of difficult topics to be someone who attends to the emotional and the scholarly. To illustrate, one white student stated:

Doing my research project, I read a book…and it honestly made me feel horrible to be white…I talked to [instructor] about it because it was actually really troubling, and …She was very helpful and really good at helping me when I was …feeling guilty for being white… (Student interview)

These ‘difficult’ moments position the instructor as ‘curator’ and ‘choreographer’, whereby we attend to the deep emotional undercurrent in courses about race and racism, and help disentangle the sometimes contradictory relationship that we, as educators, have with the emotional and learning outcomes of our curriculum.

Instructor as ‘Tour Guide’

[The instructor] opened my eyes…[The course] opened my eyes to see that the oppression that I read about in the textbook is the oppression that is out there. So she showed me what was real. (Student interview, emphasis our own)

From multiple student interviews and surveys, it appears that those who teach about race and racism and other difficult topics are constructed as a ‘tour guide’, helping students navigate between the supposed ‘theoretical’ world and, what many students referenced as "real life". ‘Touring’ here is not suggesting that students view their education lightly. Rather, students – in their search for firmer terrain upon which to position their thinking about racism – found that the class resources or materials presented by the instructor functioned as a destination or landmark of sorts. This frame, instructor as tour guide, suggest that the students are looking to the course materials for something that extends beyond what is traditionally understood as academic content, and raises questions about the tour guide role.
First, we are curious about how students construct what is, to use the terminology of student participants in our study, ‘real’ or ‘relevant’. What criteria is used by students to determine what in our courses is worthy of ‘buying into’ and, similarly, what in the realm of our course content fails to pass the test of ‘legitimate’ knowledge? Second, given the allure of ‘first hand stories’ in our courses, are we potentially brushing up too closely against ‘packaging’ experience or a type of academic voyeurism? Given post modernism’s critique of privileging experience and essentialism, is there risk in buying into the formula of ‘first hand stories = empathy’? Third, we consider our own motivations for navigating our classes through the network of selected material. It is, as one of us suggested in the collective interview, partially about generating dialogue among students, and, as another of us suggests, about “casting a wide net” hoping that one of the teachings accompanying one of the resources is absorbed and meaningful. At the same time, in our collective interview, we ‘tour guide’ through the work, stories, and experiences of others so that our own perspectives and teachings are made more credible and less lonely and stark in the classroom.

Instructor as ‘Puzzler’

Once you learn something that is powerful and personal, it changes how you think it changes your outlook. So I can't help but go into whole learning situations, or situations apart from school or university. It stays with you, your new knowledge stays with you, it changes how you think. (Student interview)

As instructors and faculty, we are continuously on a journey of discovery, trying to figure and re-figure ideas, piece them together in ways that are teachable. This role is magnified when instructors are cast into the roles of creating, recreating, assembling, and reassembling images, stories, arguments and ideas into new and different representations of society/world; it falls upon us to “put it all together” (student interview) and invite students to decipher these pieces and the connections.

The student interviews illustrate three examples about the ways in which instructors of difficult courses are cast as ‘puzzler’. First, part of the puzzling through of new ideas is the unpacking and repackaging of old ideas in which participants revisit their own life experiences. As one example, the three of us have used Peggy McIntosh’s (1988) article on unpacking the invisible knapsack of white privilege to dissemble the past and present. Second, the instructor as puzzler is also the one that lays out pieces of a ‘power-puzzle’, or an image of the interlocking discourses and structures that produce racism. This comment was repeated in similar ways by several students. Most students were aware of the racism that is reported in the media, but were unaware of racism in the subtle, the everyday (Essed, 2002) and the ‘hidden’. Third, the instructor was seen to be a puzzler in that pieces of classroom learning were connected to pieces of the students' lives outside the classroom. In this context, the notion of ‘instructor as puzzler’ bridges the personal and the public.

Instructor as ‘Book’

I just want [the instructor] to express that there are very strong thoughts on either side, and to present those strong thoughts. (Student interview)

While all instructors are read and interpreted, the specificities of scripting a nonwhite female instructor who teaches issues of race and racism to primarily white students are distinct (Turner, Gonzalez, & Wong 2011). First, the survey and interviews of students revealed that the instructors were read as either objective/neutral or as bias/too passionate, with movement between these scripts
depending on the topic. Second, in our collective interview it became clear that we, as women of
colour, were often read as an insider with ‘special’ knowledge about race that is crucial to learning,
and sometimes incongruently as an outsider who marked the Otherness of raced bodies and
knowledge and also can be targeted for not being ‘legitimately’ scholarly enough.

Third, students interpret us through the lenses of privilege and penalty. On the one hand, we are
mindful that in our case we have dominant/western accents, PhD’s from Canada and the UK, are
able-bodied, and have no overt markings of minority religions. Institutionally, the instructor is also a
privileged body that “decides” what to examine and how to examine students, and assigns grades. On
the other hand, in response to our social positions and course content, the students may minimize the
choices made by the instructor by categorizing it as the instructor’s issue, not a wider social issue.

Fourth, our data shows that the instructor is read as an agent of discipline and surveillance as well as
an agent of learning and transformation (Cranton, 2002; Mezirow). Aside from the fact that
instructors assign grades, some students noted that when they hesitated about participating in class it
was often because they did not want to offend anyone or say the wrong thing in front of the instructor
or fellow students (student interviews), or because they felt guilty as privileged white people who
interacted in the world as ‘the oppressor’.

Finally, students read into the instructors’ silences and hesitations; meaning is not only read into what
is said by us in the classroom, but meanings and claims are also constructed from silences (Miller,
1993) In our collective interviews, we noted that hesitancy, ours and that of students, can generate
learning and self-reflection as well as paralyzing guilt, epistemic violence, and a closure of dialogue.
Regardless, we are mindful that “A comfortable race dialogue belies the structures of race, which is
full of tension. It is literally out of sync with its own topic” (Leonardo and Porter 2010, 153).

*Instructor as S**t disturber/Catalyst*

I guess if I took away one thing [from the course], it would be that a lot of the
misconceptions that I had were blown apart, and I see things maybe a little
more clearly about Canada.

As nonwhite female instructors teaching material on race and anti-racism, the role of s**t disturber
and catalyst is central both to the experiences of teaching and student learning. First, students
repeatedly referenced that the instructor, material, and courses transformed how they interpreted their
own positionality and everyday raced experiences. One student for instance, stated:

[I realized that] I take for granted the rights that I have... as a white person in Canadian
culture. And I presume that other people are treated equally, so it's surprising, I keep being
surprised, surprised and disturbed when I discover that that isn't the case.

Many students who self-identified as white in the interviews and surveys talked about how they had
not realized how much they had taken for granted, and expressed shock in realizing that others did
not have the same substantive rights as they did.

Second, the instructor’s role as catalyst of change arose because we were seen as provocateurs. As
instructors, this can be an imposed identity, one that we choose, or both. One student said, “Honestly,
I thought it was important to have a prof teach the course who wasn’t of a dominant social race.
Personally I felt the fear of appearing racist made discussion uncomfortable at times” (student
In teaching about racial politics and anti-racism, and as women of colour teaching this material, we noted in our collective interview that the role of catalyst is simultaneously satisfying and draining/fraught. It is also clear to us that as female faculty of colour we are institutional barometers of diversity, as well as knowledge-carriers and bodies that are simultaneously desired and rejected.

Conclusion
In examining the experiences of students and educators engaged in classroom learning about race and racism, our research indicates that the roles of instructors of colour encompass contradictory and multifaceted responsibilities that are taken up by educators both implicitly and explicitly. In naming the different roles adopted/assigned to female instructors of colour, we follow Freire (1970) and hooks (1994) who suggest that ‘naming’ is a step to empowerment and as a way of challenging power. Speaking out in the classroom against racism and understanding our own responses are helpful in thinking about resistance and human agency. While the classroom can and should be an unsettling space, our study reveals the classroom is also a space of possibilities and profound learning for instructors (as well as students), whereby the teaching of ‘difficult’ topics provides a venue to deconstruct issues of racism. Ultimately, we are signaling the relevance and work of power in the production of nonwhite faculty roles, and the complex ways these roles disrupt multiple hegemonies.

References
Cranton, P. 2002. Teaching for transformation. New Directions in Adult and Continuing Education. 93. 63-71,


Activist Research, Knowledge Production and Education for/in Social Action

Aziz Choudry
Integrated Studies in Education, McGill University

Abstract: Research is a major aspect of many movements for social change. But there has been relatively little documentation or analysis of the actual research practice of activist researchers. The intellectual work and politics of such knowledge production in the course of social activism is often overlooked. I explore how some activist researchers understand, practice and validate their research and processes of knowledge production, and how such research contributes to resistance. Drawing from current research on small activist research non-governmental organizations (NGOs), I discuss how this knowledge is constructed, disseminated and mobilized as a tool for effective social action by and for social movements.

Summary
Research is a major undertaking of many social movements and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and a fundamental component of social struggles at local, national and transnational levels. In this paper, I explore how activist researchers understand, practice and validate their research, and how this knowledge is constructed, disseminated and mobilized as a tool for education for effective social action by and for social movements. The paper draws from recent research on small activist research non-governmental organizations and community organizations in Europe, Canada, South Africa and the Philippines, and the author’s own history as an activist researcher, with examples from movement research on transnational corporate power and resistance to capitalist globalization.

After a discussion of knowledge production and research in NGO/social movement milieus, which draws from Marxist understandings of knowledge and consciousness (Marx, 1974; Allman, 2001), I consider how this knowledge is constructed, disseminated and mobilized as a tool for effective social action by and for social movements in local struggles against neoliberalism and global justice networks. This paper aims to deepen understandings of the politics of constructing knowledge through activist research. It considers theoretical, methodological, action and dissemination aspects of research for social change by addressing the following questions: How do activist NGO researchers outside of the academy understand, practice and validate their research and processes of knowledge production? What are the sources of such knowledge? How is this knowledge produced? How do social movement activists/NGOs disseminate and use knowledge produced through such research in processes of knowledge mobilization and social action?

Scholarly discussion about activist research occurs in critical strands of anthropology (Lyon-Callo and Hyatt, (2003); Casas-Cortés, Osterweil and Powell, (2008); Speed (2006); Zamarrón (2009)), social geography (Chouinard, 1994; Fuller and Kitchin, 2004; Maxey, 1999; Pain, 2003), critical adult education (Hall, (1979); Jordan, (2003); Ng, (2006); Kapoor, (2009); Choudry and Kapoor (2010)) and sociology (Burawoy, (2000); Neis, (2000); Carroll, (2004); Kinsman, (2006); Hussey, (2012)), among other fields. Feminist scholar-activists from various disciplines and theoretical approaches have made particularly important contributions to this debate (e.g. D. Smith, (1987); Cancian, (1993), (1996); Fine, (1989), (1992), Naples, (1998); Weis and Fine, (2004); Ng, (2006), Fine and Ruglis, 2009). Often informed by Marxist, feminist and/or postcolonial insights into social relations, epistemologies and the politics of research for social change, claims are sometimes made.
for particular methodologies and approaches to qualitative research to be inherently oriented towards social justice. These include institutional ethnography/political activist ethnography (D. Smith, 1987; Frampton, et al. (2006); G. Smith, (2006)), participatory action research (Fals-Borda, (1969), (1979); (Weis and Fine), 2004; Kapoor, (2009)), community-based action research (Hall, (1979)), and Burawoy’s (2000) extended case method and reflexive global ethnography. Meanwhile, some scholars (Jordan, (2003); Naples, (1998); Nabudere, (2008); Frampton, et al, (2006)) have questioned implicit claims of participatory research approaches to be emancipatory, and highlight the power relations embedded in the research process.

A common underlying assumption in scholarship on activist research, research for social change, and community-based research is that university researchers with professionalized, specialist academic training must conduct the research. This literature tends to focus on the work of university faculty or graduate students researching in collaboration or partnership with communities, community organizations or activist groups. It therefore is more concerned with the implications of such work on academic careers, its scholarly credibility, and its implications for academic disciplines, rather than on the considerable research and intellectual work generated from within activist/community organizations on which many movements rely for independent analysis of concerns relevant to them (Cancian, (1993); Naples, (1998); Routledge, (1996); Hale, (2008)). Despite considerable academic focus on the involvement of scholars in forms of popular/community education, activist research, academic activism, engaged scholarship and research partnerships relatively little work documents, explicates or theorizes actual research practices of activist researchers in concrete locations outside of the academy in activist groups, NGOs or social movements. Intellectual work, knowledge production, and forms of investigation/research undertaken within activism are sometimes overlooked or unrecognized but nonetheless inextricably linked to action in many mobilizations. In their case for “movement-relevant theory”, Bevington and Dixon (2005) argue that “[d]irect engagement [of researchers] is about putting the thoughts and concerns of the movement participants at the center of the research agenda and showing a commitment to producing accurate and potentially useful information about the issues that are important to these activists” (200).

Drawing from interviews with activist researchers, this paper suggests that the politics of the forms of activist research are impacted by challenges related to mobilizing and maintaining support, continuity and accountability among and between activist researchers and broader social struggles. In order to further explore the conceptual and theoretical parameters for conducting research for social change, I illustrate examples of activist research practice which depend on attending to specific contexts, maintaining and developing engaged relationships, dialogue and strategic collaborations, looking for contradictions and tensions that exist in the systems, structures and institutions being contested, and commitments to long-haul struggles for change. In conclusion, I argue that further study of methodologies, theoretical frameworks and knowledge mobilization strategies at use in activist research practice in relation to approaches in academic literature claimed as “activist” methodologies has the potential to develop powerful tools for critique of capitalism - new ways, and new intellectual spaces not only to understand the world.- but to change it (Marx 1968).
A Study of Women, Adult Education and Community Development Work in Art Galleries and Museums in Canada and the United Kingdom (UK)

Darlene E. Clover, University of Victoria
Kathy Sanford, University of Victoria
Lorraine Bell, University of Victoria
Andrea Monteiro, University of Victoria
Fatma Dogus, University of Victoria

Abstract: This international Canada-United Kingdom study investigated how women practised, understood and articulated their educational work within and beyond the walls of art galleries and museums. It highlights potentials, complexities and contradictions around education versus learning, social practices, and gendered understanding. Whilst acknowledging numerous challenges we argue these women play an important educational role in society today.

Public museums and art galleries in Canada and the UK are important yet understudied sites of adult learning and education (Clover, Sanford & Jayme, 2010; Taylor & Parrish, 2010). While traditional museum practice has been predominantly elitist and exclusionary, recent discourses of social inclusion, community regeneration and social justice have aimed to broaden their mandates and expand their education and learning foci (Crooke, 2007; Hooper-Greenhill, 2007; Robertson, 2005). Women were in fact frequently the driving force behind the establishment of public arts and cultural institutions and today make up the majority of volunteers (i.e. McTavish, 2008; Tippet, 1990; Whitelaw et al, 2010). Furthermore, the mass of adult educators and community development/outreach workers in these institutions today are women, yet with a few exceptions their work within and beyond institutional walls remains largely unexplored.

Our study focused on the adult education, learning philosophies and community practices of 24 women adult educators in large and medium sized public art galleries and museums in Canada and the UK. What we uncovered was a combination of contradictions, creative social practices, gendered understandings, and internal and external challenges. Despite problems, these women are responding creatively, critically and even courageously to today’s most pressing social issues, challenging how we comprehend the educational role and place of these institutions.

Theoretical Framework

Janes (2009) argues that in all the books, studies and debates concerned with the pressing and bewildering array of social and environmental problems in communities the world over, “museums are rarely, if ever discussed…causing me to conclude that [their] irrelevance…is a matter of record” (p.26). Indeed, over the past decades, public art galleries and museums have played major yet problematic socialising and educational roles (e.g. Sandell, 2002). However, current government, and to some extent public mandates, have challenged these institutions to move beyond traditional ‘civilizing’, and patronizing discourses of inclusion and intellectual improvement (Perry and Cunningham, 1999; Taylor & Parrish, 2010) by re-shaping themselves as force for socio-environmental change. This has meant re-defining their educational and public outreach approaches to address issues such as social exclusion, racism, mental health stigma, stereotyping and homophobia to name but a few. They have also been tasked with everything from adult literacy to connecting with diverse and hard to reach populations, from creating new partnerships to
encouraging neighbourhood and cultural cohesion (e.g. Delin, 2002; Golding, 2007; Kelly & Gordon, 2002; Kozar, 2011; Pollock, & Zemans, 2007; Szekeres, 2002). Paralleling these calls are efforts by women to critique the gendered nature of arts and cultural institutions and put forward feminist initiatives. Malt’s (2006) study, for example, illustrated how women curators were using their influence to highlight women’s issues through exhibitions; others have sponsored lecture series aimed to underscore “the often neglected experience of women in minority communities” (Merriman, 2007, p. 351). Intended contributions of this type of work are to identify “tracks of gender discrimination [and to] monitor its movement in our countries, our communities, and in our homes and finally banish it” (Abrams, 2002, p.127).

However, there are concerns about the ability of these institutions to meet these mandates because the bulk of this work falls to education departments and therefore, to women in the institutions since they are the preponderance of adult educators. Problematically, although education departments were formalized in the 1970s, decades of study show their place within the institution has been anything but harmonious or secure (Chobot & Chobot, 1990; Hooper-Greenfield, 2004). Many art galleries and museums still make little provision for adult education as Anderson, Gray and Chadwick found in their 2003 large-scale quantitative study of Europe and we re-confirm today through our study (Clover, Sanford & Dogus, 2012). This has lead Burnham & Kai-Kee (2011) to refer to educational work as ‘without design…the result not conscious long-term planning or theory, but of ad hoc, step-by-step responses to public demand’ (p.25). Further, the educator’s role is often ill defined and Anderson et al (2003) found few opportunities for training for the new mandates.

Running parallel to these changes is a movement away from the discourse and practice of ‘education’ towards ‘learning’ (Thompson, 2002). Some applaud this shift, seeing it as resistance to the expert-driven pedagogical practice of yore, which focussed on transmission. For example, Roberts (1997, p.8) argues that “education has become too restrictive and misleading for the museum setting….There has been a conscious shift toward “learning” (emphasising the learner), “experience” (emphasising the open-endedness of the outcome) and “meaning-making” (emphasising the act of interpretation).” Yet others are cautious of what they see as the neoliberal creep behind the concept of learning (English & Mayo, 2012; Martin, 2003). Lahav (2003) challenges ‘personalised’ interpretations of the arts. She believes that releasing the ‘shackles of elitism’ associated with the traditional one line story of art to create more people-centred, transparent and pluralistic understandings has led to a fragmented, individualized learning experience that leaves people feeling lost and undirected. Others are concerned learning will become simply ‘edutainment’ rather than a collective experience where people can explore society’s problems through the art and other collective experiences (Besta, 2011; Clover & Dogus, 2013; Grek, 2009). Paralleling this latter is Janes’ (2009) findings that staff are often uncomfortable with taking on political and topical issues, fearing their credibility will plummet in the art world.

**Research Methodology and Design**

We used a feminist cross-national approach to explore how women in Canada and the UK were interpreting and implementing their adult education and community development activities. Feminist research places women at the centre of the enquiry and honours their experiences and ways of knowing (Hess-Bider & Leavy, 2007). A cross-national approach develops understandings within a context of growing global interdependence and similarity of challenges based on practice, policy and/or ideology (Hantrais, 2009).
We identified 18 large and medium-sized public art galleries and museums in Ontario, British Columbia, England and Scotland. We used semi-structured individual interviews and focus groups with 24 women adult educators and/or community outreach/programmers. We also used observations and journaling, taking part in workshops, talks and seminars to view their work first hand. Interview and focus group questions revolved around women’s educational backgrounds, their philosophies and visions of adult education, learning and community development and their place (and of education and/or community development) within the organisation. Questions also probed for gender consciousness and feminist leanings in terms of their activities and within the institution. Interviews were transcribed and coded for common patterns, phrases and themes as well as anomalies. We also coded for differences and similarities across the two countries and across institutions.

Findings

Gender consciousness and commitment to feminist education and community development was evident in some of the museum and gallery educators we interviewed. Many spoke, as articulated by Hilda, about being “aware of the importance of women’s issues and highlighting those and putting women strongly on the agenda in our education programmes.” Going further, Lisa in England provided an example of a specific educational aspect that included a collaboration with a women’s organisation: “there were forty-two women from Sierra Leone, and there was some wonderful work delivered in that venue with the [Women’s group]. International Women’s Day is big for us. There are a lot of passionate women here.” Although there were a few other examples of educational activities solely for women in England, there were virtually none in Canada, although one of the most staunch and articulate feminists was a Canadian working in London.

In some cases study participants illustrated a very critical analysis of the intersection of class – in particular the ‘civilising’ mission of the institution - and gender: “I think the interface between class and gender is a really important one in the gallery education field… this [problematic] enlightenment or ‘elevating the poor’ discourse comes up a lot and it’s still very present” (Janice). We also found a fairly broad spectrum of attitudes about the feminization of museum and gallery education itself. Many women consciously noted gender imbalances and took our research as the opportunity to elaborate, as Teresa shows in this creative response:

> You asked me earlier about politics [in the Gallery] and let me make the link with women. You can think of the art gallery like parliament: the President is the Prime Minister, then you have the administrators – the Ministers; the curators are the House of Lords and education, well, we are the House of Commons! And that is where you find most of the women.

Chrissy pondered the question in terms of economics: “I also think it [the overrepresentation of women in museum and gallery education] may be related to salary as this is low paid work.” Another respondent noted that women tended to be attracted to the freelance work, and speculated that it afforded them flexibility of schedule, which scholars suggest is now a hallmark of feminized occupations (Ryan, 2006). However, Mira captures a common response on the other side: “I guess it is there [gender imbalance] but it is not something I have given a lot of thought to.”

While many women felt neither male nor female leadership made a difference to the stature or emphasis on education in the institution, others disagreed:
I think we had a woman’s way of seeing before, an emphasis on inter-action and learning, and a real sense of respect for the people who come through this door or to whom we should be reaching out. We flourished. Now we are under, well constrained within a very male vision of construction – the bricks and mortar kind of stuff. I realize I am stereotyping, but it is the best way I can explain the deflation of the department – through gender (Isabel).

Some of the adult educators called themselves feminists and claimed it was what brought them to where they were: “especially within the older generation it feels like there were those of us who made claims to feminist histories and feminist activism as the reason why we came into gallery education” (Janice). Yet problematically, many of the younger participants shied away from what they saw as an unnecessary ‘label’ or were concerned about what it might do to them: “I don’t think any one of my colleagues have described themselves as ‘a feminist’ but I suppose we all have feminist ideals. [But] we don’t use the term. I suppose it has a lot of negative connotations, doesn’t it?” (Sharon).

Still others were simply not clear what the term ‘feminism’ meant: “Well, we focus on relations with family, school and children. Is that what you mean by feminist?” Clara was concerned that the lack of understanding about feminism was tantamount to “an erasure of history and she was concerned about what she saw as a “weird backlash of a younger-ish, maybe even younger than me, generation around calling yourself a feminist.” However, she felt there was now resurgence in interest “within contemporary art around feminism and that allows for a different conversation to take place in the educational arena. I mean, you cannot ignore who these artists are and what they are saying through their art and be a good educator now can you?” (Clara). Participants such as Laurie argued that without a feminist vision or commitment, gallery educators simply maintain the status quo, a liberal trajectory of seeing the institution as a way for the lower classes to learn to become cultured or civilised. She also felt that “it is all part of the self-marginalization [of educators and community development workers] that takes place and has to do with the fact that it is a largely very gendered field that doesn’t actually situate itself within feminism, or within a feminist trajectory.”

In spite of misunderstandings and perspectives about feminism all supported a social vision of education and learning, and a commitment to reaching out to and working with diverse populations: “it is about getting people to feel they can walk in and not only learn something socially relevant...but also know that they are entitled to be in that space, that it belongs to them” (Lydia). In addition to women, in both countries target populations included people with mental illnesses, seniors, recent and even established immigrant groups, asylum seekers, and LGBT youth; as Leanne argued: “homophobia is on the rise and we need to find ways to deal with this. Our whole gallery is about identity – about how we portray ourselves and are seen by others. It makes sense we take on this issue.” A major museum in Canada is also hosting an exhibit on LGBT issues, placing it front and centre in a country (this is true of both countries for that matter) where gay marriage is legal, but religious intolerance, ignorance and bias remain. Having said this, in the UK, there were many more activities on social issues such as seminars on racism and workshops on power.

Few of the women had training in adult education although there were some notables who called themselves adult educators and spoke of receiving nonformal training in a popular education centre or more formal training in universities. The majority of participants had been trained as school teachers or in fields such as art history or anthropology – which is what the job descriptions for educators asked for – although one woman did believe she obtained her job, at least in part, because
of her training as a community theatre artist.

These varied backgrounds, with so little adult education, perhaps contributed to the widely divergent understandings of the terms ‘education’ and ‘learning’ we found. Another culprit, however, is government mandates that emphasize individual learning over collective or nonformal education (Kilgore, 1999) and this was reflected in the discussions in different ways. To begin, Helen in the UK argued: ‘We agree with this change because education is more formal and top-down whereas if we are looking at learning it is self-motivated, self-driven, and there is no kind of particular standard (emphasis hers).’ In Canada, Andrea expressed it like this: ‘education is something that happens to people, learning is something that happens inside you.’

One of the participants expressed an understanding of ‘learning’ that was deeply troubling, as this conversation with the interviewer after a training session illustrates:

Interviewer: I would like to follow-up on something you said in your talk earlier about government mandates and learning.
Kayla: In this Gallery we challenge the social cohesion, integration and empowerment discourse of the government, as well as the notion of ‘learning outcomes’.
I: So what does that look like in practice?
K: As you can see, the façade of this building is not welcoming. We used to be a more ad-hoc group of artists but now we are more professional. We are a public but working gallery so we do not want people just dropping in. Our workshops have no aims, no goals, no purposes. I just like to bring a group together with no intentions at all and just watch what they do. I asked to have my title changed from Education and Outreach Coordinator because I don’t ‘educate’ anyone. So I’m now the Participation Coordinator as I encourage participation, not education.
I: So what does participation look like?
K: Well, people just creating.
I: Just creating. Was that clear?
K: In the first set of workshops, people did ask what we were doing and why - what this was all about. But I think not just feeding them answers is important and they should just figure it out. Everyone is so outcomes and purpose-oriented.
I: How well did that work?
K: Well, quite a few did not come back for the second session and finally, there was only one artist left. So I organised a celebration of the programme and I put up posters all around the community but no one actually showed up.
I: Do you think that is because they do not feel welcome and perhaps questioned the purpose?
K: But I think process is all that matters. It is important to just have creative spaces where people can learn without any intentions – ‘thinking through making art’ is what I call it.
I: Do you think the community understands this?
K: No, I mean yes, I mean I guess they just don’t understand what I am doing. The focus is on ‘process’ so there is no ‘point’. We challenge government discourse. Do you think I need to think about this more?

Discussion and Conclusions
Fleming (2002) has lauded what she sees as an “improved gender balance” in the museum profession that was “once dominated by middle-class men” (p.220) and suggests that this change will enable the
profession “to be far more community orientated than ever before” (p. 220). This later is evidenced in the many educational programmes and activities for adults that highlight social justice or historic injustices we found in our study. However, there are also concerns. The lack of understanding (particularly by young adult educators) of the term feminism and what feminism means, although not surprising, is certainly discouraging in a world where gender inequity is still prevalent (Manicom & Walters, 2011). Moreover, having more women in the institution has not necessarily raised the status of the educational department in all cases, as the parliament metaphor suggests. Although critical mass matters, it takes more than that to bring about change. Indeed, Erickson (1997), although arguing about women in politics in particular, contends that it is not the number of women that matters, but rather a strong feminist orientation that brings about substantive change. Indeed, a feminist framework or lens would provide a means to analyse relations of authority and power within the institution as well as help women to better examine these relations of power within groups they work with beyond the institutional walls. A feminist lens, we argue further, would also allow women to see their way around through the discourses of education and learning. If we go back to the example of Kayla, she sees herself as combating the neoliberal education imposition of market-oriented ‘learning outcomes’; something critical educators applaud (e.g. English & Mayo, 2012; Kilgore, 1999; Martin, 2003). However, the laissez faire ‘facilitation’ approach, where the educator simply watches from the side-lines has little ability to engage people in constructive, collective interrogation of state mandates, nor can it encourage dialogue and action around issues affecting people’s lives in the low-income neighbourhood where that particular public art museum is situated.

While learning, learner-centreness and control are important, we query the implications of losing the intentionality of education in a sea of aimless, individualized learning. Is social change not more important than that? Does it not demand risk, challenge and active engagement with others? Fortunately, there are women in Canada and the UK who are feminists and who have maintained what Freire calls the courage to teach.

Selected References


Taylor, E. & Parrish, M. (Eds), Adult education in cultural institutions: Aquariums, libraries, museums, parks and zoos. *New Directions for Adult and Continuing Education, 27.*
From the Literature: The Dynamics Between Learning and Creativity Theory

Mathew Cohen
University of Calgary

Abstract: The proposed theory is that learning and creativity engage in dynamic described as the “breath of development”. Learning is posited as the experience of “immanence”, while creativity the experience of “transcendence”. Understanding learning and creativity in this way, is argued to be the way to bridge the gaps and fractures rife in both learning theory and creativity theory.

Introduction
There is much that learning and creativity share in common. For starters both learning theory and creativity theory are weighed down by a multiplicity of themes and stark divides in their respective fields. In learning theory Fenwick (2010) addresses the state in which it is becoming increasingly difficult to keep track of what learning is. In creativity theory, there are debates about whether creativity is a product, a process, or a type of personality (Sternberg, 1999). The position here is that learning and creativity are not products or processes, but rather two distinct axiomatic experiences that build upon the other to create the macro theories we have become familiar with. The main purpose of this essay is simple: to introduce the definitions and demonstrate its use, however the given constraints make this hardly a trivial matter. This will unfortunately cause ephemeral address to ideas and scholars that deserve much more scrupul analysis. Notwithstanding the first section is devoted to showing a series of patterns existing in current literature. The literary contributions, though vast, are distilled simply to demonstrate the underlying spirit behind the definitions introduced later on. The second section situates the methodology for defining concepts within a phenomenological setting. Again this is a rich philosophy given only momentary attention, but is nonetheless required to explain how this theory is to be used within a systems approach. These systems are elaborated on in the third section with the introduction of the concept “strata”, and the method used to construct them. The next two sections include the proposed definitions for learning and creativity followed by a demonstration of its use. Finally, a brief reflection on the implications and possible critique is provided to reflect on the consequences of the propositions made herein.

Patterns In Theory
By stating that, “learning and creativity comprise the ‘breaths of development’”, the simple utterance of the word ‘development’ requires mention of both Piaget (1972) and Vygotsky (1962). Piaget and Vygotsky are eminent scholars who take up ‘opposing’ positions on child development. Piaget (1972) describes development as a qualitatively bounded cognitive process that gives way to higher order cognitive abilities founded on lower-order accomplishments. Vygotsky (1962), however, focuses on the ability to process meaning by ways of internalization, such as that by transforming egocentric speech into inner speech and through the ‘zone of proximal development’. For Piaget I pose “into what is one’s ability growing?” For Vygotsky I ask, “from what zone of proximal development is a concept’s meaning derived?” It can be argued that the two naturally differ from one another simply because Piaget’s theory can be described as seeing development from a transcendent perspective (outward growth compounded development), whereas Vygotsky’s is a matter of immanence (advancement through internalization). This outward-inward directionality is found elsewhere in literature, especially with the idea of “transfer”. Learning theory uses “transfer” to address the challenge of taking what is learned in one context and transferring it to another (see
Bransford et al., 1999). Creativity theory deals with this issue as well, but instead of transferring it to a future context creativity theory asks how one might be able to take a “known” system and apply it to the “unknowns” within the present system (De Cruz & De Smedt, 2010). This dichotomy perhaps unsurprisingly finds learning challenged by matters of transcendence, and creativity of immanence. Finally, Jarvis (2006) provides a junction point that helps distinguish experiences of learning from experiences of creativity. Jarvis states that one condition of learning is “disjuncture”, which represents a disharmony and a cessation from taken-for-granted state of mind. This harmony and taken-for-granted state of mind, however, is what Csikszenmihalyi (1990) calls “flow”, and is described as a common experience in creative tasks. Thus, learning and creativity are shown as not only being related, but also as coming into being out of one another. When the theories are held in juxtaposition it becomes clear the nature of their relations are of an inversely related binary (or “dialectic”).

**Phenomenology**

Though the definitions were independently derived they remain consistent with both phenomenological philosophy and its practiced method called “eidetic reduction”. Phenomenology is a branch of metaphysics that values the subjective perspective as a means of providing authentic content for episteme (Tieszen, 2012). Phenomenology deals mainly with experience and getting at what is called the imminent essence of consciousness through a descriptive account of one’s subjectivity (Smith & Smith, 1995). The goal of the eidetic reduction is to arrive at the essence of an experience, and as thus show how it is the root of its colorful manifestations. Eidetic reduction can be in an over simplistic manner be described as taking a description and removing it of all pleonasm; then where qualities differ one must make abstracts concepts from them until the description holds true for every case. For example, if phenomenon “α” is experienced at first as “happy” + “sweet”, and the next as “sad” + “sour” then the essence of phenomenon “α” is reduced by to “emotion” and “taste”. Thus, there is much at stake when one makes a claim that they have derived an essence of something, for it must hold for all accounts, or in other words be “apodictic”. No less, it is proposed in the ensuing definitions for both learning and creativity that they, too, are essences. As such it requires they be demonstrated, and for this to occur it is necessary to introduce the idea behind “strata”.

**Strata**

The idea is that immanence and transcendence is a movement between levels or what is called “orders”, and the strata helps maintain one’s orientation. Strata, known as layers in geological deposits, serves as a metaphor to keep track of the layers comprised of systems and their objects. Suppose all experiences can be conceived as being constituted by a relationship between a pair such as “subject” - “object” (later called phenomena). This is not a new idea and has been addressed by the likes of Buber with I-it/I-thou (see Buber 1970), and Husserl’s and Sartre’s phenomenology who state that consciousness is always consciousness of some thing (Smith & Smith, 1995; Sartre 1956). Each stratum then can be said to represent a subject-object relationship. Though qualitatively different, both subject and object share the quality of being beings (comprised of, or constituted by autonomous existents) and can take the form of: “Consciousness”, “I”, “Team”, and “Organization”. Each being, however, interacts with other like-beings (e.g. person with person, group with group etc.) in a specifically determined environment, and the ways in which they interact with each other forms a system. In the following two examples the “system” (annotated as [ ] ) and “phenomena” (annotated as { }) are shown to be nested within the subject like a Russian nested doll: {subject{system{phenomena}}}. Here it shows the “subject” being constituted by a system and a lower-order set of beings called phenomena. Since these phenomena are beings themselves they too
can be expanded upon: {League [ Sport [ Team [Strategy {Player}]]]}]. In these examples the higher-orders are situated to the left (“League”), and the lower-orders are placed to the right (“Players”). The rule is that something is considered to be of a “higher order” if it is constituted of phenomena from a lower-order; and the reverse where something is deemed a “lower-order” if it constitutes something that of a higher-order. In addition, when comparing systems and phenomena of different orders one finds that they are qualitatively distinct. For example, sport defines a standardized set of rules differentiating one game from another, whereas strategy is an interaction between players. The strata is thus seen as a body of layers where each layer is called an “order” and is defined by the being that occupies that position. Learning and creativity are then seen as experiences that either internalize or externalize a thing across orders.

While the idea behind strata is simple whatever economy gained in its conception spares nothing in execution. Inasmuch as strata will vary from context to context, one’s ability to fill in the appropriate terms is likely to be limited to one’s familiarity and experience within a given set of systems. Moreover deriving the best nomenclature for each subject, object/phenomena, and systems of interaction takes much interrogation. Despite the possible misrepresentations, this example should clarify many of the ideas hitherto expressed:

```
{G-d\{soul…\}}{technology \{civilization \{sovereignty \{state \{laws \{government
[standards \{industry \{services \{organizations \{operations \{association \{relationship
\{group \{behavior \{being/object \{disposition \{concept \{cognition \{psyche \{S-R \{world
\{will \{spirit \{existence
\{anorder[\{representation \{monad]}]}]}]}]}]}]}]}]}]}]}]}]}...}
```

Since the future demonstration will only trace definitions from {psyche} through {organization}, some liberties were taken with the outlying orders. Here it is shown that {soul} is of the highest-order of being, contrasted with a unit in Leibniz’s monadology called a “monad” {monad} (see Tieszen, 2012). Obviously this range conveys a set of personal beliefs, but were felt to be necessarily included for two reasons: (a) {soul} serves as an interesting placeholder for whatever beings we might not understand; and (b) omitting {G-d\{soul…\}} ignores a type of being the majority of the world believes in, thus given legitimacy on empirical grounds. As mentioned earlier, building a stratum is not easily performed, therefore the following includes a set of suggestions to facilitate the process:

1. The identity of the first subject is one that should be clearly understood.
2. To produce the higher-order system, ask: “how does the subject express itself to others of the same order?”
3. To produce the higher-order object, combine multiple ‘subjects’ together and consider “what ‘entity’ does it make?”
4. To produce the lower-order constituents, ask: “what phenomena constitutes the subject and how do they interact with one another?”

From these questions one can create a preliminary strata quickly for whatever context they desire. However, as the series expands it will naturally look more abstract, and require more finesse and contemplation. The more comprehensive and accurately the strata is labeled the easier it will be to
derive meaning from the definitions it helps produce. With the appropriate background covered the proposed definitions will now be introduced in the next section followed by its demonstration.

**Definition**

*Essences*, as aforementioned, are to be viewed as the root of all of its manifestations. The implications of this are that these proposed definitions can in essence reproduce theory and the rationale behind them. While the inductive task of going theory by theory exceeds the purposes behind this essay one should not hesitate to try it out independently. One merely needs to replace the term “subject” with any desired prefix and the definition will naturally follow. The result, however, will be as abstract as the definitions currently are, until a strata is introduced. A comprehensively developed strata will help concretize these definitions and bring much vitality to its form. Since every subject is made of systems and phenomena they undergo changes on account of the systems above. The result is a helical wave up and down the strata like a wave passing through an expanded toy-slinky. The simplistic result should not dissuade one from exploring the richly embedded cycles of learning and creativity below; as it is out of these cycles that have caused whatever *being* to bubble up through the layers and transcend to the given order. As mentioned, the proposed definitions have undergone eidetic reduction and as such will be quite abstract and philosophically laden. However, the paraphrased meanings have been added below to clarify where possible:

*Learning*: is when the subject’s constituents are constructed by perceiving the representation of a phenomenon’s expression.

To paraphrase:

“…*when the subject’s constituents is constructed*…”: … is when the internal *system* is ordered…

“…*by perceiving the representation*…”: … by perceiving the quality/type of effects…

“…* of a phenomenon’s expression*”*: … of an internal unit expressed as ‘y’…

*Creativity*: is when the subject is constructing an expression that represents a phenomenon from a perspective.

To paraphrase:

“…is when the subject is constructing…”: … is when the subject is building…

“…an expression…”: … an externalisation…

“…representing a phenomenon…”: … that represents the inner unit…

“…from a perspective…”: … mediated by unit’s system of interaction…

Though the terms are said to bare philosophical weight, one should not be so quick as to associate the above terms directly with the philosophical interpretations. For example, the term “expression” is more likened to Sartre’s “appearance” (see Sartre 1956), whereas “representation” should be more closely associated with that of Goodman’s use of the term (see Goodman, 1968). Though a careful examination of the terms is quite warranted, the main purpose is to provide an understanding and application for its use, which will now culminate in the following section.
Demonstration
Several prosaic attempts were made to describe the process of taking values from the strata and placing them into the proper terms in the definitions; however such attempts only to lead to confusion. Therefore an algorithm was devised to show the mechanics of this method, as well as to clearly depict which values should be taken from where in the strata. Though admittedly intimidating at first, if one reproduces the strata and follows the notations in the parameters the process becomes much more manageable:

Learning | \[L\{Sub(i)\} = \text{When the } [\text{Sub (s-)}] \text{ is constructed by perceiving the } [t:\text{Sub(i+)}] \text{ of the } \{\text{Sub(i)}\}'s \{q:\text{Sub(s+)}\}\]

Creativity | \[C\{Sub(i) = \text{When the } \{\text{Sub(i)}\} \text{ is constructing an } [\text{Sub(s+)}] \text{ representing the } [t: \text{Sub(i-)}] \text{ from a } [q: \text{Sub(s-)}]\]

- Sub(i): is the “identity” of the subject in a given context
  - Ex: Team-Learning = \text{Sub(i)= “Team”}
- Sub(i-): means the being one order lower than Sub(i)
  - Ex: \{Sub(i)[sys{“Sub(i-)”}]\}
- Sub (s-): means the system that constitutes Sub(i)
  - Ex: \{Sub(i) [“Sub(s-)”]{Sub(i-)}\}
- Sub(s+): means the value of the system above Sub(i)
  - Ex: [“Sub(s+)”{Sub(i){Sub(s-){Sub(i-)}}}]
- Sub(i+): means the being one order above Sub(i)
  - Ex: [“Sub(i+)”{Sub(s+){Sub(i){Sub(s-){Sub(i-)}}}]}
- \{t:\} : means to describe the being by inputting “type”
  - Ex: \{Sub(i)[sport{“teams”}] | [t: Sub(i-)] = Calgary Flames
- \{q:\} : means to describe the system by inputting “quality”
  - Ex: \{Sub(i)[“sport”{team}] | [q: Sub(s-)] = Hockey

In the entries that follow, a set of definitions are produced for creativity and learning respectively by simply inputting the values as described in the algorithm above. Again, one must be forewarned that the ensuing demonstration is not an ‘easy read’, or even likely to be understood in initial reflections. Rather it requires one to re-build each definition, and ask “why was this value placed here?” Only as one makes sense of one context can it bring clarity to subsequent orders. The demonstration will begin with a definition for psychic-creativity (consciousness/ sub-consciousness) as the lowest-order \{PSYCHE\} and progress to organizational-learning as the highest-order \{ORGANIZATION\}:

\[C\{psyche\} = \text{When the } \{\text{PSYCHE}\} \text{ is constructing a } [\text{SENSE}] \text{ representing the } [\text{s-r: PERTURBATIONS}] \text{ from a } [\text{FORCE}]\]

\[L\{psyche\} = \text{When the } [\text{REFLEX}] \text{ is constructed by perceiving the } [\text{concept: Light}] \text{ of the } \{\text{PSYCHE}\}'s \{\text{expression of SEEING}\}\]

\[C\{concept\} = \text{When the } [\text{CONCEPT}] \text{ is constructing an } [\text{ATTITUDE}] \text{ representing the } \{\text{psyche: PERCEPTION}\} \text{ from a } [\text{SIGHT}]\]

\[L\{concept\} = \text{When the } [\text{SENSE}] \text{ is constructed by perceiving the } [\text{being: HUMAN}] \text{ of the } \{\text{CONCEPT}\}'s \{\text{expression of RECOGNITION}\}\]
C{individual} = When the {BEING} is constructing a [BEHAVIOR] representing the {concept: IDENTITY} from a [COMFORT]
L{individual} = When the [ATTITUDE] is constructed by perceiving the {group: FAMILY} of the {INDIVIDUAL}’s [expression of LOVE]
C{group} = When the {GROUP} is constructing a [RELATION] representing the {individual: SIBLING} from a [CARE]
L{group} = When the [BEHAVIOR] is constructed by perceiving the {association: COMMUNITY} of the {GROUP}’S [expression of LOYALTY]
C{association} = When the {ASSOCIATION} is constructing an [OPERATION] representing the {group: DEPARTMENT } from a [COMMITMENT]
L{association} = When the [CONTRACT] is constructed by perceiving the {organization: COMPANY} of the {ASSOCIATION}’s [expression of PROJECTS]
C{organization} = When the {ORGANIZATION} is constructing a [ SERVICE ] representing the {association: DEPARTMENT} from a [ FUNCTION ]
L{organization} =When the [OPERATION] is constructed by perceiving the {industry: RESOURCES} of the {ORGANIZATION}’s [expression of OPPORTUNITY]

Though it may be difficult at first to make sense of the definitions, the skeletal abstracts are present and merely need to be adjusted to make them apparent. In this strata of definitions alone, we find bridges in theory via {psyche}, connecting behavioral perturbations in stimulus-response with one’s cognitive development; a bridge perhaps between Skinner and Piaget. Additionally the subject {organization} provides a set of definitions consistent within Senge’s “Learning Organization” (see Senge, 2006), whereas Jarvis’s definition of learning (2006) can be seen as a composition of orders from {psyche} to {individual}. In creativity theory, it can thus be shown that creativity as “products” are changes in [technology] at order {civilization}, whereas “processes” are in {concept[cognition{psyche}]}, and “personality types” in [attitude], [recognition], and [behavior]. Though the above hardly serves as a comprehensive argument, it is sufficient to sustain interest however.

Implications and Considerations
There are several patterns found in this demonstration, but the present constraints limits mention to only one: the inclusion of, and necessity for, emotion. All too often one finds “emotion” overlooked in learning and creativity theories. The inherent patterns above show complicated emotions emerging from earlier more primitive ones. This in itself inspires one to ask just how emotions act as players in learning and creativity theory. One avenue for research might be to study how one order distinguishes a set of emotions from the next.

Likewise one critique, among many possibilities, is that input values and structure are all given a priori, and that the organic growth is only attributed to the terms pre-existing in the stratum. Therefore any validity of this model is only as good as one’s ability to identify whatever systems they know. As a result there are no restrictions as to what one can call learning or creativity, and as much is lost as that which is gained. In response to this, using human-made concepts is not only permitted in phenomenology it is required if we are to understand the structure of consciousness. In my repeated use of this method I have yet to arrive at a manifestation of creativity and learning that was wholly unfamiliar to me. In such trials I have produced definitions that resemble common understandings of “art”, “economy”, and “currency” to name a few. Organizations and groups are
social phenomena that do not exist outside of humanity, and the main point is not whether this model can produce universal truth or make predictions, but rather that it can be used to explain how we think, and in part how we build knowledge and language.

**Conclusion**

At the beginning it was mentioned that there are chasms in the fields of creativity and learning. The idea was that there is a way to bridge the theories by seeing learning and creativity as “breaths of development”. The concluding idea is that the debate should not be about who is right or wrong, but rather how we are all “right” – albeit with a final caveat that in truth we are probably all wrong. We cannot see nor experience ourselves, but we can see that we build understanding via a particular binary; insofar the very solution proposed in this essay is yet another binary. This tautology might render all the above propositions irrelevant despite the fact that breathing, too, is tautological. Notwithstanding, creativity and learning are posited not only as bridges of theory, but perhaps more so “breaths of being”.

**References**


Volunteering during Later Life: 
Learning, Growth and Developing Wisdom Through Self-Reflection

Suzanne Cook
Institute of Life Course and Aging, University of Toronto

Abstract: Later life is a time of immense growth and incredible learning. It can be difficult for some individuals to find new meaning in retirement. The volunteer role is a positive role in our society for seniors. Positive roles need to be promoted to counteract ageism, stereotyping and negative images. This paper shows how volunteering facilitates personal growth, generativity, self actualization and the sharing of wisdom while discussing the learning, self-awareness and development that occurs. It examines wisdom through interpersonal skills, self-reflection and self-knowledge among seniors who volunteer. Roles that celebrate being a senior need to be encouraged and supported.

Introduction
In certain cultures, someone who has the good fortune to reach advanced years is loved, respected, revered and valued for their experiences and their sound and sage wisdom. This is seen within Asian, Black and First Nations cultures (Diamond, 2012). For example, the Asian Confucius tradition of filial piety demands that the young respect and support their elders (Diamond, 2013). Seniors and elders are viewed as useful in these cultures due to the wealth of experience and knowledge that they hold. Love, respect, duty and obligation are reasons why older adults are cared for and these older adults provide services and work for the family and the community. In western society, we hold ageist attitudes and stereotype seniors. We are likely to view seniors with ‘incompetence’ and somehow as ‘diminished’ or less than their former selves (Nelson, 2002). These negative images of seniorhood are not only unfortunate, ageist and prejudged; they are detrimental to seniors’ participation and engagement in society and they inhibit individuals from reaching their full potential.

Western society adheres to a Protestant work ethic. We value work and productivity; however, our expectations that seniorhood and retirement become a time of deceleration are at odds with our deeply held societal values that emphasize productive work. Seniors can be caught in a difficult transition during this phase of life. They need to have positive options and avenues for using their experience and knowledge and the wisdom they have accumulated over a lifetime.

The large and aging baby boomer cohort are approaching their senior years (Statistics Canada, 2012). As retirement looms, the end of work life creates challenges of identity and roles. This is particularly the case for those who worked in professional careers and/or those who enjoyed their paid work and occupation. The baby boomer cohort is different from the generations that came before and they will not quietly retire and enter the invisibility of seniorhood. We can anticipate that the huge Baby Boomer cohort will be looking for what comes next as they approach retirement.

What productive later life roles are available options when individuals retire and leave paid work? One option is volunteer work because it enables seniors to utilize skills, abilities, talents, knowledge and experience, learn new things and give back to community (Cook, 2011; Cook & Speevak Sladowski, 2013; Hall, Lasby, Ayer & Gibbons, 2009). Volunteering is when people freely give their time and energy to nonprofit organizations, neighbours, friends and family, normally without direct financial compensation (Cnaan, Handy & Wadsworth, 1996; Hall et al., 2009). The Canada Survey of
Giving, Volunteering and Participating indicates that 40.8% of adults age 55 to 64 and 36.5% of adults age 65 plus volunteer (Statistics Canada, 2012).

This study examines the experiences of retirees who formally volunteer with nonprofit organizations and explores later life developmental processes through the context of volunteering. This paper shows how the volunteer role has great potential for personal growth, learning and development and the sharing of wisdom. Older adults’ interpersonal and social knowledge and skill use are explored within their volunteer roles. It highlights older adults’ growing awareness of their role as resource in the community as they construct a new sense of self during their transition into retirement. The focus is on self-reflective learning, self-knowledge, generativity and transformation through volunteering as these adults manage change and transition.

Wisdom in Later Life
Traditionally, later life is viewed as a time to cultivate and share wisdom. The wise old philosopher is one of Carl Jung’s archetypes (Stevens, 2011). All the great thinkers of Western society were revered as wise elder sages, like Aristotle, and they contributed to humanity during their later years. This image is in direct contrast to the ageism and stereotyping described earlier.

What is wisdom? Most basically, wisdom is the use of knowledge; however, it is also much more than this. Wisdom is a complex concept; thus, it has been difficult to define (Ardelt, 2004; Brugman, 2006; Peterson & Seligman, 2004). In fact, wisdom is associated with deep knowledge, insight and discernment. An individual who is wise is described as someone possessing superior reasoning, judgement and perception. Wisdom integrates the cognitive, affective and reflective domains (Ardelt, 2004). Wisdom also integrates creativity and intelligence (Brugman, 2006, 446).

In this paper, wisdom means the judicious and careful integration and application of knowledge and experience for deliberate use to improve wellbeing (Dean, 2006) through deep understanding and realization of the context and situation including the people, things, and events involved, resulting in the ability to apply perceptions, judgments and actions in keeping with this understanding.

Wisdom is most important for how it is used. As we age, maturity brings a potential developing wisdom that is based on a strong sense of self, others and community (Staudinger & Glück, 2011). This connection to the broader community and society is a key element within wisdom.

Aristotle said: ‘Knowing yourself is the beginning of all wisdom’. Self-reflection and self-knowledge are forms of wisdom (Ardelt, 2004). Understanding social relationships and interpersonal issues are also part of wisdom. Previous research indicates that older adults are particularly skilled and talented at utilizing interpersonal wisdom (Grossmanna, Naa, Varnuma, Parkb, Kitayamaa, & Nisbetta, 2010).

Some research suggests that every adult will not attain advanced stages of human development (Brugman, 2006). Not every adult enjoys equal opportunity and perhaps older adults need support to reach their full developmental potential and tap into their wisdom.

Theoretical Framework
As mid-life gives way to later life, individuals continue to learn, grow and develop.
Later life - the second half of life - holds great promise, possibility and opportunity to contribute, to make a difference and to give back. Productive work takes various forms including volunteering and community service, paid work, unpaid household labour and caregiving (Morrow-Howell, Hinterlong, & Sherraden, 2001).

In this study, the focus is on personal development and how it promotes healthy aging through volunteering. There are a few key theoretical perspectives that assist our understanding of aging and later life development. These are Erik Erikson’s psychosocial identity development, Abraham Maslow’s hierarchy of needs, and Peter Jarvis’ human learning theory. Each of these will be briefly explored.

In the last three stages of his theory of psychosocial identity development across the lifecycle, Erik Erikson highlighted three key challenges of adulthood: love, caring and wisdom (Erikson, Erikson & Kivnick, 1986). Erikson’s theory describes these stages that help us to rework and rebalance across the challenges of intimacy versus isolation (love), generativity versus stagnation (care) and integrity versus despair (wisdom). According to Erikson’s theory, the focus or interest in generativity is important for middle-aged and older individuals as they turn away from individual pursuits and embrace community, civic or social endeavours – activities that benefit the broader society (Bradley, 2000; Erikson et al., 1986). Later-life volunteering fulfills this need. Similarly, it is possible that the choice of later life activity inhibits or stimulates the development of wisdom or the falling into despair at the thought of our own mortality.

There are universal human needs which are hard-wired into us and the fulfillment of these needs can enhance well-being and happiness (Tay & Diener, 2011). Maslow’s (1954) hierarchy of needs explains human motivation. This theory describes the needs that individuals have at the physiological level which are foundational, then describes the importance of safety, love and belonging, esteem and mastery, and self-actualization and self-transcendence. These needs are critical to human development. The need for love and belonging is an interpersonal need for acceptance and connection. The need for esteem includes contributing, being recognized and respected and feeling valued. Transcendence has been described as “strengths that forge connections to the larger universe and provide meaning” (Peterson & Seligman, 2004).

Within sociology, Veenhoven and Ehrhardt (1995) described a “livability theory” which connects to Maslow’s theory. Livability theory is the idea that certain societies may have a higher quality of life because they have characteristics that are universally desirable for individuals. Research suggests societal need fulfillment, more than individual need fulfillment, as related to subjective well-being, indicating the desirability of living in a flourishing society (Tay & Diener, 2011). Aristotle said: “Happiness depends upon activity.” All of this may be further motivation for volunteering and community service.

These perspectives are complemented by Peter Jarvis’s (2009) theory of human learning which enhances our understanding of the process of self-learning. This theory of human learning highlights how individuals learn in a social situation. Learning is transformed and integrated into the individual’s biography. Social learning is very relevant in a social context like volunteering at a non-profit organization in the community.
There are common elements and characteristics within each of these theories, enabling them to be synthesized within this paper. Together, these theories aid our understanding of the process of change and transition during retirement.

**Research Design**

This study employed a developmental mixed methods design with two phases. This paper discusses the Phase 2 results. Phase 2 examined the issues among a sample of 214 retirees. Closed and open-ended questions were included in the survey. All participants were between the ages of 55 and 75, had retired within the last 10 years and volunteered at least 3 hours per week.

The research questions examined participants’ volunteer experiences and previous paid work as well as their sense of self, skills and knowledge. Their personal growth was examined through questions about changes in their sense of self, especially in their career self-concept. In addition, questions on learning asked about their interest in learning and their learning goals and objectives. To better understand wisdom, they were asked about what knowledge they used in their volunteer work and what knowledge, skills, attitudes or values were most important within their volunteer work. The case study interviews were examined for trends and themes. The open-ended questions on the survey were examined in a similar manner. Finally, frequencies were tabulated for the survey questionnaire responses.

**Results**

Quotes from the participants indicate the meaning and fulfillment they derive from volunteering. Participants want to be engaged and involved in the community, using their skills and experience.

Retirees arrive with many skills and knowledge that they can share. I believe it is important to tap into that knowledge to allow them some opportunity to apply it….We want to be actively engaged with worthwhile projects and seen as contributors. (Female, Age 57)

Participants describe a strong desire to assist, consider and think about others. The participants described giving back and making the world a better place.

I have been volunteering for a long time, starting with Big Brothers, Crimestoppers, Christmas Exchange, Knights of Columbus, Church Parish Councils, Volunteer Centres, Committees….and others and I feel we all should give back if we are able to share any skills, etc. we have to make this a better world. (Male, Age 70)

A motivation for volunteering was a desire to contribute and feel needed:

The question is: "Why do you volunteer?" The answer from many of us will be: "A need to be needed." (Male, Age 74)

Participants learned about themselves. They also learned from others:

I did not think volunteering would bring me so much. At first I volunteered in a community organization, and although I…taught newly arrived immigrants how to cook, I did not get the intellectual stimulation I needed. Now I feel I am learning through my peers and giving back for having received so much in my life. (Female, Age 70).
In fact, the volunteer activities provided self-awareness:

[It is] important to try different opportunities and find out which are not suitable. [It is] important to give oneself time to adjust to a new rhythm of life after retirement. [It is] important to balance ‘looking after oneself’ physically and emotionally as one ages without becoming self-centered.

(Female, Age 63)

**Discussion**

The retirement transition is a challenging and critical time (Hesketh, Griffin & Loh, 2011; Holmes & Rahe, 1967; Pinquart & Schindler, 2007) that can lead to incredible change with the opportunity for growth and development. Unfortunately, as individuals age and enter their senior years, they encounter societal expectations regarding their role in society. They become mired in our ageist, youth-oriented culture (Nelson, 2002). Our Western values are at odds within our aging society. As seniors approach the traditional retirement age, they will be reluctant to settle for a traditional retirement and give up productive work (Freeman, 2002). It is no surprise that the participants in this study wanted to have an active and engaged retirement through fulfilling volunteer activities. The study results supported a focus on altruism and Erikson’s concept of generativity as well as Maslow’s (1954) need for esteem, love and belonging and self-actualization. The findings indicate how much learning, self-awareness and self-knowledge is gained through volunteering. There was a lot of learning through volunteering. Participants’ learning developed as they chose and engaged in their volunteer activities. In this study, the participants’ continuing self-awareness highlighted their knowledge of their needs. They balanced this with the community and others around them. Self-reflection and self-knowledge are forms of wisdom.

Several developmental theories were used as the framework for analyzing the findings. These positive perspectives on later life contrast to the ageism within Western society. Rather than being a time of disengagement, later life is a rich, dynamic and vital time of life. It is as a time of immense growth and development. A great deal of learning and self-awareness occurs during the second half of life. This study connects personal development and lifelong learning theory to demonstrate how growth is on-going throughout life.

This study generated questions that need to be explored by future research. Why are volunteer activities special for individuals? Are they critical for development? What self-learning can volunteering stimulate? Is becoming an elder facilitated through using experience and wisdom? Can volunteering facilitate the development of wisdom through enhanced self-knowledge? Do humans need to look outward to society and community and support others in order to achieve self-actualization? Is this social, interpersonal connection critical for the development of wisdom?

**Conclusion**

As Betty Friedan stated: “Ageing is not 'lost youth' but a new stage of opportunity and strength.” Retirement is a key life event that can lead not only to incredible change but can evoke new purpose and life meaning. There is an opportunity for growth, development, empowerment and wisdom. This study indicates that development and growth occurs through finding meaningful work and learning about the self while volunteering during retirement. In addition, this study indicates that retirees who
are volunteers want an active, engaged retirement. As contributing members of the community, they are excellent role models of healthy aging for younger generations.

Through their volunteer work, participants gain an enhanced and vital sense of self. They contribute to their community and to society. Retirees gain fulfillment, personal growth and self worth from their volunteer roles. They undergo a process where they construct a new social identity and develop a strong sense of self (Jarvis, 2009; Tennant, 2009) through their volunteer experiences. They are able to integrate elements of their paid work, retiree and volunteer roles into a new sense of self. The social role of volunteering helps them through this process where they are active in the community and help others by contributing their knowledge, experience and wisdom.

This positive view of aging and older adults is in sharp contrast to the more prominent images of older adults that we see in the news and in the media. Western society holds ageist attitudes and stereotypes seniors (Nelson, 2002). These negative images of seniorhood are more than ageist and prejudged; they are detrimental to seniors’ participation and engagement in society and they inhibit individuals from reaching their full potential.

As our Canadian population ages, we need to be more aware of negative attitudes, stigma and stereotypes. These bestow a low status on seniors and elders where they are not valued (Diamond, 2013). The experience of being viewed as incompetent, over the hill and past the best before date is demeaning and humiliating and it takes away social status (Diamond, 2013; Nelson, 2002).

**Implications for Adult Education: Theory and Practice**

It is important to apply empirical knowledge to the field of adult education practice. This study has broad implications as we strive to create a more senior and elder-friendly environment, where the contributions of adults age 50 plus are welcomed, encouraged and supported. With our aging population, it is important that we address the current more negative view of seniors and the elderly and highlight more positive roles for the second half of life. In addition, this study has implications for any work done with adults age 55 plus who are retired or retiring, especially for volunteer management practice and for life coaching and retirement planning. The findings can be used to help people who are looking for what comes next after retirement. With population aging, increasing numbers of adults will be interested in opportunities for personal growth; volunteering is an excellent option. This study can help guide and inform educators and practitioners who work with adults age 55 plus.

**References**


Learning Outside the Classroom: The Learning Passport

Paulette Cormier-MacBurnie, Wanda George, Elizabeth Hicks
Mount Saint Vincent University

Abstract: The Learning Passport (LP) program at Mount Saint Vincent University, Halifax, Nova Scotia was initiated by the Department of Business and Tourism in response to faculty concerns regarding a lack of student attendance and engagement in student events hosted by the Department. The purpose of the study is to summarize the development and evaluation outcomes of the Program over the 2010 – 2011 academic year. This quantitative research study was conducted using an on-line survey tool to determine what motivated students to participate, levels of participation, student perceptions of the benefits derived from participation and challenges experienced with the program.

Introduction
Mount Saint Vincent University (MSVU) is a small university located in Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada. Of the 4,218 students enrolled at the time of this study (2010 – 2011), 77% were female and 23% were male. MSVU offers programs at the undergraduate and graduate levels. At MSVU there are three faculties: Faculty of Professional Studies, Faculty of Education and Faculty of Arts and Science. Students may take course offerings on campus and via distance.

The Learning Passport Program at MSVU is a collaborative effort involving students, service providers, faculty in the Department of Business and Tourism, and a Learning Passport (LP) committee. The goal of the Program is to broaden students’ learning experiences beyond the classroom through participation and engagement in extra-curricular activities that could greatly enhance their academic studies, professional development and overall university experiences. One objective of the Program is to increase the number of Business and Tourism students who participate in extra-curricular activities, both on and off-campus, that will complement their studies at MSVU.

The LP committee is comprised of three faculty members who, in consultation with department members, coordinates and administers the program. Departmental, university-wide and community activities are evaluated and selected for LP eligibility based on whether or not they have sufficient educational content to enhance a student’s learning experiences in their business and tourism studies. Categories of LP activities in year one (2009 – 2010) included: 1) attendance at Career Day; 2) attendance at a speaker panel; 3) attendance at a conference; 4) participation in volunteer service; 5) meeting with a business or tourism leader; 6) participation in a library activity; 7) participation in an academic competition; and 8) participation in student service offerings.

In year one (2009 – 2010), the LP committee attempted to motivate students to participate in the Program by offering academic merit (bonus points) in LP eligible courses and providing an opportunity to win prizes in an end of term draw. For each activity completed, students received one prize ballot for the draw. Faculty participation in the program was entirely voluntary. Faculty members determined if their courses would be eligible for bonus points and which, if any, of the LP activities, would qualify for bonus points. Thus, which extra-curricular activities were eligible for bonus points and the number of points awarded varied by course. The one stipulation was that bonus points could not be awarded to a failing grade.
The rules in year one were: 1) only one eligible activity per category qualified in one LP eligible course of their choice; 2) each activity was to be verified with an authorizing signature; 3) students were to complete and submit a one-page reflection paper about the activity and how it was a learning experience in relation to his/her field of study and courses he/she was taking.

The primary tool used to communicate with students was a passport-sized booklet, which outlined the rules, categories of eligible extracurricular activities, space for service provider signatures, and the course for which the student wished to apply the activity for bonus points. The Program was promoted using Facebook, class announcements, word of mouth among students, and through the Business & Tourism office.

At the end of year one, the LP committee concluded there had been little enthusiasm by students in the first year. While 160 students picked up LP booklets, only 20 students (12.5%) actually completed the Program, submitted their booklets and required reflection papers. Those who completed the program participated in 48 LP activities. The LP committee assumed that the reward given for effort required was not perceived by students to have enough value. Based on anecdotal evidence, the required reflection paper was considered a barrier to participation. Also, LP activities were considered limiting as students could only participate in one activity per category (e.g. one conference) and the bonus system varied by class making it too confusing. The LP committee also felt that there was a lack of promotion/marketing of the program.

In attempts to address these challenges, the following changes were introduced in year two (2010–2011): The LP booklet was redesigned to enhance its readability and understandability; the reflection paper was omitted as a requirement; eligible activities were not limited by category; a standardized bonus point system was implemented so that participating faculty would award one bonus point for each activity up to a maximum of three bonus points per eligible course; and bonus points would count in all LP eligible courses. A dedicated online course management tool, Moodle, was used to manage information and communications about the program. An LP Activity Page was posted online for students studying from a distance and those who may have forgotten or lost their LP booklet. Additional promotional efforts were applied using Facebook, the Business and Tourism websites, the Department Newsletter, in-class promotions, and word-of-mouth.

During the 2010–2011 academic year, momentum increased significantly. The majority of full-time faculty and some part-time faculty participated in the program and the level of student enthusiasm increased from 20 to 274 students completing the LP Program – an increase of 1270% over the previous academic year. During the fall term, 119 students participated in a total of 314 activities. During the winter term, 155 students participated in a total of 420 activities.

**Literature Review**

Much has been written about aspects of student engagement since the mid-1990s (Astin, 1993; Berger and Milem, 1999; Coates, 2007; Goodsell, Maher and Tinto, 1992; Kuh, 1995; Kuh et al., 2008; Kuh and Vesper, 1997; Pace, 1995; Pascarella and Terenzini, 2005; Trowler and Trowler, 2010). The concept has increasingly become a focus of attention among higher education institutions facing enrolment and retention challenges.. According to Ullah & Wilson (2007) “...higher education institutions are struggling to identify programs and services that could be helpful to students to achieve their educational goals. They continue seeking strategies that could be effective in improving
students’ achievement. Part of the problem is a lack of understanding about the relationship of academic achievement and factors associated with it” (p. 1194).

The benefits of student engagement and participation in extracurricular activities are widely supported in the literature. The National Center for Education Statistics report stated, “extracurricular activities provide a channel for reinforcing the lessons learned in the classroom, offering students the opportunity to apply academic skills in a real-world context, and are thus considered part of a well-rounded education” (NCES, 1995, para.1).

While connections have been shown between extracurricular participation and academic achievement, academic aspirations and attendance (Shulruf, 2010), understanding what motivates students remains a puzzle. Ryan and Deci (2000) discuss theories of motivation. Self-determination theory includes various perspectives on motivation and value for effort. Motivation means to be moved to take action and is widely discussed within the context of intrinsic and extrinsic types of motivation, that is, what drives a person to take action. “Intrinsic motivation is defined as the doing of an activity for its inherent satisfactions rather than for some separable consequence” (Ryan & Deci, 2000, p. 56). In short, it is those feelings of self-achievement, interest, satisfaction or enjoyments that are the motivating factors.

**Methodology**

This study focused on four primary areas: 1) awareness of the program; 2) levels of student participation; 3) what motivated students to participate and 4) perceived value of participation. An on-line survey (Fluid Survey) was emailed after the end of the winter term (2011) to all Business and Tourism students enrolled at MSVU (683 students - 594 business students and 89 tourism students). The total participation rate was 14.9% (102): 82% (84) business students; 16% (16) tourism students; and 2 (2%) students who were studying in another program. The survey consisted of a total of twenty questions - a combination of closed-ended and others with an opportunity to comment. Results were analyzed using Fluid Survey tools and Microsoft Excel.

**Discussion & Results**

**Awareness**

Since the Program is a new initiative in the Department of Business & Tourism, one of the determinants of success is awareness of the program amongst Business & Tourism students. Results from the survey indicate that 87% (n= 101) of those who responded were aware of the program and 13% were not. Please note that percentages have been rounded. Students became aware of the program through various means. The majority of respondents, 84% (n = 89) were informed about the Program through in-class announcements. Respondents also indicated that they became informed from other students 26%, the department office 12%, the department newsletter 17% and the Business or Tourism websites 10%. Other respondents became aware of the Program from faculty, the Moodle site, and campus email. Based on these results, it is clear that the success of the program is highly contingent on it being promoted by faculty in the classroom.

In addition to ensuring program awareness, program success is contingent on students’ awareness of what qualifies as an LP eligible activity and when LP activities are offered. Respondents were asked to identify all of the various ways they found out about LP activities. The importance of promotion within the classroom was evident with 76% (n=84) of respondents identifying “class announcements” as the way they found out about eligible activities. Other ways students became aware of eligible
activities included: the Moodle site (45%); other students (36%); the Business and Tourism Newsletter (23%); the LP committee (19%); and Business and Tourism websites (18%). Five percent (5%) of respondents learned about eligible activities through other means, primarily through communication via email. Although the Moodle site was intended to be the primary way of keeping students informed about the Program and eligible activities, 32% (n=76) of respondents indicated they had not visited the Moodle site. Students commented that they either did not know the site existed or they did not know how to access it. It is noteworthy however, that of the 68% of respondents who visited the Moodle site, 92% (n=53) found it helpful.

Given the importance of promotion within the classroom to make students aware of LP activities, it is not surprising that students would be less aware of other activities requiring more self-direction, for instance: meeting with a business leader; doing volunteer work or attending Toastmasters meetings. Lack of awareness about these types of activities is most important for distance students who are generally unable to participate in on-campus activities, which requires them to be more pro-active in seeking out alternate LP activities within their communities. Some respondents expressed their dissatisfaction about the perceived lack of LP activities for distance students. One commented, “The learning passport really favours on campus students and is not a good idea for classes that are done strictly by distance, it is quite unfair and too difficult for distance student to compete” Another said, “this program is difficult for distance students to participate in since listings are on-campus only”.

While the LP committee does accept that most distance students are unable to participate in LP activities offered on-campus, it believes a lack of promotion within classes about the more self-directed “off campus” eligible activities has contributed to this perceived lack of opportunities for distance students.

Levels of Student Participation
The success of the Program lies with student participation. Results of the survey showed that twenty-eight percent (n= 88) of respondents did not participate in any activities, 6% participated in 1 activity, 11% participated in two activities, 23% participated in 3 activities, 12% participated in four activities, and 19% participated in more than four activities. It is noteworthy that so many respondents participated in four or more activities, which is beyond what they would be given credit for in bonus points.

We were interested to learn how many students who obtained an LP booklet(s) or LP Activity sheet(s) actually submitted them for bonus points and the prize draw. In order for students to receive bonus points through the Program, they must submit their LP booklet(s) and/or an LP Activity sheet(s) to the LP committee prior to the assigned deadline. Of the 102 survey respondents, 88 indicated they were aware of the program, 70 indicated they either picked up the LP booklet (83%, n = 70) or downloaded the LP Activity Sheet from the Moodle site (29%), while only 50 (64%; n=78) indicated they submitted documentation of their completed activities in the Program for bonus points and prizes. Of those who responded to the question about why they did not submit their LP booklet, 16% said the LP process was unclear (n=38), 13% felt there was a lack of time to submit the passport, 11% forgot, and 61% had a variety of other reasons.

Approximately 32% of those who did not submit their passports said they were distance students (n=22 “other” comments). This reinforces the importance for the LP committee to ensure there are activities available for distance students and that they are made aware of them. Other comments
concerned an inability to “complete enough activities during the semester” and “could not participate due to timing of the learning session”.

When asked if they would participate in the Program again, 89% of respondents answered “yes” (n=56). Comments from these respondents included, “knowledge shared is knowledge gained”, a great opportunity”, and “it’s nice to boost the final grade in participating classes”. Of the 17 students who commented on why they would not participate again, 7 students indicated they were not returning to the university. Others noted time constraints (3 students) and difficulties for distance students (2 students). Other student comments included “it is hard to go to enough activities to complete the program”, “maybe, time constraint with family”, “it is not easy for a distance student”, “not enough activities during the evening. I work during the day.”

Motivation for Student Participation
In order for the Program to continue to grow, we wanted to know what motivated students to participate. Respondents were asked to rank their reasons for participating in the Program based on the following scale: 1 = highest value; 5 = lowest value; and N/A = not a consideration. Variables included: “Educational Value”; “Bonus Points”; “Prizes”; “Networking”; “Social”; and “Other”. Responses for this question were analyzed based on respondents’ top two choices. The LP committee had predicted that the majority of students who participated in the Program were highly motivated to participate for the purposes of receiving bonus points in their courses. The majority, 79.5% (n = 68) of respondents chose bonus points as their top two reasons for participating in the Program (57.4% ranked bonus points as their primary reason for participation). Educational value was ranked as the next highest reason for participating in the Program with 67.2% of total respondents (n = 67), and networking was ranked third by 21.1% (n= 66). The ability to qualify for the LP Prize draws was ranked fourth at 18.2% (n = 66) and the social benefits of the program was ranked fifth at 13.8% (n = 66).

Students’ Perceived Value
To understand what benefits respondents believed they derived from the Program, we asked respondents to select any or all of the following benefits: “Educational Value”; “Bonus Points”; “Prizes”; “Networking”; “Social”; “Meeting New People”; “Relationship building within the Business and Tourism program”; and “Other”. “Educational Value” was selected as a benefit by 89.2% (n=65) of respondents and “Bonus Points” was selected by 80% of respondents. This was an interesting finding when compared with the motivation for participation where “Bonus Points” was ranked as the top motivator and “Education” was ranked second. “Networking” was selected by 61.5% of respondents, “Meeting New People” was selected by 55.4%, “Social” was selected by 47.7% and “Relationship Building within the Business and Tourism program” was selected by 43%. “Prizes” was only selected by 9.2% (6 respondents), which is not surprising since only prize winners would identify this as a benefit received; only a limited number of prizes were awarded.

One of the primary goals of the Program was to enhance student-learning experiences at MSVU. This benefits not only students in the Business and Tourism programs, but the broader university as well. When asked whether participation in LP activities enhanced their’ learning experiences at MSVU, 26% of respondents “strongly agreed” with the statement (n=73), 58% “agreed”, 14% “disagreed”, and 3% “strongly disagreed”. Although the majority of students feel their experiences from
participating in activities enhanced their learning experiences at MSVU, it is important for the committee to investigate why 17% of respondents do not feel this was the case.

Since student retention is an important objective for the Department, we asked respondents whether or not the Program influenced their decision to continue their academic study. Of those who responded to the survey, 32% answered “yes” (n=11) the Program has influenced their decision to continue their program of study and 55% answered with “no”. Thirteen percent of respondents provided comments regarding their choice of answer. One student stated, “I am now considering switching to the business program…this was brought about by the information I’ve gained from Learning Passport events”. Others commented, “…hearing from people that have already established their career in the accounting field is very encouraging” and “I would continue regardless, however, I love the program and think it is an asset to the department”.

Conclusions and Recommendations
Results of the study indicate that classroom announcements are a very important part of communication both for awareness of the program and of eligible activities. There needs to be better communication with distance students about the types of activities available so they can fully participate in the program. Reasons for non-participation were varied but it appears that improved communication may help increase participation. This area needs further study. Academic merit (bonus points) was the primary motivator for participation in the Program followed by educational value. However, educational value was perceived to be a benefit by more respondents than academic merit. Therefore, while academic merit is an important component of the program, the enhanced educational value it provides is significant.

Extra-curricular activities have educational value. Educators should be aware of the important role that extra-curricular activities can play in broadening the learning experience beyond the classroom. Creating opportunities for participation and engagement can greatly enhance a student’s academic studies, professional development and overall university experiences.

References


Talking to Practitioners about Poststructuralism

Stacey Crooks
OISE/University of Toronto

Abstract: This paper discusses an action research project in which I explored the challenges of communicating poststructural ideas to family literacy practitioners. The focus of the research is a practitioner workshop, in which I introduced practitioners to ways in which poststructural ideas might be useful in critiquing deficit thinking in family literacy programs. I describe the challenges of planning the workshop and reflect on the researcher’s role as expert, critic and ally.

Background
This paper originates in my dissertation research, which uses a feminist poststructural lens to explore deficit thinking in family literacy policy and programs. The presence of a deficit view in family literacy has been acknowledged by researchers for decades and is actively criticized in the field (Anderson, Anderson, Friedrich, & Kim, 2010; Anderson, Lenters, & McTavish, 2008; Auerbach, 1989, 1995; Caspe, 2003). However, despite these criticisms and despite a rhetorical commitment to models of empowerment, the deficit view of families persists.

As a former practitioner, I am interested in research that is useful to the field. I feel that social research is best when it is (among other things) “purposive” (Clough & Nutbrown, 2007) and when it contributes to change. In order for my research to have an impact on the field of family literacy, I feel it must be accessible and meaningful to practitioners and policymakers. I also feel strongly that family literacy work can and should be about challenging structures that create marginalization, particularly for women, and that the work done in family literacy programs has the potential to facilitate social change (Auerbach, 1992; Cuban & Hayes, 1996).

I have found poststructural thinking to be helpful in seeing persistent challenges, such as the continued presence of deficit thinking, in new ways. The work of poststructuralist and feminist theorists has helped me reconsider the taken for granted ‘truths’ that shape family literacy work and to recognize the ways in which “disrupting regimes of truth is important to work for social justice and equity” (Mac Naughton, 2005, p. 19). But I also recognize that poststructural theory is often seen as inaccessible and removed from practice. Most family literacy practitioners are not familiar with the theories or the language of poststructuralism. Although practitioners might like to have the time to engage with theory and research as part of their practice, it is difficult to find the time and space to do so in their working lives (Horsman & Woodrow, 2006). Even when they do find time, I am not sure many practitioners would see poststructural theory as immediately relevant to their work.

The gap between my feeling that research should be accessible and useful to the field and my own use of poststructural theory is often evident to me what I speak to practitioners about my research. I find that it is often difficult to explain what I am doing in my research and how my research might directly relate to their experience in the field. I find myself questioning which, if any, of the theoretical quagmires that I am engaged in regarding discourse, subjectivity and power may be helpful to those immersed in the day to day work of the field.

These questions are similar to questions that social science researchers generally, and educational
researchers in particular, often ask themselves: How do I make my research relevant to practice? How do I communicate my research findings? How can my research help create change in the field? But it seems to me these questions are even more complicated when, as is often the case with poststructural research, the language you use and the processes you follow may not resemble common sense ideas about what research is or does. After all, even poststructural researchers themselves struggle with what it means to do research poststructurally (Davies & Davies, 2007).

In this paper I begin to explore what it means to do research that is both poststructurally informed and useful to the field. To do so, I focus on one ‘moment’ in which I tried to share with a group of practitioners the ways in which I see poststructural theory to be useful for exploring how deficit thinking continues to be influential in family literacy work.

**Theoretical Framework and Relevant Literature**

My discussions in this paper are informed by feminist poststructural theory and the ways it has been used by education researchers. I am drawing on the work of Gloria Mac Naughton (2005), who has supported early childhood educators to use poststructural theory, particularly the work of Foucault, as a lens through which to view their practice. I am also drawing on the recent work of family literacy researchers who have used poststructural theory to study family literacy policy and practice such as Hutchison (2000), Richey (2011), Rogers, (2002), Smythe (2006) and Toso (2010). Finally, I am informed by the work of educational researchers who have reflected on classroom and research processes through the lens of feminist poststructuralism such as Davies (2006), Lather (1991, 2001) and St. Pierre (1997, 2000).

**Methodology**

My reflections in this paper are intended to address the following questions:

1) how can family literacy researchers working from a poststructural perspective make their work accessible to practitioners, and

2) how can practitioners use poststructural theory to reflect on (and challenge) the narratives that shape their practice.

In order to address these questions, I have used an action research approach in which I have reflected on my own practice and considered the implications for future research and practice (Rossman & Rallis, 2003). As a workshop facilitator at a provincial literacy conference, I encouraged practitioners to reflect on deficit and strengths in family literacy programs through a poststructural lens. Data gathered included my notes written immediately after the workshop and the extensive flip chart notes I made during the workshop. In addition, I have drawn on conversations I have had about my research with family literacy practitioners since the workshop. Some of these practitioners attended the workshop and some did not.

Analysis of this data has involved a process of reflection intended to inform further exploration of the questions. This process of reflection has considered the data and my experience in the context of the literature discussed above.

**Practitioner Workshop**

The workshop that I facilitated was part of an annual conference for literacy practitioners in Saskatchewan. The conference offers workshops for adult and family literacy workers as well as for adult learners. Most practitioners at the conference work in community-based literacy programs or in regional colleges, which serve rural and Northern areas of Saskatchewan. At the program level these
colleges tend to operate in similar ways to community based programs. Some practitioners at the conference are program facilitators but many participants work as literacy coordinators of a variety of programs; some perform both roles.

My workshop, “Reflecting on Strengths and Deficits: Critical Questions for the Field of Family Literacy,” was one of several that focused on family literacy. It was an hour and a quarter long and I had no way of knowing how many participants would be at the workshop. I expected some of them would be people I knew from my own work in the field but also that many would be strangers to me. I also expected that while my workshop would most likely attract more experienced practitioners, there would probably be a few practitioners new to the field.

The constraints of the workshop reflect the way professional development is often done for literacy workers and points to one significant challenge of presenting new ideas that or engaging in critical conversations. Mac Naughton (2005) discusses the challenges of the “injection model of pedagogical change” (p. 191) in professional development for early childhood educators. This model is exemplified by workshops in which practitioners are introduced to a “best practice” technique or strategy and then sent back to their workplaces to implement the new strategy. There is no follow up and no recognition of the messiness of the relationships in which their work is embedded and in which these strategies will be implemented. This model of professional development tends not to lead to lasting change in practice. It is also seems particularly ill suited to introducing poststructural concepts to practitioners.

Recognizing the serious constraints of the workshop both in terms of time available, the inevitable lack of follow up and my ability to plan for what could be a very diverse group of practitioners, I began to plan the workshop. One challenge was to consider how I could in any way begin to address the research questions above within these limitations. I looked first to the work of Mac Naughton (2005) who had supported early childhood educators in using poststructural ideas, particularly the work of Foucault, to guide critical reflection their work. Mac Naughton suggested the following critical questions as a useful starting point to engage practitioners in “poststructurally reflective practice”:

a) Who benefits from what I do and know?
b) How and why do they benefit?
c) Do I want this to continue?
d) Why do I take this particular action or use this particular knowledge?
e) Whose interests does this knowledge or action support (p. 11)

I considered building the workshop around these questions but felt that there would not be time to engage in these questions in depth, at least not in a way that would take us from this critical beginning to a conversation about the usefulness of poststructural ideas.

Sometime during the process of planning this workshop, I came across the following quote from Foucault:

A critique is not a matter of saying that things are not right as they are. It is a matter of pointing out on what kinds of assumptions, what kinds of familiar, unchallenged,
unconsidered modes of thought the practices we accept rest (Foucault in Burns, 2012, p. 94).

Focusing on the idea expressed in this quote, I felt if we could begin to explore this one small aspect of poststructural thought it would be a good start. To do this I decided to work with the metaphor of narrative and hoped that together we could explore the ways in which certain narratives act as assumptions or unconsidered modes of thought. For example, the narrative of “you are you child’s first teacher” has been an influential, and potentially problematic one, in family literacy work. If we could critique this narrative together perhaps we would begin (but only begin) to see the ways in which it shapes the work we do.

In the end my plan for the workshop was simple. I would introduce Foucault’s notions of critique and invite the participants to share some of their own ideas about deficit and strengths and family literacy. We would do a mini discourse analysis of the first teacher narrative. I imagined the workshop would be a group conversation in which we would all bring our knowledge and experience to the table. I would also share a few of my thoughts about how concepts such as normalization and looking at absences had been useful to me.

**Reflections on the Workshop**

The workshop had ten participants and included mostly program coordinators and facilitators from both community-based and college settings. Most of the participants had several years experience in the field but one was new to family literacy work. There was a good representation of the different geographical regions in Saskatchewan; practitioners came from urban, rural and Northern communities.

In doing the workshop there were some things that I felt ‘worked’ and others that didn’t. Overall, I am not sure how well I succeeded in introducing a few poststructural concepts to my participants. However, instead of discussing the content and outcomes, I would like to explore the ways in which I found myself struggling with my own role as researcher, academic and workshop facilitator in three capacities: as expert, critic and ally.

**As expert:** I wanted the workshop to be a conversation among people interested in exploring deficit and strength in family literacy, as opposed to a presentation by an academic expert (me) of her findings. In this approach, I would be a facilitator, willing to share her own experiences and knowledge but equally interested in the knowledge and experiences if others. I recognized that it is important not to ignore structural power differences and the ways in which we are positioned. For example, to deny the power of my position as a white women and a PhD student/researcher (among other things) would be to simply reproduce those power imbalances. However, I also wanted to find ways to challenge these power relations.

I found it challenging to work outside the role of expert in this workshop. This was partly because of the context: a conference in which most other facilitators did present themselves as expert, in which I was introduced as expert and in which participants had come expecting to ‘learn’ something in the hour and fifteen minutes we had together. It is also very difficult to eschew the role of expert while using the language of poststructuralism. I tried to use accessible language; I talked about narratives,
roles and ideals instead of discourses and subjectivities. But the language I used was still not the language of everyday practice.

This was further complicated by my concerns that in trying to translate a few poststructural concepts into everyday language, I was not adequately conveying the power of poststructural critique. I worried that by using simpler language, I was not taking about (or indeed ‘doing’) poststructuralism ‘correctly’ or faithfully.

Reflecting on my role as expert in this way brought me back to reflecting on the goals I set for this paper. I began to wonder if I was more interested in conveying my ideas to practitioners in ways that they can understand or hearing from them what they think about their work and about deficit thinking? Am I trying to impart some kind of ‘truth’ about deficit and family literacy or engage in a conversation? It also lead me to think more about my role as a critic.

As critic: During our discussions in the workshop many participants described their attempts to operate outside of the deficit model and the serious challenges they saw in making changes in the field. They described their beliefs that parents and families brought great resources to programs and that their job was to support the families in getting what they needed, as the families defined it. They also talked about the some structural barriers faced by families.

At the same time, the participants would sometimes use language that seemed to be reproducing deficit thinking. They suggested weak family literacy environments led to high drop out and incarceration rates in Northern and First Nations communities. They discussed the ways some parents set bad examples for their children. They emphasized the ways in which families need to change rather than the ways in which systems (like schools) need to change.

As I was writing their words on the flip chart paper, part of me wanted to say, “Look here it is. Right there. Deficit thinking” and through questioning and using other examples I was able to do this to a small extent. But in some way I felt that gap between what I wanted to communicate and what I was able to communicate was too large. In letting some of the comments go, I felt I was part of reproducing deficit thinking yet again.

The thinking I want to critique in family literacy dwells in discourse but it is also reproduced in the language and practices of subjects. This leads to a tension as I discuss my work with practitioners and as they discuss their work with me. While most practitioners express support for my work, they often also express ideas embedded in deficit thinking in these same conversations and I don’t know how (or if) to question this. I feel the language I have available to me is not adequate or would not be productive; furthermore, “the language we think of as critical can easily “lend itself” to the very techniques of governance we critique” (Ahmed, 2007, p. 236). I am also concerned that in critiquing practitioners’ comments, I am using a deficit lens to view practitioners, something that I have seen evidence of in practitioner training in the field.

I recognize that the role of the critic is an important and perhaps necessary one in creating change. I also recognize that from a poststructural perspective individual subjects play complex and contradictory roles in perpetuating and resisting dominant discourses (such as those that constitute deficit thinking); thus it is not surprising that practitioners (and researchers like myself), both criticize
and reproduce deficit thinking in their language and practice. I am still thinking about how I perform the role of critic in a way that is respectful and transparent to practitioners and other participants in my research.

As ally: One result of this reflection is that I have reconsidered my own positioning as a critic and expert and have begin to think how I might position myself also as an ally to those working in the field. As an ally, it does not mean I will give up criticism, nor does it mean I will deny my position as an expert (or the value of my own knowledge and experience). It does mean that I will try to keep in mind the ways in which I can support practitioners who want to make changes in the field to resist deficit thinking and create family literacy programs that might lead to social change.

Implications for my Future Research

As a result of these reflections I have made some concrete changes in the plans for my dissertation research. These changes are intended to reinforce my role as ally to practitioners and to help me think about how I can “strive to avoid discursive analyses that actually reproduce the system of domination that we would avoid” (Cannella, 1999, p. 42). Most importantly my reflection on this workshop have reinforced the importance of reflexivity in my research and have renewed my commitment to doing poststructural research that is respectful of those working in the field.

References


Pour une Prestation et Une Gestion Efficaces des Enseignements aux Adultes des Premières Nations

Pierre Demers, Coordonnateur de la formation générale des adultes
Pierre Desjardins, Directeur
Service de l’éducation des adultes Sabtuan, Commission scolaire crie

Résumé : L’objectif de cette communication est de voir comment il est possible d’améliorer la prestation et la gestion des enseignements aux adultes autochtones en s’inspirant des pratiques traditionnelles autochtones. En effet, pour les allochtones qui travaillent dans un milieu autochtone dans la prestation et la gestion des enseignements, les difficultés rencontrées paraissent insurmontables, alors que, pour les autochtones, les manières de faire des allochtones peuvent sembler étranges et les deux groupes en arrivent souvent à éprouver de la frustration. Toutefois, la prise de conscience de l’origine de ces deux manières de faire peut améliorer le travail des deux groupes en présence.

Introduction
L’enseignement du français, langue seconde (L2) aux adultes autochtones québécois sera utilisé à titre d’exemple, afin de clarifier la communication, d’autant que l’enseignement d’une L2 constitue l’une des grandes difficultés de l’éducation aux autochtones.
Dans un premier temps, nous décrirons des difficultés auxquelles les enseignants et les enseignantes de français sont confrontés dans leur enseignement aux autochtones.
Dans un deuxième temps, nous décrirons quelques difficultés auxquelles les gestionnaires sont confrontés dans leur choix d’un programme de français convenant à la clientèle autochtone et dans la gestion des réunions.
Enfin, nous décrirons deux cadre théoriques permettant, sinon de résoudre tous les problèmes, à tout le moins de les comprendre.

A-Problématique de la Prestation des Enseignements : Exemple du Français au Québec
Enseigner le français L2 aux autochtones pose souvent des problèmes qui peuvent sembler insurmontables. En effet, que ce soit le manque de motivation, le décrochage élevé, la performance aux tests sous la moyenne ou le peu d’expression orale, les défis ne manquent pas. Pour les relever, il faut choisir une approche d’enseignement de la L2 qui soit compatible avec la culture autochtone, ce qui demande bien sûr une connaissance ne fût-ce que minimale de la culture autochtone.

Après avoir rapidement passé en revue les principaux paradigmes qui ont cours de nos jours dans l’enseignement du français L2 au Québec et dans le reste du Canada (ROC), nous verrons en quoi la plupart de ces paradigmes font appel à des pratiques qui s’opposent aux pratiques de l’enseignement traditionnel autochtone. Nous expliquerons ensuite l’importance de l’estime de soi dans l’enseignement aux autochtones.

1. Quelques caractéristiques de l’enseignement ‘à l’occidental’ du français L2 au Québec et dans le ROC
Les façons de faire qui ont cours en 2013 pour enseigner le français L2 au Québec et dans le ROC peuvent se regrouper en quatre paradigmes : l’approche traditionnelle, le progressisme, le behaviorisme et l’approche communicative. L’approche traditionnelle utilisée dans les départements de français des collèges et universités anglophones met l’accent sur la grammaire, la traduction et la littérature; le progressisme utilisé dans les écoles de langues commerciales met l’accent sur l’emploi de structures figées et la répétition parfaite de ces structures par les apprenants et les apprenantes; le behaviorisme fait appel à la mémorisation et aux exercices structuraux; l’approche communicative vise l’utilisation de la langue, parfois employée comme véhicule pour l’apprentissage de matières scolaires, comme c’est le cas dans les programmes d’immersion.

Tous ces paradigmes font appel à l’une ou l’autre des composantes suivantes :

1. L’importance de la langue écrite, comme c’est particulièrement le cas dans l’approche traditionnelle;
2. L’importance du professeur, comme c’est le cas dans l’approche traditionnelle et le progressisme;
3. La valorisation des apprentissages théoriques, comme c’est le cas, par exemple, de celui de la grammaire (traditionnelle ou nouvelle) dans la plupart, sinon dans tous les paradigmes;
4. La valorisation du travail individuel et compétitif, comme c’est le cas dans l’approche traditionnelle et le behavioriste;
5. La valorisation de l’apprentissage fragmenté qui accorde, par exemple, tant de temps aux exercices de lecture, à la correction phonétique, à l’écriture, etc., et ce, dans tous les paradigmes;
6. La valorisation de certains aspects de l’apprenant ou de l’apprenante, comme, par exemple, la mémoire ou l’intelligence : rarement accorde-t-on de l’importance à tous les aspects de la personne et ce, dans tous les paradigmes;
7. L’importance de l’évaluation en soi des connaissances (ou des compétences) et ce, dans tous les paradigmes,

En fait, toutes ces composantes sont autant des caractéristiques de l’enseignement ‘à l’occidental’ dans son ensemble que de l’enseignement du français L2 comme tel et vont à l’encontre des composantes de l’enseignement traditionnel autochtone.

2. Quelques caractéristiques de l’enseignement traditionnel autochtone

Côté (2010), un ethnomusicologue québécois, estime, après avoir tenté l’expérience, qu’il n’est pas possible d’enseigner la musique aux autochtones de la manière préconisée par le programme du Ministère de l’Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport (MELS) du Québec, car ce type d’enseignement ‘à l’occidental’ ne leur convient pas. Par ailleurs, Demers (2010) énumère un certain nombre de caractéristiques de l’enseignement traditionnel autochtone. Il y en a au moins sept :

1. La distance transactionnelle, le rapport qui existe entre l’enseignant ou l’enseignante et les apprenants ou les apprenantes et aussi entre les apprenants entre eux et les apprenantes entre elles doit favoriser la communication pour que l’apprentissage ait lieu. Il n’est pas possible, dans un tel contexte, que l’enseignant ou l’enseignante utilise une approche magistrale. La création de cette distance transactionnelle favorisant la communication exige de la part de l’enseignant ou de l’enseignante, une bonne dose de confiance et d’humilité, une grande patience et une écoute attentive des apprenants et des apprenantes;
2. *La langue orale est mise à l’avant.* En effet, pour les autochtones, les traditions, la culture, l’histoire, tout le savoir, en fait, se transmettent de manière orale;

3. *L’apprentissage est toujours pratique;*

4. *Le travail se fait en groupe* et de manière collaborative;

5. *L’apprentissage est holistique;*

6. *La communication se fait de personne à personne et* tient compte de toutes les dimensions de la personne; *la personne a plusieurs dimensions,* la dimension physique, la dimension émotive, la dimension intellectuelle et la dimension spirituelle (celle du monde intérieur, du rêve, de l’imaginaire, des états modifiés de conscience);

7. *L’évaluation n’a pas d’importance en soi* car elle se fait de manière spontanée et continue.

En fait, force est de constater que l’enseignement traditionnel autochtone a des façons de faire qui sont le plus souvent en contradiction avec les façons de faire de l’enseignement ‘à l’occidental’ et, plus spécifiquement, dans le cas qui nous occupe, de l’enseignement des L2 mis à l’avant par les paradigmes dominants dans le domaine, du moins au Québec et dans le ROC.

### 3. L’enseignement des L2 aux autochtones et l’estime de soi

En fait, si les difficultés que les autochtones ont à apprendre une L2 viennent en grande partie du fait que le type d’enseignement préconisé et utilisé ne leur convient pas du tout, elles ont aussi d’autres racines, tout aussi profondes.

En effet, la L2 enseignée est la langue des envahisseurs et est souvent perçue par les autochtones comme une menace – souvent bien réelle, admettons-le – à leur identité. Cette perception de la L2 comme menace identitaire est d’autant plus importante que la maîtrise d’une L2 dominante comme le français est quasiment indispensable, vu la mondialisation grandissante du monde contemporain et l’importance d’avoir accès à un corpus d’informations de plus en plus vaste. En fait, si l’identité autochtone est grandement renforcée par la maîtrise de la L1, l’ouverture sur le monde ne peut se faire que par la maîtrise d’une L2 dominante et, pour bon nombre d’autochtones québécois, l’apprentissage du français peut fort bien constituer une expérience déchirante.

Il ne faut pas oublier, en effet, que le français était l’une des langues dominantes des pensionnats autochtones du Québec. Rappelons à cet effet que le français et l’anglais ont contribué à l’ethnocide plus ou moins réussi des diverses nations autochtones du Québec et du ROC. En effet, de 1879 à 1986, le gouvernement du Canada a financé des pensionnats religieux afin de s’assurer que les jeunes autochtones s’assimilent à la culture occidentale et se coupent de leurs langues et de leurs cultures ancestrales, ce qui a contribué à créer les nombreux problèmes auxquels les autochtones doivent faire face, non seulement dans leur apprentissage du français L2 et leur apprentissage en général, mais aussi dans leur vie de tous les jours. L’un des principaux problèmes qui peut être attribué en grande partie aux pensionnats autochtones est celui de la diminution, pour ne pas dire, de la perte de l’estime de soi. Or, l’importance de l’estime de soi dans l’apprentissage des autochtones en général est non seulement soulignée par nombre d’auteurs, dont Toulouse (2007), mais l’estime ou l’image de soi est aussi un facteur affectif fort important dans l’acquisition d’une L2 ainsi que le rappelle Krashen (1982).

### B-Problématique de la Gestion des Enseignements : L’exemple Du français au Québec

1-Le Choix D’un Programme De Français
Notre commission scolaire a choisi d’utiliser les programmes du Ministère de l’Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport (MELS) du Québec. D’autres groupes d’autochtones, comme les Mohawks ou les Inuits, ont choisi d’avoir leurs propres programmes.

Pour l’enseignement du français aux adultes, le MELS propose 3 programmes différents : 1 programme pour les francophones (le français, langue d’enseignement), 1 programme pour les anglophones (le programme de français, langue seconde) et 1 programme pour les allophones (la francisation).

D’autre part, pour obtenir un diplôme d’études secondaires, les élèves doivent obligatoirement passer une épreuve de langue d’enseignement (le français ou l’anglais) et une épreuve de langue seconde (l’anglais, pour les francophones, et le français, pour les anglophones).

Toutefois, pour certains groupes autochtones, les Cris, les Inuits et les Naskapis, la situation se complique car ces derniers groupes ont le droit (sans toutefois y être obligés) de passer une épreuve de langue maternelle (le cri, l’inuktitut ou le naskapi), leur langue seconde devenant alors le français ou l’anglais, ces deux dernières langues n’étant pas alors des langues d’enseignement, bien qu’elles soient les seules à donner accès aux études supérieures.

On comprendra facilement les problèmes que cet état de fait peut créer, d’autant que, comme il n’y a aucun programme de français du MELS de prévu pour les autochtones, il faut choisir un programme conçu pour d’autres clientèles et l’adapter, ce qui n’est pas chose facile, car il sied alors, non seulement de respecter la culture autochtone, mais encore de tenir compte du fait que bien des autochtones consacrent une bonne partie de leur temps à étudier leur langue maternelle, ce qui n’est que normal, mais ce qui enlève du temps pour apprendre le français.

2-La gestion Des Réunions
Dans la culture occidentale, les réunions sont généralement prévues à l’avance, ce qui permet de s’y préparer et d’éviter que plusieurs réunions n’aient lieu en même temps : rien de tel dans le monde autochtone où les réunions sont souvent convoquées à la dernière minute et en même temps qu’une autre, ce qui oblige le report de réunions qui avaient pourtant déjà été convoquées ou le choix difficile entre deux réunions.

Dans la culture occidentale, les réunions font d’habitude l’objet d’un ordre du jour spécifique et d’un procès-verbal : rien de tel pour les réunions des organismes autochtones où, l’ordre du jour, s’il existe, n’est pas suivi et où il n’y a pas (ou alors très rarement) de procès-verbal.

Ces façons de faire sont, bien sûr désarmantes pour les cultures allochtones, mais sont normales pour les cultures autochtones. Il ne faut pas oublier, en effet, que les réunions autochtones de tradition nomade et orale n’avaient lieu que lors de grandes occasions, ne débutaient que lorsque tout le monde était arrivé et ne produisaient jamais de documents écrits.

Cadres Théoriques Permettant de Comprendre L’origine des Problèmes Rencontrés
Les cadres théoriques retenus sont inspirés des apports de diverses sciences humaines dont, entre autres, l’anthropologie, la psychologie, l’andragogie et la sociologie, dont les plus récentes conceptualisations permettent de faire le lien entre des cultures différentes, ce qui ne peut qu’être
utile tout autant à l’enseignant ou l’enseignante allochtone qu’au gestionnaire ou à la gestionnaire allochtone travaillant avec des clientèles autochtones : il s’agit de la psychologie transpersonnelle et de la Nouvelle Communication

1-La Psychologie Transpersonnelle.
Pour les théoriciens de la psychologie transpersonnelle comme, par exemple, Groff (1992) ou Tart (2009), la dimension spirituelle de l’être humain est de la plus grande importance. En effet, s’il existe quatre grands paradigmes en psychologie, à savoir, la psychanalyse, le behaviorisme, la psychologie humaniste et la psychologie transpersonnelle, c’est seulement cette dernière qui tente de comprendre l’être humain dans sa totalité, de manière globale, holistique et en tenant compte de toutes ses dimensions.
Cette dimension holistique de la psychologie transpersonnelle est particulièrement pertinente pour les raisons expliquées plus haut.


2-La Nouvelle Communication
Pour les théoriciens de la nouvelle communication comme, par exemple, Watzlawick (1984) ou Watzlawick, Beavin et Jackson (1972), la communication entre humains dépasse largement la langue ou le langage. En effet, dans le processus de la communication, il faut tenir compte de la gestuelle, de la proxémique, du contexte, de la conception du temps, de la culture des interlocuteurs. La langue, si elle est un découpage du réel, n’est pas le seul découpage du réel car elle s’inscrit dans une culture qui la dépasse et qui la construit. En fait, la langue et la culture sont les deux faces du processus de construction et de communication du réel et il s’ensuit qu’il n’est pas possible d’enseigner une L2 sans enseigner aussi la culture qui l’habite et par laquelle elle est habitée. Apprendre une L2 c’est apprendre une nouvelle façon de voir le monde, de le concevoir, ce qui, bien sûr, « oblige à mettre en perspective ses propres langue et culture, donc son identité » comme le souligne Defays (2003, p. 91).

Conclusion
Lorsque des allochtones et des autochtones travaillent ensemble, il faut faire des compromis de part et d’autre, car les différences culturelles sont parfois considérables.
En effet, les premiers viennent d’une culture où l’écrit est valorisé, le temps découpé et l’accent mis sur l’agir et la performance, alors que les derniers viennent d’une culture orale, où le temps est cyclique et l’accent mis sur l’être bien davantage que sur l’agir et la performance.

Il n’est, bien sûr, ni possible ni souhaitable qu’un groupe tente d’imposer ses propres manières de faire à l’autre groupe. En fait, lorsque des allochtones et des autochtones sont appelés à travailler ensemble, il se produit, la plupart du temps, l’émergence d’une nouvelle culture organisationnelle hybride (comme, par exemple, l’enregistrement vidéo d’une réunion en remplacement d’un procès-verbal), qui ne sera pas parfaite mais qui permettra à tout le monde de se sentir à l’aise et de travailler en harmonie.

Références
Côté, G. (2010). Expérience d’enseignement de la musique en milieu autochtone canadien. In
Alphabétisation familiale et intégration des femmes immigrantes en contexte francophone minoritaire.

Bassirou Diene
Yvon Laberge

Centre de recherche appliquée en science sociale
College Educacentre

Résumé : Le présent exposé s’inscrit dans le cadre des études qui visent à rendre compte de l’état actuel de l’alphabétisation des adultes en contexte minoritaire. Il porte plus particulièrement sur les représentations des défis que rencontrent les femmes immigrantes dans leurs processus d’intégration en Colombie-Britannique. Beaucoup de travail a été réalisé au Canada ces dernières années dans le but d’améliorer le niveau d’alphabétisme des adultes. Quelle est la position des femmes immigrantes face à l’alphabétisation?, Qui sont ces femmes? L’analyse d’un large corpus de données recueillies auprès des femmes témoigne du besoin d’une réflexion plus systématique sur le couple alphabétisation /immigration.

Introduction

Collège Educacentre a travaillé avec des milliers de francophones à la recherche d’un emploi et des centaines d’employeurs. Il en est ressorti le constat selon lequel le niveau d’alphabétisation et de compétences essentielles des francophones à la recherche d’un emploi était, dans bien des cas, insuffisant et souvent la première cause de leur difficulté à trouver et à garder un emploi. Cette observation va dans le même sens que les résultats de l’Enquête internationale sur l’alphabétisation et les compétences des adultes (Statistiques Canada 2005a), qui indiquent que 42% des adultes sont de niveau 1 ou 2 au Canada. De plus, les échantillonnages statistiques réalisés dans quatre provinces canadiennes indiquent que le pourcentage de francophones classés sous le niveau 3 est supérieur à la moyenne canadienne (56%). Ceci étant dit, il est aussi établi que le marché du travail est en évolution constante et que toutes les provinces canadiennes sont confrontées aux mêmes défis en ce qui a trait au recrutement de la main d’œuvre : une baisse démographique significative de la population active et un manque important de main d’œuvre qualifiée.

La présente communication qui porte plus spécifiquement sur les femmes immigrantes est une contribution aux travaux consacrés à la question de l’alphabétisation des immigrants en milieu minoritaire francophone. Concrètement, il s’agit de comprendre, hors du discours du milieu éducatif, administratif et politique, comment sont représentés et vécus les défis de l’alphabétisation des adultes par les femmes immigrantes. C’est pourquoi nous avons donné une tribune d'expression aux immigrantes, public habituellement absent de ce genre de débat, alors qu’il est souvent admis que les programmes d’alphabétisation qui remportent le plus de succès sont en grande partie le produit des collectivités concernées.

En 2012, Collège Educacentre (2012) a mené l’étude intitulée, L’alphabétisation : Une clé pour l’intégration des femmes immigrantes en Colombie-Britannique, afin de répondre aux questions principales suivantes :

- Quels sont les besoins spécifiques des femmes immigrantes francophones en Colombie-
...Britannique pour des services et programmes reliés à l’alphabétisation familiale?
- Quels sont les exemples de pratiques exemplaires qui peuvent permettre de répondre aux besoins de ces femmes?
- En l’absence de pratiques exemplaires, quels sont les éléments requis pour répondre aux besoins identifiés?

Autant de questions que les pages qui suivent, s’efforceront de rendre compte à grands traits. Pour les besoins de la présente communication nous allons brièvement faire l’état de la situation pour ensuite parler de l’approche choisie pour mener à bien cette étude et enfin présenter les résultats et les recommandations.

**L’immigration Francophone**
Selon Statistique Canada (2006) le Canada a accueilli, durant les quinze dernières années, plus de 372 000 immigrants de langue française, dont près de 77 500 se sont installés au sein des communautés francophones et acadiennes du Canada, principalement dans les provinces de l’Ontario (69,1 %), la Colombie-Britannique (14,7 %) et l’Alberta (8,0 %). Ces immigrants se sont installés principalement dans les grandes régions métropolitaines de recensement. Dans l’Ouest canadien par exemple, 82 % des 11 300 nouveaux arrivants de langue française, établis en Colombie-Britannique, entre 1991 et 2006, se sont installés à Vancouver. De ce nombre, la majorité s’est installée dans les villes de Vancouver (31,6 %), Surrey (17,8 %), Burnaby (12,2 %), Richmond (12,0 %) et Coquitlam (5,3 %). Cette immigration francophone constituait 25,2% de la population totale des francophones de la Colombie-Britannique, en 2006.

Par ailleurs, il faut noter que l’immigration francophone en Colombie-Britannique est très diversifiée au niveau des origines ethniques et de la diversité culturelle. En effet, entre 2001 et 2006, les immigrants francophones installés dans cette province provenaient essentiellement d’Europe (9720), d’Asie et du Moyen-Orient (6490), d’Afrique (2360), des Amériques (1915) et d’Océanie et autres (130) (Collège Éducacentre, 2012, p. 38). De facto, cette province arrive en tête quant au pourcentage d’immigrants francophones nés à l’étranger (29,3 %), elle est suivie par l’Ontario (16,6 %), l’Alberta (16,0 %) et le Yukon (15,2 %) (Statistique Canada, 2006).


Dans les pages qui suivent, le terme alphabétisation englobe les niveaux personnel, familial et communautaire imbriqués les uns dans les autres. Nous pensons en effet que l’aptitude individuelle, les pratiques familiales et communautaires ne sont pas séparées. Les individus doivent être outillés à lire leurs communautés, c’est-à-dire à les comprendre pour bien y fonctionner et s’épanouir. LeTouze...
(2005 cité par Sherwood, 2010) estime que l’alphabétisation familiale traduit le rapport que les différents membres de la famille établissent avec l’écrit, les usages qu’ils en font, les valeurs et les attitudes qu’ils développent par rapport à l’écrit et qu’ils transmettent aux enfants. De nombreux spécialiste estiment que l’alphabétisation est une démarche qui soutient le parent ou l’adulte significatif dans la vie d’un enfant dans son rôle de premier éducateur auprès de l’enfant en contribuant au développement de ses littératies culturelle, scolaire et communautaire. Une alphabétisation réussie des nouveaux arrivants doit donc tenir compte de leur quête de transition culturelle et de leur compréhension des nouveaux codes sociaux de leur milieu de vie. En effet, nombreux sont les travaux qui montrent que l’alphabétisation familiale se rapporte aux nombreuses façons dont les parents, les enfants et les autres membres de la famille utilisent l’alphabétisation pour accomplir leurs tâches quotidiennes dans le contexte de leur culture et de leur communauté. Ce qu’il importe de mettre en évidence ici, c’est l’importance de la prise en compte, par les décideurs, des nombreuses dimensions de l’alphabétisation comme l’atteste les propos suivants :

L’alphabétisation n’est pas uniforme, mais culturellement, linguistiquement et même temporellement diverse. L’alphabétisation est modelée par les institutions sociales autant qu’éducatives : la famille, la communauté, le lieu de travail, les lieux de religion, l’État. Les contraintes auxquelles sont soumises son acquisition et son utilisation ne résident pas seulement dans l’individu, mais dans les rapports sociaux et les schémas de communication structurés par la société. (Unesco, 2004).

Par représentations nous entendons la façon dont les immigrants, considérés comme des acteurs sociaux, appréhendent les éléments de la vie quotidienne et élaborent une connaissance socialement partagée. Cette connaissance joue un rôle dans les rapports interpersonnels en permettant d’anticiper et de prescrire le comportement des individus. Notons aussi que toute représentation est complexe parce qu’inséparable des contextes historique, culturel, économique, social et politique dans lesquels elle prend naissance. Les connaissances préalables que sont les représentations sociales sont donc à la base des interactions entre les individus. Le terme de représentations est compris dans cette étude comme un cadre de référence et un vecteur de l'action des individus: «une forme de connaissance, socialement élaborée et partagée, ayant une visée pratique et concourant à la construction d’une réalité commune à un ensemble social» (Jodelet, 1989, p. 36)

**Esquisse Méthodologique**

*Revue de la littérature*
Le contexte général de l’alphabétisation des immigrants est étudié d'abord à partir d'une analyse de documents généraux sur l’immigration et l’alphabétisation des adultes au Canada. Une revue de la littérature centrée donc sur la terminologie faisant la distinction entre les questions d’alphabétisme et d’alphabétisation ainsi que la relation entre l’alphabétisme et l’intégration des immigrants. L’intention étant de mieux cerner les enjeux reliés à l’intégration des immigrants, et plus spécifiquement celle des femmes immigrantes francophones ainsi que les responsabilités des institutions à l’endroit de ces dernières.

*Profil Sociodémographique*
Le développement d’un profil sociodémographique des immigrantes francophones en Colombie-Britannique à partir de données de recensements. Plusieurs variables sont étudiées en vue de
présenter le portrait actuel le plus juste, mais aussi afin de situer ce portrait dans son contexte historique.

**Profils des Besoins des Femmes**

À partir d’un questionnaire et d’entrevues, nous avons réussi à augmenter et à approfondir nos connaissances sur les besoins spécifiques des femmes immigrantes en Colombie-Britannique Nous avons limité le champ géographique de l’étude à la Région Métropolitaine de Vancouver pour des raisons de temps et de ressources. Le questionnaire proposé aux femmes immigrantes comportait des questions réparties sur 3 grands thèmes à savoir le niveau d’éducation, la situation familiale en particulier vis-à-vis de leurs enfants, et les principales difficultés d’intégration socio-économique en Colombie-Britannique. Le questionnaire (sondage) a été mené pour l’essentiel par téléphone et par Internet. 126 questionnaires avaient été remplis. De plus 9 femmes ont accepté dans le cadre d’un focus-group de rencontrer l’équipe durant plus de 2 heures pour parler de leurs préoccupations et aussi de leurs expériences dans leur nouveau milieu de vie. L’analyse des documents écrits et des entrevues est faite à partir d’une démarche d’analyse de contenu afin de faciliter l’articulation entre les lieux de déterminations socioculturelles et les représentations issues des discours écrits et des entrevues.

En définitive nous nous sommes intéressés particulièrement aux représentations parce qu’elles offrent selon nous une voie d’analyse intéressante pour mieux comprendre les enjeux associés à la problématique de l’intégration et de l’alphabétisation en contexte minoritaire. Nous croyons également que l’approche par les représentations fournit des considérations théoriques, qui facilitent la mise en perspective et le regard critique dans le travail d’élaboration de politiques éducatives.

**Sommaire des Résultats**

La partie qui suit est une analyse qui résume les résultats de l’étude. Dans l’ensemble ces résultats mettent en évidence plusieurs domaines de préoccupation que vivent les femmes :

Il est important de souligner au départ que, si la situation des personnes immigrantes et des minorités visibles sur le marché du travail est difficile, celle des femmes appartenant à ces groupes est encore plus précaire, car elles vivent des obstacles qui se situent à l’intersection de plusieurs types de discriminations (Action travail des femmes, 2011).

Un nombre d’observations générales se dégagent des résultats de l’étude. Notons d’abord la diversité grandissante des immigrants francophones qui arrivent, de plus en plus nombreux, des régions autres que l’Europe entraînant du même coup des changements profonds dans la communauté francophone de la Colombie Britannique. Les femmes immigrantes qui ont rempli le questionnaire (parfois avec de l’aide) reflètent parfaitement la diversité ethnoculturelle canadienne en question. En effet, les répondantes sont originaires de 34 pays, ayant en commun le français. Une large majorité de ces répondantes, 80 % vit au Canada depuis plus de deux ans. Tout en augmentant le poids démographique et politique de la francophonie et en contribuant à sa vitalité, ces immigrants, révèlent l’analyse des résultats, soumettent aussi les institutions francophones à des défis majeurs par rapport à leur adaptation à une population de plus en plus culturellement diversifiée.
Relatant son expérience personnelle une immigrante rencontrée a fait un témoignage assez révélateur de la complexité du phénomène migratoire. Originaire d’un pays anglophone, elle a vécu plusieurs années dans un pays francophone avant d’arriver en Colombie-Britannique. Le français est devenu la langue couramment parlée dans sa famille surtout par ses enfants. Elle se dit frustrée par le fait de n’avoir pas été adéquatement accueillie par les institutions francophones et de n’avoir pas eu l’occasion d’aider ses enfants à poursuivre leurs études en français. Ce témoignage sur une des dimensions de l’immigration à savoir la mobilité, notamment des réfugiés, illustre parfaitement la difficulté de dresser un profil de l’immigration francophone en contexte minoritaire. Il renseigne également sur le défi d’obtenir des informations crédibles qui pourraient permettre de cerner et de chiffrer les besoins des concernées. De nombreux auteurs s’accordent en effet sur les difficultés qui découlent de cette question :

L’alphabétisation des adultes migrants reste un problème à multiples facettes: à peine une réponse est-elle apportée à un besoin que surgit un nouveau besoin, face auquel on se trouve désarmé…c’est que la population migrante est en perpétuelle évolution…celui qui a un travail peut le perdre et devenir un chômeur itinérant qui change de domicile à chaque espoir d’un nouveau travail. (Valérien, 1990, p. 3).

L’alphabétisation, reconnaissent de manière unanime les femmes interrogées, est un moyen d’acquérir du pouvoir même si pour la grande majorité d’entre -elles, la répartition des rôles familiaux empêchent une participation régulière et continue aux cours d’alphabétisation. Sur 113 répondantes, 80 % vivent avec des enfants à la maison. La majorité des femmes rencontrées vit avec un conjoint qui partage l’autorité parentale mais il est intéressant de noter que nombreuses sont celles qui ont coché la réponse incluant le conjoint et le partage de l’autorité parentale tout en précisant: «Je vis avec mon mari… mais j’élève seule mes enfants». Il ressort donc de ce constat fait par les femmes, qu’indépendamment de la culture d’origine, l’éducation des enfants reste «l’affaire des femmes» tout d’ailleurs comme la transmission de la langue maternelle.

Le sentiment sur les difficultés à intégrer le marché du travail est une préoccupation largement partagée aussi par les répondantes. Parmi ces difficultés, il est mentionné en premier un niveau d’anglais insuffisant pour fonctionner en milieu de travail anglophone comme l’exprime l’une des femmes du focus-group :

Pour moi c’est en premier lieu la langue, l’apprentissage de la langue anglaise parce que nous n’avons pas la possibilité d’évoluer en français ici. En second lieu c’est l’emploi dans la mesure où tu ne peux pas accéder à l’emploi sans connaissance de la langue et en troisième lieu il y a la méconnaissance du terrain.

La difficulté relative à la langue touche également les enfants mais autrement et au détriment du français. Selon Mélissa (nom d’emprunt) :

Depuis qu’ils vont à la garderie, mes enfants ne parlent plus qu’en anglais. Les propos d’une autre répondante vont dans le même sens :
Nous ne sommes au Canada que depuis un an et mon fils de 8 ans prétend qu’il a horreur du français, il ne parle plus qu’anglais et si je lui demande de s’exprimer en français, il le fait mais avec une telle mauvaise volonté qu’il dévalorise consciemment
cette langue et cette culture qui est la mienne. Je me sens personnellement attaquée. Du coup, le français n’est plus qu’un sujet de dispute entre nous.

Comme on vient de le voir, avec l’exemple ci-dessus de Melissa, les enfants apprennent souvent la langue dominante plus rapidement que les parents, étant souvent inscrits dans des garderies et écoles anglophones. Une inquiétude invoquée par certaines femmes qui trouvent que ces milieux d’apprentissage et de socialisation accélèrent l’assimilation linguistique et culturelle de leurs enfants.

Un autre obstacle et non des moindres est la non-reconnaissance des diplômes qui a été clairement identifiée comme un défi de taille par les femmes concernées dont certaines affirment même leur volonté de changer de métier au besoin. 70 % des répondantes travaillent (dont 42 % à temps plein et 28 % à temps partiel). Mais, elles sont 45 % à la recherche d’un emploi, car celui qu’elles occupent ne leur convient pas. Presque toutes celles qui indiquent avoir eu des difficultés à trouver du travail convenable, invoquent les raisons suivantes : absence de diplôme canadien/non reconnaissance du diplôme étranger, pas d’expérience canadienne et barrières linguistiques.

L’ignorance des normes culturelles du Canada, dans les domaines éducatif, social et économique, constituent un autre obstacle que rencontrent un bon nombre de femmes. Quant à la méconnaissance des us et coutumes du marché du travail canadien, aux attentes d’un employeur canadien, on en revient à la problématique majeure qui oblige l’immigrante à revoir sa grille de valeurs, ses principes, son éducation afin de les confronter avec ceux du pays d’accueil. Il est important de souligner que ce travail d’adaptation concerne également les institutions confrontées à la diversité. En effet, la diversification ethnique, essentiellement d’origine européenne, asiatique et surtout africaine en Colombie-Britannique, commande les institutions francophones à se repenser et à développer de nouvelles pratiques qui répondent aux besoins des nouveaux arrivants. Ces mêmes institutions sont invitées à mieux informer les immigrants sur les codes culturels canadiens non écrits. Il y a ici une énorme potentialité de croissance de l’offre des services francophones et un accroissement réel du poids politique de ceux-ci. Cependant, on estime que l’absence de garderies d’enfants qui empêchent bon nombre de femmes de suivre de manière continue les programmes d’alphabétisation. Un fait important noté au sujet des discussions est que le discours des femmes ne s’est pas seulement limité aux obstacles rencontrés. Il est arrivé en effet que des idées ou des solutions soient proposées comme le montrent les propos suivants d’une répondante

Il faut faire venir tous les leaders communautaires à une table pour discuter de la planification et l’offre des services. Les responsables des institutions francophones devraient avoir un ambassadeur itinérant qui participerait aux rencontres mensuelles des communautés. Cet ambassadeur viendrait lors des rencontres mensuelles parler des services offerts par les institutions francophones. Il/elle servirait de liaison entre les institutions et les communautés.

Pour les fins de cette présentation, nous avons jugé plus utile en guise de conclusion de faire l’esquisse du bilan en disant que pour l’essentiel les femmes se sont appropriées cette initiative de
faire d’elles les actrices et les cibles du processus d’alphabétisation. En définitive, les résultats de cette étude pourront permettre aux acteurs de l’alphabétisation d’avoir une connaissance fine des différentes situations des immigrantes francophones sur lesquelles ils peuvent intervenir afin de les aider à atteindre leur plein potentiel d’intégration dans la société canadienne en général mais surtout de rehausser leur appartenance à la communauté francophone de la Colombie-Britannique.

**Bibliographie**


Complimentary Paradigms for Education: A Mind/Heart synergy

Nancy Doetzel
Mount Royal University/University of Calgary

Abstract: Administering both a spiritual and scientific perspective to education could create a blend of “wisdom schools and “knowledge factories” within systems designed for learning. This perspective supports a belief that mind intelligence and heart wisdom should function as an interdependent dynamic; the heart’s latent capacity for universal intelligence and wisdom must, like the mind, be provided with models for its full growth and development. Because education systems tend to focus on preparing students for the job market and retaining a healthy status quo as indicators of their worth, many education models have ignored the value of contemplation or volunteer work, as part of the curriculum to cultivate heart wisdom.

For at least a century, an absence of spiritual direction and accountability has resulted in a closed-mindedness coupled with faulty suppositions about education (Myss, 2001; Nouwen, 1975). Denying spirituality within oneself and others is upholding “blindness of man and woman to an essential part of [their] own reality” (Nouwen, 1975, p. 38). Disclaiming spirituality within educational systems ignores the reality that people have multiple intelligences and therefore learn in a variety of ways (Gardner, 1999). “Spirituality is one of the ways people construct knowledge and meaning” (Tisdell, 2003, p. 3). Therefore, excluding spirituality from inquiries and curriculum is ignoring intra-subjective ways of knowing.

Spiritual evolution is a process that involves mind and heart. When people lose touch with their hearts, they become disconnected from their spirituality (Curtis & Eldredge, 1997). “Spiritual divorce” is a consequence of people distancing themselves from sacred ways of thinking and reverent ways of acting (Morrisseau, 1998). The danger is that a dualism of mind and heart keeps individuals alienated, resulting in cognitive states of heartlessness and lack of compassion for others. As noted by Curtis and Eldredge (1997), ignoring messages of the heart leads to a loss of passion for life, immoral acts and a deadening of spirituality:

We make sure to maintain enough distance between ourselves and others and even between ourselves and our own heart, to keep hidden the practical agnosticism we are living now that our inner life had been divorced from our outer life. Having thus appeased our heart, we nonetheless are forced to give up our spiritual journey because our heart will no longer come with us. It is bound up in the little indulgences we feed it to keep it at bay. (p. 3)

Ideally, learning can be an ecstasy that cultivates mind and heart by eliciting an awakening of awe and passion within students (Doetzel, 2006). This awakening can result in creativity, connection with peers and an acknowledgement of the meaningfulness of their lives. Intra-subjective ways of knowing and multi-intelligence can be addressed within education by giving students assignments, involving altruistic acts.

Many problems within educational systems can be attributed to “incomplete knowing” perpetuated by ignoring the higher elements of education (Doetzel, 2006). Because education systems tend to focus on preparing students for the job market and retaining a healthy status quo
as indicators of their worth, many education models have centered on employment rather than contemplation or altruistic volunteer work. Denying a student’s awe, passion and creativity is like claiming an ocean is separate from water. Administering both a heart and mind perspective to teaching within the education system could create “wisdom schools as opposed to just “knowledge factories.”

A reductionist approach to some education has resulted in overlooking latent essences, such as a butterfly within a caterpillar or a tree within an acorn, which are metaphors for inner wisdom and higher consciousness within a person (Doetzel, 2006). Michelangelo saw an angel in stone …and then carved the angel that he saw. When we see the “best” in students, and treat them accordingly we often can help bring out the “best” in them, which can assist them to reach their full potential selves.

“Wisdom schools” can provide curriculum that address students as being “persons”, who require certain skills to assist them to become the best version of self and thus more marketable in the work force (Doetzel, 2006). Mind intelligence and heart wisdom should function as an interdependent dynamic; however, the heart’s latent capacity for deep universal intelligence and wisdom must, like the mind, be provided with models for its full growth and development. Many twenty-first century educators are in revolt against routine bureaucratic systems that promote silence about spiritual experiences, threaten to diminish human character and “deaden” their spirits (Sennett, 1998). The ideal educator of the new millennium is viewed as an inspirational teacher who integrates the intelligence of mind and spirit, and leads from the heart (Hawley, 1995; Secretan, 1999). “Followers are currently seeking leaders who will build their spiritual muscles” (Secretan, 1999, p. 8). To help build their spiritual muscles, leaders and followers need the freedom to express spirituality within education.

Educators are coming to a juncture in an evolutionary path where they are challenging the dualism of a disconnected mind and heart approach to teaching and alternatively are taking the progressive path of including spirituality within curriculum (Helliwell, 1999). “The spiritual dimension of our lives is an important source of . . . learning and is often represented through art form, music or story telling” (Tisdell, 2003, p. 22). When considering spirituality within the educational process, educators extend the theoretical acknowledgement of multiple intelligences, including the heart, and multiple ways in which people construct knowledge. For example, latent knowledge can be awakened within people’s hearts through story telling (Vanier, 1998). In Sacred Scripture, spiritual masters introduced narratives to reveal truths and awaken people’s hearts. Vanier (1998) notes:

to speak of the heart is not to speak of vaguely defined emotions but to speak of the very core of our being. At the core we know we can be strengthened and rendered more truthful and more alive. Our hearts can become hard like stone or tender like flesh. We have to create situations where our hearts can be fortified and nourished. In this way, we can become more sensitive to others, to their needs, their cries, their inner pain, their tenderness, and their gifts of love. (p. 87)

Heart knowledge enables students to cultivate spirit, bond with peers, and create community within their workplaces.
Reviewing educational practices entails acknowledging spiritual components that promotes a synergistic and caring approach to teaching (Creighton, 1999). A leading corporate executive, Max DePree, who built his company into one of the top 25 in the world, states “love and the awareness of the human spirit are more important than structure or policy” (Hoyle, 2002, p. 11). He asks “without understanding the cares, yearnings, and struggles of the human spirit, how could anyone presume to lead a group of people across the street” (p. 11)? People need to get in touch with their own spirituality to enable them to reach others’ hearts and spirits (Hoyle, 2002).

At the beginning of the twenty-first century, a shift with respect to the ways in which educators understand education, leadership, and research is occurring (Begley & Leonard, 1999; Creighton, 1999; Hollaar, 2000; Spears, 1998). Many educators demonstrate a hunger for something beyond the traditional scientific paradigms and are mapping out new territories of spirituality despite tensions created by misunderstandings of the term “spirituality” (Holmes, 2003; Ornish, 1998).

As noted by Tisdell (2003), “spirituality is not about pushing a religious agenda” (p. xi); spirituality is about honouring the sacredness and wholeness of life and moving past a dichotomization that results in oppression of people. According to Moffett (1994), even if some educators do not “accept any metaphysical meanings of spirituality” (p. 19), a rallying call for school reform alone “warrants spiritualising education” (p. 19). A spiritual approach to educational leadership involves moving beyond cynicism and rediscovering heart wisdom. This paper has presented an argument in favor of incorporating complementary educational models into education that support synergizing mind and heart within curriculum development.

References:


Coming to Teaching to Find Meaning in One’s Work

Claire Duchesne
University of Ottawa, Canada

Abstract: This article presents the results of a qualitative research study conducted among eight professionals having undergone a teaching education program in the province of Ontario, Canada. The interviews conducted with the participants point to fact that the need to carry out meaningful work is one primary reason for making a transition to teaching. A few thoughts will be proposed to aid in establishing support mechanisms to ease the school-to-work transition of teachers into second careers.

Introduction
Researchers studying the meaning of work opted for, in most cases, a theoretical viewpoint based on the works of humanists such as Maslow or Herzberg, alleging that the main motivation of individuals having an intrinsic orientation remains the development and personal growth that work provides them (Roberson, 1990). Herzberg (1975) acknowledges the incessant need of human beings to give meaning to their lives in order to “escape existential terrors through knowledge of one’s raison d’être” (p. 14). In the same perspective, Frankl (1984) believes that because work allows individuals to take part and contribute to society, it provides meaning and value to their existence; without work or occupations, individuals would feel useless and their lives devoid of meaning.

Moreover, we live in times during which professional mobility characterizes the job market. Transitions from one profession to another fall into this process and the teaching sector has not been immune to this; some teachers leave the profession for various reasons and are replaced by new teachers, who sometimes are embarking on a second career (Chambers, 2002; Powers, 2002). This transition process centres on a realization of a feeling of professional dissatisfaction, prompting individuals to question themselves and connect their work with the other facets of their life. Personal projects are then redefined and new priorities are set out, consequently, shedding an entire new light on personal projects. (Teixeira & Gomes, 2000).

Research among second-career teachers reveals the latter have a sense of mission that is relatively high. These teachers promote an updating of their personal and professional potential by committing themselves to working with youth they can help and guide, and to whom they can transmit their personal knowledge and values, as well as ideals (Chambers, 2002; McNay, 2001). Also, participants in Powers’ study (2002) transited towards teaching with the desire to make a positive difference in their students’ lives. By way of their professional transition, these teachers hope not only to have the opportunity to contribute on a social level but also to give meaning to their life.

This article will begin by laying out the reasons why individuals decide to transition to the teaching profession. Both the individuation process associated with adult development and the different dimensions which give meaning to the individual’s work will be examined. This article shall also present the results of a qualitative research study conducted among eight professionals having undergone a teaching education program in the province of Ontario, Canada.
The Professional Transition Process
Throughout their lives, individuals undergo several transitions: transition from junior to senior education; from school to work; from parents’ homes to one’s own place or to a couple’s home, and from worker to a retiree, to name just a few. They are defined as “processes that are developed over time, and that have a sense of flow and of movement” (Meleis & Trangenstein, in Dupuy & Le Blanc, 2001). According to Mazade (2008), professional transitions for their part, are “times of rupture [...] which open up a forced decision space in which the benefits, risks and costs of certain solutions are weighed” (p. 99). The relationship with time is crucial during a transition, as are the notions of movement or action preceding a decision. Transitions to the world of work are first and foremost processes within which a stakeholder (worker, employee, manager) proceeds in order to transform the nature or the structure of his professional life in order to meet one or more existential needs that were not met in his initial professional context.

The results of Teixeira & Gomes’ research (2000) support the theory that a feeling of dissatisfaction with one’s work is what is at the root of the professional transition process. Participants in this study indicated that they had felt a degree of incompatibility between their initial career choices and their current personal interests or family lives. Lack of autonomy, difficulty identifying with the professional image reflected by the environment and an absence of challenges are some other dissatisfaction factors that could cause an individual to question his career choice. Indeed, a study by Feistritzer (2005) among 2647 second-career teachers showed that the reasons stated by respondents for choosing teaching as a second career include the desire to work with youths and the value and meaning given to education in society. Interest in the subject taught and long summer vacations were also chosen, but to a lesser degree. Furthermore, many previous studies have shown interest generated by working with youths as a primary reason for choosing teaching as a second as well as a first career (Crow & al., 1990; Lortie, 1975; Powers, 2002; Serow and Forrest, 1994).

Meaning at Work Through Need Achievement
In addition to a salary and job security, the individual also needs to understand the meaning of his work as well as the relationship between what he is doing individually and the objectives of the organization in which he is employed. Morin (2008) defines work meaning as “a consistency effect between the characteristics a subject seeks in his work and those he believes he is accomplishing” (p.24). However, second-career teachers manifest distinct characteristics that are different from those of their first-career colleagues. In addition to the altruistic reasons motivating them, for some, transition also provides an opportunity to undergo personal development (Chambers, 2002), to be creative (Haggard, Slostad and Winterton, 2006), to fill a void felt in the previous job and to actualize their personal values in their new careers (Duchesne, 2008).

Individuation, as described by Jung (1939), consists of successive steps which allow an adult to become an in-dividual, that is, an entity who is conscious, complete and indivisible; it is a self-actualization process to which only a minority aspire and which is spread out throughout adulthood, leading the person to become truly and completely himself. Lee (2007) also reiterates the fact that in the Jungian spirit, the individuation process is associated with the individual’s search for meaning in his life.
While a contribution to others’ development is the main motivation among those who choose teaching as a second career, the individuation process for many of them is one of the most important reasons behind their transition. In other words, while such individuals may first and foremost feel an urge to answer a calling to contribute to the field of teaching, some of them place just as much value on the existential benefits teaching may bring to them, particularly in terms of personal development. Borrero and Rivera (1990) agree in that regard by asserting that work allows the individual to construct his identity by offering him the chance to improve his self-esteem, his value through the social contribution he needs and his sense of personal accomplishment.

**Methodology**
A qualitative research study was conducted among eight students who had just graduated from a teaching program in Ontario, with all of them having undergone a professional transition to teaching. The intention initially was to understand the process of professional transition to a teaching career at the elementary level; this article deals specifically with the existential component of that transition, that is, the choice of teaching in response to the individual’s search for meaning. We examined the situation of teachers in Ontario because 35% of them are in a second career (OCT - Ontario College of Teachers, 2008). Five women and three men, aged between 26 and 49 (m=38), volunteered. The study participants had obtained their first university diploma in a wide variety of disciplines, ranging from physiotherapy to translation, graphic design, mathematics, psychoeducation, industrial relations and administration. The interviews, which were about 60 minutes long, basically covered the professional transition process experienced.

**Results**
The study participants first stated the reasons behind their embarking on the professional transition process, which was either the absence or loss of meaning in their initial career. Next, they explained how choosing teaching as a second career lent meaning to their lives.

**Absence or Loss of Meaning at Work**
The issue of meaning at work features very early on in the professional transition process. It is in fact the absence or loss of this meaning, which is reflected through discomfort the person feels with respect to some elements of his professional environment or by his general dissatisfaction with his career, which is at the root of the questioning that leads to the transition process.

The chosen career, for which the individual has undergone training lasting several years, could very well turn out in practice to be different from what he had imagined it would be. If left unaddressed, the disappointment felt could then lead to a questioning of the professional choice. Emily, who had initially chosen to be a translator, became disillusioned once she embarked on the profession and, at the same time, realized that its structure did not provide her with the meaning she was seeking. In other cases, over time, a job which initially had meaning for the individual could undergo changes that alter its parameters. The loss felt in terms of quality of life at work, added to its contextual difficulties, may produce what the individual views as negative results. For Carla, who had been working as a psychotherapist for several years, it was organizational changes and the fact that she had to deal with sickness and death on a daily basis that took away all meaning from her work.
The professionals we interviewed who had undergone transitions had thought long and hard about their situations and considered various avenues before deciding to return to school, which then concretized their professional transition. Once the discomfort caused by a loss or the absence of meaning in their work became intolerable to the study participants, change appeared to be the ultimate solution. The account by Gill expresses both the intensity and the unease felt at work and the relief brought about by the decision to change: “You know, when you’ve had just enough… I really needed to make a change […] and you could say that once I decided, everything fell into place”.

**Teaching to Give Meaning to Professional Life**

The second-career teachers we met had chosen to transition to teaching in a bid to lend meaning to their lives by providing answers to existential needs their initial careers could not – or did not manage – to fill. Leaving a well-paid job at the age of 30 or 40 to go back to school and eventually find a job in the new field selected is fraught with a great deal of uncertainty for the professional undergoing a transition. The participants in this study had thought hard about their decision to transition, and had clearly identified the irritants in their initial careers that had pushed them to their decision. Given their experience and maturity, their expectations are undoubtedly higher with respect to the new profession than they were when they decided on their initial careers.

Like their colleagues who went into teaching as a first career, the new teachers who took part in the study and who were undergoing professional transition, had also chosen teaching for the altruistic reasons mentioned at the start of this article. All respondents mentioned the personal satisfaction derived from being able to make a social contribution by working with youths. Freddy, for instance, translates his motivation for a teaching career into the knowledge that students will learn from him, that he will have communicated something to them. In the same vein, the conviction of “being able to make a difference” in the lives of future students is what influenced Gill’s decision to choose a teaching career.

Very little research has been conducted to explore what the profession can bring to teachers in terms of meeting their existential self-actualization, recognition and identity needs. During the meetings, the participants mentioned the benefits they derive from practicing this profession. In that regard, Freddy underscores the fact that he was not expecting any return on his investment from students: “During the practicum this year, I realized that they also give you a lot. I had no idea that was the case.”

Finding a professional identity with a high social value, and feeling that one has a place in the new work context chosen and on which one has placed high stakes, are all elements that are essential in the search for individual meaning. Teaching lent Harry a professional identity that increases his self-perception; he says he is proud to be a teacher. Carla and Astrid also feel they have finally found “their places" in teaching. Emily for her part has not yet fully assumed the identity of a teacher, since she has not yet found a job, and has thus not yet gained recognition in the profession: “[…] I don’t feel it concretely as yet, I mean, in the sense that I will be told ‘There’s your class’ … when that happens, I will be a teacher.”
Teaching has provided other study participants with the opportunity to meet their existential need for recognition, to experience interpersonal relationships, to learn or develop their creativity. Diana was particularly happy with the relationships she cultivated with pupils during her preschool practicum. For Emily, teaching provides her with a way out of the loneliness she hates: “I have issues with loneliness; I don’t like being lonely, I really like having people around. Teaching meets that need very well.” Carla also sees it as providing a chance to form relationships with others: “I really enjoy the collective aspect of the day. I’m interested in forming interpersonal relationships both with adults and with children.” Moreover, she realizes that coming into contact with children allowed her to feed her need for learning: “It’s funny, but I also learn when I teach them. That makes it all the more interesting.” Furthermore, for Ben, teaching is a way of staying intellectually active and exploiting his creativity. Astrid and Diana also specify that teaching will allow them to develop their creativity, which is something their previous professions had not enabled them to accomplish in a satisfactory manner.

The meetings with the respondents led them to assess their personal experiences gained through their professional transition. Some realized that the meaning they were seeking when they made their initial career choices had changed over time. Astrid in particular, is more aware of the importance of the age factor in the professional choices she makes: “At the age of 22-23, I was more concerned about security than with accomplishment. At the time, I wasn’t quite aware of that, but when I look back now, I realize it.”

For the most part, the study participants had fruitful careers in the fields they chose as young adults. However, they have become aware that a job that is considered to be socially “good” does not necessarily lead to a sense of fulfillment in the person doing it; Gill’s comment indeed supports this finding: “I believe that success in life is more than just about money. It’s about being satisfied with what you accomplish personally, professionally or otherwise.”

Teaching work contributes to lending meaning to the lives of the professionals with whom we met. The transition process they went through involved considerable risks for them and for their families, who shared the financial insecurity they had to experience during their training and their transition from school to work. By choosing to go ahead, they showed just how important the search for meaning in their work was in their professional lives.

**Conclusion**

The results of this research have shown the light on the fact that in addition to the satisfaction gained from contributing through a teaching job, the professional transition also provides the new teachers we met the opportunity to fill their existential individuation need, and thereby lend meaning to their lives.

At the start of the academic year, a large number of new teachers are welcomed in schools, where administrators, teacher colleagues and students and parents are waiting for them. We should recall that in Ontario, one-third of all novice teachers have undergone a professional transitions (OCT, 2008). Several of them underwent this transition without any real choice, as is the case with most recent immigrant adults unable to find jobs in their fields of qualification, and who chose teaching as a new professional path. Other novice teachers, such as our research participants, however undergo this transition by choice; these therefore have a specific professional profile in terms of experience, skills, knowledge, age, motivations and career plan,
etc. That means that school administrators must target who the teachers are, what experience they have accumulated, and what they are seeking to derive from teaching.

Supporting second-career teachers as they transition from school to work must be done taking into account their expectations with respect to their new careers and the means available to meet the needs that were not satisfied in their initial careers, and which were at the root of the transition. Moreover, their teaching work should provide these professionals with challenges that foster their individuation processes. That means, for instance, that a new teacher who previously spent about ten years working as a company manager, would certainly have developed leadership skills she would want to quickly invest in her school. The same goes for someone who has worked in the health field, and who will have many ideas for projects and activities she may want to implement in her classroom or in the entire school in order to improve the physical condition of both her students and her colleagues. Even though mentoring programs are generally handled by experienced teachers, school administrators are ultimately responsible for providing second-career teachers with the personalized coaching they need.

References


The UNESCO Institute for Education and the Legacy of Immaterialism

Maren Elfert
University of British Columbia

Abstract: The UNESCO Institute for Education (UIE), founded in 1951 in Hamburg, Germany, in the context of emerging multilaterism after the Second World War, has greatly contributed to raising the profile of adult education and lifelong learning internationally. In this essay, I contrast the intellectual foundations of UIE, in particular the concept of “immaterialism”, with the neoliberal logic of efficiency and measurability, which pervades today’s global education discourse. I argue that today’s dominant outcome-based approach does not do justice to an organization the work of which was mainly ideational and normative.

Introduction

The UNESCO Institute for Education (UIE), founded in 1951 in Hamburg, Germany, is one of the key organizations that has contributed to raising the profile of adult education and lifelong learning internationally. This essay is a historical inquiry into the intellectual foundations of the UIE. Its purpose is to explore which ideas have shaped the institute, in particular the concept of “immaterialism”, and to contrast these ideas with the concepts of efficiency and measurability, which dominate today’s global education discourse.

This essay draws on earlier archival research I undertook about the history of the UIE (Elfert, 2002), which I have expanded by consulting more primary and secondary sources. The paper is situated in the hermeneutic tradition with its epistemology of “understanding”, in which the study of history through utterances and texts is seen as a “dialogue between past and present” (LaCapra, 1982, p. 49). With regard to historical studies, this tradition is characterized by its emphasis on ideas as constitutive forces in history and the contextualization of ideas in their time-specific socio-political environment and intellectual climate (Skinner, 1969; Bevir, 1999). The paper further draws on constructivist sociological approaches to international relations, which see international organizations as “teachers of norms” (Barnett & Finnemore, 1999; Finnemore, 1993).

UIE’s founders and Thompson’s immaterialism

The 4th General Conference of UNESCO, held in 1949, adopted the Germany Resolution, which reflected UNESCO’s decision to engage in Germany in order to help overcome the country’s intellectual isolation after the Second World War and contribute to its democratization. In August 1950, the UNESCO Committee of Experts on German Questions recommended the creation of three institutes in Germany, one for education, one for youth, and one for the social sciences (UNESCO, 1951, p. 149/150).

John Thompson played a pivotal role in the early years of the UIE. In 1947, he had been hired by Julian Huxley, the first Director-General of UNESCO, as a special consultant for matters of re-education. In 1949, Thompson was appointed UNESCO’s permanent commissioner for Germany.

---

3 The institute is known today as the UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning (UIL).
4 United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
Thompson was a multilingual and multinational physician and former officer of the Royal Canadian Airforce. He had taken care of the survivors of the concentration camp in Bergen-Belsen and had been instrumental in the classification of medical experiments as crimes at the Nuremberg Trials (Weindling, 2010).

Thompson led the negotiations for the establishment of the three institutes in Germany and conceptualized their roles and mandates. The institutes were finally established in Cologne (social sciences), Munich (youth) and Hamburg (education). They were founded by UNESCO as German foundations, but they were supposed to be international in terms of the composition of their staff and governing bodies (UNESCO, 1950; Hausmann, 1979). Thompson had a vision for the institutes: “Cologne represented materialism, and Hamburg immaterialism; Munich...represented a combination of the two and was concerned with younger people. Cologne and Hamburg dealt with older people. This trinity reflected European tensions between the materialist and idealist with the Education Institute as the idealist pinnacle” (Weindling, 2010, p. 192).

Thompson’s repeated reference to immaterialism can best be interpreted as the “immeasurable”: “[Thompson] explained how it was necessary to overcome the split between the material (and measurable) and the immaterial (and immeasurable)” (p. 192). Having been a proponent of science all his life, the experience of the “scientized and dehumanized modernity” (p. 106) in Bergen-Belsen had made him suspicious of science. Thompson believed that, “unless the single individual was accorded infinite value, another holocaust would arise” (p. 312). He “believed that science and medicine should be moved from an experimental to a spiritual basis” (p. 166).

The controversies between the material and the spiritual were typical for the intellectual climate of that time. In the paper *UNESCO. Its purpose and its philosophy*, in which Julian Huxley defines “scientific humanism” as UNESCO’s guiding principle, he states that “…it cannot, however, be materialistic, but must embrace the spiritual and mental as well as the material aspects of existence, and must attempt to do so on a truly monistic, unitary philosophic basis” (1946, p. 7).

In her address as member of the governing board to the first board meeting of the newly founded UIE, held in 1951, Maria Montessori expressed her belief that education should be like a “science of man”, but at the same time she problematized the exclusive focus of science on “matter” over the “invisible energy” in “every human” (Montessori, 1992, p. 50). Montessori had been a member of the *New Education Fellowship* initiative, constituted in 1921. One of its principles for the education of children was “the supremacy of the spirit over matter” (Brehony, 2004, p. 743). Just like Thompson, Montessori emphasized the importance of the person: “If the Institute is justified in existing, then it is only in pioneering a new path for education, that is to say one for education as a support to the inner life of man.” (Montessori,1992, p. 50).

Another “godfather” (Skovmand,1962, p. 136) of UIE was Johannes Novrup, chairman of the first UNESCO international conference on adult education (CONFINTEA I), held in Elsinore, Denmark, in 1949, and first chairman of UIE’s governing board. Novrup was one of the leading

---

5 UIE long outlived its sister institutes. The UNESCO Institute for Social Sciences closed down in 1960; the UNESCO Youth Institute in 1965.
figures of the Danish adult education movement that promoted the idea that adult education was “a means of creating the new man fit for a new system, for democracy” (Novrup cited in Skovmand, 1962, p. 132). Coming from a humanist tradition of education, Novrup criticized the movement towards “the highest possible efficiency” (p. 134) of education that he had observed during a visit to the United States. In a similar vein as Thompson and Montessori, Novrup believed that “the very development of man as a human being” (p. 132) was central. Novrup considered adult education “a type of non-vocational education...for those who are going to remain what and where they are” (Novrup, 1992, p. 55).

UIE’s Work and Institutional Development
The constitution that was given to the new-born UIE defined its mandate as “establishing contacts between educators in Germany and other countries ...without prejudice arising from national, racial or cultural differences” and “to participate in the work of UNESCO...to maintain peace in the world and to carry out educational programmes for international understanding” (UIE, 1952). The work of UIE can be categorized in the following periods:

1952 to 1965: In the early years the institute’s work was rather eclectic and reflected its ambition to cover the various interests of its founders and governing board members: Early childhood education, adult education, school reform and curriculum studies, and teacher training. One pillar of UIE’s programme in those early years were the “Education for International Understanding” seminars for young teachers that ran from 1955 to 1965. Another pillar were comparative studies on “leisure education” and “parent education”. In 1955, the first issue of the relaunched International Review of Education (IRE) appeared, which is still being published by the institute today. UIE was the cradle of the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (I.E.A.), which emerged from a cooperation among national education research centres that carried out the first international comparative school assessment studies (De Landsheere, 1997; Husén, 1997).

During those years, marked by the Cold War, an important function of the institute was that of a bridge to the East European countries. After initial problems to establish contact, researchers from East and West came together quite regularly at seminars and meetings, which was unusual at the time (Husén, 1997, p. 3). This function was one of the reasons why Germany took over 90% of UIE’s budget when the initial UNESCO funding expired in 1968 (Elfert, 2002, p. 38). In the process of decolonization, many newly independent countries joined UNESCO, and UIE’s geographical focus shifted from the Western countries and Germany towards developing countries. This shift was reflected by a change of the institute’s constitution in 1965, establishing developing countries as a new regional focus and reducing the number of Germans on the governing board from six to one.

1965 to 1989: The change of UIE’s funding arrangements and constitution sparked an identity-finding process which was only resolved when, after the publication of the UNESCO report Learning to be (Faure et al., 1972), UIE’s governing board decided that lifelong education should become the overall programme of the institute. Learning to be (the Faure Report) presented lifelong education as the organizing principle of education worldwide. The report was inspired by a holistic, equitable and humanistic perspective of education, built on “each man’s right to realize his own potential” (Faure et al., 1972, p. vi). In the following years, a group of
scholars gathered at UIE in order to conceptualize lifelong learning from an interdisciplinary perspective (Dave, 1976) and explore its implications for educational practice (Cropley, 1980). Most of these scholars came from a perspective of critical pedagogy. Paul Lengrand\footnote{Paul Lengrand started to work at UNESCO in 1948. In 1962, he became head of the adult education section and later head of the Division of Curriculum and Structures of Lifelong Education, created in 1973. In 1967/68 he served as interim director of UIE.} - similar to Paulo Freire\footnote{Freire is probably the most referred to thinker at the institute. He visited UIE in 1992, to attend its 40th anniversary celebrations. See his speech in Freire, P. (1992). \textit{The purpose of education}. In: UIE (1992), pp. 23-28. He had been invited to CONFINTEA V but died shortly before the conference.} - considered the change of the teacher/pupil relationship to be a critical aspect of lifelong education: “The agent of the educational process is no longer the teacher whose knowledge has to be assimilated, but the individual himself acting in the process of his own development” (1986, p. 11). Another scholar who was part of that group was Bogdan Suchodolski\footnote{Bogdan Suchodolski, a Polish humanist, was one of the founding members of UNESCO and member of UIE’s Governing Board from 1974 to 1981.}. He pointed out the relation of lifelong education to the “change from a society centered upon production to a society centered upon consumption” and the “ideal of happiness” that comes with it (1976, p. 61).

During the 1980s, under the director Ravindra Dave, the institute built up its international reputation with its post-literacy seminars held in Africa, Asia and Latin America, which marked a shift in geographical focus. At the same time, UIE was at the forefront of the debate on functional illiteracy in industrialized countries. UIE took over the publication of the \textit{Alpha} series, covering international research in literacy in industrialized countries (Hautecoeur, 2001). The East/West shifted to a North/South polarization, and the post-literacy project got UIE involved in development work.

\textit{The 1990s:} In the mid-1990s the organization of the Fifth International Conference on Adult Education (CONFINTEA V) was transferred from UNESCO to UIE. One of the reasons that led to this decision was the lack of interest in UNESCO to organize another big conference as the organization was being criticized at the time for its event culture. Moreover, CONFINTEA IV, held in Paris in 1985, had not left a strong legacy (Knoll, 2007). Another favourable circumstance was the arrival of the adult education expert Paul Bélanger as director of UIE in 1989. CONFINTEA V, held in 1997 in Hamburg, is considered a milestone in the history of the CONFINTEA conferences. Under the motto “Adult learning: A key to the 21st century”, the conference called for a broad vision of adult education as a concern for all sectors of society. It marked the shift from adult education to adult learning, putting emphasis on the “human-centered” and “participatory” dimension of learning. Another feature of CONFINTEA V was its breaking up of the rigid structures of UN conferences through the strong involvement of non-governmental organizations and civil society (Bélanger, 1998; Knoll, 2007). Its outcome documents, the \textit{Hamburg Declaration on Adult Learning} and the \textit{Agenda for the Future}, which had been inspired by the \textit{Faure Report}, and in particular by its successor, the \textit{Delors Report} (Delors et al., 1996), were well received by the adult education community around the world.

\textit{The new millennium:} In 2000, the German government caused an existential crisis to UIE by...
announcing the progressive phasing out of its institutional funding. A resolution adopted by UNESCO’s General Conference in 2001 to change the institute’s legal status from a German foundation to an international organization paved the way for a breakthrough in the negotiations for the survival of the institute, in which UIE’s director, Adama Ouane, the governing board, UNESCO, the German government and the Hamburg authorities were the main actors. In 2006, UIE was legally closed and succeeded by the UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning (UIL), provided with a host country agreement that was signed between the German Foreign Office and UNESCO in 2007.

These developments fundamentally changed the funding arrangements and the identity of the institute. Although UNESCO committed to fund some core positions, funding for most activities and the rest of the staff had to be obtained from other sources. The institute had to reorient itself in the highly competitive environment of project-related funding. Since the change of its legal status, the institute is much closer aligned to UNESCO’s programme and, in particular, to its administrative rules and regulations, resulting in the progressive creeping in of UNESCO’s heavy bureaucratic procedures.

**Surviving in an Increasingly Material World**

In trying to understand an institution such as UIE, it is helpful to draw on constructivist scholars of international relations who take a sociological approach to international organizations (IOs). These scholars turn away from realist and liberal theories of international relations which see material causes as drivers behind IOs and treat them as the long arm of states (Keohane, 1988). Instead, they consider them as autonomous actors who generate social and symbolic meanings. Barnett (2002, p. 114) sees in IOs “the new missionaries in world politics” – they shape and diffuse ideas, values and norms with the help of their authority, which derives from their specialized knowledge. UIE is an example of an organization that exists primarily “for reasons of legitimacy and normative fit rather than efficient output” (Barnett & Finnemore, 1999, p. 703).

Much of the work carried out by UIE (and by UNESCO) was ideational and normative. The institute developed and disseminated ideas and norms that have influenced educational policies worldwide. UIE had a major impact in shaping lifelong learning as a global educational paradigm, as well as the concept of literacy as a “continuum” (UIL, 2010). The institute has been instrumental in the shift from education to learning and in contributing to the understanding of non-formal and informal learning. Causal relationships are difficult to establish, but some adult education and lifelong learning policies in African and Asian countries have been directly influenced by UIE’s work (see UIE, 2004, p. 32/33; Walters, Yang & Roslander, 2012, chapter 6). Even where UIE’s educational ideas were not taken up, they set standards against competing human capital and neoliberal approaches to education that have been put forward by other IOs such as the World Bank (Jones & Coleman, 2005, Tomasevski, 2005) and the OECD (Rubenson, 2006; Tujnman & Bostrom, 2002). These organizations were driving forces of a materialist and economistic education agenda, putting the emphasis on comparisons of country performances and on measurable short-term results while sidelining long-term developments, the value of learning, and a human rights perspective of education.

How could UIE defend its humanist perspective of adult education against the competition of these dominant materialist ideologies, backed up by much higher budgets, throughout six
decades, which saw dramatic changes of the world order and a huge increase of multilateral agencies and global governance in education? I would argue that one of the reasons was the institute’s capacity to adapt to change and to be at the forefront of educational trends. Starting off with comparative empirical studies at a time when not many countries where interested in them (De Landsheere, 1997, p. 3), UIE recognized at an early stage the relevance of the concept of lifelong learning. Located in Germany under the influence of the Western countries, the institute assumed the role of a mediator to the countries behind the Iron Curtain. When UNESCO shifted from “intellectual matters to development” (Hoggart, 1978, p. 66), UIE entered the field of capacity-building, and its regional focus moved more and more to developing countries. Despite this adaptability, there was a certain continuity in UIE’s educational philosophy and ideology, which stayed situated within the idealist tradition of its founders. UNESCO and UIE represent the humanist “first generation of lifelong learning” (Rubenson, 1999) and have been held in high regard by the (adult) education community for this counter-mainstream position, especially in developing countries and countries with a strong humanist tradition of adult education, on which the institute could rely when it needed support (Elfert, 2002, pp. 75-77). Another reason may have been UIE’s awkward legal status as a German foundation. On the one hand, this constituted a problem to the institute as it always had to struggle for recognition by UNESCO and its host country. On the other hand, this situation allowed for a certain autonomy as neither UNESCO nor Germany felt fully responsible for UIE.

**Conclusion: Humanism Versus “Results-Based Accountability”**

By and large, on the level of the discourse, UNESCO and UIL maintain their humanistic perspective. The Director-General insists on UNESCO’s “profoundly humanist agenda” and calls for a “new humanism”, as “a genuinely people-centered development paradigm” (UNESCO, 2011, p. 36). However, this agenda stands in sharp dichotomy to the neoliberal culture of “results-based accountability” (UNESCO, 2008; UNESCO, 2012, p. 7) that pervades the global educational discourse and defines funding relationships. Today’s outcome-based approach is incompatible with the work that has characterized UIE and UNESCO throughout its history, consisting of promoting ideas, values and norms, which are ultimately unquantifiable (Draxler, 2012).

The bureaucratic “iron cage” is closing in, translated in increasing accountability and measurability, numerical targets, indicators and templates. The supremacy of the material shows itself also in UNESCO’s highly ritualized and inward-looking organizational culture, which – so I would argue, along with Benavot (2011) – delimits its capacity to generate innovative ideas. UNESCO finds itself at the centre of the “tension between the spiritual and the material”, which is addressed in the *Delors Report* as one of the main problems faced by the twenty-first century. The conflict between the idealist and the functionalist perspective has been immanent to UNESCO since its inception (Pavone, 2007; Sathyamurthy, 1964) and is central to debates about its future. Interestingly, UNESCO has recently started a “Rethinking education” initiative, drawing on its profile as an intellectual organization, and is currently revisiting the *Faure report* and the *Delors report* (Tawil & Cougoureux, 2013).

Returning to the founding intellectuals of UIE and UNESCO can be a reminder of their special

---

role among the international organizations, in that they resisted the functionalist perspective of education. It will be a challenge for UNESCO and UIL to keep up its ideational work under the reign of neoliberalism, within rigid bureaucratic structures and having to rely on funding schemes that build on measurable outcomes. In an effort to survive a material turn may be unavoidable, further eroding the humanist perspective.

Selected References
The full reference list will be available at the conference or can be obtained from the author: elfertm@shaw.ca

Abstract: This study uncovers the indispensable contribution of Isabel Creighton Wilson to the Canadian Association for Adult Education (CAAE), especially in her work as National Secretary of the CBC radio program *Citizens’ Forum*. Women’s contributions to the field of Adult Education have been significant; nevertheless, histories of Adult Education in Canada have too often overlooked or ignored the leadership of women like Wilson, who served the CAAE from 1944 until her retirement in 1970. This study uncovers the magnitude of Isabel Wilson’s service to the CAAE, and the use of her role there to promote not only adult learning but also indirectly to promote justice for women.

Introduction: “Canada’s National Platform”

*Citizens’ Forum* was the title of a popular radio program, co-produced by the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC) and the Canadian Association for Adult Education (CAAE). The program was initiated in November 1942 at a meeting of the CAAE Council (Wilson, 1980, p.3). The original organizers included E.A. Corbett, then Director of the CAAE, Adult Educators from universities across Canada, a representative of the Young Men’s Christian Association (YMCA) National Council, as well as representatives of the CBC and Canada’s Wartime Information Board (WIB). The consensus of these early, formative meetings was that the new radio program should focus on questions of post-war reconstruction of Canada, and also that it should serve as a more “urban” counterpart to the widely successful mass radio program, *National Farm Radio Forum* (NFRF), which had been launched in 1941 (ibid., p.4-5; Sandwell, 2012). The pilot broadcasts of *Citizens’ Forum* in early 1943 were titled, *Of Things to Come: An Enquiry into the Postwar World*, and made the program’s reconstruction goals explicit. The subtitle of *Citizens’ Forum* eventually became, “Canada’s National Platform,” which very overtly signaled the program’s purpose as being strongly aligned with a Canadian National identity; although this identity was only very loosely defined, and appeared to hinge on the gathering together of Canadians from disparate sections of the country for some centralized (albeit virtual) forum-style discussion or debate.

Interestingly, these pilot programs did not include the study pamphlets and audience participation elements, which became central to later seasons of *Citizens’ Forum* (Wilson, p.5). There continued to be some wrangling over funding for the program throughout 1943, with the WIB withholding its support due to the CAAE’s “not being sufficiently representative of the educational interests of the country” (ibid., p.6). But with the sense of urgency and opportunity surrounding the September 1943 Conference on Education for Reconstruction, which drew an even broader base of supporters for the new radio program from 120 different organizations from across Canada, the CAAE resolved to follow up its pilot broadcasts with a series entitled, *Of Things to Come: A Citizens’ Forum*, to be based on topics, which Jean Hunter Morrison, editor of the CAAE’s journal, *Food For Thought*, had been researching since the CAAE had adopted its plan for *Citizens’ Forum* in late 1942 (ibid., p.8).
The format of the program was ambitious. The program would be broadcast weekly between October and March, across Canada. But like its rural precursor, National Farm Radio Forum, Citizens’ Forum would be organized around weekly study pamphlets, written by the CAAE and distributed to participating groups and individuals, who would then have the opportunity to discuss the weeks’ broadcast and report back via “provincial secretaries.” Summaries of reports from local discussion groups would then be broadcast at the end of the following weeks’ program, allowing for an unprecedented level of participation in Canadian mass media (G. Selman, Cooke, M. Selman & Dampier, 1998, p.48). The radio program ultimately became so popular and successful that in 1955 production of a television broadcast of Citizens’ Forum began (Wilson, p.91). However, the introduction of this new medium was not always seen as a boon for the program, particularly from the point of view of Provincial CAAE Organizations and other local participating groups. But there was a certain sense of the inevitability of television, which was irresistible to many adult educators of the time (ibid., p.89; Faris, 1980). The radio broadcasts persisted in the form of audio simulcasts of the television broadcasts, but changes in scheduling and continual disputes over funding and control of programming did not bode well for the life of Citizens’ Forum. 1963-64 was the final broadcast season of Citizens’ Forum. Roby Kidd, who had been director of the CAAE during Citizens’ Forum’s transition to television, later reflected on the politics surrounding the end of the program, remarking judiciously in his post as researcher at the Ontario Institute for the Study of Education, that “the project always had its share of opponents, but… that malnutrition, lack of sufficient organizational support, was the chief problem of all.” (Wilson, p.vi).

Certainly, for the 20 years of its existence, the Citizens’ Forum was one of the CAAE’s highest profile and most ambitious projects. The authors of The Foundations of Adult Education in Canada, Second Edition (1998) saw Citizens’ Forum and its precursor, National Farm Radio Forum as important projects in the creation of the post-war ideal of a unified Canada, and all this in service of an “informed consideration of the issues in which Canadians have a common interest” (G. Selman, Cooke, M. Selman & Dampier, p.52)\textsuperscript{10}. At the center of this sense of connectedness, which the CAAE and the CBC and their other partners sought to promote in the production of Citizens’ Forum, was the distribution of the weekly study pamphlets. These pamphlets provided the structure and set the parameters and tone for each week’s broadcast and the subsequent local discussions that would take place in communities across the country. These pamphlets were the textual glue that held Citizens’ Forum together. And starting in 1944, these pamphlets were all edited by Isabel Wilson.

So, why hasn’t Wilson ever been more widely recognized for the work she dutifully performed on behalf of her fellow Canadians, for the rapidly expanding and professionalizing field of Adult Education or for the growing CAAE? Certainly the deeply structured misogyny of Canadian society should be taken into account in the formulation of the answer to this question. As intelligent, and capable as Wilson was, it is not surprising that she excelled so much in her role

\textsuperscript{10} In addition to this discussion of Citizen’s Forum, Selman, et al.’s Foundations of Adult Education in Canada, Second Edition also contains a chapter by Shauna Butterwick, entitled, “Lest We Forget: Uncovering Women’s Leadership in Adult Education,” which was invaluable in the context it provided for my research. Likewise, I am indebted to Professor Butterwick for the guidance and support she has provided as my Research Supervisor.
as National Secretary of *Citizens’ Forum*, that figures such as E.A. Corbett, Roby Kidd, Alan Thomas and others would regard her leadership so highly, or that she would do work so tirelessly through her role at the CAAE for the educational and social justice causes she held so dear. My research into the primary documents around Wilson’s tenure with the CAAE as National Secretary and Publications Secretary of *Citizens’ Forum* shows that while Wilson and her colleagues (men and women alike) at the CAAE valued Wilson’s contribution to Adult Education very highly, the specific nature of her work allowed it to go unrecognized outside of the leadership of her organization, despite her work having touched the lives of many thousands of Canadians in her editing of the *Citizens’ Forum* study pamphlets which were so widely distributed and read between 1944 and 1964.

Isabel Wilson: Taking Action Behind the Scenes of *Citizens’ Forum*

Isabel Wilson was born Mary Isabel Creighton in Toronto in 1904, the youngest of three children, and the only daughter of Laura Harvie Creighton and William Black Creighton, who was a Methodist Minister. Isabel Wilson would become one of the most influential and highly regarded figures in the Canadian Association for Adult Education (CAAE). But the role Wilson played in that organization was not a glamorous one. Her official title beginning in 1944 was *Citizens’ Forum* Publications Secretary. Two years later, in 1948, Wilson would take on the role of National Secretary of *Citizens’ Forum*, though she retained all of her prior responsibilities as Publications Secretary as well. It was in this dual role that Wilson would give definition to an exciting era of growth in Adult Education in Canada, by editing the series of study pamphlets, which accompanied the weekly *Citizens’ Forum* broadcasts. Wilson would never go on the extensive lecture tours that distinguished many of her male colleagues—figures like E.A. Corbett and Roby Kidd who each served as National Director of the CAAE, and are rightfully celebrated in Canadian Adult Education today. Unlike many of her colleagues in the leadership of the CAAE, Wilson did not become directly associated with any academic institutions until the very end of her career when, at the invitation of E.A. Corbett, she wrote a historical overview of the *Citizens’ Forum* radio program for the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE).

Reading Wilson’s report, which gives a detailed treatment of the beginnings of the radio program all the way up through the challenges faced near the end of the program, when conflicts began to arise between the goals of the CBC and the CAAE as its primary sponsors, it becomes clear that the story of *Citizens’ Forum* is largely the story of Isabel Wilson’s career. The struggles and successes faced by the CAAE and *Citizens’ Forum* from the 1940s through the 1960s were all struggles that Wilson herself experienced first-hand. And likewise, much of the creativity and ambition which made *Citizens’ Forum* such a powerfully influential and lasting Canadian mass media presence originated in Wilson’s own motivation, and dedication to the cause of Canadian Adult Education, and social justice causes like Feminism. Furthermore, there is evidence that Wilson sometimes used her position as National Secretary of *Citizens’ Forum* as a platform for activism on issues, which were of particular importance to her, though she refers to the practices of the *Citizens’ Forum* in this regard as “direct service” rather than as direct action (Wilson 1980, p.86). Wilson must have seen her role as National Secretary of *Citizens’ Forum* as primarily a community organizer or consciousness-raiser, although she may never have used those exact words to describe herself.
Professional Life: Gaining Corbett’s Trust
Given her family’s involvement in her community—her father was a Methodist minister and editor of two Christian newspapers in Toronto, and likewise one of her older brothers, Donald Creighton, became a notable Canadian Historian (Funeral Service Program11)—it is not surprising that Isabel’s career took the shape that it did. Wilson lived most of her life in Toronto, attending Howard Park Public (primary) School, and Humberside Collegiate (secondary) School before going on to attend the University of Toronto’s Library School (ibid.) Graduating in 1926, Wilson went to work in the Toronto Public Library system. Her colleague there, and lifelong friend, Ruth McKenzie, recalled in a letter to Wilson upon her retirement from the CAAE in 1970, the strong impression she had made. In 1932, Wilson, who was a young, single woman working in Canada’s largest city impressed McKenzie most of all with her “intelligence and generous spirit towards everyone” (McKenzie, October 23, 1970). And similar sentiments are echoed in all of the congratulatory letters, which flooded in upon Wilson’s retirement from the CAAE. E.A. Corbett himself devoted the last paragraph of the chapter on Citizens’ Forum in his own memoir, We Have with Us Tonight, to praising Wilson’s talent and dedication to her work at the CAAE (Corbett, 1957). Corbett in his role as the first director of that organization was responsible for hiring Wilson in 1944. And he, McKenzie and Wilson traveled from Toronto to Amherst, Nova Scotia by car together in 1951, as McKenzie recounted, to attend an adult education conference there, “with no reservations, just taking things as they come” (McKenzie). So, it is clear that Wilson and Corbett became close friends. But Wilson was also a person Corbett trusted to be a public face of the CAAE. In 1954, Gordon Selman, who would go on to become one of the foremost historians of Adult Education in Canada and a Provincial Secretary of Citizens’ Forum in BC, had just gotten his first job in the Department of Extension at the University of British Columbia, when he decided to pay a visit to the CAAE offices in Toronto. Initially Selman had intended to meet with Corbett himself, but when he arrived it was Wilson who was there to show him the ropes. Impressed, Selman left that meeting not disappointed at having missed Corbett, but rather energized and even more fully committed to Adult Education because of the introduction he had received to the field from Wilson (Selman, October 22, 1970). Corbett’s trust of Wilson is further evidence of the likelihood of Wilson’s complete editorial control over the content and oversight of the production of the Citizens’ Forum study pamphlets.

Personal Commitments: Making Space for Activism
In 1938, Isabel Creighton married her college sweetheart, Howard Godfrey Wilson, but Howard was never completely welcomed into the Creighton family, and struggled with unemployment and perhaps even alcoholism (Flood, undated memoir, p.13). In the early 40’s, according to Wilson’s niece, her marriage “crashed” and Wilson moved alone to Saskatoon to take a “radio job” (p.11). It is unclear what the nature of Isabel’s first “radio job” was, but it is possible that

---

11 This paper relies heavily on the contributions of Cynthia Flood, Wilson’s niece, a Vancouver author who has generously provided access to her aunt’s papers, including this biographical note, which appeared in the program of Wilson’s funeral service. In addition to this note, Flood, who was very close to her aunt in her later years, also provided a series of letters received by Isabel on her retirement from the CAAE in 1970, a copy of Wilson’s detailed history of Citizens’ Forum, as well as a copy of an unpublished memoir of her aunt’s life, “A Life in Quotes.” Flood’s admiring account of her relationship with her aunt is the source of much of the information in this essay regarding Wilson’s private life.
she was employed in some capacity with the National Farm Radio Forum, which began broadcasting in 1941. It is likely that this previous experience in radio broadcasting gave her an advantage when she began working on *Citizens’ Forum* in 1944. In any case, around 1944, Wilson returned to Toronto largely in order to care for her ailing parents who both passed away in 1946. And that same year she returned to her marriage with Howard. Wilson and her husband would live out the rest of their lives together in Toronto, with Howard passing away in 1971, less than a year after Wilson’s retirement from her post at the CAAE. Isabel and Howard Wilson would never have any children, a fact which was very painful for Wilson, but which brought her closer to her niece with whom she would vacation on Mayne Island, BC (Flood, p.16).

It is easy to imagine Wilson as a woman who, in spite of, or perhaps, indeed because of the difficulties she faced in her private life, was all the more dedicated to her professional life. Similarly, in re-reading the *Citizens’ Forum* pamphlets that deal with issues, which Wilson likely had directly experienced, it is striking the even-handedness with which Wilson addressed each topic. Wilson’s role as a teacher—making information available to adults, encouraging free discussion and the autonomous formulation of individual points of view—is one, which she clearly took very seriously. Wilson explains:

> Once speakers had agreed to take part in a broadcast, they voiced their own opinions, and produced what evidence they could muster in support of their own views. The pamphlets, however, were supposed to provide a sound basis for group discussion, a summary of fact, and a balance of opinion, in light of which the citizen could make up his own mind (Wilson, p.58).

Her commitment to the impartiality of the pamphlets is a major reason why no author other than “Canadian Association for Adult Education” ever appeared on them. There were many volunteer contributors to the content of the study pamphlets over the years. Wilson lists many of them in her synopsis of Citizens’ Forum (p.61-62). But Wilson’s editorship was what held the process together.

One of the most exciting points of Wilson’s career came in 1950 when the CAAE organized a campaign, which ultimately led to the distribution of more study pamphlets then any other single program. The title of that December 7, 1950 was “Equal Pay for Equal Work: Are Women Getting a Fair Deal?” As a result of the *Citizens’ Forums’* publicity campaign, organized with the assistance of the CAAE’s Joint Planning Commission, the CAAE was still receiving orders for this pamphlet the following Spring (Wilson, p.86). So, even though this pamphlet still appeared in Wilson’s characteristically even-handed tone, the zeal with which she organized it’s publicity illustrate, not only how important this issue was to Wilson herself, but also her own implicit answer to the question posed in the pamphlet’s title—“NO!” Thus Wilson and her other feminist colleagues within the CAAE, among them Clare Clark, who would become the head of CAAE’s Joint Planning Commission that year, and others who organized this highly successful consciousness raising campaign, were able to work to push the boundaries of Canadian societal norms, even as they tread the professional lines proscribed by their respective organizations. This is only the most successful of Wilson’s activist efforts. But it illustrates the attitude with which Wilson approached her job at *Citizens’ Forum*. She was not simply a bureaucrat,
channeling communications between more powerful members of her organization. She gave *Citizens’ Forum* a definite shape and direction, and deserves recognition for that fact.

**Conclusion**

*Citizens’ Forum* was a highly successful, widely popular and technologically groundbreaking instance of Canadian Adult Education through mass media, the precursor of present-day phone-in programs like CBC’s *Cross-Country Checkup*. It engaged Canadian citizens across the country in dialogue on a sweeping scope of important issues facing post-war Canada, from healthcare to immigration, and from international trade to nuclear armament. *Citizens’ Forum* was a joint endeavor of the CAAE and CBC. But when it came to the actual curriculum of this endeavor in terms of Adult Education pedagogy, the shape of the final curriculum—the facts presented during any given broadcast, and the questions listeners were prompted to discuss afterwards—was always laid out ahead of time in the study pamphlets, which accompanied each broadcast. Isabel Wilson was the un-credited editor of these pamphlets for much of *Citizens’ Forum*’s 20-year broadcast run. And as such she deserves recognition as one of the most influential Canadian Adult Educators of the 20th Century. The details of her private life, including her sometimes troubled marriage, and her commitment to the impartiality of the study pamphlets she produced, as well as the myriad forces in society that structure gender to the disadvantage of women, have all contributed to Wilson’s status as an unsung hero of the CAAE. But now it is the task of Adult Educators to reexamine our histories and the histories of our organizations, to seek out moments when the louder voices, through no ill intent of their own, may have drowned out those on the margins. Isabel Wilson’s is only one example of a woman’s voice, which has yet to be fully heard. But it is not because she was silent. The more than 300 *Citizens’ Forum* study pamphlets, which Wilson edited, are clear evidence of the power of her words and her commitment to her work. Undoubtedly, the legacies of the E.A. Corbetts and Roby Kidds of the Canadian post-war adult education movement would be very different in the absence of the Isabel Wilsons.

**References**

Canadian Association for Adult Education. (December 7, 1950). Equal pay for equal work: Are women getting a fair deal? *Citizens’ Forum*.


Funeral Service Program. (October 27, 1983). Biographical Note. Private Collection of Cynthia Flood. Vancouver, BC.


Reading between the Lines of Participation:
Exploring the Multiplicity of Perceptions and Assumptions in Creating Participatory Spaces within Toronto Community Housing

Behrang Foroughi
St. Francis Xavier University

Abstract: This paper aims to critically engage with the strategy and practice of community-based management in the complex context of Toronto’s densely populated social housing portfolio where blended populations from around the world reside. A specific challenge is presented as a major barrier to genuine tenant participation. This challenge persists due to the conflicting perceptions and assumptions amongst the stakeholders on what participation is and who should participate.

Introduction
More than ever before, people from both rural and urban areas of the global south are streaming steadily into large Canadian urban centres. The most populated cities of Toronto, Montreal, and Vancouver while housing a third of Canadians are new home to more than 60% of immigrants (Statistics Canada, 2011). The increase and change in population in the last 20 years in these three cities has been considerable. Toronto, for example, has approximately 5.5 million Canadians in 2011, compared to 3.8 million in 1991. Recent immigrants are streaming steadily to these larger Canadian urban centres despite issues of employment, housing, education, and health concerns. There, as Saunders (2010) argues, they create “arrival cities,” clusters of migrants in inner city pockets or on the city outskirts who struggle to build communities, establish a new life and integrate themselves socially and economically, and often to move out to more prosperous areas, creating new room for the next migrating family. I agree with Saunders that these diverse urban locales or “arrival cities” are the places where “the next great economic and cultural boom will be born and can be the launching pads for migrants’ upward social mobility or where the next great explosion of violence will occur.” The difference, he argues, depends on “our ability to notice and our willingness to engage” (p. 3). This paper is an effort to notice and critically engage with the practice of community engagement in the complex context of Toronto’s densely populated social housing portfolio where blended populations from around the world reside. I focus on Toronto Community Housing Corporation (TCHC) as a place of immigrants’ learning and integration.

In a previous CASAE conference I presented the tenants’ informal, yet significant, citizenship learning through the Tenant Participation System (TPS), the community engagement strategy implemented by the TCHC (see Foroughi, 2010). In this paper I will assess individual-level perspectives and effects of participation as experienced by tenants, staff and management and highlight a specific challenge, which I refer to as communicative Problématique, in creating enabling structures to nurture community and learning within such a diverse and complicated setting. This paper is a result of a qualitative case study with over one hundred hours of observation of the work of TPS and in-depth interviews with over thirty five TCHC’s tenant representatives, staff and managers.
**Tenant Participation**

TCHC is the largest publicly owned housing authority in Canada. It houses over 164,000 tenants, six percent of the city’s population. In addition to a large number of refugees and new immigrants, there are seniors, persons with special needs and families residing in relatively affordable TCHC apartments and houses. The housing portfolio of TCHC is varied and scattered across the city. The TCHC itself is a relatively new enterprise. It was formed in 2002 as part of the merger of the Metro Toronto Housing Corporation and the Toronto Housing Company.

As part of its mandate TCHC aims to change the face and culture of social housing in Toronto (TCHC, 2006). Since its inception, the TCHC has emphasized its commitment to creating healthy communities in which tenants have a sense of social inclusion. The commitment to quality communities, quality housing and quality services has been highlighted throughout the TCHC’s annual Business Plans (TCHC, 2006). To accomplish this, TCHC management has incorporated community-based management plans and tenant participation to be essential parts of the governance structure of the TCHC. This suggests an enormous shift in values, roles and responsibilities of conventional public housing management. Rather than control by bureaucrats and expert elites, this calls for managers and staff to lead facilitative roles in developing partnerships with tenants and other community stakeholders.

The TPS works in the following way: within each Community Housing Unit (CHU), the manager develops local business plans and allocates resources in partnership with the tenant council, also known as the “CHU council”. Each CHU council develops an accountability framework so that tenants can keep the TCHC accountable on decisions made and issues that need to be addressed. Within the framework of the TPS, tenant representatives are also involved in a participatory budgeting exercise at both the CHU and city-wide levels. At the CHU level, through their input into the CHU business plans, tenant representatives have the opportunity to influence funding priorities, and through an annual city-wide initiative, tenant representatives allocate scarce capital dollars in areas with the highest impact on tenants’ lives (TCHC, 2006). There are multiple opportunities for participation as well as spaces of interaction among tenants, staff and other community stakeholders within TCHC’s community engagement initiatives. Some of these include: an election process, community organizing and education, community councils, community planning forums, and city-wide budgeting forums. In short, the TPS has intended to enable a collaborative management structure in which tenants and their representatives work with each other and with management.

**Reading between the Lines of Participation**

*Communicative Problématique*

The TPS has been developed to build and maintain a sense of community and to engender a cooperative spirit among tenants, staff and management to co-formulate solutions to local housing problems. Although these goals are reiterated by the TCHC in various ways, it is misleading to assume that a clear consensus exists on what the goals indicate and the means by which they are to be attained. As one of the managers clarified, the TPS was “so undefined; tenants got it and defined it how they wanted to.”

Since my early days of engagement with this research I found one significant yet unnoticed challenge that soon became apparent; I realized that there exists a multiplicity of perceptions,
assumptions and expectations of TPS amongst tenant representatives, staff and managers. The tenant representatives, staff and management each developed expectations on the roles tenant representatives should play and how the participatory process should be structured. The lack of common understanding over the concept of tenant participation has created varying kinds and degrees of contested and unmanageable expectations, which negatively and severely affect the outcome of the TPS. I refer to this challenge as the *communicative problématique*. For example, the TPS is perceived as a liberating empowerment tool for tenants by some, while for others it is solely perceived as a management strategy to channel, and sometimes abort, the tenants’ complaining voice. Due to the fact that these perceptions are ever present, yet rarely interrogated, I argue that it hinders effective processes of collaboration.

Frontline staff. One major challenge I found early on is the attitude of the frontline staff towards the tenant representatives as legitimate partners in decision-making. Rather, they prefer to stay in their formal roles and perform their bureaucratic duties with no or minimum tenant involvement, as it had been the case before. There is a tendency amongst the frontline staff to stay distant from the people and communities they are meant to serve. This is elaborated by the following comments made by three community housing managers in relation to the involvement of frontline staff in tenants-centred initiatives:

We have this problem here, the un-preparedness of staff to do participation, I do not know how to build the capacity in them to understand and feel that this is a better way. Do not be afraid of the conflicts [with tenants].

It [the problem of staff] is definitely a huge challenge; it is part of the resistant. They are the front… one of my staff [who was unwilling to accept participation as a principle] is on leave so I am happy now… It is lots of stress, [it is] a huge issue.

What is common among the staff is that they say “you keep cutting back, cutting back and then giving money to tenants to make decisions for. Or staff have discussed [amongst themselves] that tenants have not been able to manage their life very well; that is why some of them find their lives in the social housing and now they have to manage 9 million dollars!

From this and many similar comments and my own observations, I can argue that there exists notable lack of willingness by some front-line staff to treat tenants as equal partners or even accept their presence in the community decision-making domain. Tenants are perceived as incapable of effective participation and that inviting them to partake in the budgeting process is “a waste of time and money”. This attitude clearly impedes the growth of a participatory culture within collaborative initiatives with tenants.

I should note that the TPS is introduced at the time that the staff has witnessed massive budget cuts as the result of amalgamation of social housing in Toronto. In a conversation with one of the TCHC’s program managers, she explained that staff has always been instructed on efficient utilization of resources, results-based performance measurement and professional expertise for program planning and budget allocation. Specifically in this era of fiscal imbalances, the application of these indicators seems even more essential. She further added that, in relation to
the participatory budgeting exercise, the staff often feels that the TCHC assigns the presumably incapable and inexperienced tenants to participate in housing expenditure management.

I have also realized that the implementation of the TPS was initially sketched and planned by the TCHC top authorities and tenant activist leaders, without representation of frontline staff. I suspect that this lack of inclusion is also another reason why there is an unenthusiastic attitude towards the TPS among the frontline staff. There are also other issues related to the social welfare environment in which the staff interacts with the tenants on unequal terms. The staff is used to a relationship where they intrude upon tenants’ lives to scrutinize their expenses, determine their rents, and demand the arrears. In this zero-sum power relationship, the TPS calls for power sharing between the power-holder (staff) and the powerless (tenants). The tenants are not accustomed to possessing the power to determine their welfare, and neither tenants nor staff is accustomed to working as partners. One of the highly engaged tenant representatives with no hesitation, referred to frontline staff as “wicked.” She explained that the only times they spend time in her community are “when they are giving notices to people.” As this and the following remarks by community housing managers highlight, this problem clearly creates tension amongst the main two stakeholders, front-line staff and tenants:

You have to say people whose job is to monitor them [the tenants] to let them have a say; staff would say: ‘What! These are the people who I watch every day; now you are telling me that I cannot tell them what to do.’ The challenge is huge in the context of society as well as the housing and the social service delivery. This is not just a project; this is a life change… It is like having homeless people have a say in determining what food they want to have or what type of programs they prefer to have, you would have the same problem with the homelessness sector staff.

The problem [with frontline staff] is attitude and perception. Behind the counter they hold power and there is no power on the other side of the counter. They don’t get it, I have discussion about it; they don’t get it... they don’t care and they’re rude, they’re racist. Every day I have a complaint. They work hard, but it is their attitude.

The question of staff is indeed an important one. They are in constant contact with the tenant population for the very tangible matters of their lives. Such harsh and seemingly impenetrable perceptions of tenants call for a focused agenda to ameliorate this reality. The importance of this change is paramount, if staff members do not join in promoting and accommodating the participatory process and do not integrate these systemic changes into their practice, the chances that many local initiatives will fail are deemed to be high.

Community Housing Managers. Moving from the frontline staff, here I will discuss how the commitment to participation on behalf of the management takes various shapes and forms. The TPS is generally perceived as a process through which tenants are made aware of the TCHC’s programs and are consulted on the TCHC’s policies, as well as being permitted to participate in some priority setting exercises at their community. In so doing, the TCHC has set no restrictions on the degree of participation. Therefore, the quality of participation depends on the quality of interaction and collaboration among the tenant representatives, staff and management at any given community. The TCHC developed a participatory space that facilitates
and regulates the presence of tenant representatives in the community councils and the participatory budgeting process. Yet how this participatory process is to be implemented has largely been left to the discretion of the community management.

There seems to be four prevalent perceptions driving the participatory agenda at the management level. First and foremost, the CHU managers and the head office coordinators emphasized the benefit of the TPS in providing a ground for information sharing between tenants and management. It is believed to be a win-win situation since both parties gain useful information from this process. The tenant representatives inform the management of the existing problems and the management informs them of the policies and programs. In this way the TPS is widely believed to be an information sharing exercise. The second of four perceptions of the TPS is that it provides an opportunity for tenants to take some degree of ownership over their place of residence, which in turn serves three main goals: reducing the housing expenditures, increasing community safety and enhancing policy efficiency. Thirdly, the TPS is perceived as an accountability framework. Here the TCHC is seen to make the CHU management accountable to the needs of the tenants and those of the communities they serve. Part of the perception that the TPS serves as an accountability framework involved how managers and tenants perceive each other. While some managers see tenant representatives as the “loyal opposition to the CHU manager”, or “the party in opposition”, others see them as part of the CHU management team, thus their role is rather to collaborate with the management and be accountable to the general tenant population. The fourth perception is that the TPS provides a learning opportunity for the tenant representatives to practice formal decision-making and community planning, which otherwise they would not have the opportunity for (see Foroughi, 2010, for an elaborated account on tenants’ learning within TPS). Thus, it is believed that the TPS contributes to tenants’ education, providing an opportunity for tenant representatives to gain interpersonal and managerial skills: “They get to exercise some decision-making ability around spending money”; “residents get experiences, like [learning] how to sit on the board and how to manage a session”, explained a manager.

In sum, it is believed that higher rates of information-sharing develop into more relevant and appropriate housing services being delivered to tenants, which results in more tenant satisfaction (increased accountability to the tenants), and stronger partnerships, with enhanced feeling of ownership by the community; and tenants’ learning, through the TPS, enhances the quality of communication and information sharing, thus creating more effective partnerships.

**Tenant Representatives.** In this section I briefly highlight what a notable number of tenant respondents suggest, that the community housing managers and the staff deliberately or unintentionally, invite the participation of the tenant representatives in only what they consider appropriate. The dominant perception amongst the managers, as discussed above, is that the TPS is an information sharing exercise. As a result, tenant participation is described as a strategy to not only accommodate staff shortage in community offices but also buy-in the general tenant population to whatever policies and procedures that the staff and management have previously planned for:
I think it is downloading of the staff works and responsibilities onto tenants. Because they just went through amalgamation. TCHC tries to use us as tenant liaisons. They call it TPS we call it "can you do something for our work, please?" You know all these hours we put save them lots of dollars. Bringing info to the management is an unpaid job. We provide lots of good info for the management.

This TPS is good for the TCHC authorities to make out of us a human shield against what they want to fight for. They come up with proposals and we believe we should say yes to those proposals. This is how things are delivered to us.

It is supposed to be tenant driven, but it’s not [been] so. At CHU meetings, [there is] very little space, they bring their own agenda which is another thing I don’t consider [that] tenant participation because they have their own stuff that they want to deal with first and then there is a little point in the agenda for [all the other] eleven tenant representatives and then if you have something to bring, you bring it there.

Even though some CHU managers promote participation but they support and prefer to get the participation for what they like. How about if a tenant rep disagrees with them, is there support for participation even if they do not agree?

What the above comments suggest are the lack of opportunities for the representatives’ input and an overwhelming attention to the policies addressing the interests of the management and the TCHC. The immediate negative consequence of this has been dispiriting activist tenant representatives. As one of the managers indicated, “The best tenants are the ones who leave and we will be left with those who are resistant to change and want to keep their community homogenous”.

**Conclusion**

In this paper, I briefly discussed a specific challenge that I found hindering the sustenance of collaborative partnerships with tenants. I emphasized that although the TPS has been defined by the TCHC, it is wrong to assume that it can be objectively or technically practiced based on the TCHC’s blueprint. I demonstrated that the staff and management have diverse perspectives and multiple experiences with regard to the concept of participation, which creates a host of challenges that I referred to as the communicative problématique. To put it rather bluntly, the simple question “what is it that we want to achieve through the TPS?” has not been sufficiently discussed by the TCHC management and staff members responsible for tenant participation. Consequently, the TPS was moulded into a rather confusing format for the tenant representatives. This challenge is significant and it does persist for one reason - that tenant representatives are neither perceived as sufficiently capable nor are they perceived as partners in decision-making. The predominant view of the TPS is information sharing in which tenant representatives are perceived as solely the communicative partners of the management, rather than genuine partners in decision-making. Further discussion of the issues that this challenge raises and some consideration of how it can be addressed could help us better understand this phenomenon, and to scale up or replicate such participatory practices in a more genuine way in this or other settings.
Finally, now that participation is finding its way to all layers of community work and local governance. It is imperative to assess the preparedness of public servants for their new roles as communicators and social facilitators rather than blunt bureaucrats. In this case, a lack of understanding of the concept of participatory management amongst the staff was starkly evident. Alongside the implementation of such participatory programs there needs to be strategies for human resource development for such public domains of participatory action.

References
Workplaces as Sites for Social Imaginaries: Nation Building through Language Assessment Policy

Tara Gibb
Athabasca University

Abstract: This paper analyzes how discourses of ‘employment fit’ and ‘cultural competence,’ emerging from the assessment of immigrant professionals’ English language abilities contribute to particular conceptions of what it means to be a citizen in Canada.

Introduction

Global migration flows, for the purposes of employment, bring together people from different linguistic groups who often speak variations of the English language. Within discourses of building a global knowledge economy, where knowledge workers move across national borders and are expected to demonstrate English language proficiency, variation in communicating in English is constructed as a problem. Different registers, accents, and ways of communicating in English can become a barrier to labour market integration for immigrant professionals. Immigrant professionals who immigrate to Canada must often have their English language capabilities assessed before they can receive licensure and begin to practice in their professional fields. Increasingly, immigrant professionals’ English language abilities are being assessed according to the Canadian Language Benchmarks (CLB), a twelve-level competency-based scale consisting of performance outcomes developed by the Canadian federal government and released in 2000. While the CLB is meant to be a pragmatic response to standardizing programming and language assessment practices across the country, in practice it also contributes to reinforcing conceptions of languages as static systems tied to the nation-state. Globalization and global migration flows, however, are destabilizing traditional conceptions of standardized languages (Blommaert, 2010).

In the following discussion I analyze how discourses of ‘employment fit’ and ‘cultural competence,’ which emerge through the assessment of immigrant professionals’ English language abilities contribute to particular conceptions of what it means to be a citizen in Canada. I draw on Charles Taylor’s concept of social imaginary to examine how these discourses in workplaces reinforce imagined understandings of Canada as an officially homogeneous bilingual nation, leaving little recognition for variation in the English language and professional practices or the ways that globalization are changing our understanding of languages.

Social Imaginary

Appadurai (1996) explains that the work of imagination has become a constitutive feature of modern subjectivity. The concept of imagination is not solely tied to art, myth, fantasy, and the individual in modern times; it has become a collective, social fact (Appadurai, 1996). Similarly, Taylor (2004) asserts that social imaginary is a concept that is broader than social theory, which remains accessible to a minority of citizens. Social imaginary refers to the ways that ordinary people imagine their social contexts through images and stories. Taylor (2004) explains that it is “the ways people imagine their social existence, how they fit together with others, how things go on between them and their fellows, the expectations that are normally met, and the deeper normative notions and images that underlie these expectations” (p. 23). Furthermore, it is a
common understanding from which common practices occur and gain a shared sense of legitimacy (Taylor, 2004). The common understanding makes the practice possible while the practice in turn conveys the understanding, constituting the repertory of collective actions accessible to particular groups of a society (Taylor, 2004). These understandings and practices form the basis for how members of society interact with one another in the social space.

Taylor (2004) explains that three facets transformed the social imaginary: the economy, the public sphere, and the practices of democratic self-rule. In the 18th century, under the influence of works by Adam Smith and John Locke, the economy began to replace religion as “the path to peace and orderly existence” (p. 74). Over the course of the last three centuries, Western societies have come to view the social order maintained as an economy, an objectified aspect of society consisting of sets of production, exchange, and consumption activities. “The economic now defines a way we are linked together, a sphere of coexistence that in principle could suffice itself” (Taylor, 2004, p. 76).

The public sphere is a common space in which members of society meet to discuss and come to some consensus about societal matters. Through the advent of print media, and eventually electronic media, as well as face-to-face encounters, people began to exchange and debate ideas independent of the polity. Taylor (2004) explains that it has become a space in which people who have never met “understand themselves to be engaged in discussion and capable of reaching a common mind” about important matters (p. 85).

Drawing on the examples of the American and French Revolutions, Taylor (2004) asserts that the third component of the modern social imaginary involves a populous seeing itself as a sovereign people capable of democratic self-rule. While this imaginary was slow to develop, and initially excluded many peoples, citizens have eventually come to see society as consisting of individuals freely exerting agency through consent and engaging in the economic, public, and political spheres.

This lens of social imaginary is a way for exploring the common understandings that legitimize the assessment practices of immigrant professionals’ language skills.

The Problematic of the English Language in Knowledge Economies
For immigrant professionals who want to participate in the ‘global knowledge economy,’ migration to another country usually involves having their professional credentials evaluated and their knowledge and skill in the host nation’s official language(s). Although some Canadian immigration policies have focused on migration for humanitarian purposes, historically most policies have been developed to ensure Canada’s economic growth (Reitz, 2001; Schugurensky, 2006). Immigration and economy are linked in the social imaginary. Discourses circulate on Canada’s need for immigration to maintain economic growth and the intersection of economic policy and immigration policy has arguably intensified in the policy frame of the ‘knowledge economy.’ Common assumptions in knowledge economy policy indicate that economic participation in the 21st century depends on people’s abilities to generate knowledge by constructing, controlling, and manipulating texts and symbols (Luke, 1995/1996). If Canada’s economy is to be based on knowledge generation, then the assumption is that expanding Canada’s labour force requires attracting highly educated immigrants given that its population is
aging and birth rates are declining (Watt, Krywulak, & Kitagawa, 2008). Within this economic framing, the English language capabilities of new immigrants has become a key concern for the Canadian government (Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 2011). In previous generations, where manual labour was central to economic growth, high levels of literacy and English language proficiency were less of a concern. In a knowledge economy, however, where the ability to construct and manipulate codified knowledge is viewed as central to production, the assessment of immigrant professionals’ English language competence has been proclaimed a policy problem (Pawlikowska-Smith, 2005).

Beginning in the 1990s the federal government took steps to develop a framework for the purposes of standardizing and regulating English language teaching and assessment. After several year of consultation, the Canadian Language Benchmarks 2000 was published and under the oversight of the not-for-profit agency, the Centre for the Canadian Language Benchmarks, the framework has been increasingly implemented in a range of contexts across the country. The CLB is a twelve-level competency-based scale in which the four language skills (reading, writing, listening, and speaking) are measured independently of one another through tasks and performance outcomes. The CLB framework articulates modernist conceptions of languages as fixed systems with underlying structures and fixed rules that govern their use. In the CLB 2000 document the benchmarks are describes as “statements (descriptions) of communicative competence and performance tasks in which the learners demonstrates application of knowledge (competence) and skill” so that users of the document can describe and measure, “in a standard way,” English language users communicative proficiency (CLB 2000, p. VIII).

The development of the CLB policy, however, must also be understood within the historical context of the English language in Canada. While language is not listed as either a federal or provincial responsibility under the Constitution, both levels of government have established policies with respect to language at various points in Canadian history. English and French did not become official language until the federal government established The Official Languages Act in 1967. However, as Haque and Cray (2006) argue, from the time of European contact, English and French “have gained the discursive force and legitimacy of being official languages, not only through a historical dismissal of Aboriginal languages, but also a result of marginalizing all other minority languages” (p. 73). While ensuing backlash from non-official language communities led to the development of the Multiculturalism Act in 1971, linguistic identity remains separated from cultural identity for minority groups (Haque, 2012; Haque & Cray, 2006). The Official Languages Act fortified a dominant social imaginary of Canada as a bilingual nation. Articulating a national standard for the English language through the CLB framework further reinforces a social imaginary of languages as homogeneous entities that contribute to maintaining the order of the nation-state.

Relevant to this discussion is the CLB’s use in the development of profession-specific language assessment tools and programs for professions such as engineering, nursing, and accountancy. Language experts working in community colleges and immigrant service organizations are hired or seconded to work with employers and professional regulatory bodies to develop the tools and programs. The language experts conduct research in workplaces, interviewing and observing professionals working in a range of contexts and documenting the kinds of communicative interactions professionals engage in as they go about their daily work routines. These
interactions are then correlated to the performance outcomes and levels of the CLB framework for the development of profession-specific language assessment tools and programs.

In the research upon which this paper is based, I interviewed the language experts about their textual practices of developing the tools and programs, and the social relations of working with employers and professional regulatory bodies (Gibb, 2012). Emerging from the language experts’ experiences were dominant discourses of “cultural competence” and “employment fit.” Following, I examine these discourses more closely and discuss how they speak to the social imaginary of Canada as a bilingual nation where only certain variations of the English language are recognized.

Social Imaginary: Discourses of ‘Cultural Competence’ and ‘Employment Fit’

Citing their discussions with employers and regulatory bodies, the language experts indicate that immigrant professionals’ language competence is perceived as a problem, contributing to miscommunication in the workplace. Judgments about a prospective employee’s suitability for the workplace is sometimes based on short interactions and hasty assessments of a person’s English language ability as the following language expert explains:

What we found is often [employers’] perception of someone’s English was based on a very short interaction and hearing an accent and so saying, oh we only like to hire people who speak English and then our coordinator here who does English at Work [programming] asking a lot more about how do you know they speak English or what makes you think they don’t speak English. We’re seeing a lot of situations where you have a sense that someone walks in with an application form and the person at the front desk hears an accent and the application form goes into the not suitable pile because their perception is that their communication won’t be good.

In response to these perceptions of language problems, the language experts are expected to use the CLB document to assess immigrant professionals’ English language competence and resolve the problems of language. While some employers understand that communication and its assessment is complex, others expect the language experts to “fix” language problems. As the following language expert’s experience illustrates, language is blamed for miscommunication and remedial training is expected to resolve the problem:

The person in HR, again I’m not pointing fingers, I don’t think had a very deep understanding of that workplace and some of the challenges. I didn’t have very much access to him. My feeling in that situation was much more like, “we’ve got a problem here, we think it’s a language issue, just come in and do some language training and fix the problem.”

Assessments based on the CLB are expected to measure language ability and provide objective evidence that immigrant professionals have suitable communication skills. The language experts’ experiences, however, indicate that tensions in the workplace are more complex than merely demonstrating one’s language abilities. The expectation is that the CLB framework will provide a measurement that will assist in identifying immigrant professionals who will “fit into” the culture of the workplace. In the following passage, one of the language
experts describes the challenges of negotiating employers’ expectation about language learning and communication:

*It was a hard discussion to kind of say, because [employers] were very results oriented and wanted to see real tangible proof. Like, “can you give them another test and tell me how much better they do on this test,” that kind of thing. Difficult to demonstrate and I think some of the benefits in the long run were less tangible. Things like increased confidence and self-reporting that they [immigrant professionals] spoke up in meetings more often than they had before.*

While the benchmarks are designed to measure language ability and employers and professional regulatory bodies want evidence of English language competence, the language experts talk at length about their unease of reducing language learning to a measurable performance. As the following participant explains, tensions and conflict arise from perceptions about cultural differences:

*What can happen is employers often identify the problem as a language issue, but when we look at it, we see that it’s not necessarily language, it’s more cultural differences that are coming into play and so then our job is to somehow teach [those cultural differences] explicitly. It’s a tough one because employers seem to have this intuitive feel for a hire. I’ve heard them talk about that. “Oh yeah, they’ll fit into the team.”*

Even though the language experts attempt to teach immigrant professionals about the cultural nuances of Canadian workplaces, they also explain that employers’ response is to look for immigrant professionals who resemble the “easily fitting Canadian.”

On wider social scale, the CLB document can be seen as an ideological tool of the nation-state that is implemented to reinforce conceptions of the English language as a unifying force in Canada. Underlying the discourses of cultural competence and employment fit is an assumption that workplace cultures in Canada are static and homogeneous. The CLB promotes the notion that communication in the English language can be standardized, as the following language expert explains:

*It’s a lobby to sell a document to make believe that it would change the views of second language acquisition . . . It’s a utopia. It’s ambitious to try to have a standardized language to be used across the nation. It’s like a dream. I have a dream.*

Standardized language and a standardized method for assessing that language constructs a sense of cultural unity and sameness. Cultural competence and employment fit discourses contribute to a common understanding that ideal forms of cultural expression and communication exist.

**Social Imaginary and the English Language in Canada and Beyond**

The development of the CLB speaks to the Canadian state’s intervention in matters of language regulation. While the Official Languages Act was part of Canada’s nation-building project and solidified English and French as Canada’s languages in the public realm, the development of the CLB in many respects is a continuation of this nation-building project. As Haque (2012)
explains, the *Official Languages Act* demarcates the boundaries of who does an does not belong based on language. The development of the CLB and its implementation in the professions further entrenches these demarcations by expanding language regulation into workplaces. The demonstration of language ability, as determined through the textual practices of the CLB and social discourses of cultural competence, contribute to delineating who will be deemed a suitable ‘fit’ for the Canadian workplace.

The CLB reinforces common understandings and practices of the English language as a fixed system. While struggles exist in the practice of assessment, the framework nonetheless legitimizes practices that recognize the knowledge and skills of those who fit within the parameters of the standard. The struggle of assessing cultural competence and employment fit speaks to the convergence of the global and the local. Immigrant professionals come Canada from across the globe speaking variations of English that are unfamiliar or different from the Canadian English accent. These differences have emerged from the local histories and social practices of colonialism and globalization. Linguistic and cultural differences are perceived as problems to social and economic integration. Language ability, when associated with cultural competence, is perceived as a static and bounded system tied to the nation-state and cultural fixity. Fitting into English-speaking Canada means knowing and performing particular variations of the English language. When immigrant professionals migrate to Canada with different understandings and expressions of what it means to practice as a professional, these differences are perceived as problems that need to be resolved. As the language experts explain, it is often easier for employers to default into choosing people who are familiar or resemble the “comfortably fitting Canadian.”

Theories and polices about language reinforce the social imaginary of what it means to use the English language in Canada. Globalization and migration in the knowledge economy, however, are disrupting traditional conceptions of languages as fixed codes and bounded systems tied to the nation-state and national identity. Canagarajah (2008) argues this disruption involves a disciplinary shift towards a practice of localizing knowledge. It includes acknowledging the historical context in which English has been used and that gave rise to variations in codes, accents, and expressions. Bhatt (2008) notes that the transformation of English in postcolonial contexts “has resulted in the emergence of many new Englishes, each peculiar to its own locality and its own culture” (p. 25). Valuing local knowledge and local language practices acknowledges different ways of being and communicating that arise from historical and social circumstances.

When language is conceived of as a system tied to the nation-state and that it can be standardized, the assumption is that to participate as a Canadian citizen involves speaking in a particular variation of English and acting in a way that indicates one’s ‘fit’ into the Canadian workplace. If language, however, is conceived of as a social practice that is negotiated among language users in a community, broadening conceptions of citizenship as a participatory practice become possible. Responsibility for communication becomes negotiated and distributed among all members of a community and opens spaces for understanding and accepting variations in language. Citizenship, as practiced through language, becomes an emergent identity rather than an identity that is prescribed and predetermined through standardized conceptions of language. As Welton (1998) has argued, it is through community associations such as clubs, community
groups, and workplaces that we learn to be citizens. It is in these spaces that people can learn to communicate across linguistic and cultural differences, particularly if language is understood as a negotiated practice and not a fixed and static system.

References
Becoming a Canadian Writer: 
Identity, Fiction Writing and Learning in Community

Patricia A. Gouthro
Mount Saint Vincent University

Susan M. Holloway
University of Windsor

Erin J. Careless
Mount Saint Vincent University

Abstract: This paper draws upon research from a Social Science and Humanities Research Council of Canada study that looks at lifelong learning, citizenship, and fiction writing, to explore how individuals might learn to become Canadian fiction writers. The paper considers how the identity of becoming a writer may be shaped by involvement in writing communities. It explores issues pertaining to identity as well as challenges and supports, with regards to becoming a Canadian writer. The paper concludes by considering how learning in connection to fiction writing may help adult educators to reflect upon issues of identity, diversity, and citizenship.

Introduction
If we are to believe that engaging in lifelong learning shapes both individual and social growth and development, then the importance of identity cannot be overlooked. This paper draws upon research from a Social Science and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC) study that looks at lifelong learning, citizenship, and fiction writing, to explore how individuals might learn to become fiction writers in Canada. Beginning with a brief overview of literature, the paper considers how the identity of becoming a writer may be shaped by involvement in a writing community, and also considers some of the issues of globalization and diversity in shaping identity with regards to understanding citizenship. It then provides a brief overview of the study and some of the findings, looking at issues pertaining to identity as well as challenges and supports, with regards to becoming a Canadian writer. The paper concludes by considering the learning processes involved in becoming a Canadian writer, and how learning in connection to fiction writing may help adult educators to reflect upon important issues relating to identity, diversity, and citizenship.

Literature Review
The identity of being a Canadian writer is potentially important for several reasons. Some fiction authors make their livelihood by writing and work is a central component of identity (Billett, 2010). In Maslow’s terms, becoming a successfully published author may be a form of self-actualization, as writers attain an important personal goal. Finally, fiction writing is also linked to identity with regards to citizenship.

Allan & Lewis (2006) suggest that participation in different communities may impact on the development of one’s identity. Given this, communities centred around writing may be considered as avenues for growth around learning and identity. For example, Maher, Seton, McMullan, Fitzgerald, Otsuzi & Lee (2008) discuss the writing group that they developed as
doctoral candidates who worked collaboratively to build their skills and provide support to one another through the dissertation process during which time they learned to “shape their scholarly identities as writers” (p. 174). In the same way, fiction writers may develop their sense of identity as writers by participating within a community that focuses on the importance of this work.

In an increasingly globalized world, what it means to be a “Canadian writer” is not always easy to discern. In considering how the concept of postcolonialism is a contested one that challenges us to reflect critically upon our experiences within education and the broader societies in which we live, travel, and work, Preece (2008) notes that “we are all increasingly hybrids of our complex identities” (p. 279). Through fiction, issues pertaining to diversity and citizenship may be explored. In a paper looking at the use of poetry as a means to foster unique learning opportunities, Wiseman (2011) notes that writing that takes up issues pertaining to identity around race, culture or gender issues is frequently not supported in formal schooling. Yet, writers often explore contentious issues around their own and their characters’ sense of identity, raising important concerns regarding citizenship in an increasingly diverse and global world.

Considering how to foster writing communities that promote opportunities for learning around identity may provide valuable opportunities for adult learning experiences.

**The Research Study**

This study involves life history interviews with over thirty traditionally published authors in three areas: literary, crime fiction, and Young Adult (YA) and children’s literature. In the context of a life history interview, the participants were asked to discuss various factors and influences that may have shaped their learning trajectory as writers including influences from work, family, schooling, and the writing community. In addition, shorter, semi-structured interviews were conducted with over a dozen key informants in government, education, and the not-for-profit sector who are involved in programs connected to fiction writing. A number of interviews with authors and key informants in the UK and US are also included for comparative purposes, although within this paper, the focus is on responses from Canadian participants.

Authors were asked to reveal their identities, although they were given the option to review and revise their transcripts and could request that certain sections be kept confidential, so that if quotes were used from those sections then they would not be attributed to them. Key informants were given these same options, and could also choose complete confidentiality, where identifying features about them and their organizations would be screened out. Initial coding was determined by some of the topics in the questions such as family, school experiences, and so forth. Additional themes emerged as the research team reviewed and compared the data (Marshall & Rossman, 2011), such as the significance of writing communities.

To present the results we begin with one example of an author, Nino Ricci, that illustrates some of the issues that becoming a writer within Canada might entail. We then move into a discussion of three themes that emerged from an analysis of the data; Canadian Identity, Challenges and Supports in Canadian Publishing, and Writing Communities.
Telling a Canadian Story: Nino Ricci

In this short paper, we can only provide a few examples, but one writer whose experiences speak to the complex factors that shape the story of a Canadian writer is Nino Ricci, a literary author who has twice won the Governor General’s Award for his novels. Here he talks about the impetus to become a writer and notes that his parents initially were not enthused about their son’s decision to pursue a career first in doing international aid work, and then in deciding to become a writer:

I was kind of shocked at how upset they were at my decision to be a writer. I guess I thought they wouldn’t care that much about what I did, but I was surprised at how little value they put in writing; I valued it a lot. I think it was something they didn’t really understand. I thought they wanted me to get a job that made a lot of money as opposed to something that was more difficult. They didn’t see sufficient evidence from me that I knew what I wanted to do with my life and that I was capable of actually surviving as an adult. For many years they were unhappy.

After struggling for financial security as immigrants to Canada, they had difficulty understanding why Nino would choose a career path that was unlikely to be financially successful, although they eventually took great pride in their son’s choice of career:

When my second book came out, he [his father] helped to organize a tour and came to the readings. In fact, after one of the readings he got up on stage unannounced and started talking about how he had never supported me in my writing when I was younger, and that he regretted it now. He said that if people in the audience had children who wanted to go into the arts, they should be encouraged. For me that was a real vindication; the kind of cathartic moment that you hope for with a parent.

Nino reflects upon his experiences in university around taking writing courses:

I think there’s a limited amount of value you can get from workshop experience, but the importance of that environment is that you feel you are in a community of people who value what you’re doing.

This kind of support is critical in encouraging individuals to persist in developing the craft of writing. In terms of developing a successful career, Nino Ricci also discusses the value of support from the Canada Council, without which there may not be a strong culture of Canadian fiction and voices:

One of the things that Canada Council said was that culture is really important. No one had been saying that. The tradition in Canada was the distrust of culture. It’s important how we think about ourselves and becoming a great nation. I think we needed to be able to say, ‘It’s meaningful to read a Canadian book. Canadian books can actually be good’. So there has
been a cumulative effect, but I do think it’s a fairly fragile ecosystem; it’s easy to crumble.

In order for these Canadian stories to survive and flourish, there needs to be a support system providing opportunities for those who wish to contribute to this culture of Canadian fiction. The next sections look at some of the supports and challenges in becoming a Canadian writer.

**Canadian Identity**

Over the last couple of decades, there has been increasing recognition for the diverse range of writers that shape Canada’s literary landscape (Holden, 2000). But becoming a Canadian writer is not always linked initially to a strong sense of national identity. Poet and writer Fred Wah talks about his early experiences where “there was kind of a Canadian-American friction that started in the late 60s and went through the 70s at least. But I wasn’t denying any kind of Canadian identity; I wasn’t even thinking of any national identity”. Yet Wah’s (1996) book, *Diamond Grill*, is a uniquely Canadian bricolage that represents historical tensions, cultural pride, and insights into the “hybrid identities” that Preece alludes to as Wah develops a partially fictionalized account that draws upon some of his experiences in being raised as a Japanese-Canadian during the post-WWII era in a small Canadian town in British Columbia.

A number of other Canadian authors choose specifically to locate their books outside of Canada, but they argue that this does not make them any less Canadian. Susanna Kearsley discusses this issue as her stories have English roots:

> My choice of characters has always been by what the book needs, and I don't think I'm any less of a Canadian because I write about British people. Just as I don't think a British person writing about Canadian characters will be any less British. I don't like being constrained in what I want to write about. I don't like someone telling me I'm not Canadian if I don't set part of the book within Canada. That to me is irrelevant. It's where I was born; where I was raised. The country I consider home makes me what I am, certainly not my subject matter. If I had to be published only by a Canadian publisher I'd be out of luck.

Others believe that an important aspect of their work as Canadian writers is the way that they can take up stories located within their own country. Garry Ryan talks about his novel that is set in Calgary, Alberta:

> I think people say that they want to read about some place like New York or Venice or LA, or Toronto, London. Then I thought, Why not Calgary? And I think I must have run into someone somewhere who’d said, ‘You can’t write about Calgary or no one will want to read about Calgary’. That’s why. I’m kind of bloody-minded like that… I guess there’s a part of me that just likes to prove people wrong.

Gary was fortunate in having a regional publisher decide to publish his book that receives funding support from the Canadian government, yet one of the issues that became apparent in
this research study is that there are a number of difficulties and challenges that Canadians might face in getting their books published and distributed. The next section explores some of these concerns.

**Challenges and Supports in Canadian Publishing**

Louise Penny, whose most recent book, *The Beautiful Mystery*, ranked number two on the *New York Times* Bestseller list, explains that she ended up with a British publisher after being rejected within Canada:

> It was a Canadian editor who had it for six months and said no; it was a Canadian agent who had it for a year exclusively and said no... It wasn't Americans or the British, it was the Canadians who said, ‘Nobody would be interested in a mystery set in Canada’.

The authors who are successful in obtaining a Canadian publisher find that it is difficult to sell enough books to make any money through their writing because the Canadian market is so small. Crime fiction writer Linwood Barclay talks about his feelings around citizenship and his novels:

> I love Canada and I feel very nationalistic about it here. But I’m not writing an archetype of a Canadian novel, so I don’t come to the process thinking, ‘This must be a Canadian novel’. That’s not a part of what I’m doing. I’m trying to write the best thriller I can; the most engaging, exciting, thriller that I can. And I’m not ashamed to say I’d like to sell as many copies as I can; sometimes setting stories in the US helps with that.

At the same time, Gina McMurchy-Barber, a Canadian children’s author explains:

> The American publisher I spoke to said, ‘If you want to make a living from your writing, there’s no reason that you shouldn’t. There’s a lot of work goes into writing a book, so you should want to make a living at what you’re doing’. If you get with an American publisher, there’s more possibility of actually making a living at your writing.

She adds, however:

> I’m glad to be with a Canadian publisher though, and it’s probably what brought me into focus for the Governor General’s Award... But if I needed to make a living from my writing, then I’d say being published by an American publisher would make that more of a possibility.

The financial aid provided by the Canadian government to publishers as well as the recognition given to Canadian authors through prizes such as the Giller or Governor General’s Award are important supports for Canadian writers. This support is especially important in recent years, where globalization and changes in technology have had dramatic effects on the publishing industry. Many bookstores in Canada have closed their doors due to a lack of sales in paper
format, making it even more challenging for publishing houses to survive. One key informant discusses the challenges that both publishers and writers face with

the evaporating retail market. Every week a couple of independent book stores close. Indigo, which is our big chain of course, has recently decided to reduce their inventory to less than 50 percent books now… so there's no place to get books out there in front of people's eyes.

To address these challenges, it is important consider practical supports for Canadians, to help them establish viable writing careers (even though many authors have to also work at other forms of paid employment).

When asked about how writers fit into the fabric of Canadian society, a number of authors discussed the importance of making the work of writers more visible through programs, for example, like Writers in the Schools. These programs provide important financial and promotional supports for writers, but they also serve an educational purpose around learning and citizenship. Young adult (YA) author Christine Walde says:

I think writers visiting schools is critically important. Having them come into the classrooms, do readings, have kids ask them questions ... I think is really important. Two weeks ago I did a book camp here in London. I was at the London public library, and I had two groups of 20 kids ranging in age from nine to 16; and some of them had heard of me and others had not. But just to be there to read to them and have them ask questions about writing and being a writer I think was really important because it demystified a lot... and it serves a purpose. It demystifies things, but it also helps to solidify a vision, I guess, for them or add to a vision of what a Canadian writer or Canadian writing is.

Learning to Write Through Community

While some of the writers, more so men than women, indicated that much of their learning was an isolated process, others valued the opportunity to engage with other writers and participate in the writing community. Gina McMurchy-Barber talks about the importance of these groups during the beginning of her career:

I had a five year old and a brand new baby at that point, and I was working full time. But being in the writing community really helped… Having that community made me feel connected to it, even though I wasn’t writing much. There was this sort of acknowledgement that one day when my kids didn't need me so much I would be freer to do this. So writing courses and having a writing group were really important at that stage of my life.

Several of the writers discussed the importance of being able to take courses and be mentored by other Canadian authors to help them develop their own craft of writing. After being involved in writing groups and taking several courses, mystery writer Susan Calder talked about the valuable support she received from a highly acknowledged Canadian author:
With this novel *Deadly Fall* that I wrote, I had done three drafts on my own. At a certain point I signed up for a correspondence course and the instructor was Lawrence Hill who wrote *The Book of Negroes*. I did a one-on-one mentorship program with him for a year.

In addition, a number of writers talked about the benefits of conferences and writers’ festivals, which allowed them to raise the profile of their work and engage with other authors. Over the last couple of decades, the demographics of those who participate in the writing community has started to change, as Nate Crawford from the Nova Scotia Writer’s Federation explains:

> There are new Canadians coming here who are not necessarily very proficient in speaking or writing English. It’s wonderful to see how they develop their sense of place and themselves by trying this; trying to write. That’s great, and a lot of those people submit to the competition so we get to see what they’re writing. At the same time, however, the diverse peoples already in Nova Scotia – the French community and First Nations community – I think it’s a nice little microcosmic mirror about those communities.

Nate Crawford notes that in the past these groups were not as active in the Writer’s Federation, and they were not give as much recognition, but this shift towards broadening participation is a positive aspect that he sees in the evolving community of writers in Nova Scotia.

**Implications for Adult Education**

Authors take up issues around diversity when they reflect upon their own experiences in becoming writers, and the experiences of their characters often reflect the hyphenated and sometimes marginalized identities that are part of the Canadian literary terrain. A better understanding of cultural institutional supports and informal learning environments in which fiction writers in Canada learn their craft gives insight into one important form of adult learning that has a wide influence on contributing to what is our Canadian “voice.” Many of the organizations that help writers learn their craft are outside of formal education (writers’ federations, publishing houses, community mentoring programs). Understanding, then, how adults access and use the wide array of larger community supports to foster their craft may serve to reveal facets of their lifelong learning endeavours. In addition, fiction itself, and an analysis of how fiction writers learn their craft, provides adult educators with a lens to explore complex issues that shape many Canadians’ learning experiences around citizenship and identity.

**References**


Global Perspectives on Sexual and Gender Minorities in Lifelong Learning and Constituent Adult Education

André P. Grace
Institute for Sexual Minority Studies and Services, University of Alberta

Abstract: Sexual and gender minorities as learners ought to be a focus of a critically progressive process of education. In this paper I consider our ongoing struggle for recognition and inclusion in transnational and supranational contexts. I pay particular attention to Uganda and its brazen, anti-gay agenda. I conclude with a perspective on the meaning of lifelong learning and constituent adult education, which ought to be realized by engendering social and cultural awakening and transformative learning to abet reflexive, holistic living and learning for all.

Emulating critical theory’s advocacy of ethical and just practices and postfoundational emphases on multiple subjectivities and their recognition and accommodation, lifelong learning and constituent adult education ought to engage in critical action that advances inclusive social education for sexual and gender minorities (Grace, in press). This concern for social education across differences has been central in the emergence of the modern practice of adult education. For example, Eduard Christian Lindeman is prominently remembered as a social philosopher and adult educator who advanced critically progressive educational ideals. In *The Meaning of Adult Education*, Lindeman (1926/1961), stating that “difference is the base of personal integrity” (p.36), emphasized that learners need to learn to acknowledge and value difference by developing an ontological sense of self and others “within the organic unity of particularized selves” (p. 36). As Lindeman saw it, a key goal of the process of education is to assist learners to build awareness of difference and the larger social context, with this end result: Knowing difference, which enables freedom as an achievement, replaces fearing difference, which inhibits freedom. Lindeman asserted that knowing and accommodating difference leads to creative living following the sequence of “intelligence for power, power for self-expression, and self-expression in the context of relative freedom” (p. 53). Here Lindeman stressed the importance of making interrelationships with others an intellectual concern so we can engage in conscious problem solving whereby we consider the interests of others when challenges and conflicts arise in life, learning, and work as spheres of activity. He said this provides a basis for intelligent living.

These days education for intelligent living has to include education for citizenship and foci on vulnerable populations in transnational and supranational (such as United Nations and Commonwealth of Nations) contexts. It should attend to the historical, social, cultural, political, and economic dimensions of citizenship, ultimately seeing learning as encompassing educational and cultural work for social transformation (Allman, 1999; Grace, in press). Still inclusive lifelong learning and constituent adult education remain enigmatic in many quarters. Mainstream lifelong learning is a narrow and inadequately contextualized field of study and practice that is not broadly committed to equity and justice for all learners across relationships of power (Grace, in press). As learners, sexual and gender minorities provide a poignant case in point. In this paper, I consider our ongoing struggle for recognition and inclusion in transnational and supranational contexts. I pay particular attention to Uganda and its horrific anti-gay agenda. I conclude with a perspective on the meaning of lifelong learning and constituent adult education,
which ought to be reflexive processes that engender social and cultural awakening and transformative learning to abet holistic living and learning for all.

**Sexual and Gender Minorities in Transnational and Supranational Contexts**

As an inclusive social educator and activist, Robert J. Hill has long advocated for space and place for sexual and gender minorities in supranational contexts including the International Council for Adult Education (ICAE) and the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). In this excerpt from an extensive exchange with him (Grace, in press), Hill speaks about his experience working to advance gay rights at the CONFINTEA V Mid-term Review held in Bangkok, Thailand in 2003. CONFINTEA is the French acronym for *Conférence internationale sur l’éducation des adultes*, which is the International Conference for Adult Education. CONFINTEA V had been held in Hamburg, Germany in 1997. As Hill recounted to me, CONFINTEAs have been held every 12 years since 1949. In 1997, there was no mention of sexual orientation or gender identity and expression. Hill used the mid-term review as an opportunity to open up a discussion on SGM (sexual and gender minority) issues to counter the omission in 1997 and to create a basis to include these issues in future CONFINTEAs.

**APG:** Could you provide more detail regarding the CONFINTEA V Mid-term Review and what happened in Bangkok? How did you participate? What was the outcome in terms of addressing SGM rights?

**RJH:** Justin Ellis from Namibia, the Chairperson of the Governing Board of the UNESCO Institute for Education (now called the Institute for Lifelong Learning, which is located in Hamburg, Germany), reported that the CONFINTEA V Mid-term Review brought together over three hundred representatives of UNESCO member states. This included ministers and senior-level officials, agencies of the UN system, non-governmental and civil-society organizations, and academic and research institutions from more than 90 countries (CONFINTEA V, 2003a). The review aimed to assess the accomplishments and the difficulties encountered over the first six years in executing the CONFINTEA V agenda. This was done through a series of thematic reviews, regional reviews, and plenary sessions. Participants examined recent trends and new developments in practices and policies of lifelong learning and adult education. The group also began the task of preparing for CONFINTEA VI [which took place in Belém (State of Pará, Brazil in December 2009] by proposing strategies for the advancement of future lifelong-learning programs. One significant thematic review focused on democracy. Dr. Lean Chan Heng from Malaysia chaired the session, and I was the rapporteur. As a queer activist/scholar I arrived in Bangkok with a stated agenda, which I also brought to the Democracy Thematic Review. My goals were to expand the parameters of lifelong learning and adult education by 1) using education for citizenship and education for civil and human rights as anti-oppression tools to build knowledge, skills, resources, and capacity in human-rights advocacy based on sexual orientation and gender identity; 2) discussing language and broadening the definition of discrimination so that grounds for protection against prejudice in workplace and other sociocultural settings included sexual orientation and gender identity; 3) engaging in public pedagogy to cast members of sexual and gender minorities as persons and citizens who are not sick, criminal, or sinful, and 4) engaging in public pedagogy to draw attention to SGM human rights and any violations—social oppression, torture, arbitrary arrest, and extortion are commonplace—across governments and civil society.
After several days of formal and informal meetings, caucuses, and networking on SGM justice, both the Democracy Thematic Review and the Gender Thematic Review took up the language of SGM inclusion in lifelong learning and adult education. One of the regional reviews, largely under the leadership of Latin American women at the conference, acted similarly. The Democracy workgroup issued the following statement, “[We recommend] promoting human-centered values such as peace, human rights, solidarity and justice, [and the elimination of] discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity” (CONFINTEA V, 2003a, n. p.). This position was carried into the all-conference discussions. In the end, the Mid-term Review efforts resulted in thirty-eight recommendations. Recommendation 7 called for UNESCO member states, Civil Society Organizations, Non-Governmental Organizations, and others to include sexual and gender minorities in all lifelong-learning efforts; it also called for equal rights for sexual and gender minorities.

Point 7 was the ONLY controversial agenda item at the final session during the ratification of the recommendations. A government Minister and representative from Uganda objected to the language, stating that it would require the Government of Uganda to implement policies contrary to state laws where homosexuality is prohibited. Sadly, Uganda does not stand alone. Globally, over 70 countries have a complete ban on homosexuality, with sentences upon conviction ranging from imprisonment to public flogging and death. In at least 7 nations, same-sex relations are punishable by execution. Chechnya, Iran, Iraq, Mauritania, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, and Yemen implement capital punishment for homosexuality. Same-sex relations are unsympathetically handled in Bangladesh, Egypt, Malaysia, and Pakistan; in these jurisdictions maximum jail sentences range from three to twenty years. In some countries such as Mexico, El Salvador, Columbia, and Brazil, right-wing death squads target lesbians, gay men, and trans-identified people in “social cleansing” campaigns. For example, the seemingly open Brazilian sexual attitudes stop at heterosexuality. The group Ontario Consultants on Religious Tolerance (2008) report that “gay positive groups estimate … [that] more than 2,680 gays and lesbians were murdered in Brazil between 1980 and 2006” (para. 1).

In response to the Ugandan objection, I argued that in light of CONFINTEA V’s focus on the rights of all, the erasure of language to abet SGM inclusion would constitute an act of violence and injustice by members of the Mid-term Review. I requested that the Chair not eliminate this point, in the name of human rights and social justice. After these brief but contentious petitions to the Chair, a recess was called. During the break, with the assistance of Alan Tuckett from the National Institute of Adult Continuing Education in the United Kingdom, the language issue was resolved. In the end, the controversial wording of Point 7 was retained, with the parenthetical phrase where licit. Based on the Democracy Thematic Review recommendations, the following assembly-approved final statement was commended to the official drafting committee:

We therefore call upon member states, bi- and multilateral agencies, non-governmental and civil-society organizations and social movements … to adopt inclusive policies and take concrete measures and provide adequate resources in support of education programs mainstreaming and catering to the learning demands of persons with disabilities as well as groups with special needs such as indigenous people, migrants and refugees, minorities (including sexual minorities, where licit), [and] prisoners. (CONFINTEA V, 2003b, n. p.) During the CONFINTEA V Mid-term Review it became apparent, once again, that views on “homosexuality” flew in the face of some religious traditions, cultures, and governments.
especially in Christian and Muslim countries in Africa, the Middle East, and, to some extent, Asia. In an interesting twist, some people claimed that to promote gay rights was a form of neo-colonialism caught up in a dominating Western ideology. In the end, two questions worthy of reflection remain: Were activist educators and cultural workers, who sought equal rights for all SGM people at the mid-term review, contributing to globalization by imposing their will on purportedly less powerful nations? Or was the neo-colonialist argument a subtly homophobic manoeuvre to sideline concerns with social justice for sexual and gender minorities? Regardless of the answer, Bangkok provided us with the first real victory on the journey that began in the adult-education arena in Jamaica in 2001.

Still Working Toward a Stonewall for All: Uganda’s Anti-Homosexuality Bill and Other Travesties

Sexual and gender minorities, sometimes visible and sometimes working in subaltern spaces in transnational contexts, are demanding human and civil rights, which exist as matters of degree as religious evangelism, rightist exclusionary politics, and other factors play out in different jurisdictions globally (Grace, in press; Hill & Grace, 2009). Indeed there is sustained sociopolitical action in many quarters, Honouring the spirit and intentions of the Stonewall rebellion in New York on June 28, 1969, which is often referred to as the moment that heralded a transnational gay civil rights movement. This ongoing movement is vital, as former U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton remarked in a speech to diplomats at the Palais des Nations in Geneva, Switzerland on International Human Rights Day, December 6, 2011. In this speech she spoke about multiple violations of queer integrity:

It is a violation of human rights when people are beaten or killed because of their sexual orientation [or gender identity], or because they do not conform to cultural norms about how men and women should look or behave. It is a violation of human rights when governments declare it illegal to be gay, or allow those who harm gay people to go unpunished. … [It is also a violation of human rights] when people cite religious or cultural values as a reason to violate or not to protect the human rights of LGBT citizens. (pp. 3-4)

Secretary Rodham Clinton’s remarks signify the pressing need to recognize gay rights as human and civil rights. Ongoing efforts of the Ugandan Parliament to pass the Anti-Homosexuality Bill of 2009 provide a distressing case in point. Since Ugandan lawmaker David Bahati authored the bill, violence against gays, including the targeting and murder of gay activists, has escalated (Dixon, 2011). Sadly, the official anti-gay stance of the Anglican Church of Uganda is among factors exacerbating the danger for SGM persons. Fortunately, clergy in Uganda and Britain have contested the church’s strong opposition to homosexuality, and have spoken out against the Anti-Homosexuality Bill of 2009. Importantly, the former Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr. Rowan Williams stated his opposition to the bill: “Overall, the proposed legislation is of shocking severity and I can’t see how it could be supported by any Anglican who is committed to what the Communion has said in recent decades. Apart from invoking the death penalty, it makes pastoral care impossible—it seeks to turn pastors into informers” (Sarmiento, 2011, p. 1).

Over the past few years, the bill has caused an extraordinary international reaction. To deter passage of the bill, nations including the United States and the United Kingdom have threatened to reduce foreign aid to Uganda, making gay rights a new border zone in international diplomacy (Chothia, 2011). Both former U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton and Canadian
Foreign Minister John Baird have been vocal in castigating the Ugandan Government for harassing and violating SGM rights (Lumu, 2013). However, the Ugandan Parliament has remained defiant in reaction to what it perceives as Western incursion into its national affairs. When the Ugandan Parliament adjourned on May 13, 2011, the controversial bill had not been passed, which left it in legislative limbo (Dixon, 2011; Kron, 2011). However, the bill, also called the Kill the Gays Bill (Nathan, 2013), has been reintroduced in the new parliament. On February 19, 2013, the bill targeting not only “offenders,” but also those who know, help, or defend sexual and gender minorities topped the list of “business to follow” on the Order Papers (Burroway, 2013, n. p.).

In an interesting juxtaposition, to mark Commonwealth Day on March 11, 2013, Queen Elizabeth II signed the Charter of the Commonwealth (Elgot, 2013). However, this document intended to focus on democracy and human rights is not particularly significant in advancing SGM rights and protections. Whereas the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedom clearly protects sexual and gender minorities against discrimination and oppression, the Commonwealth Charter is a weak and meaningless nonbinding declaration. There is no specific mention of sexual and gender minorities. There is also no recorded rejection of discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender identity because the homophobic majority of member states, which includes Uganda, blocked this inclusion (Elgot, 2013). In fact, 41 of the 54 Commonwealth nations still criminalize homosexuality (Elgot, 2013). While the Charter lists mutual respect and inclusiveness as core Commonwealth values, as a multinational, the British Commonwealth of Nations fails sexual and gender minorities as global citizens. Still the Charter states, “We are implacably opposed to all forms of discrimination, whether rooted in gender, race, colour, creed, political belief or other grounds” (The Commonwealth, 2013, p. 2). While there appears to be room to include sexual orientation and gender identity in “other grounds,” 41 Commonwealth nations, by virtue of their rule of law criminalizing homosexuality, would not make room. It this dim light, we should question the social value of the British Commonwealth of Nations since it appears Uganda and the rest of the homophobic majority now rule the waves.

**Concluding Perspective: The Mean of Lifelong Learning and Constituent Adult Education for Sexual and Gender Minorities**

In writing the editor’s preface for the republication of Lindeman’s (1926) The Meaning of Adult Education, J. Roby Kidd (1961) characterized the social philosopher as an ambitious educator who affirmed social education as the modus operandi for transformation of a world where “injustice [had] to be fought, and the inhumane [had] to be brought to bay” (p. xiii). Lindeman believed that social education was the foundation for envisioning and building social democracy. To achieve this end, he asserted that study and action—thinking and doing—had to be in dynamic equilibrium so social education could be organic and whole. Valuing participation as the driving force for social education as an active and non-prescriptive engagement, Lindeman provided this caveat: Both democratic and nondemocratic forces have the potential to drive social action, which means we always need to analyze social action in terms of its rationale and positive or hazardous consequences. As indicated by the plight of sexual and gender minorities in Uganda and other brazen, homophobic nations, this engagement, which Lindeman described as mature learning, is requisite. By mature learning, Lindeman meant that learners ought to turn to social philosophy to examine what informs social action and to consider how particular actions impact groups of citizens and their welfare. For Lindeman, this amounted to socializing
power by exposing when efficacy for one group was at the expense of disenfranchisement or disqualification of another.

In applying Lindeman’s process of education to building knowledge and awareness that abet SGM recognition and accommodation, I find a queer critical framework is useful. I have been developing it to link theorizing to pedagogical, social, and cultural practices that emphasize place, positionality, ethics, and justice. These practices are meant to be spacious, political, and open to contextual interpretation. They emphasize hope, possibility, agency, proactive response, integrity (as the nurturing and protection of identities), and community building. As I see it, queer critical theorizing seeks to sustain the emancipatory potential of critical theory and lesbian and gay theory as well as the deconstructive and transformative functions of queer theory to increase theory’s capacity to 1) interrogate the knowledge-culture-language-power nexus and 2) investigate both oppressive and enabling forces impacting the ethical and just treatment of sexual and gender minorities in lifelong learning, constituent adult education, and culture. Tensions resulting from the theoretical interactions are taken as points for complicating and deepening analyses of heteronormativity, the dominant knowledge-culture-language-power nexus, and ways to transgress adversity and transform the life, learning, and work ecologies of sexual and gender minorities. This work starts by recognizing the cumulative impact of the systems, structures, and social forces and responses that influence SGM persons and our degrees of exclusion or inclusion in lifelong learning, constituent adult education, and culture. It supports an encompassing ecological perspective—one that positions SGM learners in relation to other learners, citizens, cultures, and life, learning, and work environments.

References


Using Storytelling to Understand Educational Policy – Can We See the Epic in the Mundane?

Erin Graham
UBC Faculty of Education,
Department of Educational Studies

Abstract: Storytelling is a common pedagogical technique (Christiensen, 2012; Abrahamson, 1998), theoretical model (Archibald, 2008; Kane, 1998) and methodology (Zingaro, 2008; Xu & Conelly, 2010). Educators often use personal stories, allegories, folk stories or mythology to describe human relations with each other and the world we inhabit. Though storytelling in various forms (autoethnography, narrative inquiry, performance theories) is common in pedagogical practice and education research, storytelling is rarely a means of developing, analyzing or influencing educational policy. This paper examines some of the uses and effects of storytelling and narrative inquiry in a teacher education program, particularly as it pertains to its potential to both develop and humanize education policy.

Introduction: What’s the Story?
I’ve heard storytellers say, “you can’t know someone’s story and not love them”, and it seems to be true. Once you know someone’s story, you still may not agree with or like them very much, but you can love and have compassion for them. The basis of my investigation stems from my experience as a teacher educator and a professional storyteller. I draw from a recent experience of teaching a new course in the teacher education program of my university called, “Education, Schooling and Society”. As we progressed through the course, it occurred to me that perhaps that ‘knowing someone’s story, therefore loving them’ might be true of policy as well. What story does policy tell? How does the story of policy engage the heart and mind? Dunc Sheilds, a retired teacher and active storyteller quotes Chief Dan George when he has come to talk to my class: “The mind won’t do a damn thing until the heart feels something”12. The job of policy is to set down a plan to address a problem or situation—to provide guidelines and describe organizational structure and lines of accountability. The job of story, of the stories of the people, is to move the heart to feel. Do policy and storytelling go together? I will try, in this paper, to explain that they do, and how.

Teacher candidates take this course in their first semester of the teacher education program, before a short (2-week) practicum. The course is focused on teaching for social justice, and understanding educational policy in relation to social justice education. A previous iteration of this course, “social issues in education” was similarly broadly concerning educating for social justice, but dealt much less with BC education policy, and how teachers engage or navigate policies. This paper looks at the stories that some of these policies tell, and uses as interpretive guides two of the course assignments: a “teacher biography”, and a group presentation about educational policy. Students are encouraged to examine their social locations (in terms of class, race and sex) and to see how their locations and experiences influenced their expectations and choices. Their personal examinations, then, inform their study of social policies relating to public education.

12 Dunc Shields, guest speaker, EDST 401, September, 2012.
Stories of the People

All of the peoples of the earth have stories. Every land has an epic – in the UK there are the English Arthurian legends and Jack stories; the Mabinogion cycles of Wales, Ireland has The Ulster Cycle: Táin Bó Cúailnge. The Chinese have Tales of the Monkey King; Mali has the Sundiata; the Finns have the Kalevala, an epic story told in song— Indigenous people everywhere have hundreds of stories, some shared among nations, some regionally specific. Stories describe historical events, the development of laws, values, ethics; they tell of the wisdom of fools and the foolishness of leaders. They hold within them the story of all of our humanity. There are many similarities among these stories and epics, as well—they warn of common dangers; they show the way through earthly, human and divine difficulties; they entertain and they instruct. These epics, I suppose, served in part as ‘pre-literate’ versions of policy.

Of course, as well as the epic stories of The People, there are the individual stories of each person. The stories we tell also reveal something true about the teller. Our personal histories, and the ancient epics of the people of the world are deeply related. This paper is a preliminary investigation of the ways in which educational policies tell a story, and how the stories of each teacher might relate to these policy stories. We are all in conversations which affect our behaviours and our choices. How does the process of understanding our own stories in relation to policy stories affect the conversation, and how do these conversations affect our ambitions and abilities to act? Throughout the course, our shared discoveries of “policy stories” alongside their own life stories and discussions of academic articles and other texts combine to create a shared story of teachers learning to educate for social justice within an educational system guided by policies that often reify social injustices.

Setting the Scene for the Policy Stories: Class and Autobiography

An exercise I often use in class is the ‘class layer cake’13. Everyone lines up, with lots of room in front and behind, and not touching each other. The facilitator asks a series of questions, and, in silence, the group answers by stepping forward or backward. These questions include: “if neither of your parents have university degrees, step back”; “If your family has travelled abroad for reasons other than work or to visit family still living there, step forward. Take an additional step forward for each trip” At the end of the exercise, the facilitator, who has kept track of her own steps forward and back, places herself in the group. Everyone is invited to look around “Please notice who is with you…Notice who is not. Notice who has full view of the gaps between us, and who has her back to the gap. Notice how you feel about this. (pause) Now, please come back together again” (Jochild, 2004).

Students are then invited to gather in pairs or groups of three to discuss their insights and feelings, and then to write their reflections in a private journal. The reactions they have range from interested and excited to angry and ashamed—most often a complicated mixture of conflicting emotions and insights. The exercise reveals nothing about talents, motivation or personal discipline. Nevertheless, those who find themselves in the front of the group often feel as if they are guilty of some wrongdoing—and respond with either shame or defensiveness. Others who find themselves at the back of the group sometimes feel shame and embarrassment.

---

about where they come from; but some pride, too, because they are, in spite of structural barriers, in a university program. They know what it took for them to get there. Often people express surprise about where they find themselves – often people who find they are working class, or who land in the back of the room think they are middle class, and others who thought they were middle class find themselves looking to see most of their classmates behind them. It’s a powerful exercise, and reveals not only structural inequalities, but in the discussions and reflective writing exercise later, how invested people are in believing that these differences are based more on individual merit and enterprise than on political categories at birth and childhood. Teacher candidates often discover they have more or less power and wealth than their classmates, and they find this discomfiting.

This is the first part of their teacher biography assignment, for which I also ask them to tell some of the story of their people – parents, grandparents, teachers, mentors—and chronicles of events and places that influenced them. It’s a challenging exercise for many. To my surprise, most students in the classes I have taught have not been invited to tell their stories during their university careers. This biographical assignment and the ‘class layer cake’ activity, combined with dense theoretical readings about the social foundations of education and critical readings of policy documents—often results in a fair bit of cognitive dissonance for teacher candidates. Among the ways they might make sense of all this new knowledge is to investigate how these new theoretical concepts revise or reinforce their version of their story and how they might tell it.

From Stories People Tell of Themselves to ‘Stories of the People’ in Policy:
The Class Layer Cake and the autobiographical assignment formed a background for the third assignment in this class, a group presentation about an aspect of BC educational policy in the context of teaching for social justice. The final assignment of this new course was, in small groups of five or six students, to find a BC educational policy that had relevance to social justice and examine it “through the framework of a selected social justice approach”. Each group then developed a ten-minute presentation about the policy that also shows its strengths and weaknesses. Following the group presentation, each member of the group was to also submit a 1000 word summary of their analysis.

Previous to these presentations, we had read and discussed several aspects of teaching for social justice, including research about teachers’ analysis of and contributions to policy development (Gillies, 2008; Hargreaves, 1996; Gale and Densmore, 2003). Articles discussed Multiculturalism policies and racism (Finney, 2001; Harper, 1997), the liberal discourses of social studies teachers with regard to Aboriginal teachers (Orlowski, 2008), and corporate funding for public schools (Saltman, 2004). The class layer cake activity, and the teacher biography assignment, helped to condition the ground for their group policy investigations and presentations. In discussions of these and other articles, theoretical concepts made sense in the context of their experiences. The students in my class told stories about racial divides in their schools: “the South Asian kids were the dominant group in my school” one said, and we talked about how a dominated class will organize together to take power, often mimicking their own oppressors. We talked about what these dynamics meant in the context of teaching for social justice, and whether or not and how these dynamics might be reproduced or altered when they left school. Other students told about learning English for the first time in a Canadian kindergarten, or about growing up in poverty in a family that placed little value on formal
education. Others tell about their experiences in International Baccalaureate during high school, or about teachers’ stereotyping of them based on their skin colour and background, or about being bullied because they were chubby and shy. There are policies generated to address all of these experiences and problems, many of which were already in place when these teacher candidates were in the public school system.

The policies that the groups chose were: Sexual assault/sexual harassment; bullying; year-round schooling; dress code; daily physical activity requirements and criminal record checks. Every member of each group said that the wording of their policies was frustratingly vague, and seemed to have been written--in most cases--in order to cover for an oversight, mistake, or an abuse of power publically discovered. Also, their research revealed confirmation of an assertion from one of the readings; namely that “teachers … tend to be excluded from policy production” (Gale and Densmore, 2003: 51). Though the language was vague, everyone could find a story about the policy and its implications for their teaching practice, and all of them found some of the assigned articles helpful as they built their policy presentation. Theory made sense of the practice of policy.

Each of the final presentations, then, were done in a storytelling form – presentations were short plays, or panel discussions among the group, as each member explained or illustrated one aspect of the policy, and synthesized these parts together. Other groups invited the audience to describe their experiences of the issue with which their policy dealt, and used their contributions to build upon their prepared presentation. Initially, most students (as well as I) anticipated the study of educational policy to be deadly dull, and somewhat intimidating. However, as they found the stories they told, they gained some understanding and compassion for the educational culture they are about to join. They expressed frustration with the limitations of the policies, the vague wording and the lack of opportunity they will have, as teachers, to add their experiences to the development of policy. The process of coming to understanding, on the other hand, served to demystify and somewhat humanize these policies.

**Storytelling Lesson**

Storytelling as a pedagogical technique is important in the process of learning and understanding (Abrahamson, 1998). Through sharing our stories, we can deepen our understanding of ourselves in relation to others, as well as political implications of our teaching (Friere, 1970; Christiansen, 2012). It is possible, however, to misuse stories—to over-expose oneself or others, perpetuate factual inaccuracies or promote division (Juzwik, 2010). It’s important, therefore, to be intentional and disciplined in the application and instruction of storytelling as a teaching and research method.

There is a structure to stories that enable us to understand and follow them: introducing the characters, their relationships and conditions of their lives, context of the story and the essential conflict or problem, the approaches and obstacles to solving the conflict, and the resolution(s). There is a structure for policy, too—the rationale, background and principles promoted by the policy, eligibility criteria, assessment and identification of those served (or targeted) by the policy, and how the policy should be planned, carried out and evaluated. Stories such as folk tales and fairy tales, and policy both reveal and promote the values of the culture from which
they came—including racist and sexist prejudices and practices. They often describe relationships between dominating classes and dominated classes and seek to achieve equilibrium without necessarily challenging the status quo. But on the other hand, they also promote values that help us get along and maintain social connections.

Understanding what a story means requires understanding how it is linked to a storytelling event and how roles in that event influence the story being told. Investigating the circumstances of a story’s telling is critical to understanding what a story means and why it is important (Rymes, B. 2010: 372).

Depending upon the context or discipline within which the story is told there are variations to its purpose and structure. For example, a scientific article will leave out the background information about late nights of frustrating experimental failures or negotiating criteria with funders (Rymes 2010: 373), and a policy document rarely contains information about the crisis or event that lead to the development of the policy. Framing the presentations and discussions about educational policy with examples of their personal stories as well as articles about teaching practice and theory was essential to coming to an understanding of the stories of the policies.

About Those Biographies Again…

When students tell their stories, some experience embarrassment or shame about their relative placement within political categories; some are defensive, some are secretive, others exhilarated and happy for the opportunity. Some have said telling their stories helped them to reconcile with the choices their parents made; others expressed resentment at remembering some events. I am inspired and moved by these biographies, and the candour and vulnerability with which they are told to me. This fall, I wrote a letter to my students as they were about to embark upon their practicum placements. Excerpts from this letter are italicized below:

I learned a long time ago that when you learn someone’s story, you can’t help but love them. You may never agree with each other, you may not even like each other that much, but there is nevertheless the potential of connection, compassion and genuine respect. […]

One student later told me that knowing everyone had told their story was helpful for her to soften negative judgment of them. I hope to achieve that attitude toward policy by understanding the stories policy tells.

Some of you enjoyed your k-12 education very much – [...]. Some of you had a hard time— […]. Maybe you were the bully, but you didn’t tell me about that. None of this makes you any less human, or any less worthy of compassion and a place to belong. For each of you there was someone, at one or more times in your life, who saw you, and helped you begin to understand your worth.

14 Stories such as folk tales and fairy tales also reveal and promote deeply held cultural values that may be racist, sexist, or otherwise promote oppressive beliefs and practice. European fairy tales such as those collected by the German Brothers Grimm, or the Danish Hans Christian Andersen, for example are full of passive, mute, sleeping princesses, evil, jealous Queens and stepmothers and thieving Jews or scheming Moors.
You are part of each other’s lives now, and have much to offer one another. You are together better teachers than any one of you alone. Don’t forget your story; tell it and other stories often. Listen close for the stories of your colleagues and your students. Everyone can learn, everyone can teach—we are all capable of making an essential contribution. We need each other.

I admit, I was a bit less moved by the stories they found that policy tells, but nevertheless happily surprised that I found myself moved to know more, and to find the human narrative in policy documents. In general, policy is written to protect the interests of the powerful and to reinforce the status quo. But within the fairly rigid structures of the education system, teachers can, if they listen for the stories, find a way into a conversation and make some room for the stories of the policy and the stories of the people to relate to each other. In this way, perhaps, the structures of power can be jostled and hierarchies leveled as hearts are moved and minds engaged.

References
Archibald, J. (2008), Indigenous Storywork: Educating the heart, mind, body and spirit. UBC Press, Vancouver, BC.

http://www.rethinkingschools.org/archive/26_04/26_04_christensen.shtml


Earth as Sacred: The Role of Spiritual Retreat Centres in Environmental Adult Education

Janet Groen
University of Calgary

Abstract: This paper presents initial findings from the first portion of a research study; the profiles the two spiritual retreat centres and a brief thematic analysis on how members of the staff perceive and animate their role in fostering environmental awareness and action. In considering the implications for adult learning, the focus of a retreat centre lies not in the design and animation of overt programming, but in the thoughtful development of the natural setting and demonstrable environmental practices in its daily operations.

Introduction
While increasing numbers of adults are participating in self-directed learning activities at spiritual retreat centres in natural settings, little research has explored the connection between environmental adult education and spirituality. Indeed Walters (2009) indicated there is a notable paucity of research within the humanistic orientation to environmental adult education. “Case studies would be very valuable … on the learning that takes place within humanistic environmental education in deep ecology or spirituality (p. 21).

In this paper, I present part of my research findings from a study focusing on the potential of the spiritual retreat centre and the self-directed learning activities of its retreatants in shifting our relationship with the natural world and in turn fostering environmental awareness and action among adults. Using a combination of case study and life history methodologies at two identified spiritual retreat centres in Western Canada, the Centre at Naramata in British Columbia and King’s Fold Retreat Centre in Alberta, this study has three related research objectives: 1) How do spiritual retreat centres perceive their role in fostering environmental awareness and action and how this translated into practice in areas such as programming and daily operations? 2) What activities are engaged in by retreatants during a time of retreat at a spiritual retreat centre and why are those activities chosen? 3) What are the impacts of attending a spiritual retreat and the associated activities in activating environmental awareness and action of retreatants? This paper focuses on initial findings from the first portion of the research study; the profiles the two spiritual retreat centres and a brief thematic analysis on how members of the staff and board perceive and animate their role in fostering environmental awareness and action.

Context and Literature Review
Our expanding ecological crisis gives a new sense of urgency to the importance of environmental education for adults. Indeed adult education has much to contribute in fostering environmental awareness and action given its roots in community development and social justice (Selman, 1995). However scholars (Coates, 2003; Korten, 2009; Macy & Johnstone, 2012) have argued that responses, including adult education programs, focused on technological adjustments within the present worldview of modernity do little to address our environmental problems. What is needed is a deeper conversation on such existential questions as why we are here; what it means to be human; and what is our proper relationship with the world (Coates, 2003); calling on an environmental adult education approach that draws from the humanistic philosophy of learning.
“Learning in this tradition is deeply personal and holistic, stressing the intrinsic biophysical and spiritual connection of human beings to nature” (Walters, 2009, p. 3). Environmental adult educators Hill and Johnston (2003), affirming the importance of this orientation, stated our most important task is to foster learning opportunities that shift adult learners’ relationship with nature from being outside and controlling of nature to being within nature; in essence returning to a sacred understanding of our relationship with the environment.

My interest in this research draws on my previous research on spirituality as an emerging force in the workplace (Groen, 2004) and higher education (2009). The field of adult education, my academic home, has been engaged in the burgeoning interest in spirituality, examining its historical and theoretical understandings (English, 2005), applications within various contexts such as the workplace (English, Fenwick & Parsons, 2003), community development (Bean, 2000) and higher education (Tisdell, 2003); as well as self-directed learning experiences of adults (Hunt & West, 2006). Across this research a spiritual dimension repeatedly highlighted was interconnectedness, not only with each other, but with the natural world. Secondly, in studies that explored the spiritual experiences of adults (Lange, 2008), participants expressed a desire to intentionally seek this quality of interconnectedness with the universe and creation through time spent in nature and by engaging in practices such as contemplation and meditation. This research builds upon these findings, particularly the spiritual quest for interconnectedness with nature and the potential implications for environmental awareness and action.

Methodology and Research Design
Case study methodology was used to undertake the first research objective of this study: How do spiritual retreat centres perceive their role in fostering environmental awareness and action and how this translated into practice in areas such as programming and daily operations? According to Merriam (2009), case studies are complex and multilayered and are particularly useful for their rich description and heuristic value. Also, case study methodology is appropriate when a variety of approaches for data gathering are required. In this case, documenting and profiling the processes of creating and sustaining a retreat centre, with a particular focus on history, vision and goals, programming approaches and day-to-day operations, required multiple approaches. The three techniques of observation while on retreat at each centre, semi-structured interviews with staff and board members and document and web-site analysis were used to create a profile of the two chosen spiritual retreat centres and the themes presented in this paper.

Emerging Findings and Discussion
Prior to presenting preliminary themes, I offer a profile of each retreat centre.

King’s Fold Retreat Centre
After a crazy week, I am happy to be here. Filled with anticipation, I close the car door and follow the welcome sign to the main lodge. I am greeted by Shelley, a staff member who guides me through to the dining room. I stop dead in my tracks as I am confronted with incredible vista of the Rocky Mountains in the distance and the steep banks of the Ghost River in the forefront. “Wow”, I murmur. Shelley, standing behind me, responds “I just love seeing the initial reaction of first-time guests when they see this view. It really is amazing. Welcome to King’s Fold!”

199
Located in the foothills of the Rocky Mountains, King’s Fold Retreat Centre is 80 kilometres northwest of Calgary. It is an easy drive to the centre, on paved roads; but it feels remote, as the nearest town with any facilities is 40 kilometres away. Situated on 166 acres of land, with the Ghost River running through the middle of it, one quickly realizes that you are on the edge of wilderness. Only the acreage around the buildings is tended and the hiking trail, down to the river and across the riverbed, quickly leads into forest and meadowlands. Cougars, bears and coyotes share this space and at night wolves can occasionally be heard howling in the distance.

The main lodge, where almost all guests stay, has 14 bedrooms, a dining room, a kitchen, a well-stocked library, several conference spaces and smaller living room type rooms and corners for reading, drawing and just sitting. While all meals are provided, the fridge downstairs has healthy snacks for sale. As guests wander out of the main lodge, they have access to a larger chapel and a very small chapel with room for just one or two people, and a day-use building filled with craft supplies. The buildings have huge windows facing southwest, capturing the view of the river, the mountains and the dramatic weather systems racing eastward across the sky. Grounds close to the buildings feature a labyrinth, several hiking trails and two cabins, slightly set back, where it is possible to go on solitary retreat for several days.

Eight staff members, living on-site, run the daily operations of King’s Fold, with the assistance of regular volunteers. Duties range from grounds keeping and maintenance, to cooking, menu planning, grocery shopping and housekeeping. While staff members have specific duties, everyone assists with meal preparation, hosting guests at mealtimes and being on rotational duty on weekends when King’s Fold is especially busy with group retreats. Two members are also trained as Spiritual Directors and are available to guests upon request.

King’s Fold has its origins in the First Baptist Church in Calgary, with minister Bob Ball and his wife Janet Ball being the driving force in its creation. Having just returned from L’Abri, they wanted to create a space where younger people could come together to become an intentional community. They envisioned a place to “minister health and healing” and they also instinctively understood the key role a natural setting played in their dreams, as they described the ideal location: “…a river and lots of trees were essential, as was a view of the mountains“ (Loewen & McIvor, 2003, p. 15). Thirty-four years, after the initial groundbreaking ceremony, King’s Fold’s primary focus is to provide a place for individuals to engage in solitary retreat as revealed by the homepage of their website:

Welcome to King's Fold where Christian hospitality, intentional facilities and a pristine natural environment combine to offer a deeply spiritual and refreshing time of retreat. Our guests frequently tell us that, apart from the wonderful food, the most notable quality of King's Fold is the sense that they have entered a place of quiet, rest and spiritual vitality—a “sacred” place. (King’s Fold website)

The Centre at Naramata

“Where is this place?” I ask in frustration. My husband and I had just arrived in the village of Naramata, in the interior of British Columbia, after a nine-hour drive from Calgary. Unbeknownst to us, we had already driven through the Centre at Naramata, located right in the heart of the village. There was a sign
letting us know that we had arrived on the grounds but we must have missed it!
We turn around, finally realizing our error, and we check-into the main office.

The Centre at Naramata, one of four centres under the auspices of the United of Canada, is
unique in its location in the middle of a village. Naramata village on a peninsula jutting out into
Okanagan Lake has a population of approximately 2,500, with Penticton, a large town offering
all needed facilities, located 15 kilometres away. The drive from Penticton to the village
meanders through orchards, vineyards and an increasing number of award winning wineries.
The Centre has 23 acres and is bounded by a creek and a beautiful large sandy beach shaded by
mature willow trees. Two large cherry orchards have recently been removed as the trees were
becoming old and could only be maintained through the use of pesticide; a direction contrary to
the philosophy of the Centre. A two-minute walk from the Centre brings you to the village
general store, coffee shop, motels, craft shops and weekly market.

Since the Centre opened in 1947, “the facilities have gone from a hostel with one sink and
classes in the village church basement to the comprehensive retreat centre it is today” (Trainer,
2009, p. 98). The first building, purchased and transported from the Canadian Forces Base in
Vernon, B.C., was converted from its original use as an officer’s quarters and mess hall building
and is the location for the bookstore, administrative offices and meeting and teaching spaces.
Since then, space was cleared for campgrounds. Several cottages and dormitories were
constructed in the 1950s and 1970s and in 1961, Columbia Hall opened with a large kitchen,
dining hall and gymnasium. More recent additions include a large chapel, a labyrinth, a healing
house, the sacred garden and two more accommodation buildings that feature six bedrooms
opening onto a common living, dining and kitchen space. Last year, a large outdoor kitchen and
dining space was created for campers involved in summer programs. A tour of the site shows
wear and tear on many of the buildings and the septic system needs to be replaced. However,
funds are not readily on hand for these significant updates.

Staffing numbers at the Centre ebb and flow, depending on the program offerings. An executive
director, finance and marketing director, funding director, four program directors represent the
core salaried fulltime and part-time staff. Other staff members, responsible for the grounds,
kitchen and dining room, administrative functions and housekeeping, are employed on a seasonal
basis and have been unionized since the mid 1990s. In addition, several young adults are hired
for eight weeks to run children’s programming as part of the centre’s intergenerational summer
weekly programs. Finally, other independent programmers lead programs, three to seven days
in duration, during the spring and fall shoulder seasons.

As alluded to, the Centre runs a diverse range of programs; with the summer drawing the largest
number of participants. A board member indicated that it would be impossible to create the
ambience of being on retreat in the summer, when there are up to 500 people on site. This is in
contrast to King’s Fold, where self-directed retreats occur throughout the year, including summer,
and are initiated by retreatants who simply choose the timing and length of their stay.

Returning to the Centre, the shoulder seasons focuses on programs for adults and more
specifically, young adults. Of particular interest to this study are the scheduled self-directed
retreats under the spiritual nurture theme. Several three, five and eight day pre-dominantly self-
directed silent retreats are programmed during the spring and fall offerings. A spiritual director connects with retreatants during lunch and dinner, offers evening vespers in the chapel and is available for one-to-one spiritual direction. The remainder of the time is spent in self-directed activities. The significance of silence to the retreat experience is revealed in the Centre’s website descriptor for the April 2013 retreat offering.

Much more than the absence of noise – the practice of entering Silence is a powerful way to reconnect with our most authentic selves and enter into an ever-expanding communion with the Holy. This contemplative retreat offers a time to deepen your spiritual journey in an atmosphere of prayerful silence. We “fast’ from conversation, work, outside influences and communications – not as challenge but as gift!

Preliminary Themes
Preliminary analysis of staff interviews and each centre’s documents reveal congruence and divergence between these two places of retreat. An area of congruence is the deep abiding notion that the natural setting can have a sacred identity: an identity that is multi-dimensional, rich and powerful. Lois, spiritual director and programmer at the Centre, described how such an identity evolves over several generations.

There is something at the spiritual level, the cumulative effective of people coming to pray and meditate and listen and discern over time that shifts an environment and it is a two way thing; the environment affects what happens and hopefully our attention and quality of our presence has an effect back.

Oz, the executive director of King’s Fold, also made the connection to the idea of sacred identity when describing his setting.

That’s the allure of nature when we are willing to let nature speak to us and for sure that’s the lure of King’s fold because of the mountains… so nature presents the invitation, for those who are willing, into “wow there is something outside of me that I don’t control.

In turn, the land offers the invitation for retreatants to engage however they wish. To sleep, to read, to meditate, to journal, to sit, to draw, to walk … In considering the implications for adult learning, the focus of a retreat centre lies not in the design and animation of overt programming, but in the thoughtful development of the natural setting. One staff, at King’s Fold explained that most of their ‘programming’ energy is devoted to creating places of hospitality and invitation; not only in the obvious places such as the chapel and the labyrinth but within the living space in the lodge. “Every piece of furniture is moved with lots of discussion about how it lends to providing space and the options of learning more about contemplative spirituality.” Lois also spoke the importance of intentionally creating spaces that enhance the natural setting, as she described the creation of the Spiritual Directions cottage. “Simple, clean, but considered. The images are nice and calming and it’s a good-sized space for a 2 person conversation …it was a very intentional development”.

However, how this shared belief in the sacred identity of the retreat centre is animated in the functional aspects, such as cleaning and menu offerings, is where the retreat centres diverge. Indeed the daily practice of each centre and how its belief in the sacredness of the land comes into sharp focus under the observant eyes of the retreatants and it becomes a critical, unspoken aspect of programming. What food is served and how is it prepared? What are the practices around waste disposal and reduction? How are the grounds cared for and what chemicals are used? Several of the staff members at King’s Fold have put their energy into more sustainable practices in their daily operations. “If our mandate is stewardship, hospitality and care, there are certain things we can take steps towards”. Specifically, they are becoming more intentional about recycling and composting, careful use of the water in the Ghost River Watershed, using naturally based cleaning products and providing menus that are more health conscious.

In contrast, the staff at the Centre at Naramata feel they had a long way to go; there is a fundamental lack of congruence between the values of environmental awareness and justice they espouse and their actual practices. For example, while located within an area abundant with produce, most of their food is not purchased locally. As well, there is concern about food waste and food offerings. “Can’t we eat simpler, can I just have a salad for lunch?” Mary-Ann, also a programmer at the Centre, sees this as a powerful opportunity. “My big thing is we as a team, we as a staff at Naramata, we need to be absolute congruent an living all this.” In addition, Janet, the Centre’s executive, is beginning to focus on portion control, waste management and reducing the reliance on disposable items. However, the push for increased congruence between environmental values and operations is happening within a tense culture of ‘us and them.’ Staff who actually cook, clean and maintain the grounds are unionized and programmatic staff are salaried and non-unionized.

While this thematic analysis is preliminary, significant to me is the centrality of the setting in potentially creating environmental awareness and action. “I’m convinced of the value of a place where people can just come and be silent, be un-programmed, unscheduled. I am convinced of that because I see the need in our culture and society” (Oz, Executive Director of King’s Fold).

References


The Triple Glass Effect and Immigrant’s Downward Social Mobility: Implications for Adult Education

Shibao Guo
University of Calgary

Abstract: This study reveals that the negative experience of recent Chinese immigrants can be attributed to a triple glass effect consisting of a glass gate, glass door, and glass ceiling. While a glass gate denies immigrants’ entrance to guarded professional communities, a glass door blocks immigrants’ access to professional employment at high-wage firms. It is the glass ceiling which prevents immigrants from moving up to management positions because of their ethnic and cultural differences. The findings of this study have important implications for adult education in developing an inclusive framework that works toward recognitive justice.

Introduction
Despite Canada’s preference for highly skilled immigrants and despite the fact that immigrant professionals bring significant human capital resources to Canada, many well-educated immigrants have encountered difficulties in integrating into Canadian society and the Canadian labour market. Upon arriving in Canada, many immigrants find their prior learning and work experience undervalued or unrecognized because of their real and alleged differences are claimed to be incompatible with the cultural and social fabric of traditional Canada (Andersson & Guo, 2009; Basran & Zong, 1998; Guo, 2009; Shan, 2009). As a consequence, many of them experienced downward social and occupation mobility, which hindered their integration process. It is not clear however what led to immigrant’s negative experiences in Canada. More importantly, it is imperative to examine the implications of such consequences for adult education, because it is believed that adult education can play an important role in advancing social change and inclusive citizenship. It is therefore the purpose of this study to explore factors that have contributed to immigrant’s downward social mobility as well as its implications for adult education.

Theoretical Framework
A number of studies reveal that immigrant professionals hit a “glass ceiling” in the career and socio-economic mobility (Pendakur & Pendakur, 2007; Pendakar & Woodcock, 2010; Wong & Wong, 2006). The “glass ceiling” metaphor was introduced in the late 1970s as a way of understanding the barriers confronting American women in moving up the corporate hierarchy (Wong & Wong, 2006). It is called glass ceiling because “one can see through it to a desired management position but cannot go through the impenetrable barrier that it represents” (Wong, 2006, p. 23). It was not until the late 1980s that the term was broadened to include issues of racial discrimination in the workplace. According to Wong and Wong (2006), research on barriers for visible minorities in Canada is often presented under rubrics of systemic racism and unequal access rather than via the glass ceiling concept per se. In recent years, however, there has been an emerging body of research in Canada and elsewhere applying this concept to analyze immigrants’ experience (de la Rica, Dolado & Llorens, 2005; McCoy & Masuch, 2007; Pendakur & Pendakur, 2007; Pendakar & Woodcock, 2010; Wong 2006; Wong & Wong, 2006).

In a Calgary-based study, Wong and Wong (2006) found the existence of a glass ceiling for Chinese engineers in Canadian firms. They report that a significant proportion of Chinese
engineers perceived and experienced a glass ceiling owing to their ethnicity, culture, race, skin colour, language, accent or religion. They are under-represented in management, and the higher the management level, the greater was the under-representation they perceived. Glass ceilings also restricted many talented Chinese in Silicon Valley from rising to management positions, which consequently forced many to start their own businesses (Wong, 2006). Pendakur and Pendakur (2007) used the glass ceiling concept to analyze earnings disparity between white Canadians and visible minorities. They found evidence of glass ceiling for older and more educated visible minority men in comparison with similar white men owing to the limited access of the former group to high-wage jobs. In keeping with this body of research, this study aims to further explore immigrants’ downward social mobility by focusing on the experiences of Mainland Chinese, and determining the extent to which glass ceiling and related effects apply to this group in the process of economic integration.

**Research Design and Data Collection**

This study combined questionnaire with personal interviewing. Questionnaires provided a useful starting point by allowing me to maximize the number of responses within a reasonably short time period. The questionnaire requested basic demographic information, motivations for immigrating to Canada, and integration experience of Chinese immigrants. Participants were recruited through immigrant service organizations and churches where Chinese immigrants were more likely to congregate. Records in the Landed Immigrant Data System were used as a guide to help select respondents. A total of 255 completed questionnaires were collected in Calgary and Edmonton, two of the top five cities that received Chinese immigrants. The questionnaire was made available in both English and Chinese. To further probe responses, personal interviews were conducted with willing participants from the survey. Interviewing emphasized personal and lived experiences of participants with their settlement and integration in both cities. Fourteen semi-structured interviews were conducted in Edmonton and eight in Calgary with participants of different age, gender, education background, length of stay, and employment. Each interview lasted between 1 and 1.5 hours and all interviews were transcribed verbatim for analysis. This paper reports the survey findings.

**Research Findings**

*Characteristics of Recent Chinese Immigrants*

An analysis of the survey data reveals that since the mid-1990s, Calgary and Edmonton attracted a large number of highly skilled Chinese immigrants to their booming oil and gas cities. The study demonstrates that recent Chinese arrivals were young, well-educated and experienced professionals. The age of this group is much younger than that of the cohort previously reported by Guo and DeVoretz (2006a) with 82 per cent between the prime working age of 26-45 and a mean age of 34. This is exactly the age group that Canada targets with its immigration programs. In terms of educational background, the overwhelming majority of participants (95.2 per cent) came with post-secondary education. Of particular interest are those with bachelors (49.4 per cent), masters (19.4 per cent) and doctoral degrees (13.4 per cent), adding up to 82.2 per cent of the sample. The majority came as skilled immigrants (68.3 per cent) and only 18.3 per cent came under family reunification. These figures reflect Canada’s preference, in recent years, for economic and skilled immigrants over family-class immigrants and refugees (Li, 2003). The crucial question is whether they will be able to fully exploit their education and skills in Canada.
Motivations for Moving to Canada
Moving to a new country is a big decision that requires careful thinking and planning. Previous studies show that Chinese immigrants moved to Canada for economic opportunities (Li, 1998; Tan & Roy, 1985). Findings from this study, however, demonstrate that non-economic reasons, such as Canada’s clean natural environment (52.5 per cent) and its liberal education or school system (47.5 per cent), are also significant “pull” factors. Other reasons cited less frequently in this study included seeking new opportunities (25.1 per cent) and acquiring Canadian citizenship or permanent residency (22.7 per cent). Among the top four motivations, three were non-economic. This finding is significant because it differs from the traditionally cited economic motivations for migration and raises the question of how the presence of non-economic factors might alter existing policy approaches. The next question in the study explored whether Chinese immigrants in Calgary and Edmonton had achieved their main goals since immigrating to Canada. Fewer than half (43.5 per cent) indicated that they had. Of those who had not, language difficulties (83.1 per cent) and lack of Canadian work experience (66.3 per cent) were the most frequently cited obstacles, followed by Chinese work experience not being recognized (43.8 per cent), lack of Canadian qualifications (41.6 per cent), and lack of social network (39.3 per cent). The challenges faced by skilled immigrants point to the need for policy-makers to develop programs and policies that will ensure the fair evaluation and recognition of immigrants’ credentials and prior work experience.

Multiple Barriers Facing Immigrant’s Integration
The core of this study is an investigation of the economic integration of recent Chinese immigrants to Calgary and Edmonton. When asked if they had encountered any major difficulties in their integration process, the majority (70 per cent) indicated that they had. Language (84 per cent) and employment (50.9 per cent) were the most serious difficulties, followed by social networking (43.4 per cent), and cultural adjustment (41.1 per cent). With respect to the quality and appropriateness of their employment, respondents comparing their situation in Canada with China, were most likely to have experienced deterioration. In light of this, comparison was made to highlight changes of immigrant’s employment before and after immigration. The study findings show that most participants’ employment situations took a downturn after immigrating to Canada. Prior to moving to Calgary and Edmonton, the majority (76.7 per cent) held jobs in natural and applied sciences, teaching, managerial occupations, or finance and business; after immigration, however, the number working in these occupations had dropped to 41.9 per cent. On the other hand, there had been a 17 per cent increase in people working as labourers in processing and manufacturing. Even worse, 11.3 per cent of respondents were unemployed after immigration. These findings are not unique to Calgary and Edmonton. Previous research shows that recent Chinese immigrants in Vancouver have faced similar difficulties (Guo & DeVoretz, 2006b).

Collectively, employment statistics for Canada’s Chinese immigrant professionals illustrate that these individuals face “glass ceilings” in the Canadian labour market (Pendakur & Woodcock, 2010; Wong & Wong, 2006). Their high educational achievements fail to yield high occupational achievements owing to devaluation of their foreign credentials, and in-access to employment at high-wage firms. Glass ceiling effects are also manifested in immigrants’ weak economic performance. In this study, deteriorated employment directly affected participants’ annual household incomes. More than one third (37.2 per cent) reported a poverty level income
of less than $20,000. This poverty rate is significantly higher than the 16 per cent low-income cut-off rate for the overall Canadian population, and 26 per cent low-income rate found for the Chinese population in Canada overall (Lindsay, 2007). As a consequence, recent Chinese immigrants experience downward social and occupation mobility, which hinders their integration.

**Understanding Immigrant’s Downward Social Mobility: The Triple Glass Effect**

Despite the fact that many Chinese immigrants came with high degrees, unfortunately their educational qualifications failed to yield high occupational and economic achievements. It is evident that they hit glass ceilings in the process of transferring their human capital to Canada. Because the glass ceiling concept is primarily concerned with the ability to rise to management positions in the corporate hierarchy, it seems clear that the glass ceiling alone cannot fully explain immigrants’ experience. For Chinese immigrants, the main issue lies in entering the corporate hierarchy in the first place; multi-faceted institutional barriers prevent professional immigrants from entering the organisations wherein they can fully exploit their education and skills. This study concludes that immigrant professionals potentially face three layers of glass in their integration process: the glass gate, glass door, and glass ceiling.

The first layer, the glass gate, determines whether immigrants should receive their professional membership and enter a gated professional community. However, successful license does not automatically guarantee a professional job, and immigrant professionals need a professional company to house them. In securing a professional job, many immigrants hit the second layer of glass – the glass door. As Pendakur and Woodcock (2010) point out, glass doors put up barriers that limit disadvantaged workers’ access to employment at high-wage firms. At this level, employers are the key players. Employers may refuse to offer immigrants any professional jobs because they do not have Canadian work experience, or their prior work experience is devalued because it is inferior to the Canadian experience. Or, immigrants may not secure any professional job because of their skin colour or their English accents. For those “lucky” ones who are already within the doors of a professional company, a third layer of glass may be encountered in subsequent career stages – the glass ceiling. As discussed earlier, glass ceilings prevent immigrants from moving up to management positions. Worse still, some immigrants may work on the same job but be paid less than their white colleagues, creating racialized disparities in earnings.

It seems evident that glass gate, glass door, and glass ceiling are not terms which may be used interchangeably to describe immigrants’ economic integration experiences. Rather, these terms reflect independent institutional barriers that affect immigrants’ new working lives at different stages of their settlement and integration processes. The most worrisome is that they may converge to produce a triple glass effect – multiple institutional barriers that can cause unemployment and underemployment, poor economic performance, and downward social mobility.

**Conclusion and Implications for Adult Education**

The findings of this study fill an important gap in immigration studies regarding the experience of recent immigrants to Canada. With the triple glass effect, the causes of immigrants downward social mobility are complex, occur at multiple junctures of the integration process, and therefore any solution should not aim for a quick fix. Instead, it requires a strong political will and a very coherent policy response, involving multiple players including government organizations,
professional associations, employers, educational institutions, and prior learning assessment agencies. It is the responsibility of federal and provincial governments to exercise their legislative roles to introduce new bills that will make regulatory bodies and employers accountable for how they treat immigrants. More importantly, it is time to launch a campaign to educate the Canadian public about the politics of difference and knowledge and about the contributions of immigrants to Canadian society, the reciprocal respect they deserve from Canadian society, and the rights they are entitled to as new citizens to this country.

The study also has significant implications for adult education. As our population is growing more diverse, it is imperative for adult educators to be more inclusive in order to embrace people from different ethnic and cultural backgrounds. In light of this, this study urges adult educators to revitalize the progressive roots of adult education for social change (Cunningham, 2000; Freire, 1970; Hall, 2006) by re-examining the practice of adult education. One such practice pertains to the prior learning assessment and recognition (PLAR) which has been heralded by adult educators as “potentially the most radical innovation” since the introduction of mass formal education during the 19th century (Thomas, 1998, p. 330). With respect to immigrants’ experience, we need to ask whether PLAR has lost its radical roots and become a serious barrier to adult learning rather than a facilitator.

To build a more inclusive and socially just adult education that immigrants feel they belong, one suggestion is to adopt an inclusive framework that allows us to work toward recognitive justice that balances freedom of migration with recognition and full membership in Canada (Guo, 2010). Instead of treating immigrants as deficient and inferior individuals, recognitive justice recognizes their special contributions to the host society. In rejecting the deficit model, recognitive justice acknowledges and affirms cultural difference and diversity as positive and desirable assets. Recognitive justice also offers pluralist citizenship as alternative to universal citizenship that recognizes transnational flows of migration and multiple attachments to specific traditions, values, languages, and knowledge. Only by applying an integrated approach can the issue be tackled more holistically.

References


Crossing Borders: Developing Collaborations with Indigenous Communities

Cindy Hanson
University of Regina

Abstract: Internationalization and Indigenization are frequently treated as distinct discursive frameworks, however, based on international experiences developing a SSHRC-funded study on intergenerational learning and knowledge transfer in Indigenous textile art production (for example, with the Mapuche, Cree, and Métis), a multidisciplinary project that intersects with non-formal adult learning, I imply that borders are ambiguous and relationships are experienced in more nuanced ways. In this way, the research process also suggests a terrain where non-Indigenous researchers engage in collaborative research that values and highlights Indigenous epistemologies by embracing a commitment to build relationships with Indigenous communities of practice, develop ethical and appropriate frameworks, and draw upon postcolonial methodologies.

Background to Study
Foundational documents for universities across Western Canada mandate internationalization and Indigenization as vital pillars for university growth, direction, and curricula. Such a mandate can suggest an attempt to decolonize institutions, encouraging the implementation of Indigenous epistemologies and methodologies and creating new possibilities for research and collaboration. While the two—internationalization and Indigenization—are treated as distinct discursive frameworks, a transnational feminist approach suggests that such borders or boundaries are ambiguous and fragmented, intersecting and converging. Specifically, a political terrain where non-Indigenous researchers engage in collaborative research that values and highlights Indigenous epistemologies. As part of this process, the researchers must also decolonize, shedding Western epistemological layers and, importantly, locating their social positioning (Absolon & Willett, 2005). Although such acknowledgement identifies bias, it also adheres to an Indigenous belief systems in which individuals trace social and cultural histories, which are neither neutral nor objective.

The recent SSHRC Insight Development Grant I received for a project called Intergenerational Learning in Indigenous Textile Communities of Practice, involves a story of embracing such a commitment. It is a multidisciplinary project that intersects with adult learning and is located in transnational contexts – Chile and Saskatchewan. Among other things, this includes efforts spent building relationships with Indigenous communities of practice (CoP), developing ethical and appropriate frameworks, and drawing upon postcolonial methodologies (Chilisa, 2012; Tuhiwai Smith, 1999).

By using postcolonial, participatory, and Indigenous research methodologies, and by working with the assistance of academic and community collaborators, this pilot study explores

15 Idealistically, this may be conceived as “feminism without borders” (Grewal & Kaplan, 1994; Mackie, 2001). Transnational suggests that this form of feminism goes across, beyond, and/or between borders. In addition, transnational feminism includes the process of deconstructing identity boundaries and moving towards a discovery of inter-connections, whilst recognizing the inequities which exist between individuals (Mackie, 2001).
intergenerational learning and knowledge transfer in Indigenous textile communities of practice. According to Wenger (2006), a CoP is “formed by people who engage in a process of collective learning in a shared domain” (p.1). Within the domain of textile arts, for example, such learning is often considered intergenerational – that is, knowledge is transferred and shared between generations. According to the literature, a community of practice – a site of learning where people are linked by a sense of belonging, meaning, identity and practice – is a good site for research on informal learning because of its stability and because of the regard for situated learning within it (Lave and Wenger, 1991).

Critical Indigenous methodologies suggest that attention be provided to relationships and positions of difference/power (Denzin, Lincoln & Tuiwiwai Smith, 2008). Using such methodologies therefore can involve, as in the case of the study on intergenerational learning, working with collaborators, relational networks, elders, community coordinators, and the community of practice. Together the collaborators and study participants continue to inform the draft study questions, which include the following: how is learning structured and passed on (the process of knowledge mobilization and sharing) to subsequent generations within the Community of Practice? Are there ways that intergenerational learning can be enhanced or sustained? How are identities (particularly cultural and gendered) embedded in the weaving/beading practices? In what ways (if any) might the community wish to mobilize and disseminate knowledge about the results of this study to a wider audience?

**Locating the Researcher Position**

Building international Indigenous research relationships has included engagement with Indigenous issues over the past 30 years in personal and political ways; my interdisciplinary doctoral work, and more recently travel to the communities of research for preliminary discussions about the research before funding was sought. From past work with Indigenous communities – including my experiences living with the Mapuche people in Chile, working in Aboriginal education, and living with a Métis partner – I developed capacity and relationships that help to facilitate this research. I also obtained funding—SSHRC and the President’s Travel Fund (University of Regina) to visit Indigenous communities in Nepal, Peru and Chile—in an effort to find appropriate collaborators at a country and community level, and further develop and strengthen relationships. That travel resulted in a decision to initiate the study with research sites in Chile and Saskatchewan. The work I initiated in Chile also resulted in an MOU between the Universidad de la Frontera in Temuco (UFRO), Chile and the University of Regina. This institutional linkage provides an additional layer of support for the project. I am working closely with three student graduate assistants on this project. One of the students working with me specifically joined the Masters of Adult Education program after she heard about this study.

My position is that heed can now be paid to the calls for the creation of new relationships with Indigenous communities by engaging in what several authors outline as methodologies that weave ethical approaches, emancipatory models, including participatory research, self-reflexivity and a critique of researchers’ social subjectivities, and Indigenous research practices and worldviews within cross-cultural research. As Tuiwiwai-Smith (1999) asserts, contemporary research involving Indigenous peoples and communities must address the "relationship between knowledge and power, between research and emancipation, and between lived reality and imposed ideals about the other" (p. 165). Thus, it is necessary that research methodologies must
engage with decolonizing processes that seek to unhinge power relations and provide an ethical, culturally-based foundation for practice (Ermine, 2000). In terms of gauging intergenerational learning and knowledge transfer in Mapuche or Cree textile art production, for example, a discourse on ethics with collaborating organizations or communities constitutes a vital point of entry in which to outline appropriate approaches and methodologies for the project. The language of use is critical at this stage and accessibility to the study also depends upon availability of translation, simple English and so on. The use of a community coordinator and elders in this process was seen as crucial.

**Informing the Research Paradigm**

There is no doubt that an understanding of Indigenous methodologies emerges from working with Indigenous communities, participating in ceremonies, and developing relationships with Indigenous peoples. For example, participation in talking circles in various contexts in Canada, and in the case of Chile, ceremonies in the *ruka* sharing *maté*¹⁶ have assisted me as the researcher, to comprehend the links between Indigenous worldviews in theory and in practice. The experiences have created within me a conscientious shift in how I understand connections between physical and spiritual worldviews. This shift has led me to understand that Indigenous methodologies can be viewed as an adaptation of ceremony or at the very least, as a way of engaging with Indigenous peoples in a manner that is culturally appropriate and which could be considered an anti-colonialist interventionist. Undoubtedly, recognition of the tension within this position is necessary. For example, the place of privilege, race, education, and power are all at play in the research process and the research embodies and questions such positions and the paradoxes within them.

In developing the methods and methodology for the study, for example, I had to be ever-cognizant about place and position, and about finding methodologies that would integrate what I knew about community, ceremony and sharing. This study, specifically, uses symbol-based learning and story circle focus groups, which privilege oral tradition and story-based learning that is premised on the reciprocal relationship between the teller and listener (Chilisa, 2012; Lavallée, 2009). The familiarity of such approaches to those who have grown up in Indigenous communities then transfers into knowledge-sharing, local and personal, which transform theories and practices, and which additionally, exposes social realities.

Indigenous researchers, scholars, and activists have contributed to a body of literature addressing collaborative research processes with Indigenous communities. Such literature responds to the long history of asymmetrical power relations involved with research practices and knowledge production imposed upon Indigenous peoples. Specifically, Western researchers have, in the quest to secure knowledge and dominance, displayed and studied Indigenous bodies, exploited Indigenous communities, and extracted Indigenous knowledges, encounters that may be described as fully colonial, as such practices have sought to control, own, and know Indigenous nations. Stemming from the Enlightenment tradition, which asserts universalism, objectivity, and categorization—what Friere (1994) calls “the old order”—and colonialism, these research practices are too often bound with violence and violation.

---

¹⁶ The *ruka* is a traditional Mapuche home. Maté is a herbal drink shared by the Mapuche at the start of any gathering.
Developing Collaborations in the Contact Zone

In the context of globalization, it is increasingly important to understand how Indigenous peoples simultaneously resist neo-liberalism through cultural practices that defy the marketplace and which continue to exist in the contact zone (Pratt, 1991). In discussing the position of the Mapuche within the Chilean state, for example, research demonstrates that the Mapuche workers constantly engaged in negotiation and hybrid forms of maintaining a distinct, yet Chilean identity. For example, they used resources of the state strategically for activist movements, but understood the ways in which the state co-opted their Mapuche identity (Park & Richards, 2007). The research process in other words, can also draw attention to the critical role of experience and the complex ways race, class, culture and other forms of diversity are represented – including the ways that identities cross borders of place and ideology.

Challenging and Shifting Research Paradigms

Historically, Western research methodologies, which assert harmful Eurocentric notions and ideologies, have exploited Indigenous communities and knowledges (Ermine, 2000; Tuhiwai Smith, 1999). Colonialism has, to a great extent, informed such practices and positioned Indigenous peoples as inferior, maintaining dominant/ subordinate relationships. (Poupart, Martinez, Red Horse, & Scharnberg, 2001). Thus, Indigenous peoples have been othered, dehumanized and stereotyped through the lens of Western research (Poupart et al., 2001). As William Ermine (2000) argues, colonial ideologies and intolerant discourses—the gaze of white colonial regimes—have produced potent knowledge about Indigenous ways of being that manifest and persist in policies, pedagogy, and the collective psyche of the dominant culture (p. 77). Moreover, such paradigms have dismissed Indigenous methodologies and subverted worldviews. As Linda Tuhiwai-Smith (1999) states, research is one of “the dirtiest words in the Indigenous world’s vocabulary” (p. 1). Indigenous scholars instead argue for processes that are holistic and mutualistic (Battiste & Henderson, 2000), community-driven and guided by an Elder (dé Ishtar, 2005), and wherein the researcher locates themselves and their social position as part of a decolonizing practice. Choosing the study methods was therefore critical in the process.

Research Methods and Methodology

The study uses mixed methods, including interviews and two focus groups inspired by Indigenous research methodologies. The focus groups in particular, involve working through images and story circles. Specifically, symbol-based learning and story circle focus groups emphasize oral traditions and learning based on senses, including the visual, aural, and tactile (dé Ishtar, 2005; Silko, 1990; Bourdieu, 1991). Pierre Bourdieu’s theoretical work on bodily narration addresses how knowledge can be expressed and conveyed through postures, facial expressions, and gestures, which articulate deeper emotional aspects of the participants’ memories (dé Ishtar, 2005). Such a notion invokes the concept of “blood memory”, which may also be referred to as bone memory (Allen, 1999; Lavallée, 2009; Henderson, 2000). As a way of knowing, blood memory asserts that extended kinship passes on teachings and cultural practices, including rituals and ceremonies, from generation to generation (Henderson, 2000). Memory, thus, engages with a profound body of Indigenous knowledge, one that relates to intergenerational learning through storytelling. Lavallée (2009) uses Anishnaabe symbol-based reflection as part of an arts-based research approach that emphasizes story-telling and community engagement. This method encourages participants to identify, represent, and engage through creative approaches that
connect with memory, personal narrative, and collective history.

Sharing circles focus on storytelling and personal narrative, considered a specific strand of Indigenous knowledge (Lavallée, 2009; Baskin, 2005). This qualitative research, which unites the individual with the collective and the researcher with participants, emphasizes lived experience, interconnectedness and holism, and healing. Lavallée states:

> There is recognition that the spirits of our ancestors and the Creator are present in the circle and guide the process. Energy is created in the circle by the spirit of the people involved. The circle is nonjudgmental, helpful, and supportive. Respect is important, and this includes listening to others. (p. 30)

Sharing circles may be viewed as an anticolonial epistemology in the sense that they involve the direct involvement of participants within the research, thereby unhinging dynamics related to power/knowledge and to promote empowerment, inclusivity, and respect (Dickson, 2000). Sharing circles were a key method used in the study data gathering process.

**Preliminary Research Findings**

The collection of data for the study on intergenerational learning is still underway. It involves adapting focus groups into a culturally-appropriate format – in this case, story, sharing circle focus groups. The first focus/discussion group took place at Wanuskewin Heritage Park, near Saskatoon on March 18, 2013. There were 14 study participants ages 24 to 95 years present. They represented Metis, Cree and Dene ancestry. Most were originally from Northern reserves in Saskatchewan. The participants were asked in advance to bring samples of their beading work or past work so that it could be shared with others in the group – part of the informal learning that the research offered; also part of community-building and gathering of “tools” for the storytelling pedagogies. The session was opened by an elder and then participant consent forms were described in simple English. Translation was available at all times and three participants chose to speak in Cree, dispersed with English. Time was built in for eating together, sharing knowledge informally, and responding to the research questions. The informal sharing was considered part of the research process and part of relationship building.

The session lasted almost four hours. Preliminary findings from that focus group include: 1) an acknowledgement that beading is primarily learned inter-generationally and when individuals said they “learned it on my own” they almost always then went on to describe how they learned by observing a family member at work; 2) the meaning associated with beading varied with identity strongly expressed and economics other than trading less obvious; 3) aspects of hide preparation seem to be primarily a skill of older generations and older participants were more likely to speak about the whole process (including killing, tanning, etc.), not just the act of beading; 4) the practice of having men involved in beading seems to be normative; and 5) there is a strong desire to share the knowledge. These preliminary findings will be complimented by additional data gathering in Saskatchewan and Chile and by the ways the participants will decide to share their knowledge with a wider community in additional gatherings later in the year.
Conclusion

Engaging in a research practice that involves non-Indigenous researchers building relationships and collaborations that value and highlight Indigenous lived experiences and epistemologies is challenging and takes personal commitment beyond the scope of traditional Western academic paradigms. Such a commitment includes building relationships with Indigenous people and communities, developing ethical and appropriate frameworks, and learning and implementing postcolonial methodologies. These attributes of practice are seldom straightforward or linear. They are however, part of understanding a decolonizing methodology and of deconstructing how borders limit possibilities for fully understanding interconnections between people and places. It is my hope the learnings from this research may have implications for the theory and practice of adult and lifelong learning in diverse contexts and perhaps more importantly, for the development of other collaborations based on mutual respect, healing, community well-being and decolonizing practices.

Acknowledgement:
Contributions to this paper by Bridget Keating, a University of Regina graduate student and research assistant for this study, are gratefully acknowledged.

References


Learning our Neighbourhood Histories: A Search for Decolonizing Place-Based Pedagogies

Elizabeth Henry
University of British Columbia

Abstract: This study investigates decolonizing place-based pedagogies and their potential to facilitate learning among non-Indigenous learners. In this action research project, I facilitated workshops with adults at Kitsilano Neighbourhood House in Vancouver. Participants researched Indigenous, immigrant and settler histories and shared photos of what they had learned about their neighbourhood. In the workshops I discussed how Musqueam, Squamish and Tsleil-Waututh Nations lived, sometimes seasonally, in what is now a city park, and how colonization operated to displace these Nations. I recorded participants’ learning about (de)-colonization, as well as, their suggestions for acknowledging histories in their new neighbourhood house.

Introduction
My research explores how visitor-settlers participate in decolonizing place-based learning in Vancouver. Specifically I examined how learning Indigenous, settler and immigrant histories in a person’s own neighbourhood can contribute to decolonizing place-based learning. In my study I explore the following overarching research question: how can decolonizing place-based pedagogies encourage visitor-settlers to learn about colonization, engage in forms of decolonization and become supportive allies in Indigenous struggles for sovereignty? I facilitated a series of three historical decolonizing place-based workshops at Kistilano Neighbourhood House (Kits House), followed by community member interviews, to answer this question.

Theoretical Framework
In the practice of decolonizing place-based education, my work draws upon several theories related to teaching adults from non-Indigenous backgrounds. I expand on Curry-Stevens’s (2007) pedagogy for the privileged to effectively engage adult learners who come from privileged social backgrounds. I combine her framework with several place-based educational theories, including critical place-based education (Greenwald, 2003), and Mercier’s (2011) understanding of the glocal. In other words, I have adopted a critical ‘glocal’ lens to learn with my neighbours about colonization, a global political system, and to practice decolonization in Vancouver, a specific local context.

Methodology
Throughout my research, I acted as a participant observer and engaged community members and myself in the “plan, act & observe, reflect spiral” of action research (Kemmis and McTaggart, 2000, p. 596). The action research project included:

1) forming an action research team with seven community members;
2) documenting local Indigenous, immigrant and settler histories through document analysis;
3) facilitating and observing decolonizing place-based learning processes in three workshops; and
4) interviewing community members to further reflect on their learning process.
Through documenting the workshops, I sought to understand how community members learned from decolonizing place-based pedagogies. In the follow up interviews, I dug deeper into participants’ understandings of neighbourhood history, colonization, decolonization and reconciliation.

Seven research participants were recruited based on their interest in and knowledge of local history, their involvement in Kits House programs and their ability to participate between June and December 2012. All seven participants who volunteered to participate in the study are women, with a range of ages from early adulthood to seniors. Five participants are present or past residents of Kitsilano (six to forty years), and two are residents of other Westside neighbourhoods. Participants grew up in different locations including: Lower Mainland (Anne, Mary, Natalie), Washington State (Claire), Nova Scotia (Sarah), China (Jane) and Ireland (Erin). Five participants identified with Western European ancestry (English, Irish, Scottish, German, Dutch, Italian), one with Metis ancestry, and one with Chinese ancestry.

At the first workshop, drawing loosely on photo elicitation methods (Harper, 2002), I invited participants to bring photos related to forgotten Aboriginal, immigrant and settler Westside histories, and to share what they knew about local histories as well as what they would like to learn. As a co-participant I brought photos related to Sna'q' (pronounced “sun’ahk”) and the Kitsilano Indian Reserve, which is now referred to as Vanier Park. I talked about Musqueam, Squamish and Tsleil-Waututh’s connections to the seasonal harvesting grounds of Sna’q and how this area was declared an Indian Reserve by the Canadian government in the late 1800’s. I explained how later, Squamish community members, who were living on the Reserve, were forced to relocate as part of larger colonization efforts in Vancouver. After everyone shared their historical stories, we went on to discuss the scope of the research project, including research questions, goals and our choice of historical research topics.

Between the first and second workshop, participants researched a specific neighbourhood history topic. As a co-participant, I continued to learn about the history of Sna’q through reviewing photos at the Vancouver Archives and reading articles by Maracle (2004), and Barman (2007). At the second workshop I invited participants to draw a visual representation of their history topic. Again as a co-participant I shared new information about Sna’q, the Kitsilano Indian Reserve and the formation of Vanier Park. In the second half of the workshop, I facilitated a dialogue about colonization and the implications of history on today’s community relationships. I concluded this workshop by inviting participants to bring photos for a public collage that we would create at the third workshop.

At the third workshop, I showed three excerpt vignettes from the 125 Vancouver video, which was produced by the City of Vancouver to commemorate its 125th anniversary. The video excerpts included stories about: a) unceded Musqueam territory in the Endowment Lands, near UBC; b) two visitor-settlers’ connection to Locarno Beach; and c) a Chinese-Canadian family grocery store in Dunbar. I showed this video as an example of a collage of stories from multiple perspectives and asked a series of questions to guide the collage making. Next participants shared additional information that they had learned about their topic and then worked on the collage. After the collage completion, participants discussed ideas for acknowledging histories in their new neighbourhood house. This discussion returned the group to the action-planning phase.
of the research project. Finally, I explained the next steps in the research project, including participation in individual interviews and a final meeting to discuss emerging research findings.

**Discussion**

Adopting a historical, decolonizing place-based pedagogy provides opportunities and significant challenges for engaging predominately non-Indigenous learners. Nearly all the participants indicated they had originally been motivated to join the group to learn about local history. In other words, history was the hook that drew people into the study group. Their interest in learning history offered spaces to discuss the contested nature of history and the impact of history on today’s community relationships. These discussions opened a space for dialogue about Aboriginal history, colonization, decolonization and reconciliation; however, these discussions were paralleled by a predominant focus on learning visitor-settler histories.

I had invited participants to learn about forgotten Aboriginal, immigrant and settler history on the Westside of Vancouver. The following topics were researched by the participants: Arbutus Coffee Shop (Erin / Sarah), Delmont Park [reference to Japanese internment camps] (Sarah), railway development (Sarah), the Old Barn at UBC (Jane), the Brewery at Yew and 11th [including some history related to workers and owners] (Anne), Greek history (Natalie), Hippies [social change, negative connotations, confrontations] (Mary), Railway at Trafalgar Street [political and social issues, prejudice against Irish] (Claire). The majority of these topics focused on a piece of Western European settler history. As well specific people were often highlighted in the local history stories shared (e.g. John Young saving the Old Barn, Henry Reifel starting the Brewery). For the most part people were motivated to learn about their topic because they had some personal connection to the topic and in some cases people lived adjacent to the area that they researched.

Despite the choice of research topics, the potential of historical place-based studies to facilitate learning about colonization is highlighted in Claire’s reflections: “But what I really got out of it in the long run was looking deeply into an incident and using different kinds of information sources. I got such a picture of the social and political scene at the time” (Workshop 3). Here she learned about the prejudice experienced by Irish immigrants as she read newspaper articles that referenced Sam Greer, an Irish immigrant and key person opposing railway development in Kitsilano. If Claire or other participants had focused on different historical events or perhaps examined their specific historical topic in greater depth, the racism and colonization experienced by Aboriginal peoples may have become apparent to them. Studying local history could initiate discussions on multiple forms of exploitation and oppression experienced by different groups, including Aboriginal peoples.

Based on the responses from the participants some learners appeared receptive to the critical and decolonizing place-based learning called for by Greenwood (2003, 2009). When I shared stories about Snauq, people undeniably engaged. This decolonizing pedagogical choice appeared to spark further dialogue about Aboriginal history, community relationships and Aboriginal peoples. Natalie disclosed that she went home and researched the Indian Act in part due to the discussions we had had at the workshop. Anne indicated at the end of the first workshop that she would like to learn more about the Aboriginal history specific to Kits House’s location. Both Natalie and Anne expressed a desire to learn more after their initial learning about specific local, Aboriginal
history. Their reactions indicate the potential for explicit historical, place-based decolonizing pedagogies to facilitate learning about colonization, Aboriginal history and current day policies.

**Pedagogy for the Privileged – Is it a Useful Framework?**

The term ‘pedagogy for the privileged’ comes from a ten-step workshop model outlined by Curry-Stevens (2007) in which she teaches privileged learners about oppression. In this model she argues that learners must first see themselves as oppressed (Step 3) before they are able and willing to see themselves as privileged (Step 4). Her model also includes two phases, phase one (steps 1-6) is a confidence-shaking process and phase two (steps 7-10) is a confidence-building phase. For Curry-Stevens it is imperative to integrate action planning into a pedagogy for the privileged. I loosely adopted her two phases into my decolonizing place-based pedagogies in the sense that I began by sharing stories to increase participants’ awareness of colonization and then turned to action planning for acknowledging histories at Kits House.

Interestingly several participants’ responses resonate with Curry-Stevens’s learning model. Anne and Claire both spontaneously made reference to their ancestors experiencing oppression. This aligns with Step 3 when learners first see themselves as oppressed. For Claire, she related to Sam Greer as an Irish immigrant and was interested in the prejudice experience by Irish immigrants because of her own Irish ancestry. For Anne she responded to my reflection in workshop two about history’s present day impact by saying, “if we looked at all our personal histories we could go back even a generation or two, not that far back, when we’ve been victimized or and also we’ve been victimizers” (Workshop 2). Anne connects Steps 3 and 4 simultaneously, when she refers to both victims and victimizers. This may reflect her Metis heritage. In both cases participants made connections to forms of oppression or experiences of victimization.

Three participants (Anne, Claire and Natalie) also acknowledged their personal connections to colonization. Although they didn’t explicitly use terms like oppressor and oppressed, their responses do indicate that they were thinking about their relationship to colonization. Their responses parallel Step 4, where participants begin to acknowledge their privilege. If there had been more time in the workshops, I would have explored whether participants would have engaged in an explicit discussion of their relationship to privilege and oppression in the context of colonization.

In terms of the confidence-building phase of this pedagogy (steps 7-10), I integrated opportunities for this type of learning into the workshops. I asked participants to identify ideas for acknowledging histories at Kits House. My original intention was to create opportunities for participants to actively envision decolonizing historical representations that could be displayed at Kits House. In reality, this goal may have been overly ambitious for a set of three, two-hour workshops. Predominately, participants brainstormed more how to represent histories rather than what to represent. Although discussions about Kits House were somewhat limited, Anne did suggest a photo display:

> I think it would be good to have a photographic display of just different people who have lived in first of all that very space or that very place I should say we should start with the First Nations people and then the Greeks I guess are next and that would be neat just that very specific space and in general maybe like those maps in
those books about what was going on in different places something along those
lines that would be nice (Interview).

Claire and I also had a phone discussion after the last workshop where she suggested Musqueam
members could be involved in sharing history at Kits House. Specifically she suggested
Musqueam members could participate in the grand opening of the new neighbourhood house.
Both Anne’s and Claire’s suggestions provide examples of participants wanting to acknowledge
Indigenous history. I consider their responses to be examples of the type of action planning
Curry-Stevens envisions in her learning model.

*Understanding Participants’ Worldviews*

Taking a closer look at participants’ understanding of (de)-colonization and reconciliation is also
important for understanding the baseline with which I worked in my pedagogy for the privileged.
A challenge and opportunity for the specific decolonizing place-based pedagogies I used in the
workshops became apparent when several participants (Jane, Natalie and Erin) initially
associated colonization and decolonization with international events in China and India. Their
initial responses indicate they have more clarity about colonization and decolonization elsewhere
in the world. This shows a need for decolonizing place-based pedagogies that would expand
learners’ understanding of these global forces in a localized context.

Another theme that arose was most clearly expressed by Anne when she talked about the
ongoing nature of exploitation of vulnerable people:

> I think the native people in Canada were very badly treated no question. But I think
that vulnerable people are badly treated regardless of their ethnic origin or whatever
and I think that goes on right now. I think really the lesson from that is what are we
doing now (Interview).

Her reflections on exploitation in combination with participants' initial international associations
with colonization left me to ponder how to acknowledge the ‘it’s human nature’ response.
Perhaps a more fruitful approach to teaching about colonization is to underscore it has occurred
in many places and at many different times, but that there is still a need to address it in its
present-day forms. Acknowledging the potential for all peoples to exploit, while simultaneously
acknowledging White people’s role in colonization in the local context, may alleviate the
paralyzing spiral of white guilt, which often arises in anti-racism education. Providing a
summary of international instances of colonization throughout history, may provide context to
learners to acknowledge their role in colonization without loosing perspective on the potential
for any human with privilege to benefit from exploitation of vulnerable peoples.

Participants related least to the term decolonization, as this term is not widely used in
mainstream media. If one of the new goals of place-based pedagogies is to engage learners in
actively participating in decolonization (Greenwood, 2009; Scully, 2012), then there is a need to
articulate what is meant by decolonization. The pedagogy I used in the workshops, especially in
the last workshop in which I discussed historical representation at Kits House, assumed that
participants would have a stronger understanding of decolonization. If I were to facilitate similar
workshops again, I would first ask participants for their understandings of (de)-colonization and
then I would also offer a description of these two concepts. I would consider asking the direct question – how could we decolonize historical representations at Kits House? As well as, how could we decolonize our relationships with Indigenous peoples, specifically Musqueam, Squamish and Tsleil-Waututh Nations? This approach would also require that I, as a facilitator, have a better understanding of decolonization. Basically in future workshops I would spend more dedicated time to articulating a vision of decolonization in the local context.

**Arising Contentions**

Several contentious themes arose in the workshops and interviews. Taking a closer look at these contentions provides additional insights for decolonizing place-based pedagogies. First there were different opinions about the importance of history, specifically wrongs done in the past (e.g. past colonization) versus current day social problems. Both Anne and Natalie suggested a need to focus on the present rather than the past. For Anne, she talked about the need to address present day exploitation,

> So just to see it a history of a place and not to take it so personally that we’re identifying with those people. So there’s no point in being defensive. I mean my ancestors weren’t living here at all actually when any of this took place (Workshop 2).

In contrast to my own views, she argued that people are not responsible for the actions of their ancestors. For Natalie, she recommended moving beyond the past and implied the need to create present day solutions with First Nations people. Their responses highlight an unresolved tension amongst participants’ opinions regarding the impact of colonization and history. The pedagogies I employed in the workshops had assumed that the past intimately shapes the present and that there was a need to address past wrongs in order to reconcile present day relationships and inequalities. My understanding of colonization was not mirrored by most of the participants. If I were to facilitate workshops in the future, I would create more time to discuss the impact of historical colonization on today’s relationships, inequalities and social problems. I would also clarify that we may not be personally responsible for our ancestors’ actions, but that we are responsible for dealing with their repercussions, addressing the resulting inequalities, and acknowledging our own resulting privileges. This would allow for a more in-depth discussion of the impact of history in our current communities.

Another closely related assumption in my decolonizing pedagogies is a need to reconcile past wrongs. Natalie contradicted this assumption when she questioned the need for Kits House to participate in reconciliation:

> I don’t actually know that I agree that reconciliation needs to take place, to me reconciliation the term implies that a wrong has been done and one’s trying to make amends for it, one is trying to turn that around so within the context of that question it would imply to me that Kits Neighbourhood House has done a wrong and now needs to make up for it or chooses to make up for it (Interview).

From her perspective, Kits House has not committed a specific wrong that needs to be reconciled. Again this differs from my understanding that Kits House, like any organization or person
existing today in Canada, continues to have a relationship to colonization. Underlying this understanding is a specific notion of colonization as an ongoing political process rather than only linked to the point of initial contact between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples. Again here, I would spend more time in future workshops discussing participants’ understanding of the need for reconciliation.

**Summary**

Returning to my original overarching research question, I have reflected on how decolonizing place-based pedagogies can encourage visitor-settlers to learn about colonization, decolonization and ally work. The pedagogies I used in the workshops did not go as far as I had originally envisioned. I set out to facilitate decolonizing place-based learning; however, after facilitating three workshops I realize that this goal was more ambitious and more complex than I had originally realized. Based on participants’ reflections in the workshops and interviews I can say that the pedagogies I used initiated conversations about colonization, decolonization, reconciliation and the impact of historical wrongs. However, these discussions did not lead to further discussions on how to decolonize as visitor-settlers nor did they lead to discussions about allyship and Indigenous sovereignty. Much more work is needed to refine decolonizing place-based pedagogies to facilitate learning among visitor-settlers.

**References**


Teacher Education: Shifting Teacher Thinking?

Loretta Howard
Canadian Memorial Chiropractic College (CMCC)

Abstract: This paper examines one aspect of a longitudinal institutional change process to “walk the talk” by utilizing adult learning pedagogies (Howard, 2012) to shift teacher thinking and practice from a traditional transmittal approach to one more contemporary, learning-centred (Tagg, 2007) and evidence-based (Petty, 2009) in nature. Specifically, a transformative learning model (Cranton, 2006) was utilized to examine teacher thinking as a consequence of teacher education processes at a post-secondary health science institution. Findings indicate that teacher thinking was positively influenced towards learning-centred, evidence-based practice. Further research will examine the relationship between changed teacher thinking and practice.

This paper is the second in a series that explores my work in education development at the Canadian Memorial Chiropractic College (CMCC). Since 2009, when I joined CMCC as its Director, Curriculum and Faculty Development, I have been engaged in a longitudinal institutional change process to shift teacher thinking and practice from a traditional transmittal approach to one more contemporary, learning-centred (Tagg, 2007) and evidence-based (Petty, 2009) in nature. Previously (Howard, 2012), I discussed my initial efforts to influence individual and organizational change and “walk the talk” of adult learning praxis. A Teacher Education Program (TEP) for college faculty was created to address identified development needs. This paper explores teacher thinking as a consequence of taking the initial TEP course.

Background
CMCC is the only English speaking chiropractic college in Canada. It is a private, not-for-profit professional college that grants Doctor of Chiropractic (DC) degrees under the ministerial consent of the Ontario Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities (MCTU). Students enter CMCC having already completed at least three full years of undergraduate university study. The DC program is over 4200 hours taken over four years. Students take theoretical and practical classes across nine departmental areas in Years I-III and complete a 12-month clinical internship in their fourth year. CMCC is a small college with approximately eight hundred students and one hundred and sixty five faculty members. The majority of faculty are part-time and, beyond their teaching, engaged primarily in clinical practice. Over ninety five percent of current faculty are also graduates of CMCC. In my experience as an education developer in the field of higher education, the majority of CMCC’s faculty distinguish themselves as some of the brightest and most committed professionals I have met. They are passionate about the work they do, hold themselves to the highest gold standard of evidence-based clinical practice, and are dedicated to CMCC’s mission to be a leader in chiropractic education and research.

The Teaching and Learning Disconnect
In my initial process to determine faculty development needs, I found three areas of disconnect. They related to teacher identity, a content versus process approach to curriculum design, and levels of student learning. With regard to teacher identity, when I asked faculty, “what do you do?”, I was told they were chiropractors, or anatomists, bio-mechanists, radiologists, microbiologists, or whatever title related to their specialties. Not a single person responded with “I’m a teacher/professor/educator”. Also, no one ever said “I have a class to teach” instead, I
would hear “I have a lecture” or “I have a lab”. Faculty identified strongly with their subject matter expertise, but did not appear to directly identify as teachers. I wondered how faculty developed their teaching expertise if they did not even identify as teachers. The answer was they often didn’t.

The second disconnect related to a content versus process approach to teaching. As I visited classes and reviewed course materials it became clear that there was a curriculum design emphasis on teacher intent rather than student learning. Faculty determined how many lecture hours they had and put together PowerPoint slides of content congruent with that time. One faculty member indicated that he could “get through 120 slides in just under an hour if I talk fast and they [students] don’t ask questions”. The majority of lecture classes were literally content “dumps”. Students were almost completely passive in class and focused on cramming as much of the factual and clinical information into their heads as possible. As a collective, CMCC students are very efficient learners with numerous strategies, including note services, to gather the content information needed for exams. They then “purge” this content during the exam periods which occur every 6-8 weeks throughout the 9-month academic year. I soon came to call this process of binging and purging of content knowledge “learning bulimia”.

The third disconnect related to levels of learning. Faculty would seek me out to lament the fact that students had trouble recalling information from previous modules, were challenged to integrate learning across the nine curriculum departments, and had limited skill to critically appraise or reflect upon important concepts. When I asked faculty how they had designed processes to provide the opportunity for learners to develop and practice these skills, the general response I got was that they hadn’t, they just presented content. In follow up, I asked how they expected learners to achieve higher levels of learning when they didn’t design lessons at these levels. I got somewhat blank stares in response as, at that point in time, they did not understand the connection between teacher input and student output.

All three disconnects contributed to a teaching and learning environment that is often overwhelming for the students and frustrating for many faculty; however, these disconnects are not unique to CMCC or to the health science education sector. Faculty are traditionally hired for their subject matter expertise and clinical experience. They have little to no background in teaching pedagogies and spend development time focused on ensuring their content is current rather than determining the best way for learners to engage with their content. Increasingly, in order to succeed in their chosen fields in today’s world, students need to attain 21st century learning skills (Partnership for 21st Century Skills, 2008) and demonstrate higher order thinking skills such as critical thinking, appraisal, integration and reflection. Yet many educators continue to rely on transmittal teaching strategies that promote predominantly surface level learning. CMCC faculty were perpetuating a teaching model that most faculty had experienced themselves as students at CMCC. While that traditional model served a purpose at a previous point in time, it does not reflect 21st century realities of teaching and learning.

Thus, the greatest irony and the root of all three disconnects, is related to evidence-based practice (EBP) (Sackett, Rosenberg, Muir Gray, Haynes, and Richardson, 1996), a strongly entrenched concept in health science curricula. While faculty’s curriculum content was increasingly evidence-based, their teaching was not grounded on evidence-based teaching (EBT) practices.
EBT is defined as “the conscientious, explicit, and judicious integration of best available research on teaching technique and expertise within the context of student, teacher, department, college, university, and community characteristics” (Groccia and Buskit, 2012, p. 8). Ironically, faculty were expecting students to attain deeper learning while relying predominantly on transmittal teaching, a strategy which has little evidence to support its efficacy. In fact, a wealth of research exists that indicates the exact opposite (Petty, 2009).

**The Intervention**

The initial course in the TEP program (TEP 101) was designed to attempt to deal with and overcome the three disconnects in teaching. The course is 42 hours in length and begins by expanding participants’ subject matter identities to include an emerging teacher identity, explores today’s teaching and learning context, provides an overview to curriculum design and evaluation, and introduces facilitation strategies and current educational technologies. Contemporary approaches to adult learning that promote deep versus surface levels of learning (Tagg, 2007) are consciously modelled in the design and facilitation of the course. This includes the incorporation of evidence-based learning strategies (Petty, 2009) that require participants to shift from passive to active learning (Kanthan and Mills, 2005; Marzano, Pickering, and Pollock, 2001; Meyer, and Jones, 1993) and a conscious attempt to positively challenge underlying “habits of mind” (Mezirow, 1978).

The course employs a “flipped” classroom approach requiring learners to engage with course content (readings, videos, online activities, etc.) outside of class so that in-class time can be focused on the experiential application of the course concepts. Also, throughout the course, a “two hats” model is graphically employed. The first is a student hat wherein faculty experience the learning process and requirements of the course just as their own students might. The second is a teacher-designer hat wherein, after each significant experience or course process, the facilitator debriefs the activity to connect it to learning theories and curriculum design processes. The two hats approach was utilized to help faculty better understand, from both a learner and teacher perspective, why a strategy was being used and to discuss its implications for use in their own courses.

**Theoretical Framework**

Theoretically, this research draws upon Cranton’s (2006) work related to transformative learning (TL). TL is a constructivist theory that is “a comprehensive and complex description of how learners construe, validate, and reformulate the meaning of their experience” (p.22). Transformation occurs through the incorporation of new knowledge into the current world-view or belief system. Two key aspects of transformative learning are critical thinking and self-reflection, two skills that teachers today are continually expecting their learners to demonstrate. As it relates to teaching, in this course I am hoping to challenge faculty members’ adherence to a traditional way of knowing/practice to one more contemporary in nature and promote the examination, through critical thinking and self-reflection, of how teachers make meaning of their practice.

Practically, this research builds on the work of Taber, Abbey, Howard and Cope-Watson (2008) that explored adult educators’ complexities and “how they may inform our understanding of the ‘messiness’ of adult education practice” (p. 359). Howard and Taber (2010) also encouraged those involved in faculty development to “explore the ways in which personal, professional, and
institutional epistemologies interact” (p. 35) in order to better support learning. This longitudinal process aims to explore these intersections with a goal of contributing to the growing body of literature related to adult learning praxis.

**Research Design**

Eight cohorts of faculty participating in TEP 101 from January 2011 to December 2012 were examined. Cohorts averaged eight participants in each. In this study, answers to two questions were sought:

1. How does TEP 101 influence participants’ thinking about teaching?
2. What level of engagement with or resistance to course concepts are participants evidencing?

Data collection included formative classroom assessment techniques (CATs) (Angelo and Cross, 1993) and summative course evaluations from each cohort. A content analysis of participant comments about teacher thinking was conducted to identify common themes across the cohorts. To answer the second question, participant comments were analyzed in relation to Cranton’s (2006) transformative learning (TL) model.

**Findings**

*Teacher Thinking*

Participants were asked how their thinking or view of teaching changed over the duration of the course. The overwhelming majority (93% of respondents) indicated that teacher thinking appeared to be influenced towards evidence-based practice with participants specifically identifying constructive ways by which their thinking had changed as a result of TEP 101. Comments included:

- Changed completely!
- It has changed the way I view my students;
- It has broadened my perspective in terms of how to deliver the material in ways other than the traditional didactic manner;
- It has become more learner-centered;
- Consideration of how active learning can be applied to all teaching encounters;
- It's not just about planning the delivery of a bunch of content. It's about getting students engaged in the act of learning and changing their thinking processes;
- It has broadened. I think it's invaluable to improve knowledge of how people learn and educate;
- Significantly! Now I feel I possess the knowledge to understand how to facilitate in an evidenced based manner;
- It has been a very positive change from a teacher-centred approach to now a learner-centred approach.

Seven percent of respondents indicated that TEP 101 had not changed their thinking with comments such as: “Stayed the same” and “it hasn't changed”.

*Evidence of Engagement/Resistance*

Participant comments were analyzed in relation to Cranton’s (2006) transformative learning process. Findings demonstrated greater levels of engagement with (89.5%) rather than resistance
to (5.25%) course concepts and practice. A further 5.25% demonstrated a shift in their thinking from initial resistance to engagement.

Comments demonstrating engagement include:

- It has been a very positive change from a teacher-centred approach to a learner-centred approach. This course has provided me with many tools on how to "connect" with the learner on multi-levels (sic);
- I knew that there was more to teaching/facilitation than met the eye….There is so much more to the design than I ever imagined;
- Started out thinking more along the lines of teaching through lecture and explanation and have developed into thinking more about active learning strategies;
- I have been able to develop my teaching philosophy and think about common issues in my course from a new perspective.

Other participants (5.25%) were initially resistant, but were able to work their way through that stage:

- I came into the course, with a negative view. After Day 1, I realized how comprehensive it was. It opened my eyes and made me appreciate the process. It got me excited about teaching. It is still a bit overwhelming because there is so much that goes into teaching a lesson – but I feel I now have the tools to do this more effectively;
- Initially, I was resistant to the learning that was taking place. As the course progressed so did my understanding of the process and that helped me to see how I could apply some of the concepts.

A final 5.25% of participants reflected resistance to the program in comments that demonstrated a sense of alienation from the course concepts as evidenced by: “I couldn't identify or relate pedagogical theories to small group tutorials.”

Discussion

A classic transformative learning cycle (Mezirow, 1975, as cited in Cranton, 2006) includes a process in which learners initially encounter a disorienting dilemma that creates a level of cognitive dissonance. This triggers the learner to engage in a level of self-examination related to the dissonance created and to critically assess internalized assumptions. The learner often experiences a sense of alienation, which can lead to relating discontent to others and recognizing that the issue is shared. Consequently learners can explore options for new behaviour and begin to build confidence in new ways. They begin to plan a course of action and build the knowledge and skill set to implement their plans. They experiment with and assess new roles and behaviours, which ultimately leads to reintegration as the new behaviours become internalized (p. 20).

In my experience as a teacher educator it is in the initial phases of the transformative learning process that extreme emotive and affective reactions can occur and where the most resistance to learning presents itself. Cognitive dissonance is not comfortable; feeling outside your normal comfort zone can make anyone uneasy. In particular, faculty members with a high level of cultural authority in their subject matter area can feel particular anxiety when immersed in a
learning process with content about which they know little. Likewise, self-examination is challenging. It requires undistorted self-perception, objectivity, openness to alternative perspectives, and the ability to reflect critically. Not all learners, or teachers, have these skills. As such, it is not unusual within these initial phases that expressing discontent to others and other barriers to learner engagement, including resistance, emerge.

In TEP 101, resistance is anticipated and managed with interventions in two ways by:

1. Consciously designing course activities that will (hopefully) diffuse resistance before it can occur. One example of this includes introducing participants to TL theory up front in the course process and then connecting the debriefing of various experiential activities to TL; and

2. Putting issues of resistance squarely on the table for discussion at critical points in the course. Formative feedback after specific (and challenging) points in the course process is gathered and then presented back to the cohort for debriefing and analysis against TL theory.

It is hoped that, by utilizing these strategies, within the time-span of the course the expressed resistance can be overcome early enough in the process so that faculty can engage in the exploration and integration of new ideas and behaviours. However, just as not every flower blooms on the first day of spring, not every participant is able to work through their barriers and glean insight into the intended learning within the course timeframe. The transformative learning process can be “epochal” or “incremental” (Mezirow, 1978) or it may not occur at all due to overwhelming resistance.

Given the ingrained institutional teaching practice, the course can be very challenging for some participants. Further, given that faculty are subject matter experts who relate strongly to their content, trying to shift their thinking and practice away from a transmission approach (Pratt, 1998) can be very threatening to some. They identify strongly with their content and often initially perceive a requested shift from content to process as a threat to their professional (subject matter expertise) identities. As such, it is not unusual that participants express behavioural resistance to learning on a variety of levels (Cranton, 2006). Only 5.25% of respondents demonstrated resistance at the end of the course. This indicates that the integration of TL theory and practice into the course may be helpful for faculty to manage their learning process and work past initial resistance to evidence-based teaching practice.

**Implications**

The utilization of evidence-based practice in the design and implementation of this teacher education course appears to be successful in addressing some of the issues of disconnect encountered in CMCC’s teaching and learning context. TEP 101 addresses specific faculty development needs and has assisted the majority of participants to expand their professional identities to include “educator” and recognize that that there is a body of evidence that exists related to teaching and learning pedagogies and practice. This study contributes to faculty and education development literature by providing further evidence that adult learning praxis can be effectively employed to influence change and shift teacher thinking.

Influencing thinking is one objective, but shifting teaching practice is the broader goal. Research on this longitudinal process continues with a focus on both individual and organizational change.
To that end, participants are being followed to explore in what ways changes in their thinking are evidenced in changed teaching practice and to what degree the culture of teaching and learning at CMCC is influenced as a result of changes in thinking and practice.

References
Non-formal Learning in an ESL and International Community Coffee House: Investigating Its Impact

Cynthia Hucks
Program Planner: International and ESL Coffee House

Abstract: A case study explored complementary non-formal learning during a Coffee House by students in an ESL program. Findings from interviews, participant observation, and document analysis indicate that confidence growth and cultural learning gained through the non-formal learning enhanced the international students’ formal learning experience.

Purpose of Study
This study investigated how complementary non-formal learning may provide useful support to language learners during language-skill development as well as in cultural understanding. It examined whether international newcomers, possibly overwhelmed while adapting to a new city and a new culture, are supported by involvement with a non-formal International and ESL Coffee House. Three research questions were: “What does the non-formal learning environment of the International Coffee House (ITCH) mean for those involved?” “How does an International Coffee House in Ontario, Canada encourage social interaction, friendship formation, and increase confidence levels?” “How does this Coffee House enhance English listening and speaking skills, and provide learning support for participants’ studies?” In essence, it examined whether learning by newcomers who felt isolated and were motivated to seek community interaction influenced their formal ESL learning. (Incidentally, ITCH, was named by a Korean university student as an acronym for the International Coffee House).

Relevant Literature
Roby Kidd’s and Alan Thomas’s, with their interest in, and development of international learning institutes, laid a foundation for Canada’s future involvement in the International Council for Adult Education (Selman, Selman, Cooke & Dampier, 1998). Learning contexts and approaches to learning outside of the formal classroom, portraying the usefulness of informal and non-formal learning for increasing personal confidence, have been investigated by researchers such as Chang (2004) who researched a training program for international learners. Livingstone (2004) notes that informal learning is a type of self-initiated pursuit to increase knowledge, skill and understanding outside of institutionally legislated programs. English (2005) points out that informal learning situations are a means for learning what is not taught in formal schools. She adds that non-formal learning possesses some of the characteristics of formal learning such as arriving at a set location with the intention of learning.

Tompson and Tompson (1996), in reference to successful integration of international learners, suggest that these students often engage in behaviours that undermine academic success, such as minimal class participation and sitting only with other internationals in the classroom. Tough (2002) emphasizes that planned informal learning may take place in association with others. Brookfield and Preskill (2005) emphasize the significance of discussion in the learning environment. Non-formal learning often takes place within dialogue, according to Vella (2001); she stresses the importance of the interactive learning environment. Hayes and Flannery (2002) observe that community groups, formed for the purpose of educating their members, are places of considerable non-formal learning where individuals can acquire skills and knowledge by
“doing” and participating in “more organized learning activities” (p. 43). Vella (2002) describes the informal setting with small groups crucial in the promotion of safety for the sharing of ideas and feelings in cross-cultural settings.

Mathews-Aydinli (2008) emphasizes that both cultural awareness and English-as-a-second language acquisition go hand in hand. She says, “learners who never even meet with people from the target language culture, must negotiate culture and language issues on a daily basis” (p. 208). An interactive environment promotes confidence levels when rehearsing English speaking and listening. In Tompson and Tompson’s (1996) study of the adjustment process of international learners, language skills ranked second in degree of difficulty. They linked language learning to friendship and association. Watkins and Marsick (1992) set apart learning from experience, and having experience; they clearly differentiate among informal, non-formal and formal learning.

**Research Design**

A qualitative research case-study approach was used to examine a bounded, non-formal learning program. In my research methodology I made an effort to validate the significance of international newcomer and community association to “match theory [new knowledge, skills, attitudes, and opinions about non-formal learning] with data [the research findings]” (Strauss & Corbin, 1994, p. 273). Merriam and Simpson (2000) suggest that by focusing on a single unit, or phenomenon, such as in case-study research, the researcher seeks to uncover the “interplay of significant factors that are characteristic of this phenomenon” (p. 108). The case is a social unit—the Coffee House. The meaning that is revealed and understood through the investigation and analysis of this program, can contribute to future program planning and future research on the value of non-formal learning. Merriam and Simpson point out that case-study research serves the purpose of describing, interpreting, and evaluating the “efficacy of a new program” (p. 111), such as, in this activity, the program of the Coffee House. The activities of program planning, participant observation, the reflection immediately following a Coffee House program, and the interviews, provided the data for the analysis in this study, which was intended to understand meaning.

In pursuing the meaning of the Coffee House for those involved, several corollary questions arose: Is it a place of refuge from the university campus where power and privilege affect relationships? Does involvement at the ITCH, for international learners, with members of the community, transfer the four aspirations of Chang’s (2004) study (heightened social connectedness, increased confidence levels, improvement in English-speaking ability, and learning support for formal studies) to campus life and community life and at the same time build social and cultural confidence? Tompson and Tompson (1996), describing the integration of international learners into North American schools, said learners “were surprised at how difficult and, at times overwhelming not having a social network can be” (p. 55).

**Findings and Conclusions**

Participants continually made associations between confidence, learning support, English-language learning and friendship with community members. It became apparent that the interaction among all aspects was dynamic, each having a bearing on the other, in a vibrant association. “Ya ya, I achieved that [confidence] because I have friends to speak. At my house,
I don’t speak English. At ITCH I speak English. I want to find some place or someone else to make me use my English …”

Friendship and Association
Five of the nine research participants stated that friendship and association were primary reasons for participation at the Coffee House. One participant revealed that the Easter visit to the home of a community volunteer with fellow Coffee House friends was the first occasion visiting a Canadian home after spending 3 years in Canada. She remarked, “I wanted that.” She mentioned the effect of the Coffee House on her social life. “I would say it helped me increase my social life. You know I talked to people from here. You know the way they speak English.” One participant commented on the pleasure of meeting friends at the Coffee House who he could meet again spontaneously on campus and then engage in conversation. Another went on to say, “It’s my own reflection about the ITCH structure. It says who cares about cultural diversity. Who really cares about cultural diversity? It’s not the young group, not the students, and not Canadian students for sure. At [university] there’s a lot of discussion going on about the raising of cultural awareness and about cultural diversity but it’s not the students who care, not the Canadian students.”

Confidence Growth
Confidence building was strongly associated with learning new concepts of Canadian culture and the awareness that others were going through a similar adjustment process. Preskill and Brookfield (2009) reveal the importance of asking questions which demonstrates value for another individual. They suggest that “when you ask someone to restate an idea, explain it further, or give an example, you are saying that you care enough about what this person says and believes to spend energy trying to understand her idea in the way she wants it understood” (p. 129). The increase in confidence recognized by the participants was said to be largely attributed to the formation of Canadian friendships. Confidence building was also linked with ESL acquisition and the opportunity to rehearse English conversation in an environment that was supportive and non-judgmental. An international learner expressed it this way, “In the ITCH the expectation is very low, like people at the level of their second language, and I feel I get appreciation in the ITCH but in school everyone takes everyone for granted. They expect that you are in university and no one really appreciate that I have to spend extra effort on understanding the content of the lecture.”

ESL Learning
Sweet and Adamuti-Trache (2010) point out that “language proficiency in at least one of Canada’s official languages is definitely an asset when deciding to take more education and training” (p. 12). Immigrants to the community are especially interested in increasing English proficiency for the purposes of integration and employment. However, I noted that growth in English-language learning was emphasized more by international students than by other international attendees, as the purpose for continuing attendance at the Coffee House. Another international learner stressed the relevance of non-formal language learning and community interaction: “And I played the fishing … just for fun … that time was a first for me. And I definitely think mixing with the community is the best way to personally improve speaking English.” One immigrant of 10 years suggested, “I expect that my English all the time will be improved. It is very important for me as because when I learn English at home it’s not easy, it’s good for me, but when I meet with people, it is very valuable for me. When I meet with people I
use some words, like Canadian people, some words are different. I don’t know how to tell you. It’s more informal, different, the typical language is different.” Another participant revealed the tension experienced when not understanding the lecture in the formal school: “Some of the professors say whatever comes to their mind—all over the place and they speak fast. No point form and no clear format and some days I come out of class with blank notes and I feel frustrated and guilty because my parents had paid so much money for me to come here and I don’t learn anything. And not to mention there are so many daily terms and academic terms I did not know.”

Learning Support for Formal Studies
It seemed that international learners had come to the Coffee House with the need to be heard, to be accepted, respected and appreciated, and to rehearse the theory and the grammar obtained in the formal school environment. I personally questioned whether “learning support was something as simple and at the same time as broad and encompassing as social and cultural confidence, which will enable an international student to comfortably become the focus of attention in a discussion in the formal classroom?” Is it possible for two aspects of learning—to carry on a conversation in English and to have a sense of cultural competency—to be transferred from informal and non-formal to formal learning environments? As an adult educator, I am drawn to using Vella’s (2002) model of small-group discussion and small-group activity. The social occasions outside of the Coffee House, and the use of role-playing at the Coffee House, complement the non-formal method of learning, and at the same time, advance cultural and educational learning for the formal classroom.

Critical Reflection and Implications of the Findings
Adult educators have been meeting the needs of international students, newcomers, and community members in Canada for over a century. The emphasis on meeting culturally-specific needs in our formal-education facilities has grown. At the non-formal learning environment of the Coffee House the use of questions aligns with methods used in the Highlander learning environment, where Myles Horton “posed a good question as the ultimate act of pedagogy” (Preskill and Brookfield, 2009, p. 132). Formal learning instruction needs to be complemented by informal and non-formal learning, especially in conjunction with community association. Zepke and Leach (2006) discuss the necessity of both social and academic integration for positive learning outcomes. Preskill and Brookfield (2009) suggest that organizations should find ways to encourage coaching and mentoring. Educators themselves hold the keys to accessing community resources, and ought to unlock the door for their adult learners through promotion of non-formal learning outside of the classroom. According to Illerus (2007), liberating and emancipating results come from effective experiential learning (p.86). Foley (2003) also uses the expression liberatory when making reference to the intention of non-formal learning to give the opportunity to live fuller lives.

Adult educators ought to become aware of the learning styles of international newcomers. The accomplishment of ESL certification in formal schooling should by no means imply to the learner or to the educator that ESL learning is complete. Zepke and Leach (2006) say that educators can either assimilate the student into the environment or adapt the environment to suit the learner. Adult educators ought to pay attention to the excessively withdrawn international student, especially those who appear to be struggling in social adaptation to their new
environment. The educator may be the only individual who can track changes such as withdrawal from program engagement.

*Points I Extract for Practice from My Critical Reflections*

While reflecting critically on the findings of this research, I extracted several points which I want to apply in my practice. Other adult educators may also find these points useful within their practice. I present them here in point format.

- Be personally interested in, continually refreshed and equipped with cross-cultural teaching sensitivity and expertise. Know how to pronounce the name of your student. Be equipped with culturally-sensitive teaching tools, as well as the awareness of the needs of international learners. Continue to make provision for enhanced English-language learning throughout the formal college and university program, as well as for mentoring opportunities, for international students.

- Plan interactive learning formats and invite the learners to dialogue such as in tutorials, table discussions and labs. This may encourage both the partnering and mentorship of Canadian-born students with international learners. Give adult learners the opportunity to teach while learning.

- Offer mentorship programs that link ESL learners with Canadian students to reduce the isolation that ESL learners feel from native-born Canadians when devoted to studying ESL in preparation for further Canadian programs.

- Promote access to the community by encouraging and equipping international learners with the knowledge of community programs. Such access is necessary for the cultural and social well-being of the international learner.

- Include the community at the university setting. Open a study room for English-speaking community volunteers who are screened, to have an open-door English café space, on campus.

- Welcome and screen community volunteers who wish to be host families for international learners. Host families will become friends for international learners in the duration of their stay in Canada, assisting learners to navigate in the community.

- In formal ESL classrooms incorporate dialogue learning. Give the learner the opportunity to make classroom presentations in their areas of interest and expertise to increase confidence.

*Implications for Future Research*

Adult educators and researchers alike must pay heed to the claim made by Zhao, Kuh, and Carini (2005) that “an important goal of higher education is to prepare culturally competent individuals with the ability to work effectively with people from different backgrounds” (p. 209). The future of Canada’s marketplace will depend much on how we as Canadians incorporate foreign-born professionals and other intercultural workers. Hser (2005) agrees that international newcomers have contributed to local and national economies. Canada and its economic stability and growth is dependent on the integration of all international newcomers (personal communication, L. Conolly, former president of Trent University, August 3, 2011). Canada may depend largely on immigration for growth of its net labour force in the future (Statistics Canada, 2007); non-formal learning for these immigrants may continue to be important. If integration does not take place, what will be the consequence for prospective employers in business and industry? Fluency in everyday conversational English, a core group of Canadian friends, cultural competence, as well
as knowledge of how to access community resources are essential tools and will bring about a more fully adapted individual newcomer.

As both educators and researchers, we perform a role for the many international learners who are isolated and struggling and whose ways of expressing discouragement and difference do not align with ours. We must communicate with one another regarding our international learners who deserve our utmost respect and consideration for their courage in departing from their comfort zones to come to ours. Sweet and Adamuti-Trache (2010) state, “the response of adult educators is critical to the successful participation of immigrant learners” (p. 22). I question how adult education and social action will affect the future immigrant. No matter how integrated an individual may seem to be, there remains a sense of loss of one’s country of origin; language learning as well as cultural learning through non-formal learning are necessary for successful integration of the international learner. I conclude with Andrade’s (2006) comment that international learners benefit the host country by building bridges for intercultural understanding; correspondingly, the educational institutions they attend should take appropriate measures to insure that learners are provided with the support of programs, information and services so they return home as “satisfied customers.”

References


People’s Educational Spaces: Antigonish and Highlander as Institutional Cases Supporting Learning in Social Movements

Catherine J. Irving
Coady International Institute, St. Francis Xavier University

Abstract: Using the concept of people’s educational spaces, this paper explores aspects of how learning for democratic participation was developed in two institutional contexts, St. Francis Xavier University's Extension Department and the Highlander Research and Education Center. Attention is paid to the physical and conceptual spaces of these programs, the ways people's knowledge were gathered and valued, as well as the tensions evident in these contexts.

Civic participation and activism are garnering considerable discussion in light of political and social mobilizations such as the Arab Spring, Occupy Wall Street and Quebec’s own Maple Spring. As dynamic as these events appear in the media, long term active citizen participation is a more complex process of learning and action. Lewin (1948) observed that democracy must be “learned anew” each generation. So, it seems, how people learn democracy must also in itself be learned anew. Websites of civil society organizations promoting democratic engagement offer a plethora of how-to manuals, yet the ways that organizations work with people who come together to learn, understand and organize collectively in these contexts are underrepresented in the literature. What can we learn today of past education programs and models in this context?

This study revisits two well known education programs linked to social movements, using an analysis combining political and social theory concepts of “real utopias” (Wright, 2010), “free spaces” for democratic change (Evans & Boyte, 1993; Polletta, 1999), integrated with theories of community learning for social action (Foley, 2001; Holst, 2009; Tett, 2010). St. Francis Xavier University’s (St.FX) Extension Department nurtured the Antigonish Movement—a social mobilization program in eastern Canada emerging in the 1930s. The Highlander Folk School (now the Highlander Research and Education Center) supported the civil rights movement in the United States. The lessons and tensions of how these institutions created “free educational spaces” in support of social justice are explored using archival material and writings of those involved in the programs.

Theoretical Framework
In the face of the fragmenting pressure of capitalist and bureaucratic models, Evans and Boyte (1992) examine the physical and social settings that generate the communal strength required to resist these pressures to create “free spaces” for participation. Polletta (1999) identifies three organizational forms: transmovement (outsiders who assist communities, citing Highlander, see also Morris, 1984); indigenous (self-mobilizing); and prefigurative (organizations emerging from movements). Though, these distinctions are not as clear cut as they may appear. Wright’s (2010) theory of “emancipatory social transformation” towards “real utopias” informs this analysis as the leaders of both the St.FX Extension Department and Highlander proclaimed emancipatory goals of an equitable society that embraced dreams that were well beyond the immediate tasks of more practical aspects of their respective programs. The tension between dreams and practice Wright describes helps work through the tensions of such emancipatory ideals and the practical daily work of these movements and education programs, and who are the key participants. Both
the Antigonish Movement and Highlander programs strove for the sustainability of their rural contexts, and saw ignorance at the root of oppression. The educational spaces were reinforced by a rural utopian vision for transformation.

Holst’s (2009) work on “radical training” also explores this tension of theory and practice, noting that despite the association of training with mechanistic models, it has an important role to play in supporting the practical activities required for social action. Tett (2011) notes, “Education’s role is to make a space for collective production of knowledge (p.51).” This understanding is important for community educators who confront a narrowed policy environment dictating economic human resource priorities. A recurring impediment that activist organizations acknowledge is the capacity to document and preserve their work and challenge hegemonic discourses. “We need to interrogate the silences, omissions, and misrepresentations that may exist in dominant NGO and scholarly accounts of campaigns and mobilizations (Choudry & Kapoor, 2010, p.7). People's educational spaces can play a key role in this important documentation work.

Models for Learning and Action
The intent here is not to retell stories that are recounted in detail elsewhere (see A. Horton,1989; Coady, 1939) Instead, the focus is on how the educators and participants learned and acted within their respective institutional settings. Following a brief description of each institution in the context of its guiding “real utopian” vision, the work of the educators and participants is explored through two key themes: the created educational space and the support to create people's knowledge. The vision draws people to movements and the institutions connected to them, but the spaces and practices are what are needed to generate new knowledge in social action.

The Highlander Idea
The Highlander Folk School was led by Myles Horton and others to support social and political education for marginalized people in the southern US. Drawing inspiration from the Danish folk schools, the Highlander founders created an independent school in the 1930s, free from external rules and control. This rural retreat built on donated land in Tennessee provided a place for experimentation in education programs to support people who would lead social change (Thayer-Bacon, 2004). Following early mixed results with labour education, the program matured as it tackled the racism and segregation that thwarted sustainable change. By the 1950s Highlander was synonymous with civil rights education. This “movement halfway house” provided “social change resources such as skilled activists, tactical knowledge, media contacts, workshops, knowledge of past movements, and a vision of a future society” (Morris, 1984, p. 140). The Highlander programs combined residential workshops with an “after process” (Adams, 1975) of outreach to provide additional skills for social activists working in their communities. Adams (1972) also describes the specifics of organization being left “deliberately vague” to allow for flexibility to suit the participants. The residential experience at the Highlander school in its isolated, rural location was key, creating a non-hierarchical space for people to build trust through the daily acts of communal life to learn and act democratically and solve problems together (Adams, 1972). Descriptions of Highlander regularly emphasize the rustic rural setting of this educational space that embodies “plain living and high thinking” (Cobb, 1961). The sharing of cultural knowledge through folk songs and stories were also emphasized. In later
years, Highlander returned to the ongoing oppressive conditions facing surrounding Appalachian communities. McDermott (2008) notes in particular the empowerment experienced by women participants who, through workshops and research developed their “voice” to overcome their own silencing backgrounds of illiteracy and poverty.

One specific space of Highlander, the library, is often mentioned though is not extensively studied in the context of the institution's programs overall. Loveland (1999) fills a few gaps by recounting the stories of the early librarians who were also activist educators. Hilda Hulbert developed a “radical working class consciousness” at Highlander and, “had come to see information exchange as the means by which the southern worker connected with an international labor movement” (p. 184). Mary Lawrance and Harry Lasker who were later librarians at Highlander worked with the “Traveling Library Program” gave them valuable local consciousness, “Getting to know the people where they lived was essential to work at Highlander” (p. 186). In the 1970s, the library served as a hub for for the growing participatory action research program (Lewis, 2001; Loveland, 1999). “Highlander and similar organizations have an important role to play in systematizing and giving validity to peoples' knowledge” (Lewis, 2001, p. 361). The process of participatory research not only validated the people's own knowledge and oral history, it made them more critical of expert knowledge, and empowered them to speak up. In recent years, the issue of the institution's archival collections are of concern to ensure people’s stories are preserved (Loveland, 1999; Susan Williams, personal correspondence).

The Antigonish Way

Moses Coady, first director of the Extension Department at St.FX, was critical of existing education processes that nurtured the brightest minds for advancement and careers away while leaving the mass of the rural population undereducated and robbed of their future leaders. The response was to envision an adult education program that would harness the power of groups to break the “dictatorship of big business and finance...By intelligent individual and group action, the masses can repossess the earth” (Coady, 1939, p. 138). Traditional campus-based programs were not successful, so the Extension Department fieldworkers implemented a community-based learning model. Study clubs were hoped to “light little fires” in the communities (MacInnes, 1978). The ability of these study clubs to form associations like co-operatives and credit unions, were facilitated by the technical assistance provided by Extension, but it was the clear objective that these be community-led initiatives. This diffuse educational space provided reach to the isolated rural areas, with an institutional base from which to provide the technical and material support, and to gather and promote the ideas generated from these many little initiatives. The programs spread to industrial Cape Breton as well to support the mine workers, though the literature of the day still tended to evoke the images of fishing villages and family farms. The isolation experienced in these areas contributed to the success of the study clubs. Fieldworkers Sisters Marie Michael MacKinnon and Irene Doyle emphasized the importance of the study clubs for both generating local leadership and for resolving problems and conflicts (MacKinnon & Doyle, 1990). Foley (2001) similarly describes the neighbourhood houses he studied in Australia as sites of struggles “and the struggles themselves as providing opportunities for learning” (p.77).
From the outset, the Antigonish program developed methods we would now recognize as action research. Moses Coady quipped that groups had to “fail at least twice before they will know they can do it” (MacKinnon & Doyle, 1990). This method is described by Dodaro and Pluta (2012) as “problem-analysis-vision-experiment-theory” as fieldworkers collaborated with people in the communities to develop programs that would work.

The study clubs eventually gave way to other educational programs by the Extension Department, which to this day are still conducted regionally in collaboration with community groups to address local needs. The Coady International Institute, created to respond to international demand for the Antigonish model, developed both a residential program for development workers from the global south, complemented with overseas research and training programs. The reports from these workshops through the 1970s-80s show recurring themes that integrate the study and local application of the principles of the Antigonish Movement to an analysis of the contemporary issues in the context of the workshop setting. Integrated with this is contemporary development theory and methods of Freirean popular education. These workshops were often conducted in partnership with organizations with Coady graduates. For example Le Morvan (1987) records the historical ties of the partnership with the Confederacion Mexicana de Cajas Populares representing 180 credit unions, a movement which traces its origins to the establishment of the first credit union in 1951 by two priests who had come to St. FX to learn about the Antigonish Movement in 1949 and 1950. The confederation “maintains a strong emphasis on member education and solidarity” (LeMorvan, 1987, p. 1).

The Extension Department too had a library to support its work. Topshee (1940) claimed, “Perhaps the library should be the actual head and center of all or most of a community’s informal adult education activities” (p.6). The Extension Department acquired Carnegie funds “to the development of the library in relation to the demands of the adult education program” (Lester, 1936) enabling the small library in Antigonish to be supplemented with satellite branches throughout the region during the study club years. The library adjusted its services as the programs evolved. Like Highlander’s library during these decades, the Extension library provided a combination of practical resources and literature of broader interests. The librarian Sr. Marie Michael observed the thick economics textbooks returning unread, which reinforced the need to adapt materials to meet the interest and reading level of those who were using them. The scripts of her radio programs also demonstrated this balance of adaptation to local practical needs, with the vision of offering wider vistas through literature (Irving and Adams, 2012). Like the Highlander librarians, Sr. Marie Michael was also an active fieldworker and worked with hundreds of women's study clubs.

Key to the work of the Extension Department was the sharing of information and innovations through various means, including regional meetings, The Maritime Co-operator newspaper (Topshee, 1940), and the annual Rural and Industrial Conferences. Promoting people's knowledge was important as Boyle (in MacInnes, 1978) noted in particular the leadership roles of the “humble” farmers and fisherfolk who were active participants and speakers at the Rural and Industrial Conferences. Though, this was not entirely inclusive as women were typically relegated to the women’s section of the conference. When a woman, Nora Bateson, was invited to speak to the entire conference, it was a notable exception (Irving and Adams, 2012).
Themes and Tensions
This study identifies a number of shared themes as well as tensions involved in creating and supporting the educational space that addressed their visions. The real utopias remind us to bring to light the the human failings and prejudices that we deal with in daily life.

Making Use of Educational Spaces
Both programs developed methods that would not be named in the emancipatory literature until decades later. Methods resembling popular education were successful because they did enact the understanding and respect the staff had for the local people. Rather than imposing cookie cutter models, the programs honoured and integrated local knowledge and the settings to adapt the learning spaces that were best suited to organizing in their areas. When times changed, the educational spaces adapted too.

People's Knowledge
The literature on adult education and social justice places people's knowledge and experience at the centre of learning. These programs evolved methods over the years to put this belief into practice in a variety of ways that would later be identified as action research. However, in the literature the results of these initiatives have not been well documented in recent decades. The Coady Institute's research has until recently been primarily used in testing and strengthening its own programming. It is now placing more emphasis on documenting the action learning and research for wider audiences.

Tensions Between Practical and Utopian
To embrace the “tension between dreams and practice” Wright (2010) calls for “utopian destinations that have accessible waystations, utopian designs of institutions that can inform our practical tasks of navigating a world of imperfect conditions for social change” (p.6). Both Highlander and Antigonish live the mixed blessing as touchstones of adult education for social justice in North America. Like many historical phenomena, these stories are also often incomplete, simplified, or misrepresented. The stories of the blossoming of co-operatives in Nova Scotia and of citizenship schools in the southern United States have threatened to lock our institutions in a past that overshadows the work we do now. It is notable that most writings about Highlander's work since the civil rights movement are by Highlander staff, while other adult educators continue to describe it in historical terms. McDermott (2007) claims that while the historical “myth” can be inspiring, it can also hide the other important empowerment work that has been achieved. There is also the tension of an institution supporting a movement becoming identified as that movement, which beyond causing confusion, poses the risk of undermining the ownership of the movement by the people themselves.

Tensions of Participation, Exclusion and Memory
McDermott (2007) who has researched the internal work of Highlander women notes, “It is important that our research does not replicate oppression by leaving out power and positionality in our analyses” (p.407). Throughout the documented history of the Antigonish Movement, women's participation has been noted in passing with admiration, though the details of their stories have remained secondary to the dominant narrative of Moses Coady. While Sr. Marie Michael and Sr Irene Doyle (1990) were integral to the St.FX Extension Department in the 1930s, tensions grew as women were denied full participation in co-operatives and the women's
program faced chronic underfunding. Coady (1939) optimistically described women's roles this way: “The guilds aim at spreading cooperative education among the members of the store, arousing the women to greater interest in community affairs and...promoting a finer spirit of loyalty among the women members” (p.61). Sr. Irene Doyle chafed at the assumption that women’s guilds were adequate. This was not a sufficient space for women’s participation, and certainly not equal to the spaces open to men. The Extension Department also faced criticism for not working more closely with African Nova Scotian and aboriginal communities, though by the 1960s, they had active programs.

Concluding Comments

“Peoples’ educational spaces” can play a role in building social movements. The institutions that survive today from these two traditions continue to support learning for social justice. The lessons of Highlander in the created safe space for reflection and mobilization, and of the Antigonish Movement in bridging the local and regional arenas, demonstrate that these educational spaces can take different forms in response to the needs and aspirations of the participants. There is a heavy responsibility to document and archive the work, to preserve the historical record of social activism—a challenging task for those with few resources and pressing priorities of activist work. Institutions working with social activists also have a role in the documentation and other activities that can support the learning and research of people engaged in social action. What cannot be forgotten is that the ideas and organizations have to be community-led.

Acknowledgements: The author wishes to thank to John Gaventa for initial ideas for this research. This paper draws on the presentation we prepared for the American Sociological Association Annual Meeting, August, 2012, entitled Building countervailing power: The role of people’s educational spaces in movements for ‘Real Utopias’

References


Emotional Intelligence: Is it Important That Adult Educators Have It?

Sharon Jarvis
University of British Columbia

Abstract: Emotional Intelligence (EI, EQ) is important in the adult education field because it is effective in engaging and validating participants, which in turn decreases drop out rates and increases enrollment. This proposal looks at two opposing incidents involving educators’ application of EI skills. Next, it discusses where the research currently stands on EI, and it looks at an effective method tested in developing EI in educators. Lastly, it proposes a method for comparing high IQ (intelligent quotient) and high EI educators.

We are neglecting to generate educators’ awareness of emotional intelligence in the field of adult education. When educators fail to activate their EI, they compromise the learner’s pleasure of learning and they fail to validate the learner. In a progressive learning environment educators need to model EI. Moreover, EI is at the core of social intelligence (SI) - ability to produce influence.

Rectification, first through awareness, and next through training will satisfy learners and stakeholders. Because learners will be happier and more engaged, the drop out rate will decrease, and enrollment will rise. Through constructive engagement, education will be effective and learning will rise. Thus, educators will produce higher positive effectiveness.

EI is defined by Goleman as “awareness of one’s own feelings as they occur” (Goleman, D., 1994), and Mayer and Salovey define it as the “perception, expression, facilitation, understanding and management of emotions” (as cited in Mayer & Cobb, 2000, p.166) that demonstrates character of “a well-adjusted, genuine, warm, persistent and optimistic person” (2000), but for this paper, EI is the ability to identity if one’s moment by moment emotions are constructive or destructive to others, and the ability to use constructive emotions. In other words, are the educators’ emotions helpful or harmful for the participant? On the other hand, the intelligence quotient is one’s level of language and mathematical abilities pertaining to “memory, reasoning, attention and planning abilities” (Communications staff, 2012).

High EI and Low EI

One experience with an educator demonstrating emotionally intelligent behavior made a learner feel validated, understood, and believed in while an educator with opposing behavior had an opposite effect on a participant. In the high EI experience the participant was always put in a position of support and kindness. The educator provided a model of genuine interest and empathy, and acknowledged the participant’s strengths (Rice, 2013). The educator set the participant up for success; thus, the participant produced timely, extensive, and relevant research and worked enthusiastically with the other participants. In the contrasting experience for the same participant, an educator publicly belittled the person by a negative critique of her writings and group presentations. The educator attacked the participant’s spelling and grammar errors by saying, “this is unacceptable” in an angry and judgmental tone and yelled at the person with other shaming and dismissing public comments like “that is terrible work, you should be
ashamed of it.” The participant was astonished that an educator would be so hurtful and felt distraught, small, and stupid. An experience like that has the potential to cause one to go into isolation, which can lead to a mental illness such as depression. Fortunately, instead of going into a deep depression the participant sought out counseling. According to the Mental Health Commission of Canada, one third of Canada’s population is affected by mental illness (Mental Health Commission, 2011). The Mental Health Commission teaches individuals, communities and organizations EI type skills to assist “ordinary Canadians” (2011) in helping others to recover good mental health (2011). Adult educators have a duty of care towards participants who often come from diverse backgrounds, and having EI is part of that care.

**Young Research**
The argument of which is more valid EI or IQ as per Daniel Goleman’s (1995) statement “as powerful, and at times more powerful, than IQ” (p. 34) is a question John D. Mayer and Casey D. Cobb (2000) disagree with in their article “Educational Policy on Emotional Intelligence: Does It Make Sense?” Also, they say there is not enough scientific data to support it: the science is too young. They say one can have good character and success without EI because the research in distinguishing between good character and EI is undeveloped (2000). Moreover, this article deals from the perspective of including it in a curriculum for the learners, not from the perspective of the educator developing the intelligence.

**Developing EI in Educators**
A dissertation was presented in May of 2012, by Michelle Rojas, that is similar to what this proposal is suggesting - high EQ in educators. The Six Seconds model was used as a basis for intervention and data collection: emotional intelligence assessments, teacher evaluations, interviews, transcripts and journals the educators’; furthermore, it was used to develop EQ skills in educators and the results were positive (2012).

**Further Research and Conclusion**
It is important that an adult educator have EI. Although it is argued, that the science is too young regarding EI’s definition and a distinction is needed, the attributes and training of self-awareness, self-management and empathy are needed in the adult classroom because of the mental health implications. Still, more research is needed. By comparing the teacher evaluations, enrollment and drop out rates of dominantly higher IQ and dominantly higher EQ educators’ classrooms, we will have scientific evidence of the effectiveness in engagement and enrollment of the two intelligences from the perspective of the participants.

**References**
Health Commission of Canada.
Building a Theory of the Non-Indigenous Canadian Bystander:  
A Multidisciplinary Review of Research on Bystanders to Genocide

Rochelle N. Johnston  
Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, University of Toronto

Abstract: This paper reviews multidisciplinary research on bystanders to genocide. It also shows how theories of bystander behavior can help us make sense of why non-Indigenous people in Canada are passive in the face of genocidal processes targeting Indigenous groups. The review considers definitions of “the bystander” and summarizes conditions in the domains of economics, culture, geography, politics, security and communications that could help us understand why bystanders, particularly in the context of genocide, don’t intervene.

Introduction
There is growing acceptance amongst genocide scholars, Indigenous scholars and their non-Indigenous allies in the academy that the violence of the Canadian state (and the European colonies that preceded it) against Indigenous people is genocidal (Woolford & Thomas, 2011; Tovias, 2008; Palmater, 2011; Alfred, 2007). Labelling this violence as genocide, attempted genocide, acts of genocide, or genocidal brings a new body of theory and empirical research to bear on the relationship between 1) the Canadian state; 2) Indigenous people as individuals and nations; and 3) non-Indigenous people in Canada. In particular, it begs the question, who are the “victims”, the “perpetrators” and the “bystanders” in Canada’s genocidal processes? Though there has been preliminary research applying and problematizing the constructs of “victims of genocide” and “perpetrators of genocide” to the Canadian experience, there has yet to be an exploration of non-Indigenous Canadians as “bystanders to genocide”.

In this paper I review the multidisciplinary research on bystanders to genocide as a first step towards determining whether existing theories are relevant to the Canadian experience. For the purposes of this review I focus on how the scholarship attempts to explain bystander passivity in economic, cultural, geographic, political, security and communication domains.

Genocide in Canada?
How we define genocide affects our understanding of the role of bystanders. Woolford, Thomas (2011) and MacDonald (2007) convincingly argue that specific events in Canadian history fit the definition of genocide according to the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide (U.N.T.S., 1949). However, the Convention’s definition is of limited use in understanding the situation in Canada because while it was being drafted, colonial powers, especially Canada, lobbied to ensure that the definition agreed to wouldn’t criminalize their assimilationist policies towards Indigenous people (Churchill, 1997). In particular they

---

17 While the genocide literature employs the term “victim”, I instead use the term “target” which though not ideal, does less to deny the agency of Indigenous people and groups who have survived genocide.

18 Results from social psychology experiments have also influenced theorizing on bystanders to genocide. Staub (1989) and more recently Kahn (2008) provide excellent summaries of these theories so I do not include them in this paper.
succeeded in excluding from the definition most of the cultural, social, religious, economic and political techniques they were using to eliminate Indigenous people as distinct groups. For this reason, the definition originally proposed by Rafael Lemkin, the originator and indefatigable champion of the Convention, is more useful for understanding the Canadian situation:

…the term [genocide] does not necessarily signify mass killings although it may mean that. More often it refers to a coordinated plan aimed at destruction of the essential foundations of the life of national groups so that these groups wither and die like plants that have suffered a blight. The end may be accomplished by the forced disintegration of political and social institutions, of the culture of the people, of their language, their national feelings and their religion. It may be accomplished by wiping out all basis of personal security, liberty, health and dignity. When these means fail the machine gun can always be utilized as a last resort. (1944, para. 5)

Lemkin further argues that genocide involves two phases: “destruction of the national pattern of the oppressed group” and “imposition of the national pattern of the oppressor”, in other words colonization (1944, para. 3).

Given widespread misconceptions that genocide is just another word for mass killings, it is worth emphasizing that according to both the Convention and the vast majority of genocide scholars, genocide means eliminating the group. This can and historically has been accomplished without killing all, most or even any of the individual members of the group. Therefore the sometimes (though not always) “kinder” and “gentler” Canadian approach of seizing Indigenous lands and resources, destroying Indigenous cultures, societies and families and forced assimilation – or as has been infamously said of the Indian Residential School system, “kill[ing] the Indian in the child” (TRC, 2013) – counts as genocide.

Finally, genocide is popularly misunderstood as an “event” delineated by when the killings start and stop, carried out by a psychopathically evil cadre over at most a few years. However, genocide is in fact a dialectical process that can unfold over generations, with genocidal acts intensifying or abating depending upon conditions which impact on: 1) a dominant “in-group” that includes perpetrators and bystanders (and potentially allies); and 2) a minority group who is targeted.

**Definitions of Bystander**

A bystander is someone who sees an unacceptable act and does nothing to stop it. Bystanders are unlikely to self-identify, except perhaps by what they are not: the perpetrators nor the targets of genocide (Staub, 1989). A bystander is an “ordinary” person (Barnett, 1999) who can embody any number of identities. Bystanding is a behaviour, not an identity like “woman”, or “teacher” or “settler”, though certain identities may come to be characterized by their bystanding behaviour. Because bystanding is a behaviour, one’s status as a bystander may change depending upon one’s circumstances and one’s volition. A bystander’s proximity to acts of victimization may vary not only in space (bystanders can reside within or outside of a genocidal state) but also across time: one can be a bystander to genocidal acts that were committed in the past by

---

19 Groups, institutions or governments may also be bystanders.
participating in genocide denial and by refusing restitution to those who were targeted and to their descendants.

Bystander behaviour falls somewhere in the middle of a continuum (Barnett, 1999) with those who are “resisting” and “rescuing” at one end and those who are perpetrating genocide at the other. While witnesses allied with the group targeted for genocide may be unable to act at the time of an attack, they may intervene later when they have the opportunity. On the other hand, some bystanders are supportive of genocidal acts and/or processes; while they refrain from committing or choreographing violence themselves, they voice their support or act in indirect ways to enable the perpetrators. In the middle are those who passively watch or look away from genocidal acts. Because of their silence it may be impossible to know their reasons for doing nothing. If asked, they may conceal or misrepresent their motivations. Bystanders move along this continuum of complicity depending on their circumstances and their volition. Any of these types of bystanders may incur benefits from genocide, perhaps through appropriating the property or opportunities previously enjoyed by members of the targeted group or by being rewarded by the perpetrators of the genocide for their complicity (Ban-On, 2001; Esquith, 2010).

There are other scholars who argue that instead of falling along a continuum, bystanders are indistinguishable from perpetrators (Gushee quoted in Barnett, 1999), simply criminals who missed their chance to offend. Bystanders are often groomed to become perpetrators through watching and providing indirect support to those carrying out genocidal acts (Kayumba & Kimonyo, 2008). Further, being a bystander is a classic defence given by perpetrators of genocide, the Nazi Adolf Eichmann being a notable example (Barnett, 1999).

Though bystanders may not be directly involved in acts of genocide, they are complicit through association as members of the dominant or “in group” in society that the perpetrators act on behalf of (Verdeja, 2012). Though bystanders may claim they are taking a neutral position vis-à-vis a conflict between two groups, genocide is not a conflict in the classic sense. Coloroso (2007) argues that genocide is instead analogous to bullying. Even if the targeted group resists, genocide is an overwhelming assault on the humanity of the targeted individuals and the right of the targeted group to exist. Further, bystanders are not in fact “doing nothing”. The apparent indifference of bystanders is an act, one that sends a message to the perpetrators, giving them consent for what would otherwise be impermissible and morally abhorrent (Bar-On, 2010; Staub, 1989; Kahn, 2008). Because bystanders have the power to stop genocide, in not speaking up they become morally and politically (if not legally) complicit, though the degree of their complicity may vary (Barnett, 1999). Finally, bystanders are also directly responsible for adding to the suffering experienced by the targeted group by standing silently by (Coloroso, 2007).

For the purposes of my own research I am interested in individual, non-Indigenous bystanders in Canada who watch or look away from genocidal processes, and whose allegiances – either to Indigenous people or the Canadian government and its genocidal policies – are unclear. They are bystanders to both past atrocities and the continuing oppression of Indigenous people in Canada. While there are some important cases of non-Indigenous bystanders who have been physically

20 In Canada the term “ally” is commonly used for non-Indigenous people at this end of the spectrum.
proximate to acts of physical violence against Indigenous people in Canada, I am more interested in the remote form of bystanding that most non-Indigenous Canadians enact and the fact that whether we want to or not, non-Indigenous Canadians enjoy benefits – land, resources, preferential access to opportunities – because of genocide.

**Why Don’t Bystanders Intervene?**

Most, probably all of us, no matter what our identity, have been bystanders at one time or another. Further, in societies where genocide has been perpetrated, the vast majority of the population stands by (Staub, 2011). As a non-Indigenous person in Canada I am no exception and so these theories apply as much to me as they do to others. Of course some bystanders stand by because they support attacks on the targeted group. But what conditions in society could account for why otherwise “good people” don’t intervene to halt genocidal processes in Canada?

*Lack of Awareness*

A theme in the bystander literature with particular relevance to the Canadian situation is the lack of awareness by bystanders that genocidal violence has and is being perpetrated against Indigenous people (Staub, 1989; Verdeja, 2012). This bears upon the complicity of bystanders: how can you be held responsible for genocide if you have no idea that it was/is going on? Codes of silence mean that bystanders may never hear of the atrocities that were/are committed in their name. Further they themselves may protect the perpetrators and by extension themselves by consciously or unconsciously hiding the genocide from others (Barnett, 1999). Information about genocide may be accessible to bystanders but they avoid accessing it (Staub, 1989; Verdeja, 2012); in other words they look away. Also, information may be compartmentalized within society; for example stories of Indigenous people’s lives aren’t reported in the mainstream media.

Perpetrators and their supporters may take measures to ensure bystanders are confused and misinformed about genocidal processes. They may disseminate propaganda or “spin” information that does leak out about genocidal acts (Staub, 1989). The strategies they use depend upon the extent to which they control or have the cooperation of various mediums for information sharing, whether mainstream media, the education system, new information technology or simply information communicated by word of mouth through personal networks. Their work is also aided by the fact that we take in or filter out most information almost automatically, without thinking about it critically.

The meaning we make of the information we do receive is shaped by the prevailing ideology, or dominant set of ideas in society; what in critical theory is called hegemonic discourse and in social psychology is called social representations (Tindale et. al. 2002). Staub (1989) explains that these result in a “relatively uniform definition of reality. If everyone seems to be thinking the same way, it may stifle doubt or resistance, even inner resistance.” (p. 65) Thus, we discount information which challenges what our society tells us to believe. How we speak about genocidal acts, in particular through the use of euphemisms that make violence sound benign, is one way we incorporate information about genocide without threatening hegemonic discourse (Barnett, 1999).
Geographic Reasons
The physical separation of bystanders and the group being targeted for genocide may also be a contributing factor to bystander passivity, and also contributes to lack of awareness (Barnett, 1999)\(^2\). If the targeted group is not already geographically distant from the bystanders (as they are in Darfur for example) then the targeted group may be forcibly relocated to remote areas or ghettos (as they were during the Armenian Genocide and the Holocaust). The relocation, coerced and sometimes forced, of First Nations and Inuit people to reserves far from settler communities is an example of this in Canada. Genocide, whether through mass killings or slower processes of exploitation and neglect, produces violence, disease and social chaos that can spillover and disrupt the dominant society. With the targeted group exiled, and genocidal acts carried out far from site, business as usual can continue for the bystanders (Barnett, 1999).

Economic Reasons
Bystanders may be passive in the face of genocidal acts because they benefit directly from the victimization of members of the targeted group (Esquith, 2010). In Canada the clearest example of this would be the seizing of Indigenous lands and resources by the Canadian government and transferring title or rights to resource extraction to non-Indigenous individuals and business interests. Non-Indigenous people derive benefits directly from the land and indirectly through an economy and welfare state that depends upon resource extraction. This type of exploitation is a contemporary reality, not just a historical phenomenon. It continues to benefit many non-Indigenous people and weaken many Indigenous societies in ways that threaten their continued existence as groups. Further, benefits are passed on to the descendents of the original perpetrators and bystanders, while disadvantage is passed on to the descendents of those targeted. In genocidal societies resources can be monopolized by a coalition of elite interests who use those resources to further genocidal processes and provide bystanders with incentives for remaining passive (Kayumba & Kimonyo, 2008).

Cultural Reasons
While bystanders may not explicitly support violent attacks on the targeted group, there may be cultural explanations for why bystanders appear indifferent. Genocidal processes often arise in reaction to sudden and dramatic changes in society (Staub, 1989). These changes give birth to ideological movements aimed at transforming society in part through scapegoating targeted groups, even marking them for elimination. Though this condition does not appear to broadly or overtly characterize the contemporary situation in Canada, re-examining periods of accelerated cultural change in Canadian history may reveal corresponding peaks in genocidal acts. Further, the assimilationist tendencies which still persist in Canada and still threaten the continued existence of Indigenous peoples as groups, may be a reaction to the challenge of cultural diversity.

Bar-On (2001) suggests that modern, industrial, individualistic cultures, like the dominant culture in Canada, socialize us to be bystanders, to “mind our own business”. We are “indifferent; because we are involved daily in so many different anonymous settings” (p. 133).

\(^2\) The Rwandan genocide being a notable exception where Tutsi’s were targeted by many of their Hutu neighbours and were often murdered in their own houses.
We ignore a fellow human being’s call for help because we are embarrassed that we might intervene inappropriately in someone else’s affairs.

Some genocide scholars argue that societies with “collectivist cultural frames” encourage the type of bystanding behaviour required for genocide (Oyserman & Lauffer, 2002). Canada does not fit this mould. Further examination of theories of genocide in the context of “individualistic cultural frames” is needed. The extent to which a society values deference to authority could also be a factor in understanding bystander behaviour (Staub, 1989). Canada’s political stability could be an indication that Canadians are deferential to government sanctioned authority, even if it facilitates the orchestration of genocide.

For genocide to be carried out the society must condone, or first be transformed to the extent that the range of genocidal acts – physical, biological, political, social, religious and economic – employed in genocidal processes are accommodated. The normalization of violence is a cultural process (Kahn, 2008). In the Canadian context it is important to pay attention to how violence is condoned in specific “spaces” (i.e. on reserves, on the street, in residential schools, in child welfare, in jail) against specific “bodies” (i.e. Indigenous bodies).

Security Reasons
One reason often given by bystanders for not intervening is that they were fearful of retribution from the perpetrators. Indeed in some genocides, the Rwandan one especially, Hutu bystanders were not only killed for intervening to protect Tutsis, the targeted group, but murdered if they refused to participate in the killings (Kayumba & Kimonyo, 2008). In the past, non-Indigenous Canadians faced legal sanction if they opposed specific genocidal policies. However, bystanders’ fears may not be justified. There is evidence that bystanders to genocide often overestimate the dangers to themselves of intervening to protect the targeted group. Historians of the Holocaust report that while political organizations that opposed the Nazi regime were brutally suppressed, individual German citizens who were caught rescuing Jews often received little more than a slap on the wrist (Barnett, 1999).

Political Reasons
Finally, there are also political reasons why bystanders are reluctant to intervene. First of all, genocide requires that power is monopolized by the perpetrators and their supporters, or at least that the perpetrators are able to control those in power. In some genocides there is a charismatic political leader who champions a genocidal ideology, but this isn’t always the case. For example, there was no one autocratic leader of the Rwandan genocide. Those in power are intolerant of opposition to their genocidal plans, especially from the targeted group, but also from bystanders (Staub, 2010). They may use a variety of strategies to neutralize their opposition, including co-opting those who dissent and employing “divide and rule” tactics. These assaults, and the fact that those perpetrating genocide monopolize resources, means that the opposition’s capacity to lead a movement to resist genocide may be weak. This is why intervention by foreign, external bystanders to stop genocide has been given so much attention by genocide scholars and activists.

Genocidal regimes adhere to and employ an ideology to justify genocide (Staub, 1989). These ideologies may be a response to traumatic upheavals within society and may propose revolutionary or reactionary responses to manage cultural change. While at first glance the
history of Canada seems fairly devoid of revolution, the cultural encounter between European and Indigenous civilizations presented a massive political challenge, one that continues to this day. Non-Indigenous Canadians continue to manage this challenge through settler colonialism, both a political system and an ideology that justifies genocide. Significant scholarship has been devoted to examining how totalitarianism facilitates the indifference of bystanders to genocidal processes (Barnett, 1999; Kahn, 2008), but little to how a comparable level of indifference can come about in a supposedly democratic society.22 Even when genocide occurs in totalitarian societies, genocidal regimes appeal to populist sentiments and remain sensitive to popular opinion (Barnett, 1999). This means that speaking up can reverse genocidal processes.

Conclusion
Considering the relevance of genocide studies scholarship on bystanders to the Canadian situation reveals limitations. Most of the scholarship is from a positivist tradition. In another paper (Johnston, forthcoming) I bring theories from whiteness and settler colonial studies to bear on this topic and cast a more critical light on bystander behaviour and the subject positions of those who adopt it. I draw attention to the fact that different bodies, be they male/female, racialized/white, rich/poor, rural/urban, etc. enact bystanding behaviour. The same behaviour communicates very different meanings depending upon the bodies that enact it. Further, genocide studies emerges from a Western academic tradition. I am beginning to work with a group of Indigenous scholars, activists and traditional knowledge keepers to explore Canadian Indigenous theories relevant to bystanding and genocide. In line with an Indigenist approach I am reflecting on these theories through the lens of my own experiences as a non-Indigenous Canadian and sometime bystander to make it more relevant to my research, activism and relationships with Indigenous people. Finally, the empirical basis for theories of bystanders to genocide is limited to retrospective accounts by bystanders to the Holocaust and overly reliant on the results of laboratory based social psychology experiments. The findings of this paper are a strong rationale for my planned empirical research in Canada on non-Indigenous bystanders to genocide.

References

22 By this I of course mean democratic in a selective sense. For most of Canada’s history and to an extent until today the political system fails to protect the human rights or extend constitutional protections to Indigenous peoples has actually established bureaucratic institutions charges with victimizing them.
Black + White = Lots of Grey: How Pop Culture and Place Complicate Understandings of Canadian Healthcare and Identity

Kaela Jubas, Dawn Johnston and Angie Chiang
University of Calgary

Abstract: This paper discusses preliminary findings from research into popular culture’s pedagogical functions, namely influences on sociopolitical debates and identities. We are juxtaposing messages and portrayals in the show Grey’s Anatomy with Canadian viewers’ understandings of and stances on healthcare-related policies and services. We focus here on inter-provincial similarities and differences that emerged in conversations with participants, and suggestions about how healthcare and pop culture are constructed and received across borders.

Introduction
This paper builds on prior presentations about a study into the pedagogical functions of popular culture, specifically how cultural consumers come to understand and position themselves within sociopolitical debates (Jubas, Johnston, Chiang, & Reznick, 2012). We are exploring how Canadians relate portrayals and messages in the American-produced medical drama Grey’s Anatomy to Canadian healthcare. Healthcare remains a prominent concern in this country, and “the political importance of health care in Canada is remarkable” (Redden, 2002, p. 103). It “has been considered to be at the core of Canadian national identity and values” (Rak, 2008, p. 61), a view reflected in high profile advocacy groups and campaigns.

In this presentation, we focus on inter-provincial similarities and differences that emerged in conversations with participants. We discuss what those conversations suggest about how healthcare and pop culture are constructed and received differently across provinces, and how emotionally based learning surfaces in both cultural consumption and engagement with public policy. Although Medicare is seen as a “black-and-white” symbol of Canadian identity, as we explore here, differences disrupt the notion of a coherent national identity, and suggest shades of grey.

Prior Research and Working Conceptualizations
Adult educators increasingly see culture as pedagogy, and cultural consumption as a learning process. Christine Jarvis (Fisher, Harris, & Jarvis, 2008; Jarvis & Burr, 2010) establishes how, while some cultural texts (e.g., Educating Rita) reiterate traditional liberal notions about adult education as a pathway of personal advancement, others (e.g. Buffy the Vampire Slayer) develop characters who model transformation in understanding of self and other. In offering “intense vicarious experience” (Jarvis & Burr, 2010, ¶6), popular culture can even invite fans to engage in their own transformative learning. In a similar vein, Robin Wright (2010) explores how the character of Cathy Gale, from an early season of the show The Avengers, affected fans’ sense of feminism, and of their identities and opportunities. In her discussion of research conducted with

23 The research discussed here is supported by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada. Thanks are extended to Rebecca Reznick, who worked as a graduate research assistant on this project.
colleagues, Elizabeth Tisdell (2008) notes that members of minority groups felt affirmed by portrayals of successful people who resembled them, and hoped that such portrayals could foster change in other people’s views. Although the pleasure of consumption mitigated participants’ critical response to hegemonic messages, researchers found that facilitated discussion about cultural texts helped participants expand their “understanding of marginalized ‘Others’ in new ways and/or…their understanding of how hegemonic processes work both in media and in society at large” (Tisdell, 2008, p. 58).

We concur with these scholars that cultural consumption informs the knowledge that audience members construct. Whether or not it is accompanied by any formalized educational intervention, as recommended by Tisdell (2008), cultural consumption is a process of “incidental” learning, “which is mostly experiential, unconscious and unplanned learning acquired in everyday life” (Hrimech, 2005, p. 311), and helps consumers make sense of the sociopolitical relations and discourses that they engage in daily. Other sources of information – news media, advocacy organizations, political platforms, acquaintances’ stories, formal education and personal experiences – are juxtaposed with pop culture and contribute to this learning. In this way, cultural consumption and other sources of information are intertextual. Although intertextuality can be (and is) taken up somewhat differently by scholars working from diverse perspectives, it generally refers to the idea that “every text has its meaning, therefore, in relation to other texts” (Allen, 2011, p. 6).

Finally, drawing on the work of people such as John Dirkx (2001), we see learning as a multidimensional process, which is as much emotionally as intellectually oriented. Like the scholars cited above, we assert elsewhere (Jubas et al., 2012) that learning through cultural consumption is emotionally charged. Fans relate to or empathize with varied characters, and imagine themselves facing similar, often challenging, situations. Although Jarvis (2012) recognizes that the words identification and empathy often are used interchangeably, she distinguishes between them. She uses the former to refer to the capacity to see oneself as or in another, and the latter to refer to the capacity to see oneself as with another.

**Methodology, Methods and Participants**

This qualitative case study began in 2011 with a textual analysis of *Grey’s Anatomy*. Study team members reviewed DVDs from the first seven seasons, keeping notes and transcribing segments about healthcare policy. Three questions guided that work: Who deserves and receives care? What procedures are covered? How is healthcare organized?

Analysis of that stage 1 data informed guidelines for a second stage, which involved focus groups. Participants were Canadian *Grey’s Anatomy* viewers aged 18 to 30. Ideally, they were aware of recent relevant news stories, and had voted in a federal or provincial election. We held sessions in Victoria, Vancouver, Calgary, Edmonton, Saskatoon and Regina in 2012. Of the 54 participants, 21 were in BC, 16 in Alberta, and 17 in Saskatchewan. Most were female, were completing or had completed post-secondary education, and self-identified as middle class. Most also characterized themselves as white; other ethnoracial identities included Asian/South Asian, Canadian-Persian and “mixed race.” Data analysis remains underway.
Findings
As we noted above, the findings discussed here remain very preliminary. Still, there are some interesting points that have surfaced. Conversations with participants have highlighted both inter-provincial similarities and differences in views about healthcare and *Grey’s Anatomy*, as well as the importance of personal experience in understanding healthcare and the show.

**Reading Healthcare and Pop Culture as Canadians: Similarities across Provinces**

Conversations across provinces suggested that the line between (perceived) fact and fiction is blurry. Participants generally agreed that the producers of *Grey’s Anatomy* try to convey a progressive view on social life. As Joanna noted,

> I think they’ve made a very diverse cast to show...different ethnicities....There is [sic] role models...of these high end doctors and surgeons of all, you know, colours, and different people and ethnicities....And also the fact that they have, um, such an equal balance of women and men, I think, like, [creator] Shonda Rhimes, I think she’s doing that on purpose for sure.

At the same time, even though most participants articulated what could be characterized as progressive social outlooks, they felt drawn to the show because of its dramatic appeal and interesting, attractive characters, rather than its reputation as a vehicle for social commentary.

Most participants supported Canada’s Medicare framework, seeing it as preferable to the largely privatized, for-profit system of insurance and care portrayed on *Grey’s Anatomy*. They interpreted the show’s presentations of sympathetic patients who could not afford healthcare insurance and services as gentle critiques of America’s framework. Consistent with the writing of Rak (2008) and Redden (2002), participants discussed the importance of healthcare not just to them, but to all Canadians:

> Celeste: I really value our Canadian healthcare system and access for everybody.... That’s incredibly important for me,...that Canadian heritage and, to me, that basic human right.

> Cora: I completely agree with you. I, I think it’s about access....Talking to people who haven’t grown up in Canada [who] move here and take pride in the fact that we have public healthcare. And...I think, too, healthcare is one of those issues that no matter your demographic, no matter where you’re living, it’s applicable.

Participants also found appearances of patients who lacked medical insurance a realistic reflection of healthcare in the US, although they found the propensity for the show’s surgeons to volunteer their services on a pro bono basis as highly romanticized and unrealistic. Even if they had no first-hand knowledge of American healthcare, participants saw in the show a message that inability to pay for service discourages some Americans from going for check-ups and consultations. Several participants also accepted inferences in the show that publicly funded hospitals in the US are ill equipped and staffed by incompetent caregivers.

Interestingly, even though participants acknowledged that Canada’s Medicare “system” looks different and faces diverse challenges depending on province or locale, nobody discussed the American “system” as similarly diverse and fragmented. Many discrepancies in Canadian
healthcare were related to provincial regulations, finances and political priorities, as well as urban/rural divides in access to services; discrepancies in the US were seen in socioeconomic terms. In short, participants thought that the show hyper-dramatized interpersonal dynamics and medical cases, but got many technical and even clinical details about American healthcare right.

Beyond such representations of and messages about healthcare, participants tended to agree that Grey’s Anatomy reflects American society and culture, and some important differences between the US and Canada. For instance, one storyline in the months leading up to the American election in 2012 centres on a lead character, Cristina, who chooses to have an abortion. Although she has been up front with her husband, Owen, about not wanting children, he responds to her decision with hostility, and garners sympathy from many other characters and, presumably, viewers. As Carolyn, a BC participant, explained,

Going back to…[whether it’s] purposeful what they [the show’s producers] do, and I think it is, especially how they brought back in the controversy about the abortion between Owen and Cristina. Like I think that’s definitely purposeful because I think that’s going to be a really important issue, it always is in American politics.

On one level, then, Grey’s Anatomy is an American cultural text which is received in a particular way by Canadian fans.

Provincial Particularities

We have identified some provincially-based distinctions in participants’ comments, about either the show or real-life healthcare. These distinctions suggest awareness about recent events, news stories and trends in participants’ own provinces. In British Columbia, several participants had responded to a recruitment flyer posted on a university campus, specifically in a faculty of education. They were well aware of an ongoing dispute between the provincial government and teachers, and related their concerns about funding cut-backs in the education sector to financial strains in the healthcare sector. For them, Grey’s Anatomy highlighted the threat and danger of creeping privatization throughout the public sector. In healthcare, that privatization is evident in for-profit, fee-bearing centres and services which are jockeying for a greater share of the medical “market.”

Participants in Alberta were similarly concerned about shifts in Canada’s healthcare sector toward a for-profit orientation; however, they raised their concerns in different ways. The participants in the Edmonton session happened to be students in healthcare-related fields. They spoke at length about the phenomenon of named medical facilities and described the cachet that accompanies the ability to attract privately raised funds. In part, their comments were prompted by a segment from the show in which characters await the release of national rankings of teaching hospitals – some, like Seattle Grace, fictional inventions, and others, like Mayo, well known in real-life. These participants related Grey’s Anatomy’s messages about the importance of status to comments that they heard about medical facilities in their city. For practitioners, status comes from working at a top facility and being the best in the field; for patients, it means having access to that facility and those professionals. According to Timothy, a participant in that session, a new centre under construction was “nicknamed...the Mayo Clinic of the north....Clearly this one’s gonna be awesome!”
A second particularity among Albertan participants was the recognition of a Conservative legacy in the province. When we asked participants about their recollections of platforms in recent election campaigns, a few noted abortion and what is known in the province as “conscience rights” – the question of whether public servants can refuse to issue treatments (including referrals) that violate their personal beliefs or ethics. Claims of conscience rights relate to services such as abortion and same sex marriage, and are advanced by socially conservative voters and political parties. Although some participants in other provinces commented – mostly in dismay – about cut-backs to reproductive health services and agencies, rhetoric of and concern about conscience rights was exclusively Albertan. Like participants from the other two provinces, the Albertan participants advanced moderate or progressive views, and they were troubled by the idea of conscience rights. Moreover, several of them attributed the spread of private, for-profit healthcare centres in Alberta to a long history of fiscally conservative provincial governments and voters, rather than to a more recent American influence.

Finally, we are struck by the predominance of one particular concern among participants in Saskatchewan. When asked about their perception of the main healthcare concern in their community, almost to a person they provided one answer: the intersection of Aboriginal population, racism and socioeconomic disparities. Claire offered this explanation during a session in Regina:

I’d say in Saskatchewan, and I’ll expand on this topic, but, um, I’d say that issues in our Aboriginal population in Saskatchewan are of the biggest concern, um, healthcare-wise. Um, having such a high Aboriginal population that doesn’t necessarily access healthcare, because it’s not as accessible to them because of the places that they live in, because of their socioeconomic standing, and also because of racism....I think that it’s more predominant because we have a higher Aboriginal population, specifically in our city, so we notice that yeah.

Likewise, Elizabeth, who was raised in Ottawa, shared the following comments on this topic in a Saskatoon session:

And, uh, do I think it’s the same across Canada? Um,…I don’t think it’s the same across Canada just because we do have a particular Aboriginal population here that, you know, you wouldn’t find out in Newfoundland, you wouldn’t find in Ottawa, I don’t think, from my knowledge.

Overall, participants in Saskatchewan were well informed about the history of Medicare, and conversations there were peppered with references to Tommy Douglas, or the Saskatchewan doctors’ strike of 1962. In contrast to the Alberta participants who were aware of their province’s Conservative legacy, the Saskatchewan participants recognized the legacy of socialist parties, politicians and programs there. Although these issues do not relate directly to Grey’s Anatomy, they suggest that neither healthcare nor popular culture portraying healthcare work and services is experienced or understood in a uniform way across Canada’s provinces.
Other Factors Shaping Canadians’ Understandings of Healthcare and Pop Culture

As we explored above, sometimes participants’ responses seemed to vary by province; sometimes, though, variations seem unrelated to province of residence. Place could have an impact on participants’ knowledge about and experience with healthcare in other ways. For instance, people who had come from or worked within rural communities quickly identified the limitations and pressures as a major problem. In Nancy’s words,

> Where I teach right now, like they have one doctor that like lasted four months. That doctor was on call 24/7 for four months….And she has a family. Like, it’s no wonder that she left, now there’s no doctor anymore, because she was like, “I can’t do this, this is insanity!”

Another factor shaping understandings include having a chronic condition and not being able to find a family physician. Jane, who gets migraine headaches, explained, “I was on preventative medications, but…as soon as you saw a new doctor, they wanted to give you a different suggestion….Like, I’ve found what works. I’m not looking for alternatives, I’m looking to get the prescription I have.”

For participants with education in a healthcare-related field, courses became important sources of information and learning about healthcare policy. They noted issues such as the growing need for geriatric services or the problem of obesity. Confirming Jane’s words, Cassie, an Alberta participant, remembered one class in which she had learned about patients with chronic conditions and how they don’t really feel like there’s a good entry point for them if they have an emergency situation, because they don’t want to be going to emergency departments and sort of using up those resources. They really want access to someone already knows their issues and knows their case and they don’t have to start re-explaining from the beginning, they just want sort of a resolution or solution.

One participant, Claire, related a recent conversation with her mother, a nurse, with a scene from the show that we viewed in the session. The scene features a young woman diagnosed with cervical cancer so advanced that the surgeons discover that it is untreatable. They (and we, the viewers) learn that the woman knew that something was wrong, but had no healthcare insurance and could not afford to pay for the medical consultation that would have saved her life. After watching that scene, Claire shared this comment about how social inequities surface in Canadian healthcare:

> Like my mum was just talking about….we have people who… shouldn’t be in the system. And it could be totally preventable, like with this girl with cervical cancer. We have the exact same thing, like people in the Aboriginal population who have diabetes, who are overweight….Why don’t we address the more systemic issues?

Direct experience with healthcare services, hearing anecdotes from family members or friends who worked in healthcare, living in a rural community, and engaging in healthcare-related education created variability among participants, irrespective of provincial location.
Discussion
As the preceding discussion suggests, there is both a degree of commonality in understanding among Canadian viewers of Grey’s Anatomy, and multiple factors which help explain divergences in understandings. Commonalities in understandings about and feelings toward Medicare are not surprising, given the function of Medicare as an identity-marker in this country and the federal nature of the overall framework, despite provincial variability in implementation. Watching Grey’s Anatomy reminded participants that policy ensuring access is an important, much-valued difference between America and Canada. Even so, participants recognized that Medicare does not ensure equal distribution of quality, timely healthcare services across all communities.

These findings contribute to understandings of identity, specifically in the context of the Canadian nation-state. In seeing Grey’s Anatomy’s portrayals of healthcare policies and services, along with other relevant social issues, participants were reminded of how Canada is distinct from the US. The largely for-profit healthcare framework seen as dividing Americans into a have/have-not population became one example of how American society and social debates are more polarized than what participants have tended to experience here in Canada. There was a persistent belief that Canada’s healthcare framework sets this country apart, for the better, from America, even as differences in perception and experience were apparent within and across provinces. Such differences suggest that the function of Medicare as a marker of Canadian identity is both potent and fragile. Medicare might be used to construct and articulate a coherent Canadian identity, but national identity is experienced in much more local, subtle ways.

References


Cultivating a Culture of Care, Community, and Knowledge Sharing: Mentoring Relationships Between Elder and Newer Faculty Members

Colleen Kawalilak
University of Calgary

Jacqueline G. Warrell
University of Calgary

Abstract: This paper focuses on the untapped potential for mentoring and knowledge sharing between Elder and less-experienced faculty members within university settings. Drawing from a larger, three-year, SSHRC funded study (2009-12), Elder faculty at selected Canadian universities shared perspectives and experiences of ‘growing old’ in academia. The potential for reciprocity of mentoring benefits for Elder and newer faculty are identified.

Introduction
In this SSHRC funded study (2009-12), the perspectives and knowledge gathered ‘along the way’ of Elder faculty members (academics - 55 years or older and who have worked within university contexts for 20 plus years) were explored. Elder faculty engaged in dialogue, sharing stories of significant learning moments. This paper elaborates on one of the dominant themes that emerged in this study, that being, mentoring and the valuing and devaluing of Elder faculty in academia.

Aging Demographic
As the generation of ‘baby boomers’ ages, the demographics of the Canadian workforce is shifting significantly. Cole (1999) referred to an aging workforce and identified 2006 as a milestone year when ‘early boomers’ would turn 60. Cole (1999) suggested that the 55 year plus group would increase by 35% over the next few years. Foot (1998) added that over half of all Canadian professors would soon be eligible to retire. The 2010 Statistics Canada University and College Academic Staff System (UCASS) survey confirmed that 52% of university academic staff are over the age of 50.

Although, 65 years of age remains a common benchmark for retirement, Lefebvre, Merrigan, and Philip (2011) found that the age of retirement and the number of individuals returning to work after retirement was increasing among the Canadian workforce. In an Affidavit filed with the Supreme Court of Nova Scotia, MacGregor (2010) addressed the status of mandatory retirement in Canadian universities:

Except for Manitoba and Quebec and a few post-secondary institutions scattered across the country (including the University of Calgary), mandatory retirement at age 65 was enforced in all Canadian universities at the beginning of the 21st Century … [whereas] mandatory retirement disappeared from US academic institutions almost 20 years ago. (p. 1)

In light of the changing workforce demographic and retirement trends, it is increasingly
important to understand the transitioning experience of Elders and those of less experienced faculty (Bosetti, Kawalilak, & Patterson, 2008).

**Navigating the Early Years**

Early years of professorship are frequently characterized as a time of survival (Driscoll, Parkes, Tilley-Lubbs, Brill, & Pitts Bannister, 2009). Newer faculty referred to ‘baptism by fire’, being thrown into the flames and in need of support as they battle challenges and stresses associated with transitioning from doctoral student to the role of newly minted assistant professor (Ortlieb, Biddix, & Doepker, 2010). Characterized as a period of confusion, isolation, frustration, loneliness, and powerlessness (Driscoll et al., 2009; Ortlieb, Biddix, & Doepker, 2010), Driscoll et al. (2009) referred to murky waters that are difficult and challenging to navigate. Kawalilak and Groen (2010) referred to the “maze-like pathway” towards tenure and promotion. Adding to this tension, many new faculty become mentors for graduate students concurrent with a need to be mentored themselves in their new academic role.

Mentoring is understood and experienced differently in various contexts. Within academia, Ambrosino (2009) described mentors as fellow travelers who assisted junior faculty to successfully navigate their academic journey. This included anticipating potholes and mitigating potential roadblocks. Publish or perish permeates many institutions and can be a significant source of stress (Driscoll et al., 2009). This pressure is further exacerbated by decreased resources/supports for new faculty to develop their research program (Sorcinelli, 1994; Ortlieb, Biddix, & Doepker, 2010). Kawalilak and Groen (2010) noted tensions that arise when a new hire struggles to locate themselves within the many layers of academic life.

Mentoring relationships between faculty members, at a time when universities are reshaping and reforming in identity in response to neoliberal influences are significant. This research is relevant in that it supports nurturing mentoring relationships at a time when the number of Elder faculty who will retire from academia is staggering.

**Methodology**

This study was guided by intersecting two theoretical frameworks, Indigenous epistemology and conservation theory. An adult learning conceptual lens assisted in data analysis. Elder faculty and their storied knowledge (Indigenous epistemology) are regarded as rich environmental resources at risk of becoming extinct (conservation theory) if not valued and validated.

The design of this study draws from the foundational principles of adult learning that support a holistic view of lifelong learning, collaboration of community members, and the interconnectivity of individual, storied experiences to the larger community narrative. Life history methodology informs this study. Life history work (Gouthro, n.d.) supports the exploration of experiences and tacit knowledge acquired by Elder faculty and also of newer faculty who seek a deeper understanding of nuances and not so subtle challenges shaping the new academic reality.

**Participants**

Snowball sampling was used to recruit participants from Western, Central, and Eastern Canada. Thirty-seven Elder faculty participated. Elder faculty were defined as retired (or soon to retire),
55 years of age or older, and who have resided in university settings for at least 20 years. Four small focus groups (three to four participants per group) of newer faculty members also participated.

Methods/Data Collection
Story sharing (Stroobants, 2005) through dialogue (Bohm, Factor, & Garrett, 1991) and life history interviewing (Clandinin, 2002; Cole & Knowles, 2001; 2001; Keats-Whelan, Huber, Rose, Davies & Clandinin, 2001; Measor & Sikes, 1992) were the chosen research methods. Bohm (1998) described dialogue as “a stream of meaning flowing among and through us and between us...out of which may emerge some new understandings (p. 6). Dialogue is about emptying a space in order to create room for the co-creation of new knowledge and understanding. Life history methodology values “the informant’s subjective reality; that is to say, his or her definition of the situation (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2000, p. 133). Although face-to-face dialogues were preferred, Skype and Elluminate, via the Internet, were employed to connect with some participants. Dialogues spanned one to two hours in duration.

Data Analysis
Data analysis included repetitive review of audio taped and transcribed dialogues, storyboarding emergent themes, and clustering/connecting key and sub-themes using NVivo software.

Findings and Emergent Themes
Three dominant themes emerged in the dialogues relating to creating spaces for Elder knowledge sharing in support of mentoring relationships. The interrelated and overlapping themes were: 1) mentoring and reciprocity, 2) collegiality and care, and 3) inclusive community.

Mentoring and Reciprocity
This study supported Lichtenberg’s (2011) findings that mentoring had numerous benefits for mentees and senior faculty: deeper engagement, friendship development, work satisfaction, and reflection on one’s own practice. According to one Elder participant:

There is a natural tendency for older faculty to want to get to know younger faculty… partly for their own purposes, just because they want to be in touch with younger scholars. And, in the back of their mind, perhaps they are thinking, maybe this is someone that is interested in some of the same things I’m interested in. Maybe we can do something together.

Elder faculty spoke of the potential for reciprocity in mentoring relationships when space was created for collaboration and the co-creation of knowledge. Both Elder and newer faculty referred to knowledge sharing through co-publishing, team teaching, co-supervision of graduate students, and through informal conversations and interactions. Some Elder faculty confirmed that authentic mentoring relationships supported a culture of care and wellbeing and contributed to a stronger desire to actively engage in faculty activities.

Many, soon-to-retire/retired, Elder faculty expressed a desire to remain “engage[d] in this knowledge-making phenomenon.” Most Elder participants expressed a need, when contemplating retirement, for an ongoing connection to the university and a welcoming space
within which to engage in ongoing dialogue with colleagues and students. One retired faculty member attributed health and wellbeing to ongoing engagement and said, “if I stop learning, it’s going to be dangerous in terms of my health.”

A newer faculty member expressed appreciation to Elder faculty who took the time to share their knowledge:

… they are a wealth of knowledge. Next week some of the other field school instructors and I are going out with [an Elder faculty]. To go out with someone who has worked in the mountains for 40 years … is priceless. I think we are really lucky here that the older and retired faculty are so willing to help us out.

Elder and newer faculty spoke of challenges in connecting with one another. One Elder faculty elaborated:

Maybe the same conversation gets interpreted in different ways, right? It’s not inconceivable that you have a conversation or a meeting and one walks away thinking, ‘I’m not being asked’ [and] the other one says [that] ‘he’s not willing to share.

Some Elder faculty, cognizant of power differentials, were sometimes hesitant to share their knowledge out of fear that this would be perceived as ‘imposing’. One Elder spoke of social occasions and urged newer faculty members to “talk to the seniors about what they were doing and explore areas [of] mutual benefit.” Newer faculty, however, not yet comfortable or established within a department/faculty, may feel timid in approaching Elders. Or, they may not know who to seek out for advice. In spite of these challenges, initiating interactions with Elder faculty members, within the context of this research, often fell on the shoulders of new faculty members. One new assistant professor shared his experience and said: “...the older faculty are not overbearing. They are not going to come in and tell you how to do things ... but, if you go ask them, they’re more than happy to help.” Several participants emphasized that, in order to foster reciprocity, Elder and less experienced faculty need to be genuinely and authentically interested in engaging with one another.

**Collegiality and Care**

Extensions and expressions of collegiality and care between faculty members were identified as contributing factors to fostering a culture of trust and wellness. Trust provides a rich and fertile foundation upon which mentoring relationships may organically germinate and take root. Within this safe space of trust, resides a genuine openness and interest to learn from one another and to appreciate alternate perspectives. This openness requires that tightly held beliefs and assumptions are left at the door. One Elder faculty member elaborated, “It’s the ‘hi’ in the hallway” that sometimes encourages ongoing contact between one person and another. Elder faculty also emphasized the importance of social gatherings for fostering interpersonal relationships and collegiality, a catalyst of sorts for informal mentoring relationships. In the words of one Elder:

“... just sit down and have a coffee with somebody and see what opportunities [arise]. I don’t like formal structures for doing this because they become obligations, they’re
time slots. But, I think when departments have things like birthday parties for faculty members, and they invite retirees to come … and when they have Christmas parties and they invite them to come … I mean the informal, where you sit down, you know the person, [and] you’re able to enter into an exchange, like we’re doing now for an hour and then see them again at Christmas time, or get back to them on the phone, I think the elaboration of those informal relationships are things that can sustain over time.”

Physical space was identified as a factor contributing to or inhibiting the development of a collegial and caring culture. Participants suggested that the physical layout of a faculty will facilitate or inhibit opportunities for informal interactions. One Elder faculty member described the shift in faculty culture when departmental offices were closed/replaced with a central mailroom. “The worst thing that happened is the 11th floor mail room. [The] 11th mailroom became a place [to simply go for mail] … [whereas] the departmental offices were usually places where we gathered and we chatted until one or two secretaries were [saying], ‘get out of here, I need to do my work.’ That mailroom is the most alienated place; you go and take your mail and hope no one sees you. We’ve lost a lot …”

Several participants described how the general culture of academic work has been deeply impacted by technology:

… it’s the cell phone and electronic things that are making that change. [For] a lot of people, their interactive community [is no longer] their face-to-face community down the hallway …. [This] electronic community … isn’t their sustaining, everyday, face-to-face, social community.

Elaborating on promoting a culture of greater collegiality and knowledge sharing:

We should be encouraging people to be together … to learn, embrace each other, and to work in that way … to connect to the practical activities in the community, but we are not. We are encouraging people to shut their doors, to focus on writing journal articles that nobody will ever read. (Elder faculty)

Inclusive Community

The academic journey is often characterized as a lonely pathway. In the words of one participant, “I still think academia is a very alienating and isolating place.” The desire to experience a sense of belonging and feel connected to a community of scholars was identified by both junior and Elder faculty.

The relationship between leadership and creating an inclusive culture was also raised:

… the thing that I think is important is to create in an academic unit … to do everything you can if you are in a leadership position to create a sense of inclusive community … so that everybody feels a part of the community … so, that people have a chance to get to know each other, and as they get the chance to know each other than I think that mentorship will flow … And that we give lots of storytelling opportunities, you know in our academic administrative spaces, and then we also have some kind of
social, or I guess better said, community life [that's] slightly independent of academic administration and the academic politics. I think that for me this feels like a more natural way to help people to find each other. (Elder faculty).

From another participant:

It also depends on what kind of culture the senior leadership creates … I do think that there are two very important leadership tasks, to motivate individuals and to create a culture where collaboration happens, where productivity happens, where people are happy. I don't get a sense, for example, that we've got that right and [I don’t think we] motivate people very well [or] ... have a culture that encourages collaboration.

One Elder faculty cited a Dean’s ability and desire to authentically engage with faculty members as a significant factor in creating a culture of collegiality and care. She described her Dean as “a real guy ... human,” referring to his attentiveness, appreciative nature, and ability to convey “care, compassion, and genuine concern.”

Feelings of exclusion were also referenced by several Elder participants who spoke of a sense of homelessness within their department/faculty and, for some, within academia at large. The perception was that their knowledge and contributions were no longer valued, that they were simply an “old fart” or “old fogey,” taking up space and too much of the budget. This led to feeling disenfranchised. Feeling excluded and devalued included not being invited to share their knowledge or to participate in faculty activities. From this standpoint, some participants felt they were perceived as no longer making significant contributions. A Professor Emeritus, when asked how he shared knowledge with the younger generation, responded, “Well we don’t much anymore, once you become an Emeritus you’re kind of a useless tool hanging around.”

Continued engagement was often dependent upon retired faculty volunteering and self-initiating as a way of remaining involved. Those eager to remain connected with the university expressed a desire to be invited to share their knowledge and to participate in the university community.

In contrast to some faculty members feeling disenfranchised, one Elder described this period in his career as “carrying a tremendous amount of weight in my faculty” and “[feeling] valued, more valued then I ever have.” Another Elder shared, “I really enjoy where I am, at this point in my career. I have time to think … to involve myself in activities that are meaningful to me.”

One Elder faculty shared that “I feel like there is a need, people feel a need, younger scholars and organizational leaders … they do feel a need for an older voice to come along and do a keynote or whatever.” One Elder described how “it has taken me nearly 20 years to figure out what it is to be an academic... I would say now I am real [and] bona-fide.” Of significance is that all Elders who continued to feel valued and engaged, also identified supports within their institution that contributed to this.

**Discussion**

*Space* emerged as a dominant theme throughout the dialogues with Elder faculty. Described, understood, and experienced in different ways, the need for space extended beyond the physical to include some emotional, psychological, and social needs of participants. Space was also identified as being critical to ‘mentoring relationship’ development and included a need for time.
and opportunity for these relationships to form. When roles and responsibilities are tightly packed and when professors are over-extended, this space does not exist.

When Emeritus Elders have a physical home, a defined space within a faculty, this is interpreted as an invitation to remain engaged and to contribute. Providing physical space for retired Elders to work and to gather with other community members communicates that their acquired knowledge is valued. Inviting retired faculty to guest lecture, participate in department committees, and attend both academic and social events were cited as authentic and meaningful gestures.

The development of a more collegial community that fosters a culture of knowledge sharing and collaboration was cited as a critical need. Collegiality can be fostered through opportunities to engage within more informal and social spaces. Activities that encourage faculty members to interact with one another, connect with like-minded individuals, and discover similar interests are significant. These spaces provide potential for more natural/organic mentoring relationships to form. Mentoring relationships that form more naturally were cited as being more meaningful and longer lasting. As shared by several participants in this study, the most meaningful mentoring relationships were born out of a human desire to connect, to belong, to be valued, and to contribute.

Indigenous cultures regard Elders as vessels who hold the values, stories, and experiences of the past. Within a university context, how do we regard and support our Elder colleagues? What do we do as faculty members to encourage knowledge sharing and relationship development between Elder and less-experienced community members?

Indeed, growing older is inevitable! In light of mandated retirement being removed from university policies, academia is better served by recognizing the value that Elder faculty, those who desire to remain engaged, bring to the work life, academic/learning journeys of less experienced faculty members. Findings in this study confirm that support and response to the reality of an aging population demands both an individual and collective commitment.

References

Walnut Creek, CA: AltaMira Press.
Understandings of Multiple Subjectivities and Positionalities
of Women in Online Learning Contexts

Jennifer H. Kelland
University of Alberta

Abstract: This paper is adapted from Chapter 7 of my PhD dissertation (Kelland, 2010). The research described here examined how women mediate tensions when learning online. In this paper I use concepts of multiple subjectivities and positionalities to explore what my research adds to existing theoretical understandings of these concepts. Specifically, it will explore how, in the absence of physical observation, learners and instructors will make assumptions about what it means to be a student resulting in a vision of the universal online student as a shared subjectivity among the women learning online in this study.

Purpose of the Study
The understandings described here are drawn from a larger project that examined how women mediate tensions when learning online. Using concepts of multiple subjectivities and positionalities, in this paper I explore what my research adds to existing theoretical understandings of these concepts. Through my research I acknowledge the usefulness of poststructural feminist theorizing about multiple subjectivities and positionalities. It provides a way of understanding the diversity of women’s experiences as they negotiate tensions while learning online; however, my research also highlights gaps in such theorizing as the need to examine the impact of distance and invisibility. This paper will focus on understandings the subjectivity of being a student and how the universal online student can be conceptualized using these concepts, and how these understandings challenge theoretical notions from poststructuralism.

Defining Multiple Subjectivities and Positionalities
Poststructural feminist understandings of multiple subjectivities and positionalities are connected. Though subjectivity is related to identity, and positionality is related to power, each one influences the other. Women’s experiences are shaped by the interaction of factors unique to each woman, based on her cultural background, age, ability, socio-economic class, family structure, and sexual orientation (Tisdell, 1995). Women’s identities are shaped through the interaction of these subjectivities within their individual experiences. In other words, the multiple subjectivities form women’s sense of who they are and what their roles are in the world in which they live, which are fluid and continually changing (Weedon, 1997).

Positionality describes how and where individuals are located within “multiple systems of privilege and oppression” (Tisdell, 1995, p. 61). Positionality describes an individual’s perceived or real power within a specific context at the intersections of different networks of power. As their multiple subjectivities interact, individuals have different agency to act on and in their environment, which is defined as their positionality.

Positionality is a useful concept because women’s position within systems of privilege and oppression in online learning contexts depends on their subjectivities, but also on the type of Internet access they have, their ability to communicate in writing, their familiarity with and skill
in using Internet-based communication tools and online learning interface, their ability to work independently, their familiarity with institutional structures and expectations, and their capacity to organize their time and space to meet the course requirements. Each woman’s relative power within the online classroom setting will be influenced by their subjectivities and how these play out both on and offline.

Together, subjectivities and positionalities can be imagined as strings that weave together. The subjectivities form the foundation for an individual’s understanding of the world; in places, the strands will be woven closely to form a strong and stable web, but in other places the strands will knot or pull in different directions to form bunches and holes where different subjectivities are contradictory or in conflict. For example, Cynthia (a participant in this study) would experience the strength of her web in regard to her position as a “respected online instructor” and as “a daughter who was valued, regardless of her educational level.” She would also feel the fragility of the strands as reflected by her vulnerability of being a student, both in regard to feeling she had no recourse in a conflict with an instructor and in regard to the effect of government tax decisions on the cost of her education. The strand formed by her position a grandmother would weave in and out through these other strands as she shared the experience of her grandchildren. The result is sometimes a strong stable weave that will support examination, action and external pressure, and in other situations, a weaker weave that will stretch and possibly break when external forces are applied to it.

Research Design
Specifically, my research question asks: How do women learning online mediate tensions in the learning environment and their own personal context? Subquestions ask: What tensions do women face when learning online? What strategies do they use to address the tensions? And, are they able to find ways to balance or overcome these tensions? To answer these questions, I explored the experiences of female learners using two qualitative research methods: photo-elicitation interviews and an online focus group. Both methods reflect my poststructural framework by engaging the women in identifying what was meaningful for them and sharing their experiences (Clark-Ibáñez, 2004), and by creating “polyvocal texts” (Kamberelis & Dimitriadis, 2005, p. 888) that acknowledge the diversity of their experiences (Madriz, 2000). By combining these methods the data included different perspectives including face-to-face and online components; one-on-one and group exploration; oral, written and photographic expression; and collaborative knowledge construction (Creswell & Maietta, 2002).

In the first phase, six women were invited to participate in individual interviews, which examined their experiences through a discussion of photographs they had taken that represented the tensions they experienced as online learner. The photographs served as “starting-points, rather than finished end-products […] [to] explore feelings, attitudes and beliefs and stimulate additional creative expression” (Weiser, 2001, PhotoTherapy, para. 11). In the second phase, a different group of six women collaborated in an online focus group where, as a group, they reflected on their experiences as learners in a dynamic and collaborative analysis (Mann & Stewart, 2000). The online focus group offered practical benefits (Burton & Bruening, 2003; Gaiser, 2008; Kenny, 2005; Stewart & Williams, 2005), while creating connections between the participants’ learning context and the research context (Orgad, 2005). The interview data and
descriptions of the photographs and focus group transcripts were analyzed by looking for patterns and themes.

**Subjectivity as a Student**

Women learning online continue to be negotiating multiple subjectivities. Neither the online context nor the distance from the institution, instructor and other students negates these subjectivities even though they are hidden from view. The women in this study and in others described in the literature (Burge, 1998; Kramarae, 2001) confirm that women learning online come from diverse backgrounds. Their identities or sense of self develop from the multiple subjectivities and influences in their lives. They shift from student, to worker, mother, partner – yet they never completely separate from any of these subjectivities that define them. However, the invisibility of what is offline and physical distance combine to bring the subjectivity of student to the centre.

The women in this study all appear to strongly associate with the subjectivity of student within the online learning context, and this common experience seems to bring them together. Drawing on their comments from their demographic forms and the focus group participants’ introductions, clearly these women define themselves related to the subjectivities they experience, as they illustrate with the ways they began their introductory messages:

*I look forward to meeting you and learning about your online experiences. I live in an isolated part of Northern British Columbia. I have obtained much of my education through various forms of distance education.* (Karen)

*Hello, it looks like I’m the second post in this new blog. I’m writing this message from my home computer. I have taken many online courses and I currently work at home, on a project for distance education students.* (Tracy)

*I am a full-time student completing a B.Ed. after-degree and a full time mom of 2 little ones.* (Rebecca)

*I have also taken a number of online courses to continue my education. Right now I work part-time at a local college and am starting a business to fill in the non-academic part of the year.* (Barbara)

*I’ve been working on my Master’s degree (online) for the past four years. During that time, I’ve taken two leaves of absence to welcome my second and third daughters.* (Jessica)

*I am joining this conversation a little late but I am delighted to be among all of you hard-working and determined women. I am currently a Master [degree] student with a prior graduate degree.* (Michelle)

All the women in the focus group highlight their subjectivities as students within the first three sentences of their introductory messages; however, other subjectivities are also presented in these first sentences: Karen lives in an isolated community, Tracy can afford to have a computer.
at home, Rebecca and Jessica have children, Michelle is working on her second graduate degree, and Barbara and Tracy are self-employed. Throughout the focus group and interviews it becomes clear these women as a group represent some or all of the following subjectivities: students, mothers, wives, employees (both self-employed and working for others), community members, volunteers, supervisors and colleagues, classmates, friends, children, and on and offline teachers. However, they also share a subjectivity as students. This shared identity as a student seems to erase other differences leaving what appears to a common experience of being a student.

While the interview participants approach the subjectivity of student differently, probably because they were not invited explicitly to introduce themselves, they still show clear examples of how being a student became their main activity/identity. The women spoke about their lives revolving around studying. It became the central focus of their activities:

> Every minute I got, I did school work. So that was 2 years... (Debra)

> My life has been so focused that I am tired. (Sharon)

> When people suggest doing something tonight then I would feel like I have this responsibility of schoolwork and I would say I think I should get my work done instead. (Nicole)

> I was just thinking about how different my courses were this summer and just how enjoyable it was to be able to fully focus on schoolwork (Amy)

Cynthia, who is both an online instructor and a student herself, finds parallels between herself and the students she teaches:

> But we create these ideas for ourselves: to be the best student, to be, to get the A, to get the scholarship, to get, and we create a lot of stuff. We put a lot of burdens on ourselves that we don’t really need to, and that helps my students because I look at them and I’m telling them the same thing. (Cynthia)

The women I interviewed also spoke about being students or part of a community within their cohort, thereby affirming their subjectivities as students:

> Most people started taking classes, we all started at the same time, so we started to know each other over the, you know, year and a half. (Amy)

> That was great because it brought us together once a week... our cohort got to meet. (Sharon)

> There were students like myself... (Amy)

> Being the mature student when I made a commitment, I’m there. (Debra)
Poststructural feminist understandings of multiple subjectivities fail to account for situations like the one highlighted above: the women in this study, all chose to self-identify as students. While they shared details about how their learning environments and experiences were different, the subjectivity of student, or perhaps more accurately student with multiple competing responsibilities, seemed to be understood as a shared experience. Their focus on that subjectivity may represent their understandings of this research, but it also affirms that being a student is a shared subjectivity between all participants. However, even with that shared subjectivity, their experiences were certainly not the same. While their narratives continue to illustrate the unique and individual subjectivities of the participants, they themselves see being a student as their primary subjectivity and they themselves tend to erase other subjectivities within their online learning environments.

Despite the diversity of any student population, in online learning contexts subjectivities can remain invisible to students, instructors, and institutions. The subjectivity of “student” can subsume all other subjectivities in the online classroom, where students are expected to set aside other responsibilities to focus on their academic learning. Not only does the subjectivity of student come to the front, but, in many cases, their other responsibilities, as well as other aspects of their identity, remain invisible. By eliminating face-to-face interaction, or at least limiting it, learners’ lives outside of the classroom remain invisible. However, even when they are invisible, those other subjectivities continue to shape women’s experiences as students. Individual subjectivities are still present, but they become redefined as characteristics of the student rather than the individual. For example, a mother who balances family and school, and does well academically is praised as a hardworking student, while a mother who finds that family demands prevent her from spending as much time as she wants on schoolwork is seen as disorganized or not committed to her schoolwork.

For students, this shared subjectivity seems to create a feeling of connection. Their shared online experiences provide a starting point for developing relationships, in some cases, or sufficient connection to work together, in others. The orientation “boot camps” emphasize the need for a sense of shared experience to unite a diverse group of students. However, the shared subjectivity of student can also be used to ignore differences.

The distance and invisibility that come with the online environment truncate subjectivities even more than do face-to-face learning environments. The result is that the essentialized universal student becomes the most obvious and visible subjectivity in the educational context. Although multiple subjectivities is helpful in understanding these women and their diverse experiences, particularly as they navigate their multiple responsibilities on and offline, the theory of multiple subjectivities is most helpful in recognizing that their subjectivities are simplified and subjectivities other than student are erased in the online environment. By using poststructural feminist concepts, it is possible to problematize the lack of subjectivities that are presented in online learning environments as students become part of a homogenous group where being a student subsumes other subjectivities. In the online learning environment, difference seems to be erased by the lack of physical interaction and the invisibility of differences. The erasure of difference parallels assumptions that women’s responsibilities at home, in the family, and in the community are private concerns that should remain outside of their learning environments.
Erasing difference also makes the online learning environment appear to be a less political context since difference appears to have already been eliminated.

**Implications for Adult Education Theory and Practice**

In response to the subjectivity as a universal student, post-secondary institutions design and develop online programs. These programs are developed with certain expectations of who learners are and what their needs will be. They meet the needs of a particular vision of this universal student: one who cannot attend traditional classroom offerings and, therefore, relies on online courses to provide a more flexible alternative. The many different reasons that may prevent a student from attending a face-to-face course are presented in promotional materials (i.e. successful businessman who travels for work, stay-at-home mom, young student who needs to work to pay for school, resident of an isolated community without a college or university close by, etc.); however, these reasons are not necessarily addressed in the actual delivery of the programs.

By focusing on the subjectivity of “student,” institutions are able to create a picture of a universal online student. This approach makes it easier for educational institutions to develop programs to meet the needs of these students through “flexible” delivery. The discourse of flexibility is used to as a way to address “the needs of diverse learners,” but actually, it ignores differences by shifting responsibility for addressing individual needs and all aspects of life outside the online classroom to the learner. Learners are expected to address private concerns that may interfere with their subjectivity as student. In essence, institutions are able to ignore diversity by claiming that by being flexible they are addressing the needs of all learners.

In the face of institutions seeing students as a generally homogenous group, educators need to be aware of how they approach difference in the online learning context. They must acknowledge it to themselves and be attentive to the assumptions they make about who their learners are and what their particular needs are. In some ways, they must work within the invisibility while assuming their learners are diverse and teaching in ways that respect that diversity, even if they cannot see it. Learners should choose whether or not they disclose information about themselves, but even if learners choose not to self-identify as different, the online classroom should be inclusive.

**Conclusions**

Multiple subjectivities and positionality are key concepts in poststructural feminist theorizing. They provide helpful understandings of the diverse experiences of women learning online, particularly in ensuring that diversity of experience is acknowledged, and in describing the changing power of women as they move through their off- and online experiences. However, I found the theories of poststructural feminism do not adequately address what happens to subjectivities and positionalities when they are hidden by technology. Research examines how individuals in online social contexts may experiment with gender switching or creating different identities (Kendall, 2000; Kolko, Nakamura, & Rodman, 2000; Turkle, 1995) or challenging traditional roles (Kelly, Pomerantz, & Currie, 2006), and research looks at what happens to strengthen characteristics that conform to online group identities (Kendall, 2000). However, the theoretical analysis of what distance and invisibility do to understandings of subjectivities and positionalities in online learning contexts needs to be further developed.
References


Race, Representation and Public Pedagogy –
From the CBC to Edmonton Public Library Theatre

Jennifer Kelly
University of Alberta

Bruce Spencer
Athabasca University

Abstract: The purpose of this paper is to explore the ways in which “race” or ethnicity has been, and can be, represented in Canada and to make a number of other observations that challenge the “Central/Eastern” representation of the formation of “two-nations” Canada. Therefore this is not just a critique of how the CBC ignored ethnicity in a major piece of “public pedagogy” but a lament for a missed opportunity to present the multiethnic, multicultural origins of Canadian experience – a missed opportunity which is sadly repeated almost daily. Finally, we will discuss a case study of how community engagement as “public pedagogy” can be a major component of university research and represent the lived history of African Canadians.

Race and Representation

In Canada, as in many white settler societies (Razack, 2002), public education such as that undertaken in the CBC series (discussed below) has traditionally been concerned with transmitting ideas and symbols integral to nation-building. Such forms of public pedagogy becomes a principal vehicle for “one of the most significant discourses through which white privilege and difference are normalized” (Schick & St Denis, 2005). White-skin subjectivity is an identifying characteristic in Canadian national identity. So non-white bodies are always at odds with the constructed white subject. As well, racism is able to operate through the belief that one’s country is humane, benevolent, hospitable and modern—all qualities that can be held up as proof against the possibility of intolerance, exclusion, and discrimination. Public pedagogy has the potential to highlight where these tensions and contradiction exist. As Giroux argues,

The time has come for educators to develop more systemic political projects in which power, history, and social movements can play an active role in constructing the multiple and shifting political relations and cultural practices necessary for connecting the construction of diverse political constituencies to the revitalization of democratic public life. (2003:12).

As part of looking at public issues we, as educators, have to respond to questions and issues raised by public life and the ways in which inequities are reproduced within the material contexts of our life-world. Issues of power surrounding erasure of those constituted in national discourses as “other than white” or those whose immigration experiences and contributions to building Canada are regarded as not worthy of memorializing because they are not white males. How do we work as adult educators within such a public sphere to develop a counter narrative based on pedagogical engagement? It’s a position akin to C. W. Wright Mill’s reference to the “sociological imagination” or as Giroux puts it, “how to translate private troubles into public actions, arouse public interest in pressing social problems, and use collective means to democratize more fully the commanding institutional economic, cultural, and social structures”
In this paper we highlight two examples of what can be identified as public pedagogy in that they are dealing with how the nation, Canada, has been constituted and memorialized. The first example relates to the TV series (and videos) Canada: A People’s History (2001) and its portrayal of Sir James Douglas first governor of BC. The second relates to the constitution of African Canadian immigrants as always taking from Canadian society rather than contributing their skills to its development.

**Background (Bruce)**

First, although the official “Canadian story” likes to promote a view of tolerant Canadians welcoming runaway slaves with open arms at the end of the Underground Railway a truer representation would be far more complex. Blacks were discriminated against in a number of Provinces – for example, the treatment of Africville in Nova Scotia; the legislation segregating Blacks into their own schools in Ontario; and discriminatory immigration practices that preferred immigrants from northern Europe over others including African-American families fleeing discrimination.

Not many in Canada will know about the Black pioneer families who came to the Canadian prairies in order to escape the extension of Jim Crow laws in the USA in the early 1900s, or about the racist immigration practices that prevented other Black families from joining the migration North and entering Canada. Canada paints itself as a kinder, gentler society than the US with a more harmonious race history but Canadians have struggled to talk about past racialization or even acknowledge key events in Canada’s racialized past. (For example, Mission and Industrial Schools for First Nations; the war internment and confiscation of property of Ukrainians (1914-1920), Japanese (WWII); Chinese head-tax and immigration restrictions; treatment of East Indians (the Komagata Maru carried 340 Sikhs, 24 Muslims, and 12 Hindus and was refused to dock in Vancouver in 1914); and discrimination in the armed forces – the Black construction Brigade in WWI or the treatment of First nations/Métis fighters.)

The CBC Canada: A People’s History could be seen as within the tradition of public adult education – following in the examples of the Farm Forum radio, NFB, the traveling film shows of early University Extension. We think the program producers thought of themselves in this light by the way they promoted the history series as unifying Canadians through knowledge of a common history. However when the English language episode on British Columbia was aired it was clear the research on, and representation of, the multicultural history of BC was poor. After watching the episode we fired off an email to the producers pointing out that the “African Rifles” group formed to help with law enforcement in Victoria was not populated by “runaway slaves” as claimed by the CBC but by free African-Americans who had moved North at the invitation of the Governor of Vancouver Island, James Douglas, to escape “Jim Crow” laws coming into California. The producers acknowledged their error and changed the commentary in time for the French version to air and then changed the tapes of the already aired English language version.

But when we also pointed out that the mother of the “Father of British Columbia,” Sir James Douglas, was Black they refused to re-shoot the clip of Douglas using a Black actor. The producers of the program claimed the photographs show him as light-skinned but research using Canadian sources would have revealed he was known as the “Scotch-West Indian” when he was in the fur trade, and many in what was to become BC knew him as of mixed heritage – and so the CBC missed a chance to show a part of Canada historically as “multicultural” (his wife, Amelia,
was Cree-Métis). It’s disappointing enough to find the scriptwriters and producers for the award winning series reverted to the Central Canada narrative of African-Canadians as “runaway slaves” or their descendants, but to argue:

After careful consideration, we decided not to change the actor for the re-run of Episode 6.

Our producers were aware that Douglas was of mixed race as you pointed out, but the photograph of him which we used in the program, and which was used to cast the character, was an original photo from the Hudson Bay Archives. They still have its negative and assure us it has not been "touched up". Similar photos of Douglas exist in other archives.

Kelly Crichton, Senior Producer, "Canada: A People's History" (Email response to author, Oct 1, 2001).

…is of course pathetic. They claim they knew, but did nothing with that knowledge.

This is not our only complaint about the part of the story on BC – we think they underplayed the significance of James Douglas’ leadership in securing BC against US interests, and his defense of citizenship rights for all ethnicities in the newly founded settlement of Victoria. Some of the resources the CBC used relied on US archives which fail to represent a rounded picture of Douglas’ relations with First Nations in BC and even misrepresented his policy of negotiation, compromise and assimilation of First Nations and minority groups that marked his years as Governor – in the face of some hostility from British and American settlers’ racist attitudes.

It could be argued that without the “multicultural” citizenry of BC (First Nations, Métis, French, Pacific Islanders, Chinese, Japanese, Russians etc) including the hundreds of Black families that emigrated to BC from racist California on the invitation of James Douglas the new colony would have been overrun by American gold miners. The astute policies of Douglas and colleagues combined with his acceptance of different ethnicities and identities (which may be criticized by today’s standards but was in fact exceptional in his time) secured Canada’s Western coastline from the USA. Margaret Ormsby in the Dictionary of Canadian Biography sums him up as:

A practical man, but yet a visionary, Sir James Douglas was also humanitarian. He treated individuals, including Negro slaves [and free Blacks] and Indians, with a respect that few of his contemporaries showed. The majesty of his bearing aroused criticism, but that same bearing made him the symbol, in the motley crowd attracted to the two British seaboard colonies, of the fact that the British presence was firmly established on the northwest coast.

On reflection we think that Canada: A People’s History was too focused on the central Canadian story, the conflict and accommodations between Anglo and Franco Canadians, to see what happened in BC was as equally if not more important to the geography of modern Canada as the 1812 war. And it was a story with a Black man (a Scots-West Indian) as the key figure supported by a multi-ethnic citizenry and yet the CBC knowingly chose to represent Sir James Douglas with a white actor and downplay BC’s multicultural past. In our view this section of a Peoples History is a failed example of public pedagogy.
Questions Arising (Jennifer)

So what pedagogical moments would emerge if CBC had portrayed Sir James Douglas as dark skinned?

What conversations might such a portrayal allow to occur in a public space that presently is impossible?

What might it mean to view Sir James’ identity as Diasporic?

For example, if we were to examine Douglas’ identity as diasporic we may well be able to take up issues of hybridity. Exploring a public pedagogy that highlights the diasporic is a starting point towards understanding a collectivity that spans geographic boundaries and makes it possible to place black identity in relation to other national and ethnic identities. Douglas’ identity is transnational and offers a way to imagine a more complex “ecologically sophisticated and organic concept of identity than offered by the contending options of genealogy” (Gilroy, 1997: 339). Drawing on an understanding of pedagogy as a process through which to analyze and understand the world (Freire, 1970), we are able to re-think this example of Sir James Douglas in a way that offers possibilities for working with adult communities to generate knowledge of and about African Canadians as well as other racialized communities.

The idea of thinking through public pedagogy carefully offers the opportunity to reinterpret the relationship not just between identity and location, but also between nationality and geographic origin. It allows for a shift in “attention from notions of geographically-bound contexts that develop in chronological sequences to notions of regions bound by a discursive ‘field’” (Gillespie, 1995). What were the implications of Douglas being born in Demerara? Further, such an understanding of public pedagogy allows us to analyze the political and the social aspects of identity and to see how representation of sameness and difference become part of meaning making and everyday culture. So how did Douglas’ experiences of being identified as a “mullato” affect his interaction with others whose identities were not perceived as “pure” or white, for example with other early settler groups in Victoria such as First Nations, African Americans and Chinese. Conceptually, this use of Douglas’ experiences as a form of pedagogy helps us understand the intersections of ethnicity, class, religion, and gender in identity formation in mid 19th century B.C. So it can be argued that public pedagogy offers the opportunity to re-theorize and articulate ideas of nation, nationalism, and pluralism within the field of community education.

Thus we are encouraged to ask: In a pluralistic and historically multicultural society such as Canada, how can we develop within our community organizations a complex and heterogeneous understanding of cultural and racialized identity formation that we can re-narrate a sense of social belonging (although not always easy or straightforward) among those traditionally marginalized as other than white? Such a retelling of Canadian history would also highlight an obvious present-day tension between the universalistic Enlightenment concept of the nation as a voluntary association or contractual entity and a more particularistic German Romantic notion of a “predetermined community bound by blood and heredity” (Malik, 1996: 131)—a community destined to be white.

A public pedagogy offers a way to work with hybridity and complexity when discussing life in 19th century Victoria. We would argue that public pedagogy could foreground issues around
“identity” and “mobility” in a more overt and coherent way than the official narrative as essentially presented by the CBC program on BC. It could have allowed for an understanding of how history, politics, and culture inform the availability and/or construction of identities and, furthermore, how movement across geographic areas (re)translates and blurs these same selves (for an interesting and informed discussion of some of these issues see Perry, 2010.)

**West Indian Diary**

Public pedagogy offers the possibility to recognize complexities in national stories and to take up issues of not just race but also issues of gender. Public pedagogy recognizes that communities are spaces of learning, sites where knowledge and informal learning is produced, exchanged, and transferred, places where adults meet and learn from each other. One such example of public pedagogy is a play that I co-produced based on my research using interviews, archival materials and focus groups.

This second example of public pedagogy discusses how educators can engage folks in developing a play about their experience in coming to Canada, forming a community, and becoming Canadians of Caribbean descent (African Canadians). It also records the success of the 3 performances of the play before a total audience of 400 at Edmonton Public Library Theatre. With the relaxation and opening up of the immigration laws in 1962 and again in 1967, the Alberta Black population was increased with immigrants from Caribbean countries such as Jamaica, Trinidad, Guyana, and Barbados. This group of immigrants was diverse in terms of geographic origins and occupational skills, many being technicians, tradesman of all kinds, clerical workers, and professional teachers (who were able to emigrate from the Caribbean directly into jobs as teachers, usually in rural areas or First Nations reserves).

The process of public pedagogy began with a traditional research project and design mapping out the experiences of Caribbean immigrants to Canada in the 50s, 60s, and 70s. As the interviews and other research data were being processed it became clear that developing a play-script would be a useful addition to the overall research project. With the help of some additional funding from a community grant a playwright, Pat Darbasie, whose heritage is in the Caribbean, was engaged to develop a script. This led to the exploration of a number of questions. How might African Canadian adult learners become engaged in an educative process about community through arts-informed practices of public pedagogy? How do these differing periods of African Canadian immigration contribute towards a sense of a unified community? A main focus was to establish participant accounts of the experiences of becoming an immigrant in Alberta and Canada and to give prominence to their “voices” to provide both data and direction for the investigation.

Following one-on-one semi-structured interviews some of the participants were re-engaged in a number of focus groups in order to give direction as to how the interview data might be used in a play format. This process consisted of the playwright and myself working for several sessions with a group of senior men and women whom emigrated from the Caribbean. The play-script *West Indian Diary* was the outcome of the various focus group meetings and highlighted the experiences of five main characters that provided space for discussions to take place around their immigrant experiences. Once a draft of the script had been written there was further feedback
from the community and a reading of the draft play with community members reading the parts of the main characters (for a fuller discussion of the play-script development see Kelly, 2010.)

Some of the main themes to emerge from the play-scripting process included isolation, marginalization, and the importance of community and community contacts in overcoming these factors. Many of these early immigrants recalled being faced with isolation in rural communities because of employment opportunities or having to develop their store of cultural and social capital (Bourdieu, 1984) in order to access professional jobs. Even in towns and cities new immigrants experienced marginalization in relation to housing, work and social situations; all of which aided community development.

Participant: But you know like in those days…you take for instance you go and you see somebody put up a notice ‘room for rent’ and you’re the black person go there. The moment they go they tell you say they forget to take down the sign you have a friend that’s white go the next day [the sign] is still there.

Of note, discussions of gender were surfaced through the development of the early play-script and provided an avenue into discussions reflective of what Stuart Hall (1996: 474) might identify as the end of the innocent Black. As Hall argues, “what is at issue here is the recognition of the extraordinary diversity of subjective positions, social experiences and cultural identities which compose the category ‘black’; that is, the recognition that ‘black’ is essentially a politically and culturally constructed category” (1996: 443). In other words, that Black representations do not run along a single narrative of good versus bad; that complexities abound. Thus some participants in the development of the play-script suggested that not all representations should be open to public presentation in that some of these discussions might not reflect well on the community. Others highlighted gender within the early script and suggested that the play should represent the negative aspects of gender relations between men and women. The tension that emerged raised issues of authenticity and ownership. Who gets the right to represent the African Canadian community and should those representations always be positive. In response the group discussed who might be the audience for the finished play since for some of those present issues of context are vital in terms of interpretation and meaning. It was feared a play staged for the wider Edmonton community offered a different social context from one in which the African Canadian community was reflecting on itself.

What makes these forms of contested knowledge socially and intellectually significant is that while written accounts of family or community histories (Carter, 1988; Hooks, 1998; Foggo, 1990) presently exist, the knowledge that this project mobilized was analytic rather than just descriptive and draws on sociological and critical cultural studies perspectives. So I was able to gain a sense of how these differing communities converged at times over specific issues (such as racism) while at other times issues of geographic origins took precedence. Returning the research findings to the research participants, family, friends and fellow community members through these acts of public pedagogy was enormously successful and educational. Public pedagogy was able to contest the traditional simplistic understanding of immigration experiences and to allow a broader public to access the counter narrative.
Conclusions

One of the reasons that we all find it difficult to engage in public talk about race, racialization and history is because we are totally immersed in a discourse of liberal multiculturalism. As part of this broader discourse it is often considered impolite to highlight issues related to race and its effects on the lives of folks, young and old. There is a strong push to be colour-blind, to see colour-blindness as a virtue. As an educator in one of my early research projects said to me, “I don’t notice the colour of my students” which is a noble effort to try to be inclusive but in such attempts at being inclusive that teacher might well not be able to recognize and support a student who is experiencing racism. Colour-blind racism is insidious since, as Bonilla-Silva suggests, it ignores “the effects of past and contemporary discrimination on the social, economic, and educational status of minorities” by “supporting equal opportunity for everyone without a concern for the savage inequalities between blacks and whites” (2010: 31).

Adopting forms of analysis associated with public pedagogy we would be able to talk more openly about the complexities of race and provide a space for public engagement that could help re-script the traditional story of immigration and Canadian nationhood – an opportunity which in our opinion was missed by the CBC’s portrayal of Sir James Douglas by a white actor along with the downplaying of the multi-ethnic composition of, and ethnic/racial tensions in, Vancouver Island and BC.

References


Work-life Experience and Learner Identity
The Economy and Beyond: The Benefits of Lifelong Literacy

Alyson E King
Shanti I. Fernando
University of Ontario Institute of Technology

Abstract: Our paper is a multidisciplinary exploration of how the continuum of (multi)literacies alongside the connections between social capital, community engagement and literacy can provide the basis for an analysis of adult education policy and a lifelong holistic approach to practice. Based on an analysis of research in education, sociology, public policy, labour studies and political economy we argue that adult literacy education is often promoted as a way to integrate oneself into the labour market with an underlying message that it will also help one integrate into society more broadly but this reality is not supported fully by government policy.

Introduction
The Literacy Council of Durham identifies literacy as a “use it or lose it skill” which complicates the notion of being a “literate” person over one’s life course. Rather than focussing simply on alphabetic literacy and a dichotomy between literate/illiterate, researchers have developed a broader conception over the last thirty years that allows for a deeper understanding of how literacies over life-spans are beneficial even beyond its impact on the economy and personal finances. Literacies (or multiliteracies) acknowledge the expansion of our understanding of literacy to include visual literacy, digital literacy, numeracy, and the like. This expansion has gradually evolved since the 1960s, but was named “multiliteracies” only in 1996 by the New London Group who aimed to capture the importance of both “the multiplicity of communications channels and media, and the increasing saliency of cultural and linguistic diversity” (p. 63).

For adult lifelong literacy, the New London Group’s pedagogy of multiliteracies addresses the complexity of life and work in the 21st century which requires interactions with different modes of communication requiring both “mere literacy” and “other modes of meaning [which are] dynamic representational resources” (New London Group 1996, p. 63). In other words, the nature of everyday life requires adults to have functional literacy skills as well as broader multiliteracies that allow one to interact with the information and communications technologies (ICT) that are insinuated into daily activities. For instance, in order to access employment resources, whether to claim employment insurance or to search for a job, one needs a basic level of literacy to be able to read job ads and complete an application form, while also navigating government websites, employment search engines, and/or human resources webpages, and then be able to submit an online application form or résumé. Given how challenging such tasks can be for even those with strong functional literacy skills, it can seem overwhelming for those who struggle to read. Numeracy is a particularly fragile skill that is easily compromised, while digital literacy skills have generational variations. It is with this knowledge of both the fragility and the necessity of literacy skills that we examine the economic, social and personal benefits of and government policies about lifelong literacies.
Lifelong Literacies
With the rapid growth of information and communication technologies, as well as the almost overwhelming amount of information available via these technologies, the ability to maintain one’s skills – “skill security” rather than job security (Schugurensky 2007, cited in Gibb & Walker 2011, p. 383) – becomes essential: one must continually place energy and money into maintaining skills as well as developing new ones. In other words, those individuals best able to manage and adapt to higher order literacies that move beyond traditional alphabetic literacies and pay close attention to the continuous influx of new (and old) information will be in demand. Individuals will require the ability to learn continuously to keep up with the growth and changing nature of both technologies and information; this is part of the continuous process of lifelong literacy education.

Digital Literacy: Generation Gap?
Over the last decade, government policies have prioritized digital literacy as a skill necessary for success in the knowledge-based economy. While the argument that adult learners need to develop digital literacy skills is well-taken given those priorities, there is evidence learners must develop some level of functional literacy first. At a basic level, therefore, we ask what the relationship is between traditional conceptions of literacy (i.e., functional literacy) and the more recent focus on multiliteracy skills (i.e., a multiliteracies continuum that includes functional literacy, digital literacy, numeracy and so on). In other words, how does reading on a screen differ from reading on paper? Recently, Greig and Hughes (2012) have found a linkage between literacy skill level and ICT use: “the higher the literacy level, the more likely adult learners are engaged with computers and digital media. Those less likely to engage with ICTs tended to have lower literacy levels” (p. 16). In addition, they note the ongoing digital divide based on social class and income levels.

Indeed, Aro and Olkinuora (2007) demonstrate a clear linkage between “computer use for instrumental purposes” (p. 389) and strong literacy skills. They also argue that “the youngest generation, who are also higher educated and have been socialized early in the use of the computer, have on average better functional literacy than the older generations” (p. 389). Their findings suggest that active computer use for information can help to improve functional literacy levels among those with lower levels of education. In addition to the “use it or lose it” problem, computer or digital literacy provides a good example of the generational gap that can occur without lifelong literacies. Aro and Olkinuora (2007) note that those born prior to the years 1956-1957 are less familiar with computer technologies. Those who have not made an effort to pursue computer skills are at risk of becoming marginalized as government services and general information regarding news, events and activities continue to move to the Internet. When skills are taught early, those skills persist – at least to a degree – and habits built during one’s teen years tend to influence later life (Aro & Olkinuora 2007).

Literacy and the Economy: Lifelong Integration
In a 2011 survey of the training needs of workplaces, the Ontario Chamber of Commerce found that the most heavily invested in skills included technical, management/leadership, interpersonal, and computer skills. Much further down the list were skills in reading text, writing, and document use. We note here that in order to attain the top skills, individuals would need the foundational skills of reading and writing. If companies are not investing in training for such
foundational skills, then the government must provide that training. The Chamber of Commerce noted:

In the 2011 Budget, the government announced $44 million over three years to expand literacy and basic skills training by Employment Ontario. This represents a reduced emphasis on workforce skills training compared to the $90 million over two years invested in 2009. In order to implement a viable vision for workforce learning which recognizes the economic impetus for a stronger government commitment, the government must increase program expenditures to address the pressing need for a comprehensive long-term strategy. (p. 2).

As has been well-documented, the language used to describe workers, such as “human infrastructure” (CCL 2009, p. 5) or human capital, dehumanizes individuals turning them into objects that can be owned and disposed of (Taormina et al. 2012), much in the same way that systemic unemployment also reduces people to resources that can be out-sourced as needed. While the Canadian Council on Learning’s 2009 report rightly emphasizes the importance of adult education for workers, the focus on people as part of the economic infrastructure and as no different from capital infrastructure is troubling. At a pragmatic level, as long as Canada’s economy is based in capitalism we all need to earn a living and education helps us to do so. In addition, “[e]ducation and training that enable individuals to adapt to fluctuations in the labour market (as in the current recession) can serve as a preventative, rather than a reactive, measure of social policy” (CCL 2009, p. 7). However, from a quality of life perspective, literacies are essential in allowing for and maintaining integration into an information and knowledge-based society.

**Literacy Beyond the Economy: Networks and Social Capital**

While there are many studies demonstrating that literacy skills are important in the development of human capital (Bloom et al. 1997; Campbell 2008; Solar 1998), there are fewer studies that clearly establish the relationship between literacies and social integration. For example, the Canadian Council on Learning (2009) maintains that there are considerable gaps in our knowledge of ways for understanding and measuring the non-economic outcomes to adult learning. In addition, the OECD (2005) acknowledges the fact that while human capital theory links education to economic returns, there is, as of yet, no widely accepted theory linking education to social outcomes. Murray and Shillington (2012), however, have linked literacy levels to the risk of being in poverty; since workers with low literacy skills are more likely to have low incomes, to rely on social support, and to participate less in community activities, we can extend this idea to argue that improvements in literacy levels will also improve social capital and community engagement.

The extensive works of Tett et al. (2006, 2007, 2008) provided the foundational research for understanding the benefits of adult literacy and numeracy learning through a social capital lens. As a way of operationalizing social capital, Tett et al. (2006) have defined it as the processes between individuals that establish norms, networks, and trust to facilitate mutual benefits. Lesley Bartlett (2008) found in a study of literacy programs in Brazil that it was not the fact that students developed literacy skills that were beneficial in economic mobility, but rather “the relationships and networks they cultivated through and in schools” (p. 737). Unlike the
“autonomous model of literacy” (Bartlett 2008, p. 738) that assumes direct and linear benefits of literacy and is embedded in much literacy policy, more broad-based literacies acknowledge that different people have different needs and therefore require more flexible adult literacy programs to allow them to attain their personal goals – goals that will change over lifespans.

The social benefits of literacies – such as improved self-esteem (Stromquist 2008), greater civic participation, and so on – will help Canada to become a stronger knowledge society, moving beyond the more simplistic expectation of economic benefits. As Bartlett (2008) states: “it is misleading to conceptualize literacy as a single phenomenon that has a predictable economic or political ‘effect’” (p. 751). When diverse learners, with unique social, cultural, political, and economic backgrounds, engage with reading and writing for their own purposes, results are unpredictable: “Social and cultural factors that are only perceptible and understandable in the local context influence how students understand and ‘take up’ literacy practices and literacy pedagogies” (p. 751). As a result, it is unreasonable to assume that different literacy programs will have similar effects – the vision of individual programs, of the instructors, and of the students will impact the discourses within the classroom and the connections to the world outside. Literacy, therefore, is a tool that can be used in different ways for different purposes and which are shaped by cultural and social contexts (Bartlett 2008).

**Government Policies**

Recent Canadian policies continue to be narrowly focussed on job attainment within a high-skills knowledge economy rather than broader economic and social benefits. While federal policy has a declared “commitment to, and concern for, becoming a knowledge economy” (Gibb & Walker 2011, p. 381), the fact that responsibility for education lies with the provincial and territorial governments hampers the potential success of Canada becoming “a highly skilled knowledge economy” (Gibb & Walker 2011, p. 382). Nonetheless, with governmental and non-governmental policies emphasising that “a skilled labour force with the capacity to learn and adapt by continually producing and engaging with codified knowledge, particularly through information and communication technologies” (Gibb & Walker 2011, p. 383) is necessary for strong national economies, there is a need for adult educators to continue to pay attention to issues of lifelong learning.

**Matching Skills and Jobs**

While the government continues to focus on the creation of a high skills workforce which requires on-going, lifelong learning, the actual jobs being created are not ones that require such highly skilled workers. Although Canada has been successful in creating one of highest qualified workforces, Cruikshank (2007) notes that about “29 percent of university graduates are working in jobs that do not require university degrees” (p. 36). The policy focus on creating a highly educated and skilled workforce leads to a general belief that those who are unable to find jobs appropriate to their skills are somehow inadequate, especially with pronouncements that Canada has or will have a shortage of skilled workers in the future. The downsizing and “rightsizing” of corporations over the last two decades, combined with the outsourcing of both high and low-skilled jobs to other countries, has led to a simultaneous shrinkage of the workforce and an increase in workload for those remaining.
The Ontario Government and Literacy Training

In the 2011 Ontario Budget, “Turning the Corner to a Better Tomorrow,” the word literacy is used primarily in reference to schooling, financial literacy and family literacy. There is little reference to adult literacy. Embedded in the section on Postsecondary Education and Training is a vague description of funds to be disbursed “over three years for literacy and basic skills programs to ensure that services are available for those who need them most” (p. 40). The other reference is contained in the section on meeting the needs of Ontario’s workforce. This comment, however, is a complaint that the expiry of the federal government’s support of skills training will impact approximately 13,000 learners who would no longer have access to Literacy and Basic Skills Training. It is only here that there is any acknowledgement that access to literacy and basic skills training is important for adult learners as well as children, but it is contained within a section on labour-market training. The Ontario government’s budget papers implicates the federal government in reducing funding for such training (Ontario Budget 2011, p. 40). It seems clear that the federal and provincial governments must work together to ensure that adult literacy and basic education do not fall through the cracks as emphasis continues to be placed on high-knowledge skills. At the federal level, support for literacy and basic skills training is explicitly tied to skills needed to enter and remain in the workforce as one program under the umbrella of the Ministry of Human Resources and Skills Development Canada (HRSDC). While reference is made to broader social benefits of literacies skills, the fact that support for literacy programs are housed within HRSDC reinforces their focus on the economic benefits of literacies.

Implications

Even though there are clear benefits to quality of life when literacies are maintained over a lifespan, governments and literacy organizations continue to focus on the economic benefits which are politically easier to “sell” as good policy. The neo-liberal bent to most Canadian governments since the 1980s has led to policies that focus on the financial bottom line rather than the societal benefits of supporting broad-based literacy programs that provide personal enrichment and self-esteem (Stromquist 2008). Literacy providers may want to support their clients in achieving personal goals, but their hands are tied by the accountability requirements that are based on those neo-liberal government policies focussed on improving the economy. While a capitalist economy requires a human infrastructure along with a capital infrastructure, the narrow focus on the economic benefits of literacies ignores the importance of creating a citizenry that cares for and about social issues. Lifelong literacies should be supported by governments not only because there are economic benefits, but also because it helps individuals’ self-esteem, health, and civic participation.

An important challenge to consider no matter what form of literacies programs are implemented is that of measuring success. As Bathmaker (2007) notes, “what counts as improvement within the [British Skills for Life] strategy is a rather complex affair” (p. 307). For the most part, accountability and success is measured by “counting and quantifying outcomes” (Bathmaker 2007, p. 310). However, if we shift attention away from a focus on a knowledge economy to a knowledge society, does it become easier or harder to measure success? In evaluating student success in a knowledge society, the voice of the student becomes more important. In other words, if the learner believes that his or her life has been improved in ways beyond a straightforward economic measure, then there has been achievement. This shift in focus also has
the potential of changing the way in which practitioners target their energies. As Bathmaker (2007) argues: “A strategy which is based on narrowly-defined functional definitions of literacy, language and numeracy, and which centres around the pursuit of targets related to qualification outcomes, concentrates policy-makers’ and practitioners’ energy on counting and quantifying outcomes” (p. 310).

**Conclusion**

The practice of adult education includes both formal and informal practice in classrooms and workplaces, as well as ad hoc assessments, re-education seminars and one-on-one training to update skills. If multiliteracies skills form a continuum and if there is evidence that learners must have basic, functional literacy skills to be able to move along that continuum, then a holistic approach to multiliteracies and adult education seems to make sense. This holistic approach, however, is not supported by government policies that fund special projects rather than providing stable funding for infrastructure. A holistic approach is one that will allow learners to develop social capital that moves beyond an emphasis solely on the economic benefits of literacy training. Indeed, a holistic approach assumes that integration into society includes economic success as well as providing the skills to allow adult learners to overcome barriers to full participation in society. This theoretical framework will help to make adult education practice more informed and relevant and can provide the basis for a firmer government policy commitment to adult literacy funding. This is research-based practice and policy built upon evidence in the areas of economic growth, equity, and community development.

**References**


From Classroom to Community: An Inquiry of Community-Based Action Research (Through Indigenous Storywork Principles)

Paul Kolenick
University of Regina

Abstract: Two action research projects of the Community-Based Master of Education program at the University of Regina are featured with attention given to a developmental progression that takes place through a series of action research cycles, with a significant shift from a classroom-based to community-based teaching practice. This study draws upon Jo-Ann Archibald’s (Q’um Q’um Xiiem) (2008) Indigenous Storywork: Educating the Heart, Mind, Body, and Spirit, which offers an insightful perspective on community-based education of value to educators (including adult educators) with an interest in community development.

Introduction
The Community-Based Master of Education program at the University of Regina consists of eight courses (24 credit hours) as well as a six credit hour project. As a central part of the program, the action research project offers graduate students the opportunity to focus on an area of interest to improve their respective teaching practices (Friesen, 2007). As action research, these projects are driven by a series of cycles of action and reflection, described by McNiff and Whitehead (2011) as a process of identifying particular concerns or interests, followed by a trying out of different ways, of addressing those concerns, and then reflecting on what has happened in order to explore further venues as a cyclical sequence of steps (i.e., observe, reflect, act, evaluate, and modify). Educational action research is grounded in the first-hand experiences of practitioners as teacher-researchers involved in an immediate and direct way in thinking about and theorizing their own practice.

This paper focuses in particular on the action research projects of two K-12 teachers of the Northwest Regional College (NWRC) cohort (2007-2009) enrolled in the Community-Based Master of Education program. These project reports, among others of the larger cohort of 18 graduate students, are available through the Office of Research and Graduate Studies on the Faculty of Education website at the University of Regina (University of Regina, 2010). The purpose of this inquiry, however, is essentially to sharpen my understanding of action research and its potential, particularly within the social contexts of the communities in which the action research projects of the community-based program have been carried out. In this endeavor, I hope to contribute to the ongoing and evolving conversation on the prospect of educational action research as a way toward improving and understanding teaching and research practice whether within the K-12 system or the broader communities of adult education.

Given the attention of the community-based program at the University of Regina to Indigenous issues, as well as my emerging interest in Indigenous teachings and philosophical paradigms, I have drawn upon a small portion of the literature of Indigenous peoples education, notably Jo-Ann Archibald’s (2008) research on Indigenous storywork principles. The perspective taken through Indigenous story seems especially well suited to the cyclical and yet reflective nature of action research.
Stories go in circles. They don’t go in straight lines. It helps if you listen in circles because there are stories inside and between stories, and finding your way through them is as easy and as hard as finding your way home. Part of finding is getting lost, and when you are lost you start to open up and listen. (Tafoya, 1995 as cited in Wilson, 2008, p. 6)

True to the reiterative nature of story, the storywork principles lend themselves to an understanding of community-based teaching practice informed by a more balanced, holistic view of learning with the power, as Archibald (2008) puts it, “to make our hearts, minds, bodies, and spirits work together” (p. 12). In her study, Archibald shares in narrative form the results of her research conducted in the company of three Coast Salish Elders and 13 Stó:lo Elders of the coastal region of British Columbia, who either were storytellers or were versed in the oral traditions of their people. Seven storywork principles emerge through her work with the Elders, including respect, responsibility, reciprocity, and reverence, as well as holism, interrelatedness, and synergy.

I draw upon these principles in their entirety as a uniquely insightful perspective on learning with relevance to a community-based practice of teaching and research, with a focus in particular on the storywork principles of respect, responsibility, reciprocity, and reverence, while the remaining principles of interrelatedness, synergy, and holism serve in a no less important yet supportive role. Taken as a whole, Archibald (2008) summarizes these four leading storywork principles essentially as learning principles, including, (a) respect for each other and cultural knowledge; (b) responsibility for carrying out the roles of teacher and learner (a serious approach to the work and being mindful of what readers/other learners can comprehend); (c) practicing reciprocity so that we each give to the other, thereby continuing the cycle of knowledge from generation to generation; and (d) reverence for spiritual knowledge and one’s spiritual being.

From Classroom to Community

In each of the two studies of this inquiry, a connection took shape with communities of artists, for example, or with families and community members with a genuine interest in the learning and wellbeing of the children and youth in their schools. In the first of the two action research projects, Jinny Nieviadomy (2009) explored the emergence of her identity as an artist, and in particular, its influence upon her art teaching. In the second project, John MacCormack (2009) focused on his Group of Seven. These were students enrolled in a bridging program, which involved his work on resiliency skills with youth at-risk of dropping out (or failing out) of school. Significantly, these studies demonstrate a developmental progression through a series of action research cycles that moves the teachers and their respective teaching practices from the classroom to communities beyond the physical and social boundaries of their schools. This has implications for K-12 education, yet also for adult educators, who as community members may play a contributing role in the education of children and youth in schools. The presentation to follow of the two action research projects is a condensed version of a more detailed inquiry.

Emerging Identities

In the first of the two action research projects, Nieviadomy (2009) explored through four successive action research cycles her emerging artist identity and its potential contribution to her practice as an art teacher. This process began with the first research cycle, a PowerPoint presentation of her artwork to separate classes of Grade 8 and 9 students, complemented by the
second research cycle, an invitation to local artists (i.e., a potter and a photographer) to share their respective crafts. This budding relationship with the local art community continued, however, with the third research cycle, comprised of an interdisciplinary field trip to two local art galleries, followed by the fourth and final research cycle, which involved an art exhibit where students had the opportunity to display their artwork for their peers within the school setting (and potentially for parents, families and others within the local rural community served by the school).

Archibald (2008) describes her storywork principles as essentially weaving themselves metaphorically in and out of one another, so that no one principle truly stands alone. If one principle could be said to be symbolic of this particular project, however, the storywork principle of reciprocity seems to best exemplify the maturing relationship between Jinny and her students as they progressed through each of the research cycles. This is reminiscent of Archibald’s (2008) account of her work with Elder Ellen White, as being “ready to share and ‘give back’ to Ellen what I had learned from her—thereby practising the principle of reciprocity” (p. 57). In this way, the learning experience for teacher and students alike may be said to be truly reciprocal as it involves not simply a transfer, or dissemination, of knowledge, but instead a re-creation of knowledge, as Lightning (1992) observes, that is dependent on the mutually sustained relationships that have developed between Jinny and her students.

**Fostering Resiliency Skills**
The sense of mutuality felt between teacher and student, as a trust that is built on the day-to-day experiences of a teacher with his students, is at the heart of John’s action research project on the development of resiliency among Indigenous youth. John focused on seven students (i.e., the Group of Seven) of his bridging class, described as a program “to address the issues the students face and make it possible for them to complete their academic tasks in a caring and welcoming environment” (MacCormack, 2009, p. 22). This group included four boys and three girls, ranging in ages from 16 to 20 years with two of the three girls who were single mothers. Among the four boys, one was described as a single father and 19 years of age, while the other boys were younger and with problems of substance abuse.

Underlying John’s relationship with his students was an attitude toward teaching that is perhaps best marked by the storywork principle of respect. Taken from a Eurocentric point of view, however, Hannah Arendt (1958) remarks upon the manner in which respect, as principle, has come to be understood; that is, as she observes, respect “is a regard for the person from the distance which the space of the world puts between us, and this regard is independent of qualities which we may admire or of achievements which we may highly esteem” (p. 243). This implicit understanding of what it means to be respectful, and to be respected, independent of qualities or competencies that we may hold in high regard (attributed perhaps to Arendt’s reading of St. Augustine) is contrasted with the commonly held, and depersonalizing, view that respect is due “only where we admire or esteem” (p. 243). Reminiscent of Arendt’s explanation of what the principle of respect, at least, ought to imply, Archibald (2008) reflects upon her interview with Elder Simon Baker, who “stressed the importance of living honorably and showing respect to everyone, even if you dislike a person. In time, this respect could be returned to you” (p. 43). This view of respect as a principle indifferent to achievement, position, or disposition is perhaps
best exemplified, however, through John’s telling narrative of how the character of Atticus Finch in Harper Lee’s novel, *To Kill a Mockingbird*, is likened to the life of his beloved uncle.

I particularly liked how Atticus would do lawyering work for people, and never charged them money as they couldn’t pay. He knew that, but still gave them the honorable ability to pay with their cattle, or their grain, or whatever it happened to be. And I thought that’s my uncle to a tee because he would go around from church to church and do these little miracles, things that the priests or anybody else didn’t know about. And so, I always have believed that people are good, and no matter whether you are of a high or low echelon, you need to be treated with respect. That, for me as a teacher, is probably the pinnacle of what it means to be a good teacher, respecting people no matter where they come from, and giving them an opportunity, like Atticus, to pay their way. Nobody really wants a free ride. They want to feel wanted. They want to feel that they belong, and that they’ve got something to contribute. (Interview, February 1, 2011)

Through the example of Atticus, or the life of John’s uncle, the storywork principle of respect lends itself to a sense of belonging, suggestive of the Circle of Courage (Bendtro, Brokenleg, & Van Bockern, 2002), or as Archibald (2008) suggests, a feeling of kinship or interrelatedness. Novelist Thomas King, for instance, speaks of the Indigenous notion of living with *all my relations* as a reminder of who we are in our relationships with family, yet also our extended relationships with other human beings, our kinship with animals, birds, fish, plants, and all animate and inanimate forms of life, that serves as a reminder to “accept the responsibilities we have within this universal family by living our lives in a harmonious and moral manner” (1990, p. ix as cited in Archibald, 2008, p. 42). In this sense, the principle of respect is, and ought to be, implicitly unconditional.

**It Really Does Take a Village**

In both of the action research projects considered in this inquiry, these teacher-researchers have moved essentially from the relatively private space of the classroom, housed within the institutional environment of the school, toward a more publicly engaged space within their respective communities of interest. Characterizing each of these projects, however, is a uniquely intergenerational quality reflected through the storywork principle of responsibility, found especially in the early reference by both authors to notable individuals in their lives who were significant in their growth and development as teachers. Archibald (2008) tells us that according to the teachings of her Nation, the Stó:lo Nation, knowledge and wisdom bring power, and, “If one comes to understand and appreciate the power of a particular knowledge, then one must be ready to share and teach it respectfully and responsibly to others in order for this knowledge, and its power, to continue” (p. 3). Learning in this sense conveys a special responsibility in caring for the next generation, as reflected in the narratives of each action research project.

The parting with knowledge and the sense of power and wellbeing experienced by others is central to the principle of responsibility. Jinny, for example, recalled the influence of a high school art teacher and how she had passed on knowledge and insight about the practice of making art that, importantly, served in both an instructional and inspirational sense in teaching art.

I remember being the student that looked over her shoulder, curious to see what she was doing and how she was doing it. . . . Through her vast knowledge of art theory, techniques
and creation of her own work, my grade twelve art teacher empowered me as a student through meaningful art experiences. She allowed me to be a collaborator and facilitator of my own learning in art class making it a meaningful experience. (Nieviadomy, 2009, pp. 1-2)

Similarly, John recounted the passing of his Uncle Angus, notably his funeral, and the special way in which his beloved uncle was remembered.

One priest needed some clothes for the poor and, one morning sitting on the altar, there was a box of good, used clothes. Another priest shared a story about a borrowed chalice that was supposed to have been returned to his church and, with time running out, he was going to have to make do with something less ceremonial. When he opened his church for the first mass of the day, he discovered the borrowed chalice in its rightful place on the altar. . . . He made things happen but never required any type of thanks or manner of appreciation. He did these things because they had needed to be done. I learned much from my Uncle Angus and, in death, he still had lessons to teach me. (MacCormack, 2009, p. 4)

In each instance a special and notable individual is credited with having passed on valuable knowledge about life and learning, reminiscent of Elder Vincent Stogan’s hands back, hands forward teaching:

In joining hands, hold your left palm upward to reach back to grasp the teachings of the ancestors. Put these teachings into your everyday life and pass them on. Hold your right palm downward to pass these teachings on to the younger generation. In this way, the teachings and knowledge of the ancestors continue, and the circle of human understanding and caring grows. (Archibald, 2008, p. 50)

The passing on (and reception) of a storied life from one to another, as Archibald (2008) phrases it, whether through art and the art community, or through the many inter-relationships found through family and friends, is at the heart of the storywork principle of responsibility.

Closely interwoven with the storywork principles of reciprocity, respect, and responsibility, Archibald (2008) notes the importance of reverence, as a principle defined through prayer and spirituality, yet also though language and speech within an Indigenous framework as depicted, for example, by Lee Maracle of the Stó:lo/Coast Calish Nation, who speaks of the spiritual reverence for oratory, as words that “represent the accumulated knowledge, cultural values, the vision of an entire people or peoples” (p. 26). Wane (2005) offers a further perspective, however, on an Indigenous (African) way of knowing, referring in particular to the need to preserve its transcendent and holistic nature, and in addition “its reverence for the community, the earth, and the dignity it holds for life and living” (p. 19). An understanding of the educative power of community may be said to take shape through the collaborative ventures of the community-based action research projects that involve, for example, local art communities, radio station operators, town councils, law enforcement officers, or parents and families, all characteristic of what Handspiker (2009) referred to in his action research project as community/educational partnerships; that is, as Bendtro, Brokenleg, and Van Bockern (2002) observe, all adults in traditional Indigenous society were responsible for the education and upbringing of children and
youth, whereby, “Child rearing was not just the province of biological parents, but children were nurtured within a larger circle of significant others. From the earliest days of life, the child experienced a network of caring adults” (p. 46). This is a view toward life and learning that is fundamentally community-based and of considerable relevance to adult educators with an interest in community development.

The idea of an entire community, including schools, charged with the care and responsibility for the upbringing of children and youth (evocative of the African proverb, “It takes a village to raise a child” as cited in Tymchak, 2001) is reflective of the work undertaken through the action research projects considered in this inquiry. Common among these research projects is a firm acknowledgement of the contribution to be made by communities of professional practitioners beyond the institutional space of the school, as well as the families of students, who are valued for their spirit of care and generosity as educational partners—as Handspiker (2009) puts it, the “community becomes the teacher” (p. 14). It really does take a village.

References
End Notes

1 Action research arises, at least in part, out of the experiences of teachers as “teacher-researchers” as noted by Elliot (2009), who refers to his work as a teacher-researcher involved in the school-based curriculum development movement in the United Kingdom during the mid-1960s. Lawrence Stenhouse is credited with having coined the phrase “teachers as researchers” with an emphasis on the development of shared practical understandings among teachers engaged in reflective educational research (Elliot, 2009).

2 The term “Indigenous” is applied within the framework of Archibald’s (2008) usage of the term as explained in her Preface to Indigenous Storywork: References to terms such as “Indigenous,” “First Nation,” or “Indian” are meant to include all people of Aboriginal ancestry. The term “storywork” is reflective of the need for Indigenous stories to be taken seriously; that is, “to demonstrate that Indigenous knowledge systems could be investigated from an Indigenous perspective with rigour acceptable to the academy” (Archibald, 2008, p. 5).
Work-life Experience and Learner Identity
Sissel Kondrup
Roskilde University, Denmark

Abstract: In order to examine how orientations toward learning activities are situated in and conditioned by specific work-life experiences it is crucial to develop a dialectic concept of learner identity. Based on a qualitative research-project (Kondrup 2012) this paper outlines how unskilled work forms a specific condition for engaging in lifelong learning. The aim of the study was to examine how an unskilled work-life presents certain conditions for the formation, maintenance and transformation of a learner identity, enabling workers to position themselves as educable subjects and engage in formal learning, as demanded by the Danish national strategy on lifelong learning.

The Obligation to Engage in Lifelong Learning
It is a widespread consensus that lifelong learning is a prerequisite for the transformation from industrial to knowledge-based societies (Brine 2006), and for the development of a competitive economy promoting both individual and societal prosperity and welfare. The requirement for continuing learning is substantiated by intensified global competition, demographical and technological change, industrial transformation and new forms of organisations, increasing the demand for formally qualified labour (Bélanger & Tuijnman 1997). It implies that everybody should engage in lifelong learning, not just a minority of skilled workers or specialists, but the whole workforce (Field 2006). It is a widespread but not absolute consensus. There are researchers pointing to underemployment (Livingstone 2000) and questioning the presumption that an increased level of formal education will increase the supply of high skilled jobs (Brown 2003). But the educational optimism, proclaiming education to be the locus for future welfare and prosperity forms the hegemonic discourse in both national and transnational policy documents and most research on lifelong learning (Desjardins 2009).

The discourse prevalent in international and Danish policies on lifelong learning positions everybody as educable subjects (Fejes 2006) obliged to develop formal qualifications to remain employable (Kondrup 2012). Non-participants are defined as a double risk. They risk being marginalised in a labour market characterized by increased demand for formal qualifications and they become a societal liability for the development of a competitive knowledge economy (Brine 2006:657).

Participation in Adult Education and Training – a Research Field
The consensus that everybody must engage in lifelong learning has fostered an interest in examining the distribution of adult education and training and explaining different patterns of participation and several research traditions can be identified (Rubenson 2011). One builds on the ambition of developing heuristic models for explaining participation. Two significant contributions within this tradition are Cross’ Chain-response-model and Rubenson’s Expectancy-valence-model. Both illustrate that motivation and attitudes towards education are situated and that participation is a result of interactions between the individual and their specific context (Rubenson 2011). Another tradition is preoccupied with how participation and non-participation can be understood from the perspective of different groups. The arguments forming this tradition
posits that orientations toward education and training must be researched as an element in specific life-histories or biographies, where habitual dispositions (Paldanius 2002, Hodkinson & Hodkinson 2004) significant learning activities (Antikainen 2006) and changing value contexts (Lynch 2008) constitutes how people perceive education.

While pointing to the necessity of understanding participation as a result of an interaction between the subject and their situation, and of understanding the meaning of education from the perspective of the subject, neither of the referred approaches has explicitly addressed how unskilled work pose specific conditions for meeting the demand for positioning one’s self as an educable subject. Furthermore the approaches tend to overlook the ambiguity and potential conflicts both in peoples’ experiences and in their actual situation (Kondrup 2012).

**Learner Identity**
To examine how unskilled work forms certain conditions for workers to meet the obligation to position themselves as educable subjects, it is necessary to develop a framework able to capture the relation between work-life-experiences and how workers perceive their needs and possibilities to engage in different learning activities: their learner identity. In order to comprehend the relation between work-life-experiences and learner identity it is critical to apply a theoretical framework sensitive to the relation between work and identity (Kondrup 2012). Several traditions in social science and humanities are explicitly preoccupied with this. I have included two perspectives, both defining the identity-process as dialectic; a life-historical approach rooted in critical theory (Salling-Olesen 2007, 2002) and Archer’s (2000, 2003) critical realistic approach and her concepts of natural, practical and social concerns.

**Identity and Experience**
According to the life-history approach the formation, maintenance or transformation of subjectivity or identity take place through an on-going experience-process. Experience is a phenomenon with three modalities, relatively independent but mediated through each other; immediate experience, life (historical) experience and objectified experience (cultural knowledge) (Salling-Olesen 2007). Identity is formed in a dialectic process, where the subject continuously is engaged in practices in specific social and historical situations giving rise to certain immediate experiences. Through this engagement the subject builds consciousness and internalises a certain version of the cultural knowledge (e.g. language, concepts, techniques and norms) (Salling-Olesen 2002). In order to understand a certain identity -- how the subject perceives themself, the situation and their possibilities to act in it -- it is necessary to apply an approach sensitive to the specific process of experience constituting the formation of identity.

**Identity and Concerns**
According to Archer identity is developed through on-going engagement in the three orders of reality: the natural, the practical and the social order. The engagement gives rise to natural (bodily), practical (performative) and social emotions and concerns. The human embodiment confers concerns about physical well-being. Performative concerns are unavoidable due to the necessary engagement in practical activities in the world of material culture (Archer 2000). The social concerns are linked to the social judgement of approval or disapproval of our performance in different social projects (Archer 2003). The presences of diverse concerns force people to
form a modus vivendi and prioritise their ultimate concern. The personal way of prioritising these concerns is what gives people their personal identity (Archer 2000).

*Learner Identity as Analytical Framework*

The commonalities between the two perspectives are 1) the claim of humanism, 2) the ambition of bringing the subject to the forefront of social science and 3) insisting on the identity process as dialectical emphasising the significance of the historical, social and material context. There are also substantial differences (Kondrup 2012), but this is not the time and place for an account of the discrepancies between the approaches.

I define learner identity as peoples’ perceived need and possibility to engage in different learning activities (formal, non-formal and informal) in order to comply with their concerns in the given situation. Learner identity is formed, maintained or transformed in an on-going experience-process through engagement in a specific historical and social (work-) life. Therefore learner identity must be analysed as a dialectic phenomenon, established, maintained and transformed by subjects continuously and actively engaged in specific situations giving rise to immediate experiences and specific concerns. The perception of these experiences and of the opportunity to meet the concerns will be mediated by previous life-historical experiences (conscious or unconscious and potentially ambivalent) and the cultural knowledge internalised through socialisation. Archer’s concepts of the differentiated reality can discern the concept of immediate experience, by emphasising how the involvement in the specific situation always implies natural, practical and social concerns.

**Examining Learner Identity**

In order to examine how unskilled work poses certain conditions for the establishment of learner identity I have conducted a qualitative study based on work-life history interviews. 24 workers employed in unskilled jobs in 6 different small and medium-sized private companies have told their work-life stories. These stories describe a) their work trajectory: how they entered the labour market and what kind of jobs and tasks they have undertaken, b) their learning trajectories: how they have learned to perform their tasks and what kind of learning activities they have participated in. C) The story of the development in their current job and how the demand for qualifications and their opportunity to apply different skills has changed. And d) the story of their expected future work-life.

The analysis examines how engagement in unskilled work causes a multitude of concerns, how the workers perceive their possibilities to handle these concerns, what they define as their primary concerns and how they perceive their need and opportunity to engage in different learning activities in order to deal with these concerns.

**Diverse and Ambiguous Concerns in Unskilled Work**

The work-life stories reveal that an unskilled work-life give rise to diverse and conflicting concerns.

*Natural Concerns*

The most prevalent natural concern in the work-life-stories is the concern of physical disabilities. It is a widespread experience that degeneration is a risk caused by heavy manual labour, shift working and a combination of hard work and ageing.
Practical Concerns
The work-life stories reveal different kinds of practical or performative concerns: A concern for the Quality of work concerning the use-value of the product. This is evident in stories about satisfaction gained from seeing the products taken into use and contributing to something useful. A concern for quality in work concerning the performance of a good job and being good at ones tasks. This is evident in stories about satisfaction gained from obtaining experience enabling one to perform well. Finally the opportunity to use skills and knowledge in the job is a common practical concern. This is evident in the stories about the experience of loss when the job changes and the opportunity to utilise one’s knowledge and skills decrease. These practical concerns appear in different variants in all the work-life stories and are closely intertwined. They emphasise different dimensions of the practical engagement in work and how the practical engagement are substantial for the subjective meaning of work.

Social Concerns
The work-life stories reveal a multitude of social concerns. The concern about maintaining employment is evident in stories about unemployment, and how frustrating it is “not doing anything” and in stories about the necessity to adjust and compromise in order to maintain employment. These stories reveal that employment has a value in itself, and is considered as a per se useful activity in opposition to home-work. A second concern is about economic security and maintaining employment in order to pay the mortgage. The third concern is about getting recognition from superiors. This is expressed both in positive and negative stories; about the pride gained from getting credit when performing a god job, and about the frustration caused when efforts and struggles to keep the production running despite worn down production machinery and understaffing are not appreciated. The fourth concern is about having good relations with colleagues. It is emphasised how having a good time with colleagues can make up for unsatisfactory work-conditions; how helping out less experienced colleagues contributes to the subjective meaning of work, and how frustrating it is to work in a job where people oppose each other, and where opportunities for social interaction are restricted. The last concern is about there being more to life than work. This concern is evident in stories about how exhaustion caused by work and shift work limits opportunities to engage in leisure activities e.g. sports, political activities and night classes.

Ultimate Concerns
The work-life stories reveal how an unskilled work-life gives rise to a multitude of different and sometimes contradictory concerns. Therefore it becomes necessary to compromise and prioritise the ultimate concern and maintaining employment is the ultimate concern. The necessity of compromising and neglecting natural, practical and social concerns, and enduring uncertainty and limited control of one’s work-situation in order to maintain employment is a common experience, expressed in the work-life histories. But the compromises imply significant subjective costs. Thus the interviews reveal that uncertainty, ambiguity and ambivalence are experienced as unavoidable conditions in the unskilled work-life.

Unskilled Work as a Condition for forming Learner Identity
It is evident in the interviews, that learning – acquiring new knowledge and skills – are central to tackle the concerns experienced in the unskilled work-life.
Learning as a Mean to Cope with Concerns
In order to cope with the natural concern of degeneration it is necessary to learn to protect the body and avoid unnecessary strain. This is accomplished by developing routines, getting a feeling for the machines and adjust to their pace and by learning how to share the burdens. Sometimes it is not enough to adjust and change of trade is perceived as a mean to deal with the concern for physical degeneration. This implies a demand for learning to interact with new colleagues, behave in new company cultures and undertake new tasks. Learning is also essential in order to cope with the practical concerns. Quality in and of the work entails gaining knowledge of how their specific tasks contribute to and form part of the total production-process as well as the end product. Furthermore the informants tell that it is necessary to learn to solve problems outside their formal job description in order to keep production running, but also because it increases the subjective value of the work. ‘The more you can do on you own, without having to wait for the smith to fix it, the more interesting it gets’. It is common in the work-life-stories that the opportunity to use knowledge and skills in the work, both in the performance of the job and in peer-to-peer training, is essential to the subjective meaning of work. And it is presented as a loss when changes in the content or organisation of work decrease their opportunity to apply their knowledge and skills.

Learning is also a key factor in order to deal with social concerns. It is necessary to learn to perform new task and take on new assignments in order to obtain employment. And learning is essential for being careful and skilful and thus to accomplish acknowledgment in the work.

The Meaning of Different Kind of Learning
When examining what kind of learning the informants consider valuable in order to comply with their concerns, they tell that the most valuable knowledge and skills come from gaining experience. Primarily knowledge and skills gained through informal and non-formal learning are applied in their everyday work.

It is a general story that the perceived opportunities to use more or new formal qualifications are ambivalent or even non-existent. The opportunities for job-development in their current workplace that will entail use of more formal skills, are restricted if not absent. Additionally they describe a lack of or restricted opportunities to put to use some of the formal skills they already possess. On qualifying for a new job or towards the future demand for labour, the informant expresses a great deal of uncertainty. They question alternative job-openings due to the financial crisis and the high degree of unemployment. They express an uncertainty on the future demand for labour enhanced by changing and contradictory statements from employers’ organisations and politicians.

Regarding formal learning they tell about conflicts between short and long term interests. The reduction in labour, in the companies, implies that there are only enough labour left to keep the production running. Absence due to education implies a decrease in or stop of production. So even though formal learning can be a mean to meet a future demand for qualified labour, participation in formal education implies a risk of losing the current job.
Conclusion
The analysis shows how experiences from unskilled work-lives form certain conditions germane to the formation, maintenance or transformation of a learner identity that complies with the rationales and demands formulated in the strategy for lifelong learning for all. It reveals how learner identities are conditioned by previous experience, perceptions of the current situation and expectations for the future. The experience of being able to use experience, skills and knowledge while conducting work is essential to the learner identity. Equally important is the experience of what kinds of learning activities contribute to practicable knowledge and skills.

In order to conclude the initial research question – what challenges the fulfilment of Danish strategy for lifelong learning for all, one answer will be: the mismatch between the rationales and assumptions forming the strategy and the work-life experiences of the target group. The strategy is based on the assumption that the use of VET can be qualified by more demand driven supply. This implies accordance between the qualifications needed by the workers, as individuals and groups, the companies and society, and between short- and long term interests. This contradicts the experiences articulated in the work-life stories, about ambiguity and potential conflicts between the different needs. The strategy also relies on the assumption that employability is obtained through formal qualifications. This contradicts the work-life experiences about not always being able to apply formal qualifications in the job and about the qualifications practicable in the current job mostly are achieved through non-formal and informal learning. The strategy suggests that everybody position themselves as educable and orientated toward the future demand for qualified labour. This contradicts the work-life experiences of an unpredictable future. Just as it contradicts the prevalent experience of conflict between participation in formal education and maintain employment.

The workers comply with the rationale in the discourse on lifelong learning: on-going learning is a necessity in order to be employable (e.g. learning to undertake new tasks, handle new machines, working with new colleagues, change workplace and even trade) when demand for labour changes. Their learner identity is characterized by a primarily instrumental orientation towards different learning activities. Skills and knowledge must be practicable in their work-life in order to be considered meaningful. But this is not the same as an indifferent orientation towards learning. The work-life stories show how the opportunity to gain and apply knowledge and skills is relevant to the subjective meaning of work and thus contributes to a meaningful work-life.

The study demonstrates how the application of a dialectic concept of learner identity formed, maintained or transformed through involvement in a specific work-life can widen our understanding of unskilled work as a certain condition for engaging in lifelong learning. By being sensitive to the concerns in the unskilled work-life and how workers perceive their opportunities to cope with these concerns, it can widen our understanding of how and why workers in unskilled jobs ascribe formal learning activities certain meaning in their specific situations.

References
Bern, Peter Lang.
A Planning Framework for Adult Education in South Countries: Lessons Learned from the Development of a Masterplan in Adult Education in Ethiopia

Yvon Laberge & Bassirou Dienne
Centre for Applied Research in Social Sciences
Collège Éducacentre College

Abstract: In 2010, a consultative team composed of three Ethiopians and one outside consultant worked with representatives from many different sectors to produce a ten year Masterplan in Adult Education for Ethiopia. In this paper, the planning process used in the development of the Masterplan is critically reviewed through lenses that go beyond the traditional technical domain.

Introduction

In 2010 the Ethiopian government produced the Education Sector Development Program IV-2010/2011-2014/2015 (ESDP IV), which is the fourth consecutive five-year education sector development plan. It is in alignment with the country’s ten year Poverty Reduction Plan (PASDEP-II). ESDP IV includes a renewal of the adult education (AE) system with a specific focus on Functional Adult Literacy (FAL). Contrary to past ESDP when AE was little more than a footnote in the overall education strategy, in ESDP IV, AE is considered a key to the attainment of PASDEP-II goals.

The adult education goals and strategies of ESDP IV are taken from the Ministry of Education (MoE) draft document called “Learning for Life: A Masterplan for Adult Education in Ethiopia, 2003-2008 (EC)”24. The ten year Masterplan was elaborated using a participatory planning process directed by a consultative team composed of three Ethiopian adult education experts and one of the authors of this paper as the external lead consultant. The planning process was conducted over a short and intensive period; from February to May 2010.

The purpose of this paper is to critically reflect on the planning process used to develop the Masterplan with a view to informing future adult education planning processes and frameworks in South countries.

The Ethiopia Context

Ethiopia is a vast, unique and ancient country with the longest history of independence in Africa, and was, except for a brief occupation by the Italians between 1936-41, free from colonial rule. Ethiopia is divided into nine regional states, two city administrations and over 800 woredas (communities). The current government has been successful in reversing the highly centralized autocratic governance model of previous military regimes. Efforts towards more regional autonomy include fiscal decentralization and devolution of decision making powers.

There are more than 80 different ethnic and language groups in Ethiopia, Amharic being the official language and English used as a medium of instruction in secondary and university education. Ethiopia has one of the fastest growing populations in Africa; 74 million according to

---

24 There is a seven year gap between the Ethiopian calendar (EC) and the Roman calendar (RC). Thus 2003 (EC) is 2010 (RC).
the 2007 census, and 93 million in 2013 (est.). Over 64% of the population is below 25 years of age. According to the 2009/10 UNESCO/EFA Global Monitoring Report, the adult national illiteracy rate is 64% (male 50%, female 77%). Ethiopia is one of the poorest countries in Africa, but still aspires to become a mid-income country by the end of the current PASDEP. Modernization of agriculture, which in 2011 represented 51% of GDP, is seen as the focal point of development (Walters et. al., 2013), and education is widely viewed as the most important variable that will project Ethiopia to achieve its ambitious development goals.

**Adult Education in Ethiopia**

Formal education is provided in a 4-4-2 structure. After grade ten, students join a technical/vocational path (1-3 years of TVET for the vast majority) or a two-year second cycle/preparatory secondary education leading to college and university education. Government investment in education is 4.7% of GDP (2010). Education is a shared responsibility between federal and state governments. Broadly, the Federal Ministry of Education (MoE) has responsibility for policy and standard matters, providing technical support to the Regional Education Bureaus (REB), who in turn, support Woreda Education Offices (WEO). More specifically, the MoE has overall responsibility for education, including AE, especially for policy, strategy, standards, technical assistance, monitoring, research, evaluation, information dissemination, staff development, international contact, and fund mobilization and, to some extent, allocation. Regional governments are responsible for primary, secondary and two-year colleges as well as adult education (formal and nonformal). Woredas decide on sectoral priorities in determining budgets, and supervise and report on education programs under their purview. Actual delivery of programmes generally stems from the Woredas to thousands of kebele (Amharic "neighbourhood").

Adult Education (AE) is integrated into the overall education system, but remains the poor cousin that is always given a sliver of hope that things will improve. In October 2006, a consultative workshop was organized by the MoE and its partners to consider the development of an education act that would have given AE stronger legal footing for the implementation of programmes (Darroch, 2006, p. 12). By 2008 agreement was reached, not on an “act” nor even a policy, but on a strategy - the National Adult Education Strategy (NAES).

According to the NAES, “the focus of adult education is to impart knowledge and skill among the adult population and to facilitate conditions for the provision of the Functional Adult Literacy (FAL) programme”. FAL is the *de facto* programme orientation of the strategy. But a national curriculum or learning outcomes for FAL do not exist, and many NGOs come with their own programmes and approaches. There is no credentialization for FAL, so participants must see great relevance and applicability in order to participate.

Within the NAES framework and with the support of the major contributors (international financial and technical donors such as USAID, the Royal Netherlands Embassy (RNE), and dvv international\(^{25}\)), numerous smaller donors and actors (mostly non-governmental organizations but also REBs and WEOs) deliver programmes and services. The implementation of NAES is unstructured, with some donors covering only some selected woredas; and others operating within the same region (if not the same woreda) without any coordination between them.

\(^{25}\) dvv international is the Institute for international cooperation of the German Adult Education Association.
The development of the NAES was an indication of the political will to increase the prestige of AE within the overall education framework. A certain momentum seemed to be created when in an address to a teachers’ conference in 2009, the Prime Minister said that coverage and quality of AE was unsatisfactory and that government was going to work on this through teachers and educational facilities. This announcement implies a will for greater involvement of the formal education system in the delivery of AE.

It is within the framework of NAES and a seemingly supportive political apparatus (but one in election campaign mode) that the Masterplan on AE was developed with financial and technical support to the MoE provided by dvv international.

*Educational Planning and Planning for Adult Education*

Coombs (1970, p. 40) defines educational planning as “the application of rational, systematic analysis to the process of educational development with the aim of making education more effective and efficient in responding to the needs and goals of its students and society”. In the late 1950s, empirical studies showed that economic growth was influenced by labour. It was posited that a knowledgeable and skilled labour force was one of the residual factors that explained economic growth, leading to the development of the human capital theory (Shultz, 1963; Decker, 1964). As the human capital approach took hold, the aims of education and planning became more directed to developing individuals to meet the needs of the economy. Private and public investment in education increased, and education was given a more prominent role in public policy. This can be observed in international investment in education in South countries by organizations such as the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and many state governments. Over time, such investment strategies were supported by international protocols such as the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) and Education for All (EFA) goals, which focussed on primary basic education.

In this context, educational planning was used to sollicit and justify multilateral and bilateral investments (Bray & Varghese, 2011). Planning shifted from a holistic approach that covered all sectors of education (primary, secondary, post-secondary and non-formal) to focus on primary basic education, to the point that some said that “in many countries (it) was equated to planning for EFA” (Bray & Varghese, 2011, p. 26).

Since the shift to education as human capital, nonformal education has been widely excluded as a funding priority by multilateral and bilateral donors, and by national governments. There seems to be a new era coming as more interest and recognition is given to nonformal education as a means of filling gaps left by the education system (drop-outs, coverage, quality), for building bridges with the formal system (developing literacy levels that allow access to TVET) and for providing training for specific skills needs of the economy (Hoppers, 2006).

This constitutes a challenge for educational planning. Contrary to the formal education system, which is characterized by its homogeneous nature – generalized and prescriptive curriculum, clearly stated educational goals, credentials and well defined organizational structures and services – the nonformal education sector is anything but homogeneous. There are many actors delivering a wide range of educational services for varying purposes, funded by a myriad of national and international agencies. As Evans (1981, p. 97) writes: “The strength of nonformal
education lies in its diversity, its vitality and its ability to respond quickly and creatively to local needs.” But this volatility and rapid response create a planning nightmare. Although planning practices in the nonformal sector borrow heavily from the formal system, it must adjust to the special challenges faced within the nonformal context. Some of these challenges will be explored in the following section, along with some strategies developed within the context of developing the Masterplan in Ethiopia.

Lessons Learned
Over the past fifty years, adult educators have developed increasingly sophisticated planning models anchored in the technical-rational tradition (Sork, 2009, p. 186) that tend to borrow the models and tools of educational planners. Although the technical component of planning is imperative, its limitations have been effectively pointed out by scholars grounded in critical theory, such as Adams (1991) and Wilson & Cervero (1994; and 1996 cited in Sork, 2009) who claim that planners must become aware of the role of power, ideology and various interests and must systematically act upon them during the planning process. In our view, the involvement of multiple actors is imperative. These active participants will most likely support what they helped to build, and could become agents of change. The planning process thus becomes as important as the outcome. This view fits well with Sork (2009) who further argues that an effective planner must go beyond the basic elements of traditional planning models and blend three dimensions into the process – the technical, the social-political and the ethical domain.

The technical domain: Planners have the hazardous task of projecting what the world should look like in the future. Reading the dynamic political, socio-demographic and policy context is a precursor to acting upon it. Although it is impossible to predict all factors that will affect future change, the accuracy of projections is predicated on the ability to accurately describe the present. This is not an easy task, especially in a country as diverse as Ethiopia and with limited access to data. For example, population projections were not available, so they had to be developed. Using 2007 census data as a baseline, we went back 20 years to establish growth rates and literacy rates by region. Using these rates, we made population and literacy projections from 2007 to 2020, nationally and by region. These projections served as the numeric foundation on which we could determine long term goals. Moreover, given that programmes are delivered by a wide range of agencies, most of which are national or international NGOs, it was impossible to gauge the types of programmes being offered by whom, where and for how much. A first attempt was made to obtain programming data from REB during a first meeting of REB directors, followed by a questionnaire sent to each REB. This exercise also demonstrated the limited resources available in the regional offices to access and produce data.

Projecting costs for FAL in Ethiopia proved a significant challenge. In their study on different costing approaches to adult literacy programmes, Carr-Hill, Roberts & Currie (2007, p. 42) conclude that “the diversity of programmes in terms of their modalities, objectives and intended outcomes makes it difficult to make meaningful comparisons between them. Every programme also takes a different approach to budgeting, which further complicates the task.” The first challenge was to propose a programme delivery unit cost. We took an average of the selected Ethiopian programme costs and the selected programmes from the Carr-Hill study to arrive at a yearly unit cost. Through this method, we derived an average yearly unit cost of approximately $50US and concluded that based on best practice models it would take two years to complete a
literacy programme plus an additional year to solidify the knowledge., which is consistent with the FAL directives. From this analysis we developed a general costing rationale for every aspect of AE management and delivery. A technical document was then submitted to the MoE, thus providing them with an important planning tool for future reference.

Since multiple NGOs deliver AE programmes, we tried to gather information on how and where they were involved. By consulting a multitude of sources, we were able to prepare a list of NGOs working directly in education (though we were unable to aggregate for AE) in each region. This document was also given to the MoE for distribution to the REB. Finally, recognizing the difficulty for the MoE and REB to collect data, thereby rendering effective planning at the regional level next to impossible, we prepared regional snapshots that included population and education data as well as information on facilities and available human resources. This information was then transferred onto maps using Geographic Information Systems technology, and written up as short technical reports given to each region. Although the information is very basic, this information can be used by the REBs to develop their own plans, and it serves as a model (to be improved upon) for future evaluation and planning activities.

The social-political domain: The Masterplan was developed during the 2010 election campaign, as a result of which the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF) came to power. The election results have been contested by opposition parties, and international observers concluded that the election process did not meet international standards (Human Rights Watch, 2010). It is clear that the development of the AE Masterplan was deemed a successful initiative of the government in power. The link between the Masterplan and ESDP IV and its importance as a means of increasing national and international funding for AE gave the planning process more political power. The Minister responsible for AE was on board and he used his status to ensure that all the government actors contributed to the endeavour. This raises a few questions. First, how exactly and to what extent was this political capital used in the context of the campaign. Second, given the lack of institutionalization, mandate and ownership of AE, one wonders if so much political support could have been mobilized in a different political climate.

In the planning process we tried to use a non-competitive participatory model that involved as many actors as possible. Representatives of each sector were invited to participate in the entire process. A meeting was held at the beginning of the process with representatives from REB, universities, line ministries and MoE officials, NGOs and the planning team. An advisory committee was struck with the participation of representatives from each group and chaired by a MoE official. As data was gathered, it was shared and vetted by the participants. An effort was made to provide a legacy of documents, tools and practices that can be used in future planning activities. A draft of the Masterplan was first presented to the advisory committee and then revised. The second draft was then presented for critical review to the broader group that met at the beginning of the process. A final draft of the Masterplan and a copy of all the tools and documents were formally presented to the Minister responsible for adult education. The Minister then handed over the relevant documents to REB representative in a formal meeting. During this meeting, he outlined the action plan for implementation of the Masterplan – the last and most important document.
The ethical domain: A planner is never neutral; we come with our own moral values, background, experience and conditioning circumstances. How then can a planner act when confronted with ethical issues that go against his own moral values? The challenge of achieving neutrality is further exacerbated within a cross-cultural context. How then can a planner when confronted with a situation that confronts his own values stay neutral?

Sork (2009) argues that the planner will always be confronted with ethical issues and that posing questions about ethics raises the issues to a level of critical consciousness so as to make deliberate choices. To achieve as much neutrality as possible, we employed a reflective practice approach, understood as the process of learning through and from experience towards gaining new insights of self and/or practice (Boud et al., 1985; Boyd & Fales, 1983; Mezirow, 1981; Jarvis, 1992). During the reflective process, challenges were systematically documented and solutions were explored through research and by consulting planning experts and other team members. For example, a significant amount of time was invested in understanding the sociopolitical dimension in which we were working and the overt and subtle power relationships between the federal and regional governments, between different federal ministries and between key stakeholders. Some members of the planning team were obviously more aware than others of the political power structures (the Ethiopian members as compared to the Canadian member), but given the government’s history of silencing discension, they were not all equally ready to express their critical views. For the Canadian, his values of free speech were doubly confronted – by the power of the state to stifle debate and by the silence of his collaborators on the issue.

Another key element of reflective practice was being self-aware and critically evaluating our own responses to practical situations. Decisions were made about the kind of adult literacy programmes that were to be delivered – integrated functional adult literacy. Given the goal of these programmes to develop individual skills to allow for better integration into the local economy, we were questioning ourselves about the ideology of this approach. There isn’t much room for critical reflection in such a programme. However, after more reflection on the approach, we realized that it is indeed a very pragmatic way of enticing individuals to participate in programmes since they see the immediate and potential benefits.

Grushka, Hinde-McLeod & Reynolds (2005) distinguish between ‘reflection for, in and on action’. The reflection for action was not predicated on sociopolitical transformation, but rather on strengthening the position of adult education in ESDP IV. The reflection in action was limited to the planning team continually monitoring the planning process to ensure full participation; the reflection on action referred to the self-awareness described above. Issues such as those described above were discussed in evaluation meetings held with the planning team throughout the process and at the end.

Conclusion

The participatory planning process has led to a greater engagement of a number of key stakeholders in delivery of adult education services in Ethiopia. The Masterplan has led to greater coverage of AE in ESDP IV (Walters et al., 2012). The objectives of the Masterplan have been included in ESDP IV, and a 8.8% share of the overall education budget has been allocated to this sub-sector (ESDP III allocated 3%). Adult education is also seen as a key factor influencing economic and social development. At the regional level, a comprehensive planning process is being applied since 2011, emulating the Masterplan planning process. At least one
integrated functional adult literacy project is being piloted in each region. It seems that the planning process has engaged more key stakeholders and provided a critical path to action in the field. It is hoped that the projected investment will come through. Regardless of these achievements, a great deal of work needs to be done to formally integrate adult education into a holistic approach to education.

Selected References

All references will be available at the conference or can be obtained from Yvon Laberge at the following address – ylaberge@shaw.ca


Sork, T. J. (2009). Planning Educational Programs, In Wilson, A. & Hayes, R. (Eds.) Handbook of Adult and Continuing Education.

Networking the Natural: Environmental Adult Education in the Digital Age

Jon-Erik P. Lappano
University of Toronto, Ontario Institute of Studies in Education

Abstract: As a field of practice, environmental adult education (EAE) must view online spaces as viable and meaningful sites of teaching and learning. As an integral part of the contemporary culture, online venues are highly occupied and utilized spaces of public, informal education. This paper explores how the participatory, creative, and critical methods associated with EAE can complement and enhance online spaces to foster socio-environmental transformation. If equipped with a critical consciousness, EAE can cultivate environmental “conscientization”, encourage alternative and empowering narratives to the dominant media messages of the environmental crisis, strengthen ecological identity, and foster environmental connection in online venues.

Introduction

The digital sphere, with its extensive media, technologies, and cultural influence, offers a dynamic pedagogical terrain and opportunity for transformative learning in the field of environmental adult education (EAE). Virtual sites of engagement may seem at odds with traditionally “natural” locales of EAE and have been discussed in the literature as leading to social isolation, civic disengagement, environmental disconnection, and technological fundamentalism, among other ills (Abram 2010; Bowers 2000; Kraut et al. 1998; Orr 2002). While these are insightful critiques, it is necessary to recognize that as highly occupied cultural sites, online venues are now primary sources of informal education. We must therefore learn how to critically navigate them as educators going forward. Much of the literature on EAE rightly emphasizes the development of ecological literacy (Capra 2006; Duailibi 2006; Orr 1992), but there is room to further develop the notion of critical cultural and digital media literacy from an environmental perspective. As Darlene Clover (1999) states, EAE should have a critical interest in socio-environmental change and develop “frameworks more responsive to broader contemporary needs” (p. 56). EAE should then be situated where contemporary society gathers and fluent in the media of contemporary culture. In practice, EAE must be present in the cultural spaces of digital media to re-imagine them as critical and meaningful sites of teaching and learning.

The participatory, creative, and critical methods associated with EAE are well suited for online spaces and media, which themselves are optimal venues for collaboration, organization, dialogue, and participation (Mackenzie, Russell, Fawcett, & Timmerman, 2010). This paper will explore how EAE can best move forward in online venues. It will begin by framing the theoretical contexts of EAE from a popular education perspective. It will then define and critique “online venues” to assess their pedagogical limits and opportunities, and analyze online contexts and methods that can foster socio-environmental transformation. This will lead into a discussion of how online EAE might restore a relationship to the biosphere as we move forward in virtual territories.
Contexts of Environmental Adult Education

Historical Development of EAE
Since its emergence in the 1970s (Haugen, 2009), EAE has been defined as “a hybrid outgrowth of the environmental movement and adult education, combining an ecological orientation with a learning paradigm to provide a vigorous educational approach to environmental concerns” (Sumner, 2003, p. 41). In this light, it emerged as an attempt to “reach new populations and to facilitate broader, more genuine change” (Haugen, 200, p. 1). EAE draws from other pedagogical philosophies and disciplines including feminism, adult education, and popular education among others to include a critical analysis of larger systems that underlie environmental issues (Haugen, 2009). Such critical disciplines enable individuals to “see themselves as key actors who have the capacity to assess and address their own needs and concerns in order to become effective participants in the struggle for change” (Clover, 2000, p. 9).

EAE in a Contemporary Context
As an evolving field, EAE allows for in-depth engagement with ever-changing political-economic and social dimensions of contemporary society. In such dimensions, one cannot ignore the effects of digital media, as its emergence has changed the manner in which mass media disseminates the information that comprise contemporary paradigms and how audiences respond or adhere to it.

This is of interest when educating for a critical understanding of environmental issues, because digital media has altered the way in which environmental dilemmas are framed and interpreted. This interpretation contributes to what Karen Malone refers to as “popular knowledge” (1999). In practice, popular education aims “to make popular knowledge and culture coherent and to give them a critical orientation” and so can be helpful in guiding EAE towards effective pedagogy (Infante & Letelier, 1994, p. 316, as cited in Yoo, 2007, p. 76). It is therefore worthwhile to orient EAE in online contexts within a popular education perspective.

EAE and Popular Education
Popular education, as described by Clover (1999), “is a highly participatory group-learning process that begins with the concrete experiences of the learner and uses these experiences to develop a critical awareness about their situation and what they can do to improve it” (p. 99). This critical awareness amounts to a conscientization in which learners realize the ways in which they are oppressed (Freire, 1970).

In an environmental context, oppression is manifested in myriad ways. The ecological degradation and pollution of local environments by development or industry is one obvious form of environmental oppression, yet a less apparent but more insidious form lies in an increasing environmental disempowerment, disconnection, and disillusionment propagated by late capitalism. A pedagogy seeking liberation from such oppression would restore a meaningful relationship with the natural world and critique those processes that lead to ecological disconnection. This is the aim of EAE from a popular education framework: to equip populations with the necessary critical tools to resist oppressive trends of political-economic domination that have led to the environmental crisis.
Methods for developing such critical tools must be dialogical, participatory, rooted in experience, and run counter to the “banking model” of education where knowledge is “deposited” in learners (Freire, 1970). EAE uses dialogue and relies heavily on the environmental experiences of learners as a valid and empowering source of knowledge (Malone, 1999). Such empowerment results from the active participation of individuals in the learning process, “to be critically conscious and an active participant in the shaping of her or his own reality” (Clover, 1999, p. 224).

Online venues place great emphasis on creative media and individual participation in interactive spaces. In this way, contemporary EAE that utilizes the creative, participatory, and experiential methods of popular education is appropriate to explore in online contexts. In order to discuss how such methods might be most effective, we must first critically examine “online venues” themselves.

**A Brief Analysis of Online Venues**

*Defining Online Venues*

Online spaces are heterogeneous cultural media outlets that require distinction. This particular analysis is concerned with those interactive and participatory networks that comprise what is now broadly accepted as “Web 2.0” (Backardjieva & Gaden, 2011).

Many online venues in Web 2.0 are “democratic”, user-generated, and user-controlled in design, content, and structure. These venues can be interpreted as open-source software like “wikis”, independent or community run user-forums, blogs, websites, and social networks, and represent the “grassroots” spaces of Web 2.0.

In contrast, many popular online venues are housed in and mediated by private corporations that have control over user expression, access, privacy, and behaviour. Sites such as Facebook or YouTube are examples of such venues. Often, these venues are highly populated by advertisers and private corporations.

*Critiquing Online Venues*

**Perpetuating consumerism.** Consumption of particular products, experiences, and values truly becomes a patterned way of life in online venues, and as a direct result, in offline practices. Innovations in targeted advertising and amplified pop-cultural mythologies have arguably heightened the reach and influence of consumerism. Moreover, the self-reflective nature of social networks may reinforce consumerist mythologies of identity and meaning through a perpetual “checking in” of one’s social relevance. Online EAE must include a critical media literacy of the space and content to foster conscientization and transcend the often-hegemonic structures of online media.

**Environmental disconnection.** Even the most grassroots online venues warrant critique in terms of their ability to foster a direct and mindful relationship with local environments. Clover (1999) argues, “Learning in place can help people to understand how they are always engaged in a process of listening and attuning to other presences that surround them even though they often fade into busy lives” (p. 232). David Orr (1992) argues that to develop a sense of ecological literacy learners must engage in place-based conversation with the natural world around them (p. 91). The portability of Web 2.0 may present a barrier to place-based learning. Similarly, no
matter how rich with information and inter-cultural experience, digital media remain as mere simulations of the physical world (Abram, 2010).

Despite these criticisms, the creative and participatory spaces of Web 2.0 offer profound opportunities for EAE, if paired with a critical consciousness. Equipped with the proper methods and insight, EAE can overcome the above limitations, utilizing the momentum of digital culture to build effective movements of opposition and cultivate socio-environmental transformation.

**Weaving it in: Online Contexts of EAE**

*Narratives of Empowerment*

EAE, according to Clover (1999) should “begin from people’s experiences, emotions and locations” and “tap into the rich store of existing ecological knowledge and expertise to create new knowledge” (p. 4). The social media networks of Web 2.0 emphasize personal stories rooted in diverse locations and provide vibrant spaces for the development the knowledge and expertise to which Clover refers. Storytelling thrives online in many creative forms, with social networks aggregating user-generated media into overarching and empowering autobiographical narratives. Mitchell Thomashow (1995) lauds the autobiographical in helping to illuminate one’s “ecological identity”:

> Through autobiography, learners can experiment with their life stories, seeing how they fit with the experiences of others (…) The collective interpretation of autobiographical experience enables people to construct a common story as their lives become linked through their mutual interest in ecological or political identity (p. 188)

In this way, autobiography is important to EAE because it allows an individual to make meaningful connections to broader contexts; a critical step in conscientization.

EAE should utilize the cultural momentum of digital media and technology to facilitate a critical consciousness of the environmental crisis through creative, autobiographical storytelling. Clover sums up the transformative potential of stories in EAE:

> What hopefully will become more evident as we share and listen to a larger number of stories (…) is a deeper insight into the ways in which we express ourselves through nature/culture particularities (P. 277)

Using the critical mass of online user participation, the creative potential of new media, and the abundant autobiographical exploration in the digital sphere, EAE could more effectively foster socio-environmental transformation in the modern culture.

*Expanding Environmental Popular Knowledge*

Stories of environmental experience can build rich global and local networks of “environmental popular knowledge”, which is distinct from the formal scientific discourse prevalent in mass media (Malone, 1999). According to Fals Borda (1982) popular knowledge is “belonging to the people at the grassroots and constituting part of their cultural heritage” (as cited in Malone, p. 236). As Malone asserts, “through practices of education and environmental popular knowledge production the capacity exists to encourage individuals to challenge and change the very
definition of what constitutes valid knowledge”. It is in this counter-hegemonic spirit that online EAE should build new forms environmental popular knowledge and spark a critical dialogue of the environmental crisis.

Of course, tangible, place-based environmental experiences and explorations are required for the level of ecological literacy or environmental understanding that will be needed for socio-environmental transformation. Online venues merely provide creative and collaborative platforms to share and learn from these experiences and forms of knowledge.

**Vivid Interactions of Place**
The concept of “place-based” learning need not become lost in digital culture, as digital experiences are fundamentally rooted in place. This is true both from a position of media production and media consumption. We do not step fully into the novel spaces of virtual media; we are bound by our immediate spatial and temporal contexts. When we pause to look up from the screen, we become suddenly aware of the place we are in. Moreover, our global, digital experiences are housed in, and influenced by, local environments. Content wise, digital media are illuminated by place, telling an embedded environmental story of human connection.

Stressing the importance of place in digital culture is paramount to online EAE. As Sumner (2003) argues, “Even in a globalized world, the concept of place is still vitally important as an expression of our connection with each other and with the environment” (p. 39). Paying close attention to the local integration of global online experiences, digital culture can open up a rich and vibrant space for local-global dialogue.

In an environmental sense, local users can explore and collect “distant symbolic resources” created from global stories of environmental popular knowledge, thereby expanding their consciousness to include the diverse, shared, or contradictory environmental experiences of communities and individuals (Bakardjieva & Gaden, 2011, p. 404). The global accessibility of Web 2.0 and a predominance of visual media content allows for a reciprocal, inter-cultural exchange that can lead to a meaningful, creative, and critical dialogue for the purposes of socio-environmental transformation.

Given the above, methods of EAE best suited for online venues should be creative, participatory, critically conscious, and rooted in sensory, place-based experience. As a popular tool of online engagement, video is a method particularly worth exploring.

**Participatory Video as a Method of Online EAE**
Online venues are brimming with creative energy. The fluidity, technological advancement, and structural innovation of digital space continue to expand the capacity for grassroots artistic expression. The largely visual nature of Web 2.0 also holds vast promise for critical methods of conscientization including participatory photography, videography, and other modes of creative expression. As Clover (1999) argues, creative methods help environmental adult educators develop a critical and creative response to people’s “embodied and grounded” experiences that can be “expressed through stories and images, art, drawing, and music” (p. 266). These methods transcend language and knowledge barriers, giving a visceral, cultural form to environmental popular knowledge.
Video, as a participatory and reflexive process, can facilitate conscientization through communication that transforms individual experience into a rooted sense of collective, cultural identity (White, 2003). As a democratic process “characterized by dialogue, creative and consensual thinking, and collective action” White argues it has the ability to “liberate people from powerless positions and [place] them in a position to construct their own futures” (p. 20, 36). From an EAE perspective, participatory video can enable individuals to become reflexively aware of their immediate environmental situations and experiences to develop a sense of ecological identity.

While many creative methods of inquiry have been embraced by EAE, Clover (2011) notes a gap with regards to the use of film and video in critical practice. She writes, “although Giroux (2001) reminds us of the critical role film can play in placing particular ideologies and values into public conversation and opening pedagogical spaces for new interpretations of old issues, film remains an art form largely underexplored” (p. 21).

It seems there is a need to expand the use of participatory video for EAE, and the online venues of Web 2.0 provide a suitable and engaging space to do so; social media networks like YouTube are driven by participatory and interactive modes of media production that communicate local experiences to a broader global audience.

As a mode of inquiry, video offers a vibrant alternative to the dominant “environmental discourses that focus almost exclusively on individual responsibility, behaviour change, and scientific and rational knowledge” (Clover, 2011, p. 21). The creative platform allows for a more nuanced interpretation of complex issues posed by the environmental crisis, and allows viewer and producer alike to engage in visual and symbolic dialogue with other people, species, and the natural world. As Mackenzie et al. (2010) discuss, “films can offer an evocative entrée to potentially unfamiliar worlds or the experiences of other humans and the more-than-human” (p. 158). For Stephen Crocker, film can powerfully present “aggregated details in a way far more immediate than print and other media” and is therefore “a means of producing better informed citizens” (2003, p. 124).

Utilizing digital video production as a means of environmental exploration may even enhance ecological identity and connection. The process of participatory video is embedded in place and rooted to local, subjective environmental experience. The video frame, if selected through mindful attention to the surrounding environment, communicates a visual narrative of environmental exploration and interpretation. It simultaneously opens up a space for environmental dialogue between people and communities, and encourages an immediate sensory attuning to place, which is a practice that builds ecological literacy (Orr, 1992). With regards to the environmental crisis, the digital communication of embedded environmental explorations of local issues or contexts can build important local, national, and global networks of environmental popular knowledge, facilitated by social media platforms and grassroots online venues.

**Discussion**

Immersed in the symbols and narratives of digital culture, it may seem as though humanity is destined to slip out of the embrace of the biosphere and into the glittering confines of the “technoscape” (Appadurai, 1996). Yet this vision undermines the environmental tangibility that
permeates our experiences, even those digital ones in which we so frequently partake. EAE must work to recapture a sense of environmental connection in the contemporary culture and simultaneously raise a critical consciousness of our cultural alienation from our local and planetary environments.

To remain culturally relevant, EAE must utilize the digital media spaces and technologies that are now part of our collective cultural identity. By infusing a critical consciousness into this abundant territory while encouraging a meaningful and mindful connection to place and environmental experience, EAE can surely weave in the digital and the natural to cultivate socio-environmental transformation. Moreover, the creative nature of digital media technologies can infuse our natural experiences with participatory and creative modes of exploration, communicating powerful, inter-cultural narratives and forms of environmental popular knowledge to global audiences. In such a way, online EAE might restore a unique cultural relationship to the biosphere.

Digital culture is a fluid entity that evolves in response to users’ collective consciousness. If online EAE continues to foster critical consciousness in contemporary culture, vibrant spaces of resistance and environmental connection will surely open up in digital venues. If successful, the hope is that online EAE can foster a cultural shift towards more environmentally embedded, mindful, and compassionate practices in the offline world.

References


Activation of Resources of Immigrant Women Entrepreneurs: Learning Processes in the Culturally Diverse German Society

Anna Laros
University of Education Freiburg, Germany

Abstract: The following paper documents my development of a grounded theory about the learning processes of immigrant women entrepreneurs. These learning processes exceed the economic sphere to encompass the entrepreneurs’ life-circumstances. My learning model consists of four learning phases of which I will outline the first and the final. Throughout the learning phases, the interdependency between gender and migration plays a significant role. The Theory of Transformative Learning is used to further understanding of the outcomes.

Introduction
As elsewhere, ethnicity and gender often represent major challenges in the German labour market for immigrant women. Heretofore, migration research has had a marked deficit of discourse and research. Discrimination of this subgroup in the labour market results from factors such as non-recognized foreign credentials, subpar educations, insufficient German language skills, and deep-seated—if perhaps subconscious—xenophobia (OECD, 2005). Recent German labour statistics show that these discriminating effects are significantly higher for women across the board—to varying degrees among different ethnicities (stat. Bundesamt, 2006).

Broadly speaking, discrimination of immigrant women can most easily be explained by the baseline gender discrimination trends among German employers. Here, the labour market can be characterized by a vertical gendered segregation—women are represented most prominently in lower positions within the rubric of a typical business hierarchy. A second discriminating effect, a horizontal segregation, illuminates the division of labour in gendered occupations and industrial sectors (Dressel & Wanger, 2008). These internal segregating mechanisms of the workforce are further analysed and explained by the approach of “segmentation” (Westphal, 1997). Another excluding determinant is “double socialization”—the alignment of profession and household/family (Becker-Schmidt, 2008)—which is still mainly a challenge for women, even though politicians are increasingly involving men and fathers when crafting family/labour policy. “Double socialization” has given way to the even more comprehensive “triple socialization” which sheds perspective on processes of socialization by looking at household/family, income/assents and ethnicity (Lenz, 1995). Consequently, the “intersectionality” approach focuses on the interdependency between categories like gender, ethnicity, race, and class (Winkler & Degele, 2009²; Klinger, 2003).

When considering these interdependent categories, the vast gulf of challenges awaiting an immigrant female attempting to enter in the German labour market comes into sharp focus. A prominent option for immigrant women seeking liberation from traditional barriers to the workforce is self-employment. From the position within a community of a successful entrepreneur and employer, an immigrant background can morph into that of not just power, but empowerment (Leicht et al., 2009). As a result of this trend, immigrant female entrepreneurs as a subgroup are increasingly primed for social-scientific exploration (Ministry for Generations, Family, Women and integration of NRW 2007; Leicht et al., 2005, 2009). The likelihood of
becoming entrepreneurially active is outlined in studies as having gender-based differences as well as differences between Germans and immigrants (Burak, 2009). Although immigrant women increasingly start businesses, among the self-employed demographic, they’re still an underrepresented group (Leicht et al. 2005, Leicht et al. 2009). Diverse programs, which aim to support entrepreneurship (implicitly or explicitly), target immigrant women. A study of the learning processes of immigrant female entrepreneurs, based on subjectively relevant life circumstances, has been heretofore missing in the educational sciences.

The following paper reports on just such a study, within which these learning processes are analysed according to the Theory of Transformative Learning by Jack Mezirow (Mezirow, 1991, 2012). Mezirow says, “Learning is understood as the process of using prior interpretation to construe a new or revised interpretation of the meaning of one’s experience as a guide for future action. In transformative learning, however, we reinterpret an old experience (or a new one) from a new set of expectations, thus giving a new meaning and perspective to the old experience.” (Mezirow, 1991: 12).

In the following, I (1) describe the design of the study. (2) I outline and discuss central results within two phases—(2.1) the launching-preparation phase, and (2.2) the phase of the successful entrepreneurship. (3) I then reconstruct the different interdependent categories that influence the learning process. Evolving patterns show that immigrant women creatively transform surface-level disadvantages—connected to gender and migration—into resources and advantages for their entrepreneurial activities. Finally, (4) I summarize the results and give an outlook on this field of study.

**Design of the Study**

My research question of how immigrant women learn to become entrepreneurs is focused on the analysis of informal learning processes that go with launching a company. In addition to Mezirow’s Theory of Transformative Learning, I am working with the methodology of Grounded Theory according to Corbin and Strauss (Corbin & Strauss, 2008): A succession of data collection, data analysis, and development of theory within a circular process. My aim is to develop a Grounded Theory of learning processes among female immigrant entrepreneurs.

So far, I have conducted 11 narrative-style interviews (Schütze, 1976). For the scope of this paper, the outcomes of the study will be demonstrated through two of the 11 interviews. The 11 entrepreneurs interviewed can be commonly categorized as women and immigrants; this seemingly homogenous subgroup gives way to great internal heterogeneity. The interviewees are of different nationalities, different immigration backgrounds (first or second generation), and family status. Furthermore, the sizes of their enterprises differ as well. According to the methodology of Grounded Theory, the interviewees were selected in a theoretical sampling (Corbin & Strauss, 2008).

So far, I have outlined four different learning phases, throughout which these women pass while honing their skills as entrepreneurs. Below, I outline central aspects of the first and the fourth phases.
Results and Discussion

The results of the study demonstrate that immigrant women entrepreneurs are not only well suited for the process of becoming entrepreneurs, but that they view the learning process as holistic (Fuhr & Laros, 2012). In discussing their self-employment, the interviewees routinely refer to different social non-economic contexts, namely their home life and familial circumstances. Their self-perception as entrepreneurs is inextricably linked to their role in their communities and families.

Although the learning processes individually show differences, all 11 interviewees experience what I’ve delineated as four learning phases in which they develop and enhance their entrepreneurial self-perception. During the first three phases, they face challenges connected to their entrepreneurial activities. Their strategies for coping with these challenges can be outlined: Within these three phases their emerging entrepreneurial-self is primarily focused on individual and enterprise-centred dilemmas relating to launching and establishing their business. In contrast, the fourth learning phase is mainly focused on social issues—with the enterprise already established, the interviewees further enhance their inner-entrepreneur through reflection and reaction to the social implications of their successful entrepreneurship.

By focusing on the beginnings and the ends of the learning processes, my aim is to outline the range and the complexity inherent to all four. The first learning phase, the launching-preparation phase, is individual-centred: The interviewees discover and pursue opportunities for business ownership. The fourth learning phase, the phase during successful entrepreneurship, occurs when the interviewees transcend the individual-centred focus, evidenced by their attitudes towards employees and customers. The influence of their gender and immigration proved extremely important.

For the purposes of this paper, I exemplify the first and the fourth learning phases by referring to two interviews that lend powerful insight about how and in what contexts the interviewees developed their entrepreneurial self-perceptions.

Lisa is a hairstylist whose family immigrated to Germany from Turkey when she was 3. After secondary school, she completed an apprenticeship in a German salon and worked for many years as a hairdresser. She is a single mother of two children and launched her own five-person-strong salon when her children were 21 and 13 years old.

Maria, a Russian German teacher with a doctorate in German studies worked at a university in Russia—she immigrated to Germany 12 years ago. She experienced a sense of exclusion as she began her job hunt—her accent, in conjunction with her diploma and qualifications being unrecognised in Germany, left her frustrated and devastated. By focusing on her talents, she launched a language school, thereby actively creating her own career opportunities. Today, she owns two language schools that together employ more than 300 people.

Launching-preparation Phase

During the launching-preparation phase, the activities are focused on the individual and mainly refer to processes occurring previous to that entrepreneurial activity: All interviewees refer to their different social experiences, which enabled them to become entrepreneurially motivated.
The self-perception of fledgling entrepreneurs is embedded into their self-perceptions as women, mothers, and immigrants.

Lisa describes the starting point of her entrepreneurial activity as a coincidence that led her to spontaneously make the decision to launch her company. Gender was central to this decision. Her understanding of the roles of women and mothers—she is a single mother—enormously influenced her decision to launch. She cites her children as driving her decision to live up to her potential by starting a business.

Lisa: “I needed a push; just a confirmation of whether or not I could really [start a business]. Primarily, [I worried about] what my kids would think about it, because they are the ones who would feel [my obligation] the most since their mom would not be around all the time anymore. But they think it’s great, and that was the only thing I needed for my decision—nothing else.”

Lisa, in citing her children’s support as “the only thing I needed for my decision,” shows that profitable efficiency, business plans, etc. were and are less important than a healthy home life. This concretizes when she describes her understanding of her role as a woman and a mother. Looking at the whole study, status as an immigrant also seems to play a central deciding role in launching a company. Maria, who unsuccessfully sought work during the launching-preparation phase, outlines aspects pertaining mostly to her ethnicity, which effectively led her into self-employment.

Maria: “(...) because I didn’t know anybody here in Germany, I was looking for contacts and I landed in a Russian choir. Of course, in the choir people knew that I am the German lecturer from the university. Then they said, ‘Oh please, we have attended several courses and we haven’t learned anything yet—we still don’t speak German.’ That was a typical complaint among Russians. I said, ‘Okay,’ and then I formed a small group of those Russians.”

By referring to her start within the group as “landing,” she hints at a certain amount of chance involved in her entrepreneurial beginning. Within this choir, the past professional status that she enjoyed in Russia was validated, indeed respected. She was not seen as just another unemployed Russian in Germany. Thanks to her connection with the choir, her first entrepreneurial opportunities began to take root.

In summary, these interviewees were motivated by their communities, be it family or otherwise, during the launching-preparation phase. Their ethnicities and their gender—and consequently their self-perception as women and mothers—also played significant roles to varying degrees. It then follows that the women’s burgeoning entrepreneurial self-perception and their other roles within their communities are not viewed as mutually exclusive.

Phase of the Successful Entrepreneurship
The fourth learning phase differs greatly from the first three. Within the fourth learning phase, the entrepreneurial-self develops through negotiating societal aspects of successful entrepreneurship: The first phase is focused on the individual—identification and activation of potential as related to Lisa and Maria’s gender and immigration backgrounds. Conversely, in the
last and fourth phase of the learning process, successful entrepreneurship, impacts these contexts and commonly overrides economic concerns.

As evidenced by their own testimonies, enterprise and entrepreneurialism has inculcated in these women a focus beyond themselves. In their roles as employers, the interviewees emphasized their tendency to offer work opportunities to other immigrant women. While they often deem their own successes as coincidence, they intentionally create opportunities for participation in the labour market for others.

Lisa: ”I wanted to be an employer. One reason is that I have a teenage daughter, and it’s really difficult to find employment. … My origins are in Turkey and there was this girl from Turkey who wanted to become a hairstylist but couldn’t get placement [for an apprenticeship]. It was very important to me giving, especially, her, as a Turkish woman, the chance to [apprentice to become] a hairstylist. I thought, ‘I know the Turkish upbringing. This is how I was also raised.’ It was very important to my parents that I have an education.”

Lisa sees her teaching-related role as a master hairdresser as related to her role as a mother and a once-unemployed immigrant. Her first employee was also Turkish. Her quote above focuses on ethnic aspects by specifically recalling another “Turkish girl.” Lisa frequently combines aspects of gender and immigration as central themes throughout her experience in the four learning phases. She points out that her education was of great importance to her parents, still, she starts the sentence with “but,” hinting that education may not be an integrated part of Turkish mores. Consequently, education for her daughter and fellow female Turkish immigrants is also highly relevant to her. Through her business—by interacting with job applicants—she experiences how difficult it is for foreign women to find employment. Her decision to become an instructor denotes a sense of duty and loyalty to others who may be struggling with the German labour market due to their ethnicity. Her enterprise gives her a wider breadth of opportunity to participate in—and even create—a more inclusive society, offering her the opportunity to live according to her ideals.

Maria’s experience with the German system as too exclusive has instilled in her a sense of obligation to create opportunities for inclusion of other foreigners as well. As an entrepreneur, she has created a culture within her company that takes responsibility for her students’ successful integration into German society. These acts of good will extend to helping her students cope with xenophobia and supporting participation within the German society.

Maria: “We have a young man from Gambia … He took a literacy class … he is so slow and during the exams, there are time limits. The teachers told me if we had five hours instead of one and a half, he would pass. He is slow, but now, he knows how to read and write. While others read two pages, he has read one sentence … So, I allowed him to attend the class one month for free … I have a certain responsibility.”

Maria goes on to point out how culturally significant it is to speak German fluently and flawlessly. In this fourth learning phase, we see her as a successful entrepreneur, facilitating support for others even when it is not economically advantageous.
In summary, during this fourth phase, the entrepreneurs offer opportunities of participation they may not have themselves to others. The business and being an entrepreneur becomes important to these women, but it does not undo their own sense of themselves as females or immigrants. Their newly attained status as successful entrepreneurs extends the women’s opportunities for action and had positive impacts on their communities.

**Summary and Outlook**

The results of the study show that entrepreneurial activities are inextricably linked to the interviewees’ personal backgrounds. Furthermore, the reciprocal relation between gender and immigration also rises to the fore. In sum, these are two central categories (out of many others) that become relevant within these women’s learning processes. These two categories are present across all four learning phases. By examining phases one and four, I have outlined how these women developed their entrepreneurial self-perception through referring to the gender and migration statuses.

Within the first phase, the launching-preparation phase, experiences of difference motivated the women to become proactive. This was related to unrecognized credentials (Maria) and the negotiation of family and work (Maria and Lisa). They learned strategies for generating resources through their personal, professional, migration-related communities, and created opportunity structures that eventually led to successful entrepreneurship. Their self-perception, influenced by gender and immigration, has a determining influence. Furthermore, within the first phase, the women fought discriminating structures inherent in the labour market by creating their own career paths.

Within the fourth phase, it becomes obvious the women have further differentiated their frames of references. This includes their views on the categories of gender and migration. Both categories influence their attitudes concerning clients and customers and, furthermore, become central when the entrepreneurs offer opportunities of participation to others.

The importance of the reciprocity of gender and migration in creating an inclusive society is obvious through the way Lisa and Maria use their positions to benefit others. This study shows also that exclusion can lead to inclusion and opportunity. Disorienting dilemmas are often used as the springboard to success.

These two cases reinforce what Mezirow (1991, 2012) outlines within the Theory of Transformative Learning: Within learning processes that involve adapting to a new role, learners reorganise existing perspectives. This exceeds the economic sphere and includes the person within her different contexts (business and private) (Clark & Wilson, 1991). The Grounded Theory that I am developing within my research can hint at how adult education might foster transformative learning processes within the majority society and create valuable inroads to establishing peer support and opportunities within various socially marginalized communities.

**References**


http://www.destatis.de/jetspeed/portal/cms/Sites/destatis/Inter=net/DE/Navigation/Statistiken/
Bevoelkerung/MigrationIntegration/Migrationshintergrund/migrationshintergrund.psml.
Einwanderungsbedingungen. Bielefeld: Kleine (Theorie und Praxis der Frauenforschung,
Vol.26).
Bielefeld: transcript Verlag.
Pedagogy of Law; The Hegelian Story of Community Based University
Resistance, Research and Advocacy

Marc Legacy
Simon Fraser University

Abstract: Following the pre-Victorian rise of ecclesiastical courts throughout Great Britain, this paper considers violence against women through a western common law perspective, more specifically, violence experienced by women in marital relationships. Beginning with a look at the Victorian compassionate model of marriage into the growing awareness of marital violence of the 1970’s, this paper ends with a dialectic look at the Canadian socio-juridical struggle to deter and denounce violence against women. Accordingly, the intent of this paper is to examine how the force of law exerts its pedagogic authority across intersecting fields of struggle.

Introduction
Historically, “women’s inferior position was legitimized by scriptural, political, medical and legal thought” (Foyster, 2005, p. 9). Maintaining the dominant pre-Victorian – Victorian patriarchal order, “marriage was intended to be the bedrock of the patriarchal ideal where women were subordinated to men, and, where husbands ruled over and dominated their wives” (Foyster, 2005, p. 9).

Consequently, men were dominant figures in the family and society at large where their use of power, physical, emotional and psychological violence was not only socially accepted, in many cases, their violence was legally permissible (Mears and Visher, 2005). In the eighteenth century for example, it was widely believed husbands could legally beat their wives with a stick no thicker than their thumbs (Kindschi-Gosselin, 2000). And while this widely held belief was sometimes attributed to William Blackstone or Sir Francis Buller, its epistemic justification along with its anecdotal validity carried its pedagogic content across intersecting fields of interaction (Foyster, 2005). Nevertheless, as a result, women remained much more likely, much more than men, to suffer oppression, isolation, symbolic and actual violence.

But, historical antecedents also suggests growing opposition to marital violence as early as the twelfth century. For example, by mid 18th century evidence reveals growing public opposition to marital violence in the form of public denunciation. Accordingly, habitually violent husbands accused of legal cruelty were the subject of charivaris (Butler, 2007).

Violence by Convention
Following the rise of ecclesiastical court, as early as the thirteenth century, wives began appealing to the courts for protection from their violent husbands in the form of peace bonds, separation, divorce and the return of pre-marital property. However, unlike court ordered anger management, treatment or therapy that are in place today, historically, wives were offered very little protection from the courts who, despite the occurrence of marital violence, preferred to preserve marital unity and the common law of property.

Consequently, divorce or separation was rarely granted while peace bonds were routinely ineffectual in halting the violence especially where the family was financially depended solely on the husbands wages. To a large extent, the legal fiction of marital unity guided legal, social
and marital conventions well into the nineteenth century where English common law established specific marital guidelines affirming the husbands dominance at marriage (Doggett, 1993).

By legal convention therefore, and, by the common law, the courts enforcement of women’s marital subjection was further governed by the ‘principle of couverture’; “marriage was considered to be the bedrock of the patriarchal ideal where women were subordinated to men, and, husbands ruled over and dominated their wives” (Foyster, 2005, p. 9). Accordingly, husbands were expected to ensure their wives adherence to social and marital conventions (Butler, 2007). Even when women would allege marital violence and seek divorce of separation, the courts would often instruct wives accordingly;

the most solemn engagement one human being can contract with another … to the moral order of civil society …the obligations of this contract are not to be relaxed at the pleasure of one party … and … it is not be lightly relaxed even at the pleasure of both (Evans v. Evans).

Additionally, legal commentators such as Mathew Bacon and William Blackstone for example, reinforced marital and social convention through the ‘legal’ subordination of wives. In Mathew Bacon’s (1736) *New Abridgment of the Laws* for example;

The husband hath by law, power and domination over his wife, and, may keep her by force within the bounds of duty, and may beat her, but not in a violence or cruel manner; for such case, or if he but threaten to beat her outrageously, or use her barbarously, she may bind him to the peace (Foyster, 2005, p. 40).

And, according to William Blackstone another eighteenth century legal commentator and author of the ‘*Commentaries on the Laws of England*’;

A husband may give his wife moderate correction. For as his to answer for her misbehaviour, the law thought it reasonable to intrust him with this power of restraining her, by domestic chastisement … . But this power of correction was confined within reasonable bounds (Foyster, 2005, p. 40).

But, along with a husband’s right to physically chastise, instruct and correct his wife, marital convention required a husband “treat and govern her [his wife] well and honestly, and to do no injury or ill to her body other than that permitted lawfully and reasonable to a husband for the purpose of control and punish his wife” (Butler, 2007, p. 31).

**Harmonious Authority**

Moving away from the ‘principle of couverture’ for example, the right to reasonable chastisement or moderate correction, marital harmony, or rather the Victorian compassionate model or marriage was intended to be an expression of natural and affectionate domestic ties – a reflection of a proper and enlightened Victorian society (Butler, 2007). “Respectability, was to be expressed through moderation and self-restraint, and, men of all classes were expected to re-fashion themselves to this new model of non-violent manliness or face [increasingly] harsher sentences” (Levin-Clark, 2005, p. 1).
But, sadly however, not all marriages conformed to the compassionate model. In cases where the misconduct of either the husband or wife led to marital discord, there could be no legal remedy for either or both aggrieved parties. In Taylor v. Taylor for example, the court’s position was made clear; “a wife is not entitled to a divorce by reason of cruelty of her husband unless she is a person of good temper, and, has always behaved dutifully towards him”. Very much to that same end, in deciding whether to grant judicial separation on grounds of legal cruelty, the court concluded in Evans v. Evans that “the suffering party must bear in some degree the consequences of an injudicious connection” implying that a poor choice of partners or subsequent marital discord was not a concern for the courts. In a similar ruling, the court concurred with the legal fiction of marital unity when in Hudson v. Hudson the court concluded that “the courts will not grant a decree of judicial separation to protect the wife from mere unhappiness resulting from an ill assorted marriage, nor from the destruction of domestic comfort”.

More ominously however, following the common law, Taylor, Evans and Hudson for example, well into the nineteenth century courts throughout the British Common Wealth continued to question wives conduct, especially in cases where wives were found to have provoked their husbands’ abuse. In Bostock v. Bostock, for example, the court often would excuse the husband’s response by concluding that;

There can be no doubt that in thirty years … the husband on several occasion was guilty of inexcusable violence, excited by more or less of provocation on the part of the wife (Tomes, 1979).

At other times, the courts continued to condone marital violence. In Waring v. Waring for example the court offered a stern warning to all married women;

If the conduct of the wife is inconsistent with the duties of that character, and provokes the just indignation of the husband, and causes danger to her person, she must seek the remedy for that evil, so provoked in the change of her own manners.

…
I recommend to her that the duty of self examination, and to consider whether a proper change in her own conduct may not be the most effectual remedy for the evil of which she complains, and consist better with her duty to her husband, her children and herself.

Subsequent courts continued to exert the law’s pedagogic authority across intersecting social and juridical fields when in Curtis v. Curtis, the court concluded that;

Whatever may be the cause or motive of the husband’s misconduct, the wife is entitled to the protection of the Court if cohabitation is rendered unsafe, unless she is herself greatly to blame.

However, the wife’s conduct was not always sufficient grounds for establishing provocation and thereby forgoing her legal protection. In Holden v. Holden the court concluded that “it was not
necessary that the conduct of the wife should be entirely without blame”. So, while wives’
conduct was still considered as aggravating circumstances in cases of marital violence, what
began to gradually emerge throughout society at large and eventually to creep into the judicial
discourse was a growing concern for protecting women from violent husbands – protection from
legal cruelty. Accordingly, the court concluded that;

If the passions of the husband are so much out of his control, as that it is
inconsistent with the personal safety of the wife to continue in his society, it is
immaterial from what provocation such violence originated (Holden).

But, despite growing social disapproval, persistent charivaries denouncing marital violence,
along with women’s growing inclusion in community based activism, the courts continued to
disadvantage women trying to escape from their violent husbands across interrelated intersecting
social and juridical fields. Divorce laws, in particular, were exceptionally punitive in the
allocation of property and in withholding financial support to battered women. In Canada for
example, the English Matrimonial Causes Act of 1857 continued to exert its pedagogical
authority until the Canadian parliament passed the Divorce Act of 1968 essentially eliminating
the double standard in which grounds for divorce could be sought differed between husbands and
wives (Douglas, 2006). Nevertheless, many scholars and social commentators concur that
violence against women received very little attention throughout the first half of the 20th century
(Barnett, Miler-Perin and Perin, 2005).

**Second Wave, and, the Battered Woman**

In early 1960’s, women began to assert themselves globally. The ‘Women’s Liberation
Movement’ of the United States, for example, began to publically expose and dispute historically
gender based injustices – institutional subordination, social inequality, legal marginalization of
women. Loosely knit together, these grassroots movements became known as ‘Second Wave
Feminism’. By challenging a variety of gender and racial inequalities, the post World War II
‘domestic ideal’ along with marital and employment inequality became symbolic of many
contentious issues throughout the movement. Ultimately, radical feminists of the 1970’s
successfully brought the aggressive and violent abuse of power in gender relations to light
(Johnson and Dawson, 2011). Awareness of rape, marital rape immunity and domestic violence,
for example further emerged through sustained activism. Moreover, Amy Lehrner and Nicole
Allen remind us that;

The domestic violence movement emerged in the United States during the early
1970s in the context of the civil rights, antiwar, Black liberation, and feminist
movements. Suddenly the previously invisible phenomenon of “woman battering”
was identified as a social problem (2009, p. 656).

Then, in 1977 Lenore Walker interviewed a group of women who had sought refuge in battered
woman’s shelters and who reported marital violence (Walker, 2009). Initially, Walker
discovered that many battered women displayed similar symptoms to those of Martin Seligman’s
theory of learned helplessness (Craven, 2003). At that same time, Walker also noticed that
women were reporting similar cycles of violence; the first she named ‘tension building’ where
women were expose to verbal and emotional abuse accompanied by escalating pushing and
slapping followed by the sudden onset of the ‘acute battering incident’ ending in ‘loving contrition’ where batterers would exhibit a series of conciliatory behaviors (Walker, 2009). Walker further noticed that the cycle would repeat itself over and over again with minor variances in intervals and severity. Together however, ‘learned helplessness’ along with the ‘cycle of violence’ became known as the ‘battered woman’s syndrome’ (BWS) that persists today as a sub-set of post-traumatic stress disorder across intersecting juridical-social fields of interaction.

**Defense Critiques**

Almost immediately after Walker’s discovery, BWS was simultaneously roundly criticized by feminist scholars, and, widely celebrated by criminal defense attorneys in cases where battered women resorted to death or grievous bodily harm in self defense. On one hand, feminist scholars denounced the passivity, homogony and heterogeneity of battered women unable to exercise personal agency and extricate themselves from the violence, while on the other hand, the social discourse continued to pathologize women who remained in violent relationships when they could have (presumably) easily left (Tang, 2003). Nevertheless, despite mounting controversies, BWS enjoyed the juridical endorsement of the courts along with growing social and cultural authority (Tang, 2003). For example, even though methodological questions persisted as did shifting the focus on women’s responses instead of men’s violence, BWS rapidly became a way of understanding a woman’s choice to remain in a violent relationship or to resort to death or grievous bodily harm in self defense (Craven 2005). In other words, according to Sheila Noonan, “the psychological profile of battered women was largely formulated in response to an erroneous beliefs as to why an abused woman would remain in an abusive relationship, [and further] stressed the woman’s victimization and paralysis (1993, p. 252). But, what happens when a particular battered woman does not display all the characteristics of battered women?

In the early 1980’s Jane Whynot shot her husband Billy Stafford killing him instantly while he was asleep. She was charged with murder but subsequently found not guilty. At trial, the court heard police and medical testimony that Billy was habitually and brutally violent, and, that Jane had frequent and severe injuries requiring medical attention. Nevertheless, on appeal, the Nova Scotia Court of Appeal overturned the lower court and ordered a new trial concluding that since there was no imminent danger to Jane, “no person has the right in anticipation of an assault that may or may not happen, to apply force to prevent the imaginary assault” (Noonan, 1993, p. 249). So, while Jane did not exhibit the passivity associated with learned helplessness, Madame Justice Wilson would later reflect back to conclude that “BWS has become the product of popular writings and social movements that draws judges’ attention to woman battering, and, that [BWS] resonates with its audience by aligning itself with larger cultural themes found in the greater society (Tang, 2003, p. 618). Similarly, in a subsequent decision, Madame Justice L’heureux-Dubé would further conclude that “women who have demonstrated too much strength or initiative, women of colour, women who are professionals, or women who might have fought back against their abusers on previous occasions, should not be penalized for failing to accord with the stereotypical image of the archetypal battered woman”. In the end, perhaps it is necessary to remind ourselves that “the impact of abuse on a woman must be understood within

---

26 R. v. Whynot, 9 C.C.C. (3d) 449
the context of the batterer’s domination and control … the cycle of violence, the woman’s fear, her heightened sensitivity to the violence and the danger posed by threats to leave or separate (Schuller and Hastings. 1993, p. 174). In other words, BWS describes a “pattern of physical and psychological abuse inflicted upon a woman by a man with whom she shares an intimate relationship” (Ewing and Aubrey, 1993, p. 258).

**Conclusion**

Power and dominance over women are well rooted in historical antecedents. At marriage for example, women were under the control of their husbands. Physical and emotional abuse under the guise of ‘reasonable chastisement’ or ‘moderate correction’ were legally permitted and socially acceptable so long as the physical and emotional abuse did not amount to legal cruelty resulting in lasting grievous bodily harm. When confronted by accusations of marital violence, husbands would rarely deny the allegations, instead counter-alleging provocation. Throughout history, marriages were considered to be private matters where the State and Crown developed special circumstances that favored the male head of the household. For women, especially women trying to flee the violence, separation and divorce was excessively punitive. While there have been historical instances of public outrage, it was not until the persistent efforts of Second Wave Feminism that violence against women including marital violence were finally brought into the public discourse. Theoretically, marital violence occupies the middle ground of the WHO spectrum in which BWS persists along with emerging multi-dimension ecological theories.

In the end, there is no one answer, no one solution – historical antecedents must inform future and on-going interdisciplinary discourse across interrelated fields of interaction.

**References**


*Bostock v. Bostock*. [1858] 1 SW & TR 222


*Evans v. Evans*. [1790] 2 Hag. Con. 27


*Hudson v. Hudson*. [1863] 3 SW &TR 315


*R. v. Whynot*, 9 C.C.C. (3d) 449


*Taylor v. Taylor*. [1755] 2 Lee. 173


*Waring v. Waring*. [1813] 2 Hag. Con. 155

Learning for Self-Care and Self-Management: Chinese Ontarians Living with Cardiovascular Diseases

Lichun Willa Liu
University of Lethbridge

Abstract: This paper examines the needs and barriers of Chinese Ontarians living with heart disease or stroke and the strategies they utilized in self-care and self-management. Mixed methods were used in data collection, which included nine focus groups, eight individual interviews, and an open-ended email survey with survivors, caregivers and health professionals respectively. Data analysis highlights the following findings: 1. English poses a major barrier in accessing health information and health services, 2. Insufficient Chinese-speaking doctors lead to long waiting time and cause delay in treatment. 3. Self-management and self-care practices include regular physical activities, eating healthy food, modifying health behaviour, and self-administering of herbal medicine.

Introduction
Cardiovascular disease, especially heart disease and stroke, is the leading cause of death in Canada (Heart and Stroke Foundation, 2012) and worldwide (Mackay & Mensah, 2004). It is associated with high morbidity, social and economic cost, and mortality rate (Heart and Stroke Foundation of Canada, 2003). Studies on ethnicity and cardiovascular disease indicate that gender and ethno-cultural affiliation influence people’s beliefs about health, their understanding of health risk, and their health-related behaviour (Anand & Yusuf, 1998; Anand et al., 2000; King et al., 2007). However, there is little research on how ethnicity influences the self-care and self-management practices among people living with heart disease and stroke.

Funded by the Heart and Stroke Foundation (2012), this paper examines the needs and barriers of Chinese Ontarians living with heart disease or stroke as well as the strategies people used for self-care and disease management. This paper took a gender-based, lifelong learning approach to examine the service needs and barriers of Chinese survivors of heart disease or stroke in accessing health information and health care services and the strategies they used in self-care and self-management of adverse health conditions by focusing on the intersectionality of gender, age, class, ethnicity, language, level of education, and length and geographic location of residence.

This paper is divided into three parts: a review of pertinent literature, a discussion of research methods, and the major findings of the research. The paper concludes with some recommendations for improvement in health care services and questions for future research.

Literature Review

Cardiovascular Disease in Canada
Cardiovascular diseases are defined as diseases and injuries of the cardiovascular system: the heart, the blood vessels of the heart and the system of blood vessels (veins and arteries)

---

28 This research was supported by Chinese Canadian Council of the Heart and Stroke Foundation, Ontario. The research team includes Helen Leung, Alice Mui, and Betty Doung from Carefirst Seniors and Community Services Association. Special thanks go to Ratsamy Pathammavong and Leqin Lu from Heart and Stroke Foundation, Ontario.
throughout the body and within the brain. Heart disease and stroke are two major forms of cardiovascular disease (Heart and Stroke Foundation, 2012).

Heart disease and stroke have declined steadily over the past four decades due to significant improvements in treatment and prevention. Nevertheless, heart disease and stroke continue to be the leading causes of death in Canada and worldwide (Heart and Stroke Foundation, 2012; Greelund et al., 2012). In Canada, every 7 minutes, someone dies from heart disease or stroke. According to the latest available data from Statistics Canada, more than 69,500 died of cardiovascular disease in 2008, which account for 29% of all deaths in Canada, 28% of all male deaths, and 29.7% of all female deaths (Statistics Canada, 2008). In Ontario, Major cardiovascular diseases caused 25,959 deaths (13,032 for male and 12,927 for female) in 2008, accounting for 29.5% of all deaths in Ontario (29.5% for both men and women). Heart disease and stroke are most likely to affect older people. In 2008, cardiovascular disease deaths among those 55 and above account for 94.4% of all cardiovascular disease deaths in Canada (Statistics Canada, 2008).

According to a report by the Heart and Stroke Foundation (2012), heart disease and stroke costs the Canadian economy more than $20.9 billion every year in physician services, hospital costs, lost wages and decreased productivity (Conference Board of Canada, 2010). Furthermore, heart disease and stroke continues to be the leading cause of hospitalization in Canada accounting for 16.9% of total hospitalizations (19.8% of all hospitalizations for men and 14% for women) (Public Health Agency of Canada, 2009).

In 2007, 1.3 million Canadians (4.8%), 5.3% male and 4.2% female, reported having heart disease (Public Health Agency of Canada, 2009). In Ontario, 5% of the people reported living with heart disease. There are over 50,000 strokes in Canada each year. That’s one stroke every 10 minutes. About 300,000 Canadians are living with the effects of stroke. At age 55, the risk of stroke doubles every 10 years. Among people who have a stroke, 65% live with minor to severe impairment or disability, and 10% require long-term care (Heart and Stroke Foundation, 2012).

**Chinese Older Adults and Heart Disease and Stroke**

People of Chinese origin represent Canada’s largest visible minority group, accounting for 3.5% of the national total and roughly 26% of the country’s visible minorities (Statistics Canada, 2007a). In 2006, there were 576,980 Chinese in Ontario, accounting for 48% of Ontario’s population. Over 80% of the Chinese immigrants in Ontario live in the Greater Toronto Area (Statistics Canada, 2007b).

Of the nearly 5 million Canadians were 65 and over, 7.2% are seniors belonging to an ethnic minority (Statistics Canada, 2011). Chinese seniors account for a large portion of Canada’s aging population. In other words, the Canadian population is not only growing older, it is also becoming more diverse.

However, Chinese older adults are not a heterogeneous community, as they came from different parts of the world and speak different dialects. Those who came in the 1970s, 80s and early 90s were mostly Cantonese-speaking Chinese from Hong Kong. Mandarin-speaking Chinese were relatively recent arrivals from Mainland China (Li, 2005).
Self-Management among Canadian-Chinese Older Adults with Cardiovascular Diseases

Despite a relatively large number of studies on older adults of Chinese origin in Canada (Koehn, Neysmith, Kobayashi & Khamisa, 2012), there is little research on Chinese older adults in terms of their experiences coping with heart disease and stroke. Only one Canadian study was found that examined cardiovascular disease management among Chinese immigrants in Canada (King, Leblanc, Carr, & Quan, 2007). Based on interviews with older Chinese immigrants with cardiovascular diseases (10 male and 5 women) in Calgary, King et al (2007) identified four factors that influence people’s health risk management behaviour: intrapersonal factors (i.e. individual perceptions and beliefs), interpersonal factors (i.e. social supports from families and others), extrapersonal factors (i.e. access to health care services/programs), sociodemographic factors (i.e. income, education, and habitation).

King et al. (2007) showed that Chinese ethnocultural affiliation and gender have a great impact on the behavioural changes among Chinese cardiac patients to reduce their risks associated with cardiovascular diseases. Chinese informants, in comparison to other ethnic groups, were extremely diligent in seeking information and learning about their cardiovascular diseases, as well as seeking and obtaining care. The informants sought out the physicians they had confidence in, connected with other health care service providers (i.e. dieticians, nurses), and made use of other resources (i.e. cardiac rehabilitation programs) in their self-management process. Chinese informants in this study were strongly in favour of using Western medicines and used them exclusively in managing their cardiovascular diseases. However, they did not find obvious gender differences in their health management behaviours.

However, King et al. (2007) also noticed that, while much research has been conducted in the past decade to illustrate patients’ experience of living with and recovering from cardiac events or procedures, health care service providers are still not informed of how ethnocultural affiliations and gender roles guide patients’ decisions in managing their cardiovascular diseases (p. 806).

With the review of pertinent literature above, I will now turn to my research by discussing my research methods and my research findings with Chinese survivors of heart disease and stroke.

Methods

Built on the proposal guidelines from the Heart and Stroke Foundation, this study examined the following two questions:

1. What health needs or barriers did Chinese survivors of heart disease and stroke face related to self-care and self-management?
2. How did gender, age and ethnicity influence the health behaviours in managing/reducing health risks associated with cardiovascular diseases?

Mixed research methods were used in data collection, which involves focus groups (n=9), face-to-face / phone individual interviews (n=8), and an open-ended email survey. The mixed methods provided us with flexibility in participant recruitment, and complemented each other in helping us to understand the nature and complexity of phenomena in their social context and to discover the social determinants of health, service gaps, and the needs of Chinese Ontarians living with heart disease or stroke.
Sixty-two participants contributed to this research, which included 26 survivors with cardiovascular diseases, 29 caregivers, and 17 health care providers from across Ontario. Participants were recruited from the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) and four other cities in Ontario: Ottawa, Hamilton, London, Kitchener, and Windsor in order to strengthen the representativeness and validity of the research. With consideration of the dispersion of Chinese Ontarians in the non-GTA region, participants were recruited from Ottawa, Hamilton, Kitchener, Windsor, and London, using the population size of 5000 as the threshold criteria.

As the purpose of this paper is on self-care and self-management of cardiovascular diseases, I will focus my discussion on the research findings from interviews and focus groups with the Chinese survivors, rather than on their caregivers and health service providers.

Findings
Sixty-three people participated in the study, including 29 men and 34 women. They are made up of three groups: survivors of heart diseases or stroke (n=26), caregivers (n=19), and health care providers from across Ontario (n=18). The majority of the survivors were men (69%), although most of the caregivers in this study were women (84%). Most of the survivors were 65 and above (92%), and were living in the Greater Toronto Area at the time of the study. 62 percent of the survivors were Mandarin-speaking Chinese, who were relatively more recent immigrants, and had lived in Canada for less than 10 years (63%). In contrast, the majority of the Cantonese survivors (70%) have been in Canada for more than 20 years. Over half of the Mandarin-speaking survivors had college or university education (58%) whereas only a handful of the Cantonese-speaking survivors (12%) had post-secondary education.

Many of the survivors suffered from more than one cardiovascular diseases, including hypertension (50%), stroke (50%), coronary artery disease (39%), angina (31%). Several survivors of heart diseases reported having had at least one stroke. Many stroke survivors reported having heart problems, hypertension, hyperlipidemia, diabetes, and other health issues.

Health Care Needs and Barriers
Many Chinese survivors of heart disease and stroke reported English as their major challenge or barrier in communicating with doctors, in seeking medical treatment and mainstream sources of health information, educational programs, and community services. This is especially the case with the recent immigrant seniors (100%). Several Mandarin-speaking survivors also reported challenges in communicating with Cantonese-speaking health providers.

Coming from a completely different culture and social system, many new immigrant seniors found it challenging to access the Canadian health care system and community-based health programs and social support. Some seniors showed particular concern for not knowing where and how to seek help in case of an emergency, such as a heart attack or stroke.

Many older survivors found it difficult to navigate the Canadian health care system for lack of means of transport and access to affordable translation Services. As a result they had to depend on their children to drive them around and translate for them when going to doctors’
appointments, rehab programs or in emergency cases. This caused an extra burden for their children and affected their children’s life and work.

Many older survivors said they had to wait for a long time before they can see a doctor due to insufficient Mandarin-speaking family doctors and specialists. As a result, many survivors sought health information and medical advice from “non-professionals” or from “unofficial” sources in Chinese, such as friends, Chinese newspapers, Chinese websites, or even doctors they knew in China. Many recent immigrant survivors used herbal medicine to supplement prescribed drugs in disease management. However, conflicting health beliefs on traditional medicine prevented many survivors from revealing the use of those drugs to their doctors.

Many senior survivors faced with financial challenges, as they had no or very low income. Many were living with children and grandchildren. This prevented some stroke survivors from accessing paid rehab programs after their prescribed rehab ended or having adequate space to continue with their own rehab activities at home. Some seniors also reported isolation from the mainstream society due to language and cultural barriers, and the lack of a social support network.

Many survivors, as well as their caregivers and some health care providers call for more affordable, culturally and linguistically appropriate community programs and supports (e.g. day programs, home-care services, Meal on Wheels, and senior homes) for Chinese survivors of heart diseases or stroke and their caregivers, especially for those living in the non-GTA regions.

Self-Care and Self-Management
Consistent with King et al.’s study (2007) on Chinese immigrants in Calgary, many of the Chinese Ontarians living with health disease and stroke reported making great efforts to take control of their health by adjusting their mind and beliefs about living with diseases, by modifying their health behaviours and diet, and by developing new strategies for self-care and self-management. These efforts included engaging in light to medium level of physical exercises, modifying diet, managing negative emotions, and using health supplements or alternative medicine. The latter were especially common among recent immigrants who combined the use of traditional Chinese herbal medicine with prescribed Western medicine.

actively engaged in physical activities. Many older survivors reported doing physical exercises on a regular/routine basis. Based on their health conditions, availability of time, amenities in their neighbourhood, survivors reported involving in light to moderate level of physical activities on a daily or weekly basis. These activities included playing taiji in the morning, taking a walk after dinner, massaging certain meridian points on their body, and participating group dancing and singing. Some stroke survivors and caregivers believed that doing some light housework, like cooking and cleaning the floor, contributed positively to their journey to recovery after a stroke or heart attack. While many survivors reported doing physical exercise on their own or with the person they took care of, it seemed that women were slightly more likely to exercise in groups, such as participating in singing and dancing at the community centre, whereas men preferred to exercise alone in a private setting. Several male survivors reported adjusting their lifestyle by following a strict routine, such as going to sleep early and rising early, quitting smoking and drinking less, etc.
Modifying the diet by eating more vegetables and fruits. Many of the older survivors said they modified their diet after a heart attack or stroke by eating more vegetables, fruits, and by eating less meat and fatty food. Quite a few talked about using certain measures to control their health problems, such as reducing sugar and salt in cooking to control diabetes and hypertension, or adding a few drops of vinegar in the glass when drinking water to help reduce hyperlipidemia.

Managing negative emotions. Many Chinese survivors talked about controlling their stress, worried, and fear by developing a positive/optimistic outlook, by exercise moderation by not getting too excited or too sad, by learning to compromise to avoid conflicts among family members, and by developing a religious faith or by going to church.

Using health supplements or alternative medicine. Many recent immigrant seniors used health supplements and traditional herbal medicine they brought from China to prevent heart diseases and stroke and to manage their health conditions, especially in emergency cases. Many of them believed that herbal medicine is better than Western medicine because it has fewer harmful side effects. Some recent immigrants even went back to China for medical examination and treatment, mainly due to language barriers and long waiting time to see a doctor/specialist. It is worth noticing that many survivors used those non-prescribed medicine without informing their doctors about it for fear that the doctor may not understand it or disapprove the use of it (because they could not explain clearly what the medicine is made of and how it works). Sometimes, they use the Chinese medicine along with the medicine prescribed by their doctors, without the awareness of their doctors. While many survivors insisted that herbal medicine is effective in stabilizing their conditions, self-medication or mixed use of Chinese traditional medicine with Western medicine should be practiced with caution, as it presents some potential health risks. For example, one of the participants said self-medication concealed her symptoms and delayed the treatment when she had a heart attack. Research also revealed that many Chinese herbal medicines can increase the anticoagulant effects of commonly prescribed cardiac medications (Davidson et al., 2003).

Discussion and Conclusions
This paper has discussed the health needs and barriers as well as health behaviors among Chinese Ontarians living with heart disease and stroke. Data analysis reveals that gender and cultural affiliation play an important role in the challenges they Chinese survivors faced and the strategies they used in self-care and self-management of their cardiovascular diseases. Compared to their male counterparts, many senior female participants are both survivors and caregivers, as many of them reported having some form of health problems, including hypertension, hyperlipidemia, hyperthyroid, or heart disease. However, many of them said that they did not give priority to their own health mainly because of their household responsibilities, such as cooking, providing care for spouses, and babysitting grandchildren. When they did not feel well, they either ignored it or used some of the medicines they brought from China lest they became a burden to their children. They reported feeling guilty for having to split their attention in caring for their sick husbands and their grandchildren. Despite their eagerness in seeking health- and health care-related information, and active participation in community activities and community educational programs on health prevention, many female recent immigrant seniors, who were well-educated professionals before immigrating to Canada, expressed anxiety and a sense of powerlessness for not being able to manage their health as well as they did back in their home.
country due to language barriers and insufficient knowledge of the health care system in their new host country. Thus, it is also important to develop culturally and linguistically appropriate educational programs to meet the informational needs of Chinese immigrant seniors and to bridge the knowledge gaps on traditional herbal medicine between patients and their health care providers. Further research is required to investigate the ethnocultural needs of Chinese immigrant seniors in their practices of self-care and self-management of heart diseases and stroke.

This paper also found that many recent Chinese immigrant seniors were in favour of using traditional Chinese medicine for preventing or treating heart disease and believed that traditional medicines were less harmful than Western medicine. As a result, their health-related behaviours and practices were greatly influenced by their traditional health beliefs as well as the changed situation in health care in Canada and the challenges and barriers they encountered in accessing the health care system. Further research is also needed to explore ways to integrate traditional medical practices into the dominant Western medicine and health care system.

References

Statistics Canada, 2006 Census. Visible minority groups, 2006 counts, for Canada, provinces and territories, and census metropolitan areas and census agglomerations - 20% sample data


On Critical Reflection: Functionalizing “Levels of Reflection” within Empirical Transformative Learning Research

Henriette Lundgren
University of Hamburg, Germany

Abstract: In this paper I review empirical studies that research levels of reflection based on Mezirow’s framework in a variety of educational fields. Discovering different settings, research designs, models and outcomes leads me to the initial conclusion that there is little alignment on levels of reflection in adult education research. I suggest three qualities that an integrative model should have, i.e. (1) allowing for thematic embedding, (2) depicting distinct reflection categories that are grained to the relevant level, and (3) aligning coding units and coding indicators. I conclude by pointing out the value of second wave perspectives and encourage using these more in the future.

Introduction
How to usefully reflect on critical reflection? Dewey (1933) refers to reflective thinking as an important component of learning. Many other authors have theorized about reflection while offering conceptual frameworks that attempt to clarify what reflection means (Boud, Keogh, & Walker, 1985; Mezirow, 1991; Schön, 1983). According to Taylor (1998), many empirical studies assume the presence of critical reflection among participants without actually observing it. Taylor calls researchers to provide “more substantive data of critical reflection and at the same time explore more means for capturing its presence” (Taylor, 2007, p. 186). Also, Taylor and Cranton (2012) argue that there is a need for more in-depth theoretical analysis on Mezirow’s conceptual framework including new and emerging perspectives.

While acknowledging the writings of other authors, the purpose of this theorizing paper is to focus on Mezirow’s (1991) Transformative Learning (TL) theory and to review “levels of reflection” and their functionalization in empirical TL research. By functionalization I mean the pragmatic translation of a theoretic concept into indicators that can be observed in an adult learning settings. Gunnlaugson (2008) distinguishes between “first wave” theory development, i.e. studies that build on, critique or depart from Mezirow’s account, and “second wave” studies that integrate different theoretical perspectives and models that have emerged since the beginning of TL research. In this paper I aim to review both first and second wave perspectives. More specifically, I want to answer the following two questions:
1. What approaches are used to functionalize levels of reflection?
2. What qualities should an integrative model on levels of reflection have for future research?

Method
With a view on identifying empirical studies in this field of research, a literature research was performed on the key words of “Mezirow”; “transformative learning”; “levels of reflection” and “critical reflection” in five large databases. About 40 articles were reviewed as part of this meta-analysis, from which I selected a small sample of nine research studies for further investigation.

29 PubMed (NCBI), PsycInfo, ProQuest, EBSCO and ERIC
My selection was done based on the following criteria adapted from Taylor (1998, 2007), i.e. the study

(a) Involved Mezirow’s model of perspective transformation, with a specific focus on “levels of reflection” or “critical reflection”

(b) Provided a methodology section that was clearly described, implying that it was an empirical study and not just a conceptual article

(c) Showed supplementary information on data collection and analysis, e.g. providing the original questionnaire or coding scheme in the appendix

This last selection criterion is especially important in the context of my doctoral research, as my aim is to get closer to an operational definition of (critical) reflection and how this theoretic term has been functionalized in recent empirical studies.

Analysis and Discussion

What Approaches are Used to Functionalize Levels of Reflection?

In the following section of this paper, I first describe a variety of approaches that are used in defining and functionalizing levels of reflection and that I found as part of my meta-analysis. I decided to structure around settings, research designs, models and reflection outcomes.

Settings. The studies were conducted in different educational fields; almost half of them in medical education including nursing, pharmacy and health sciences, and the other half in teacher, business, elementary and higher education. In terms of geographic spread, the studies took place in industrialized countries across the world, including one study from Hong Kong. Remarkably, four out of the nine studies were conducted in the Canadian context, which shows the density of TL research taking place in Canada. An interesting observation is that all of the medical education studies were conducted with undergraduate or graduate students, whereas the studies from other educational fields targeted teachers or faculty members.

Research designs. In terms of research approaches, an almost balanced mix of quantitative and qualitative approaches could be observed, with a slight bias toward the qualitative side. Two studies followed a longitudinal research design where data was collected in several instances over a longer period of time. Half of the studies worked with written accounts (e.g. student journals), a third used a mix of journal entries and interviews, and only two studies relied on verbal communication as their primary data source. Whereas studies relying on interviews might be easier to conduct, they are also “limited by the extent to which participants are willing to accurately represent their experience or can correctly remember it” (Kreber, 2012, p. 333).

Models. Four studies link directly to Mezirow’s 1991 conceptual framework on levels of reflection: Kember et al. (1999), Kreber (2005), Kitchenham (2006), Chirema (2007)\(^\text{30}\). Only one

---

\(^\text{30}\) This study equally refers to two conceptual frameworks: Boud et al.’s (1985) qualities of reflection on the one hand and Mezirow’s (1991) distinction between reflection, critical reflection and non-reflection on the other hand.
study of my meta-analysis sample refers to an earlier Mezirow framework on critical reflection published in 1981: Liimatainen et al. (2001). The second most functionalized framework is the model on reflective levels by Kember et al. (1999) that in turn evolved from Mezirow’s conceptual work: Wallmann et al (2008), Bell et al. (2011)—I will elaborate more on Kember et al’s coding scheme in the next section. One study is based on a model by Kitchenham (2008) that is derived from Mezirow’s later work published in 1998: Kitchenham and Chasteauneuf (2009). The remaining study does not employ any a-priori model due to its Grounded Theory approach but strongly links with Mezirow’s levels of reflection: Cranton and Carussetta (2004).

**Outcomes.** Whether or not the highest level of reflection was achieved is often the focus when reporting on levels of reflection. While the naming of the various levels of reflection altered by study, the highest level of reflection usually refers to Mezirow’s (1991) *premise reflection* that involves “our becoming aware of why we perceive, think, feel, or act as we do” (p. 108). This ultimate level of reflection is also referred to as *critical reflection*, and I split the studies into three groups in terms of reported reflection outcomes:

- **High:** Liimatainen et al. (2001)
- **Moderate:** Chirema (2007), Kitchenham (2006)
- **Low:** Kreber (2005), Wallman et al. (2008), Bell et al. (2011)

*(Key: low = below 10% or when the authors stated that it was low, moderate = between 11 and 49%, high = 50% or higher percentage of reported critical reflection; studies where levels of reflection was not measured are not reported)*

It can be observed that high levels of critical reflection occur relatively seldom. This is in line with Mezirow (1991) and other scholars who explain the observed scarcity by pointing towards the antecedents of critical reflection, i.e. a major change of perspective along an alteration of deep-seated beliefs. This perspective transformation does not take place each and every day and neither is all learning intended to yield transformation as an outcome.

Observing a variety of approaches within different *settings* employing different *research designs* and using different *models* resulting in different *outcomes* leads me to the initial conclusion that there is little agreement on the functionalization approach of reflection in adult education research.

**What Qualities should an Integrative Model on Levels of Reflection have for Future Research?** In order to answer the second research question, I decided to focus on the comparison of two studies. Limiting myself to only two studies was not an easy task and selection consideration included: direct reference to Mezirow’s (1991) conceptual model, number of citations, availability of follow up studies by same authors and empirical validation by other authors. In sum, the selection was made on the basis of maturity and embedment in this area of TL research.

**Study-1:** “Determining the level of reflective thinking from students’ written journals using a coding scheme based on the work of Mezirow” by Kember et al. (1999) who test a coding scheme with seven levels of reflective and non-reflective thinking with health science students based in Hong Kong.
**Study-2:** “Reflection on teaching and the scholarship of teaching: Focus on science instructors” by Kreber (2005) who works with science instructors in higher education to explore their level of reflective engagement along the SofT\(^{31}\) model using content analysis on interview transcripts.

So although the object of empirical inquiry—levels of reflection—is similar in both studies, the perspectives are fundamentally different, which makes the comparison also a bit delicate. However, looking at functionalization less from an outcome perspective but focusing more on the qualities of each study is the aim of the following sections.

**Thematic embedding.** Both research studies are based on Mezirow (1991), who defines reflection as “the process of critically assessing the content, process, or premise(s) of our efforts to interpret and give meaning to an experience” (p. 104). In other words, reflecting on a certain event or incident could be rephrased as follows:

- What is the problem? (Content reflection)
- How did I get to know that this is the problem? (Process reflection)
- Why is this important to me? (Premise reflection)

In **Study-2**, reflection takes place within three domains of knowledge. The author names three teaching specific domains of knowledge: instruction, pedagogy and curriculum. This combination of three levels of reflection and three domains of knowledge is formulated into a model with nine components. To give you an example, one question in the model could be “What shall I do in course design, selecting materials, and methods?” (Content reflection on instruction) – or an indicator for premise reflection on curriculum could be “Why do our goals and rationale matter?” (Kreber & Cranton, 2000, p. 485).

**Study-1** look at establishing a coding scheme that is also based on the three levels of reflection—content, process and premise—but in addition it includes Mezirow’s levels of non-reflection, i.e. habitual action, thoughtful action and introspection. The authors of **Study-1** reason that in order to detect reflection also non-reflection needs to be identified. All of the coding categories in this study are independent of the students’ subject of study, their curriculum or knowledge domain.

While **Study-2** employs a thematically embedded approach combining knowledge domains with levels of reflection, **Study-1**’s coding scheme is kept clear of any thematic references. In my view, this thematic-embedding of **Study-2** is an important building block for a framework on levels of reflection because reflection happens on a subject or within the knowledge domain of the particular person who reflects. Ignoring this content of reflection would reduce reflection to a thematically “empty” exercise. Depending on the area of adult learning, we should be able to amend the themes of reflection. Thus, the three knowledge domains that were important in **Study-2**—instruction, pedagogy and curriculum—could be altered as needed. An example: for a community college program leader, the reflection themes could center on access, inclusion and relevance. To continue this line of thinking, when we look at levels of reflection in nursing, the themes could be around different domains of patient care; for the builder, we could think about

---

\(^{31}\) For an elaboration on the SofT model see Kreber & Cranton (2000) „Exploring the Scholarship of Teaching“ in the Journal of Higher Education
knowledge domains of construction work; and for the administrative assistant in a small business setting, the domains could be around organization and team work.

Categories and granularity. The granularity in coding distinct categories on levels of reflection is important in order to derive at consistent outcomes. Different takes on categories can be observed when comparing the two studies. Study-1 depicts a coding scheme with seven levels of reflective and non-reflective thinking. According to the authors the seven-level model was “too fine-grained” (Kember, McKay, Sinclair, & Wong, 2008, p. 372); a simplified scheme with fewer categories was needed. Consequently, the authors developed and empirically tested a model with the following categories:

1. Habitual action: “…what has been learnt before and through frequent use becomes an activity that is performed automatically or with little conscious thought” (Kember et al., 2000, p. 383)
2. Understanding: “…makes use of existing knowledge without attempting to appraise that knowledge, so learning remains within pre-existing meaning schemes and perspectives” (Kember et al., 2008, p. 384)
3. Reflection: “…concepts will be interpreted in relationship to personal experience” (Kember et al., 2008, p. 374)
4. Critical reflection: “…there should be evidence of a change in perspective over a fundamental belief” (Kember et al., 2008, p. 375)

In comparison, Study-2 does not include any levels of non-reflective thinking in their model but focuses on content, process and premise reflection only. The question of course is whether in a study on reflective thinking you also want to capture non-reflective thinking, e.g. habitual action or understanding as described in Study-1, and what categories and granularity you choose for describing each of these. The passages between habitual action, understanding, reflection and critical reflection can be quite fluid. As a result, learning can be habitual, confirmative or transformative and not all adult education aims at transformative learning experiences. Also, we need to acknowledge that there is a “rationalistic bias” (van Woerkom, 2010, p. 339) when speaking about reflection as a cognitive or rational process without including the impact of emotions on the learning process.

Coding units. Semi-structured interview transcripts were used in Study-2 to test levels of reflection, and each answer segment is coded separately. As a result, the author matched each answer segment with indicators developed in their SofT model. This segmental coding approach allows the author to point out the level and kind of reflection per answer segment.

Similarly, the authors of Study-1 started out by coding individual journal segments in their pre-test—two to three paragraphs each. However, the pre-test also showed some methodological difficulties around the coders’ interpretation of each segment which led the authors to change their segmental coding strategy to a more holistic one. As a consequence, the authors of Study-1 recommend the entire student essay or journal entry to be coded and categorized as a whole, allowing no differentiation, sequence or development.
Each coding approach has its risks and opportunities. While Study-2 results in a multitude of individual statements that support teaching knowledge areas and levels of reflection, the judgment on whether the highest level of reflection was reached—in this case premise reflection—is not as straightforward as it seems. Study-1 on the other hand offers an evaluation tool that determines the level of reflection per student journal.

There is one more interesting finding in relation to coding. Study-2 reports that there seems to be a large difference between the declarations of reflection in the interview setting in comparison to finding concrete indicators of reflection. This means that what a person states is not necessarily what this person actually does. Trying to explain this phenomenon, Kreber (2005) argues: “It is possible that they really do engage in reflection but do not know how to show it. It is equally possible that they think they engage in reflection, they do not really do it because they do not know how to” (p. 352). This is an interesting finding as it highlights the limitations of inquiry on the subject of reflectivity regardless of the data collection method or coding unit.

In sum, an integrative model—combining Mezirow’s conceptual framework with emerging perspectives and empirical findings—could offer some value for future research. In terms of qualities, this model should include knowledge domains or themes along levels of reflection and hence allow for thematic-embedding, depict reflection categories that are distinct and grained towards the relevant level, and it needs to critically examine coding units and indicators and their limitations of inquiry.

**Conclusion**

This paper has shown the diversity of research settings, designs, models and outcomes that current empirical research on levels of reflection has produced. Although there is seemingly no one best way of researching levels of reflection, a closer look at two selected studies highlights certain choices that adult education researchers can make when functionalizing Mezirow’s framework in a pragmatic way. These choices shape how we study levels of reflection with important implications for research quality and outcomes.

I conclude by relating my findings to Taylor and Cranton’s (2012) call for a more “unified” stand on TL theory. Rather than promoting research that continues to be based solely on Mezirow’s conceptual work, newer perspectives have emerged, frameworks have been refined, and these could be referred to more. In this paper I show the value that can be added through these second wave studies that integrate different theoretical perspectives and functional models in TL research. Especially Kember et al. (1999, 2000, 2008) and Kreber (2005) offer detailed insights into categories of and indicators for reflection levels and therefore provide a useful and pragmatic translation of a theoretic concept. Going forward, I expect more research using these and other second wave frameworks on levels of reflection.

**References**


Chirema, K. D. (2007). The use of reflective journals in the promotion of reflection and


An Embodied s/Self Study Approach to Extrarational Professional Learning in Adult ESL Literacy

Paula Mannington
St. Francis Xavier University

Abstract: Community-based language, literacy and settlement practitioners working with increasingly diverse groups of adult learners experience first-hand the impact of globalization and how old paradigms to educate no longer hold. However, a paucity of research in this area of practice means the lived experiences of adult language and literacy learners not attending formal programs and the educators who work with them are, in essence, unvoiced and overlooked. This paper draws on graduate research that considered how expanded notions of adult learning theory embedded in a self-study approach to professional learning can create boundless space for a more cross-culturally informed articulation of professional knowledge of practice.

A Note on Terms
ESL Literacy refers to immigrant or refugee learners who arrive to the learning context with limited or interrupted formal schooling experiences and/or no prior opportunities to acquire print literacy in any language (Centre for Literacy, 2008). The Ontario Literacy Coalition (2007) differentiated ESL literacy from the fields of ESL and adult literacy:

ESL literacy is different from adult literacy wherein learners already speak a language and are just learning its written form. ESL literacy is different from ESL learning in that adults with literate experience are able to transfer some of their prior knowledge (both from schooling experience and written language use) of reading and writing to the new language. The ESL literacy learner faces the daunting task of acquiring the oral second language (L2) and written L2 language, while functioning in the new L2—a seemingly superhuman task. (p. 10)

Introduction
In Canada, approximately 35% of the more than 2.4 million immigrants and refugees who gained permanent residency during 2001-2010 had neither English nor French language ability; approximately 15% had between 0-9 years of schooling prior to arrival in Canada; and approximately 16% had between 10-12 years of schooling (Research and Evaluation Branch, Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 2011). The learning needs of adults with language, literacy and settlement needs—particularly those with no or limited first language literacy—have been described as unique and complex; however, research, policy, appropriate programming and sustainable professional development pertaining to this specific demographic remains sparse (Bigelow & Schwarz, 2010; Centre for Literacy, 2008; Folinsbee, 2007; Ontario Literacy Coalition, 2007). According to Essential Skills Ontario (2012), “individuals without a high school diploma are now twice as likely to be unemployed as they were twenty years ago, downtime between jobs is greater, the hours worked fewer and the probability of needing government income support is significantly higher” (p. 1). Clearly, there is a compelling need to respond to emerging educational needs in our changing communities.
Adult educators can play an important role in facilitating opportunities for the socio-economic success of non-traditional learners, but they need opportunities for professional support themselves and have learning needs that transcend episodic and didactic models of professional development. King (2005) asks: “How do we emphasize the needs of the educators in a field like adult education, where the learners and focus are already marginalized?” (p. 523).

An alternative approach to meeting the professional learning needs of practitioners working in “indeterminate zones of practice” (Schön, 1987) comes from self-study scholarship informed by expanded notions of the experiential, self-directed, and transformative aspects of adult learning theory (Wilcox, Watson & Paterson, 2007). Through a visual, narrative and collaborative approach to self-study research, I attempted to embrace the multifaceted dimensions of adult learning theory—thoughts, feelings, actions, and interdependence — while acknowledging the importance of context to improve my knowledge of and for practice with adult ESL literacy learners.

**Background**

Many reasons exist for learners’ limited print literacy or formal educational experience prior to arrival in North America, including civil war, genocide, famine, gender bias, ethnic oppression and natural disasters (Bigelow & Schwarz, 2010). Some learners come from “an oral culture and whose language does not have a written form or only acquired a written form recently” (Centre for Canadian Language Benchmarks, 2000, p. III). Accordingly, in addition to language and literacy skill acquisition, these learners face the very complex task of navigating new cultural practices while constructing new social identities. The Ontario Literacy Coalition (2007) reported:

> Language training is quite simply not enough. The whole gamut of needs is present for the ESL literacy learner: food, housing, health, parenting and the school system, navigating the community quite literally, and knowing the community’s laws. The more social supports included in language training, the better. Program and learner success depend on these supports and networks with community. (pp. 73-74)

In a discussion paper looking at connections between literacy and ESL, Folinsbee (2007) reported that “very little was found on connections between settlement issues of immigrants and refugees and having low literacy in one’s first language” (p. 9). Literature that was accessible suggested “that low literacy in one’s own language compounds the issues that immigrants face, such as racism and discrimination, poor housing, lack of access to health care services, unemployment, and overall quality of life” (p. 37).

With regards to education options, gaps in Canadian policy concerning the specific needs of this demographic often lead to “a situation where these adults do not have equal access to services they need or they may get services that do not meet their needs” (p. 38). The gaps we see on the front-line seem to be more broadly reflective of fragmentation in how adult education is funded in Canada: provincial funding for adult literacy programs and federal funding for adult language training (Centre for Literacy, 2008). “Problems in the field suggest either a lack of resources or badly allocated resources” (p. 8). Despite more than 25 years of fundamental, well-articulated concerns being raised about the need to provide ESL literacy programs and classes that are separate from mainstream ESL and mainstream literacy programs for native English speakers, a
distinct stream of provisions remains the exception not the norm (Bell & Burnaby, 1984; Bigelow & Schwarz, 2010; Ontario Literacy Coalition, 2007).

**Professional Learning & Other Ways of Knowing**

Adult ESL literacy instructors “need no reminder that their classrooms serve as a meeting place for learners of many and often disparate cultural backgrounds” (McGroarty, 1993, para. 1). This demographic “includes newcomers as well as those who have been in Canada for many years…adults with little oral fluency as well as those with a great deal…[and] refugees with particular circumstances and needs” (Folinsbee, 2007, p. 37). In terms of adult ESL literacy practitioners, training in linguistics and standard ESL teaching methodology should only be a start (Ontario Literacy Coalition, 2007). Merriam & Kim (2008) suggest that “being familiar with non-Western perspectives of learning and knowing helps adult educators better understand how adult learners from non-Western societies act and think” (p. 79). However, the “intellectual recognition of these issues does not always provide specific pedagogical direction” (McGroarty, 1993, para. 1). Adult ESL literacy professionals need to understand how non-western perspectives of learning from oracy rich cultures influence practice and the literacy demands of a print-rich culture (Sparks, 2002). Alfred’s (2002) question “How can adult educators, practicing within a Eurocentric dominant institutional culture, validate the myriad social and cultural contexts from which learners’ experiences emanate?” (pp. 3-4) is particularly relevant.

In response to recent research that finds implementation of professional development directed by an outsider or “expert” problematic, scholars have considered the relevance of self-directed learning for continuing professional learning—with a caveat. Increased autonomy in professional learning can generate a sense of agency, but it can also lead to feelings of isolation and detract from innovative teaching practices (Webster-Wright, 2010). Hargreaves (2000) argued for a more balanced approach that blends professional autonomy with collegial efforts—akin, perhaps, to the notion of interdependence advocated for in expanded notions of self-directed learning. Boucouvalas’ (2009) rationale for what she called “s/Self”-directed learning was: “self with a lower case s refers to one’s separate individual self, while Self with a capital S refers to the expanded connected sense of Self” (p. 9).

Dialogue, then, in this broader understanding of self-directed learning, plays an important role in relational and collaborative learning:

> Dialog implies a talk between two subjects, not a speech of subject and object…This dimension emphasizes connection rather than separation in the construction and validation of knowledge…For knowledge to be validated, it must be made public, and that is done in relationships with individuals or within a community. (Alfred, 2000, p. 3)

According to Hansman (2008), the intersection of self-directed and experiential learning in dialogue with communities of practice supports the validity of knowledge discovery and deepens learning. Webster-Wright’s (2010) research that has sought to understand professional learning from the perspective of professionals themselves noted “dialogue is at the heart of relationships that are generative of ideas and productive for learning” (p. 199).
The multifaceted strength of emerging contemporary adult learning theory is being called upon to transform traditional practices in professional development that have relied on didactic and episodic means to update professional knowledge (Carussetta & Cranton, 2009; Daley, 2001; Webster-Wright, 2010). A shift from static development goals with rigid and prescriptive content achieved through knowledge transmission to dynamic learning goals with flexible and authentic practice-based content achieved through dialogue and socially constructed knowledge enhances an adult educator’s ability to adapt to change, generate new knowledge, and continuously improve performance.

**Purpose of Research**

The purpose of this study was to use self-study methodology to embrace “the rich chaos of situated practice” (Ham & Kane, 2007, p. 103) as the space for study and improve my knowledge of and for practice in a personal and interpersonal way for the ultimate benefit of learners. The findings may help us to understand how expanded notions of adult learning theory embedded in a self-study approach to professional learning can create space for a more cross-culturally informed articulation of professional knowledge of practice.

**Theoretical Framework**

Self-study research challenges teachers to rethink and reframe their practice in a personal and interpersonal way that renews both professional and program practice for the ultimate benefit of students (Samaras & Freese, 2006). It values postmodern assumptions “that the “self” cannot be separated from the research” (p. 13); that an ontological stance of understanding and improving practice (what is) is given more attention than “establishing foundational claims to know” (epistemology) (Pinneagar & Hamilton, 2009, p. 50); and that a “non-linear and unpredictable nature” is normative (Samaras & Freese, 2006, p. 47).

A basic assumption underlying self-study research is that “change that is demanded by others is less powerful than change that is self-initiated and self-motivated” (Samaras, 2011, p. 15). This is also a basic premise that differentiates professional learning from traditional top-down notions of professional development. Professional learning, as a concept, is contingent on “the role the individual takes in initiating and directing the nature of their own growth and development within their field of expertise, as opposed to being “trained” to perform particular tasks or changes to existing practice” (Loughran, 2006, p. ix). Since “professionals across fields claim to learn much from experience” (Wilcox, Watson, & Paterson, 2007, p. 273), making personal contexts of practice and experience intentional sites of focus and inquiry can become “a central aspect of change and a catalyst for genuine Professional Learning” (Loughran, 2006, p. ix). Self-study research offers a way for practitioners to initiate self-directed inquiry into their own contexts of practice, mobilize the process of inquiry through dialogue and critical conversations about practice, and improve practice on personal, professional and program levels in a symbiotic manner.

**Research Design**

Self-study research offers a particularly meaningful response to the need for culturally sensitive research in the diversity rich field of adult ESL literacy. Self-study “stretches our way of thinking about how we know what we know” (Samaras & Freese, 2006, p. 111). It shifts ownership of the interpretation and representation of knowledge from the “distanced voice of the third person” (Pinneagar & Hamilton, 2009, p. 3) into the hands of practitioners themselves and invites transformative possibilities to emerge from a less prescriptive and more embodied practitioner-driven inquiry process.
The Five Foci Framework for Self-Study Research Methodology (Samaras 2011)
(i) Personal situated inquiry; (ii) Critical collaborative inquiry; (iii) Improved learning; (iv) Transparent & systematic research process; & (v) Knowledge generation & presentation. This particular study used visual, narrative and collaborative methods within the *Five Foci Methodological Components* to express insights from professional learning embedded in practice. The methods constantly interacted and often became mutually interdependent.

**Research Questions**
*Primary:* How can I improve my ability to develop, implement, articulate and share professional knowledge of practice? *Secondary:* How can I inquire into my practice to direct my own growth and change while at the same time learn how to participate with learners in identifying culturally appropriate instructional processes, topics, and materials that promote language, literacy and settlement progress?

**Findings**
The findings represented how embodied (narrative), extrarational (visual) and dialogical (collaborative) learning modalities can play the role of methods in self-study research. Findings revealed—from a self-study stance in which the self cannot be separated from the research—what happens inside the “black box” of an alternative, community-based language, literacy and settlement family program for adults with no or limited first language literacy. A “narrative-visual-collaborative” re-presentation of the findings will be the focus of this presentation.

**Conclusion**
Notions of professional learning and the multifaceted dimensions of adult learning theory fit seamlessly into a self-study framework which views the messy unknowns of practice as an asset rather than a deficit. It invites “extrarational” (Scott, 1997, p. 44) transformative possibilities to emerge from a less rational and more artistic, visual, interactive, non-linear and practitioner-driven inquiry process. The embodiment of experiential learning can find explicit articulation through self-study approaches such as storytelling which “becomes a tool for understanding the meaning of lived experiences and for the [social] construction of knowledge that informs professional practice” (Tidwell, Heston, & Fitzgerald, 2009, p. xv).

Self-study is s/Self-directed (as coined by Boucouvalas, 2009, p.9) in both an independent and interdependent way. In addition to the sense of camaraderie I gained from the stimulating dialogue of many colleagues, I am most grateful for the collaborative relationship established with my primary critical peer and co-learner on this journey—Rossana Chisholm. It has been an honour to work so closely with such a passionate and committed educator. Accordingly, my analysis of myself as a self-directed learner transcends foundational notions of an autonomous, independent practitioner working in isolation to a more balanced view that blends professional autonomy with collegial efforts, interdependence and a connected sense of self.

**Implications**
The Group for Collaborative Inquiry’s (1993) call for the “democratization of knowledge” envisioned a more inclusive production of knowledge that “must include not only the field’s scholars, but its constituency and its practitioners…multiple ways of knowing and multiple sources of knowledge…and multiple modes of expression” (p. 49). Although there has been a shift in understanding adult learning from Western perspectives that privilege individuality,
cognition and rationality to other ways of knowing that value interdependence, embodiment and affect, many voices are still missing from the literature. Self-study is a particularly meaningful response to the need for culturally sensitive research in the diversity rich field of adult ESL literacy. It offers tremendous opportunities to develop the informal educational skills and intercultural competencies needed to move between classrooms and the community.

Self-study methodology suggests a means for acknowledging the insights of practitioners working in the periphery of adult education. The movement of tacit knowledge to explicit knowledge through embodied, s/Self-directed, extrarational methods and critical dialogue can empower practitioners to “transform their practice to better suit particular settings and purposes” (Wilcox, Watson, & Paterson, 2007, p. 307). In our increasingly complex world, community-based practitioners experience first-hand the impact of globalization and how old paradigms to educate no longer hold. Enhancing professional learning in the margins of adult education through self-study research holds promise for exploring alternative ways of developing, implementing, articulating and sharing knowledge of practice—not just to “reveal knowledge of the educational landscape” (Clandinin & Connelly, 2007, p. 575), but to nurture genuine educational change (Samaras, 2011) for the ultimate benefit of all adult learners.

References


Linguistic Minority’s Identity Negotiation in ESL Social Networks: An Auto-Ethnographic Study of My Informal English Learning Experiences in Canada

Li Mao
University of Alberta

Abstract: In this auto-ethnographic study, I, a Chinese international student in a Canadian university, explored my investment and identity negotiation in Canadian society during my informal English learning process (incidental learning and learning through socialization). I first investigated the characteristics of my investment in ESL informal language learning social networks such as frequency, duration, conversation types, construction categories, interdependency with the other interlocutors. Then, I studied the key factors that influenced my identity negotiation during my investment such as social isolation, indifferent attitudes of the native English speakers, secret social values and rules, and the lack of reciprocal social networks.

Research Background and Purpose
Shortly after my arrival in Canada as a Chinese international student, I found that learning English in Canada was quite different from learning in ESL classes in China. In order to improve my English proficiency and get integrated into English-speaking Canadian society, I needed to learn English informally through my involvement in natural language learning environment. The key point of this informal learning process was to find somebody to talk to, but the questions were “where, and with whom?” While looking for native English speakers and participating in ESL mainstream social activities, my motivation fluctuated a lot, and the identity crises and cultural shocks I experienced during this process took a lot of time and social supports to overcome. This situation caused me great anxiety, and I even felt that as an ESL speaker, I had been, to a certain extent, marginalized in this society.

All these experiences stimulated me to conduct this auto-ethnographic study to explore my participation and identity negotiation in Canadian ESL social networks during my informal English learning process. The specific research questions include: How have I invested in ESL social networks in Canada during my informal English learning process? And how have I experienced the identity negotiation during my investment?

Theoretical Framework

Sociocultural Perspective of Language Learning
Since the 1990s, “with the development of sociological and anthropological aspects of SLA”, SLA theorists began concerned with studying “how L2 learners are situated in specific social, historical and cultural contexts and how learners resist or accept the positions those contexts offer them” (Norton and Toohey, 2001, p. 310). And Vygotsky (1978, 1986) and Bakhtin (1981, 1986) are two leading theorists who have influenced researchers in shifting to an examination of the dialogic, social nature of learning. “This sociocultural perspective on language, typified by the understanding that meanings are negotiated within diverse social contexts, indicates an important new direction for theorists and practitioners in the field of second language use” (Miller, 2003, p. 290).
An assumption that is quite fundamental to the sociocultural aspect of language learning is that “learning and development occur as people participate in the sociocultural activities of their community” (Rogoff, 1994, p. 209). As for this point, one important notion proposed by Lave and Wenger (1991), community of practice (CoP), has attracted academic interest. Lave and Wenger (1991) defines community of practice as “a set of relations among persons, activity and world, over time and in relation with other tangential and overlapping communities of practice” (p.98). This notion asks “what kind of social engagements provide the proper context for learning to take place” and emphasizes “learning is a process that takes place in a participation framework…distributed among co-participants” (Hanks, 1991, p. 14). Learning process in CoP then is “a movement towards full participation supported by other members and previous knowledge and experience is passed between old-timers and newcomers (Montgomery & McDowell, 2009, p. 458). From this point of view, language learning is redefined as “a complex social practice” (Norton, 2000, p. 129) and the success of good language learners is based upon “their access to a variety of conversations in their communities” (Norton and Toohey, 2001, p. 310).

Critical Identity Approach to Foreign Language Learning Research

Studies on language minorities in English speaking world have found that social environment will have direct impact on their language learning and identity formation (Block, 2007; Cummins, 1996; Kanno, 2003; Norton, 1995, 2000, 2001, 2010; Ricento, 2005; Toohey, 2000; Pavlenko, 2003). Hence, “every time language learners speak, they are … constantly organizing and recognizing a sense of who they are and how they relate to the social world” (Norton, 1997, p. 410). They are, in other words, engaged in identity construction and negotiation. Meanwhile, Baker (2006) indicates that linguistic minorities’ identities are established “through social comparison, labeling by others, dialoguing with themselves and with others, and through the experience of ever-changing contexts” (p. 408).

This perspective is enforced by Norton’s critical identity approach to language learning research, especially by her concept of investment. Inspired by Bourdieu’s (1984) metaphor of cultural and social capital, Norton (1995) observed that “there are sociocultural rewards for those who sound similar to the dominant majority and linguistic skills are symbolic resources not equally available to all persons” (Miller, 2003, p. 294). The notion of investment then indicates that “when language learners invest in the target language, they do so with the understanding that they will acquire a wider range of symbolic and material resources” (Norton, 2001, p. 166). Furthermore, “the return on investment must be seen as commensurate with the effort expended on learning the second language” (Norton, 1995, p. 17). In addition, by referring to Weedon’s (1997) poststructuralist view of language and identity as being mutually constructed, the notion of investment also presupposes that since language is the place where our identity is constructed, investment in the target language is also an investment in learner’s identity in the target language speaking community (Norton, 1995, 2000). Linguistic and identity investments are then the central motives for my investigation of my informal language learning experiences as a linguistic and sociocultural minority in Canada.

Research Design

The methodology I chose was auto-ethnography, “an autobiographical genre of writing and research that displays multiple layers of consciousness, connecting the personal to the cultural”
and theory to practice (Ellis & Bochner, 2000, p. 739). By writing themselves as the major character, auto-ethnographers challenge accepted views about “silent authorship”, where the researcher’s voice is not included in the presentation of findings (Holt, 2003, p. 19).

The data used in auto-ethnographic studies are usually texts “written in the first person and feature dialogue, emotion, and self-consciousness as relational and institutional stories affected by history, social structure, and culture” (Ellis & Bochner, 2000, as cited in Holt, 2003, p. 19). Therefore, the data used in this paper were based upon the data I collected sporadically in my first year of study-abroad life in Canada, which included daily language use logs (qualitative survey in which I took down all the conservations I got involved in during a continuous span of time), my Sina Weibo (Chinese counterpart of Twitter), blogs, narrative assignments (personal reflections of my experiences in Canada), personal e-mails, schedule notes, online QQ (Chinese counterpart of Skype) chat messages, etc.

Chang (2008) indicated that “auto-ethnographers are expected to treat their autobiographical data with critical, analytical, and interpretive eyes to detect cultural undertones of what is recalled, observed, and told of them” and “at the end of a thorough self-examination within its cultural context, auto-ethnographers hope to gain a cultural understanding of self and others” (pp. 3-4). Then as for the data analysis of this study, I developed a thick description of Canadian ESL social contexts in which my investment and identity negotiation took place, followed by in-depth analysis to identify themes pertaining to the research questions.

**Research Findings**

*My Investment in Canadian ESL Social Networks*

**Characteristics of my investment.** I studied two categories of investment in my informal language learning experiences- “incidental learning” and “learning through socialization” (Merriam et al., 2007). The analysis of my daily language use logs showed that the frequency of my participation in ESL social networks was almost the same as in Chinese-speaking ones. However, the biggest difference existed in the duration and the quality (such as variety and depth of the conversation) of each conversation.

Furthermore, the majority of my ESL investment was functional and compulsory rather than emotional and optional, which placed me at a passive social position without many choices of conversation types. Also, most of my investment belonged to indirect construction category through people who speak my native language. The limited investment in the other two categories, direct construction with native English speakers and active construction through voluntary participation may due to the lack of considerateness of the native interlocutors (speakers) and the nature of the social networks, which will be further discussed in the following sections.

**My relationship with the native interlocutors during investment.** Through the analysis of my blogs, daily language use logs and schedule book notes, I found that the number of the average interlocutor number in my ESL oral social networks obviously overweight that of the Chinese-speaking social networks. However, interdependency between me and the other English interlocutors were much looser than those of the Chinese-speaking ones. This may from another perspective explained the short duration of the ESL conversations. Hence, there was a lack of
both the quantity of linguistic minorities’ investment in oral representation though giving “voice” and enhancing “audibility” (Miller, 2003), and the quality of the investment through the depth, diversity and close interdependency of the conversation. And only through investment with high frequency and quality could newcomers like me “gaining access to (linguistic and sociocultural) sources for understanding through growing involvement” (Lave & Wenger, 1991, p. 37).

In addition, I found that many native English speakers did not recognize their roles as scaffolds and incidental teachers and my investment during incidental learning was mostly influenced by the considerateness of the native speakers. Hence, I argue that in order to facilitate ESL learners’ linguistic and identity investment, English native speakers should be aware of their roles in ESL social networks though corresponding citizenship education.

Identity Negotiation as a Linguistic and Sociocultural Minority in Canada during Investment

Social isolation due to limited ESL informal language learning opportunities. When examining the identity negotiation of ESL students in English-speaking mainstream environment, Miller (2003) argued that linguistic minority students must “achieve self-representation in the dominant discourse, if they are to participate in the mainstream social and academic context, (and) renegotiate their identities in new places.” (p. 291). However, during my investment in Canadian ESL social networks, I felt, to a certain extent, be marginalized and was extremely lonely, because it was rather difficult for me to find ESL social and informal language learning opportunities in Canada. My high motivation to get involved in ESL social networks then was not in good proportion to my investment, which led to my frustration and isolation.

As for this issue, I noticed that there were some problems in current Canadian educational and social structures in terms of meeting the linguistic and sociocultural needs of ESL international students. For example, the university I studied in only uses language proficiency test scores as the only measurement of foreign students’ linguistic capacities. Based on these scores, it was assumed that I was totally ready for ESL academic and daily life. In addition, graduate programs pay more attention to the academic written input of the students rather than their ESL academic and conversational oral input, even though these language skills were needed in order to interact in and out of class with other students in my program. Also, the way that courses and extracurricular activities were structure neglected the informal language learning and cultural integration needs of ESL students. Therefore, I might always seemingly get the necessary information for study through ESL socialization, but did not have further social opportunities to realize my identity negotiation and full participation in ESL social networks.

Native English speakers’ indifference towards visible and audible minorities. Through the analysis of my blogs and narrative assignments, I found that the indifferent attitudes of the English native speakers towards me, a visible and audible minority, greatly influenced my identity negotiation. Sometimes it seemed that the linguistic, cultural and social capital of the native speakers offered them a kind of superiority, which made them quite indifferent to the needs of the non-native speakers, especially the visual minorities. In many social sites, the native English speakers formed small clusters and spoke in an extremely fast way, which excluded linguistic and sociocultural outsiders like me. In such situations, I tended to be silent and just listened from the outside circle of the cluster.
In these occasions, “the dominant speaker may refuse to carry any responsibility for the communicative act, (because) ‘language ideology filters’ come into play whenever an accent or a hesitant ‘non-standard’ voice is heard, causing the listener to reject ‘the communicative burden’” (Miller, 2003, p. 294). Thus, it should not be taken for granted the conditions for the establishment of communication “that those who speak regard those who listen as worthy to listen and that those who listen regard those who speak as worthy to speak” (Norton, 1995, p. 18), but the linguistic minorities should advocate an awareness of the right to speak or even “the power to impose reception” (Bourdieu, 1977, p. 648).

**Secret social values and social rules.** After an analysis of my personal emails and QQ online chat messages with other ESL learners, I found it really frustrating for a social outsider and newcomer like me to work out and appreciate the social values and secret social rules of ESL social networks in Canada which native English interlocutors have taken for granted. During my trying out and guessing out of the secret values and rules, I experienced being misunderstood or sometimes even being laughed at by the others in the CoP.

For example, I was not comfortable with the Canadian way of euphemistic or over positive way to say “no”, so I might at first be very happy about the feedback to my paper as “interesting”, but later be disappointed to be asked to work on a totally different draft. Also I was quite confused to be asked to respect the multiculturalism of Canadian society, but at the same time be recommended by my local students to be more “Canadian” and less “Chinese” in class. Besides, I was quite shocked by the “informal” relationship between students and teachers in many Canadian classrooms as well as the “independent” relationship among different generations in Canadian families. In addition, I was not used to the credit consumption as a way of life in Canadian society.

As for this, I argued that transition/orientation services/activities should be developed for the linguistic and sociocultural minorities like me before and during their investment in ESL social networks. Local social networks should also pay attention to the “taken for granted” social values and rules through self reflection and cross-cultural comparison and find out ways to facilitate the social newcomers to have a better understanding of them.

**The lack of reciprocal social networks.** After an examination of different types of social networks I invested in, I found that the reciprocal ESL social networks were my favorite ones and facilitated my identity negotiation most. The basic foundation of reciprocation was the respect and appreciation of each participant’s previous knowledge and experiences and making use of them to empower all the participants. However, the construction and participation within such kind of win-win social networks need all the interlocutors to dig out and cherished the values of the others, which also challenged the social marketing skills of the organizers.

Two good examples of reciprocal social networks during my investment included: First, the weekly graduate study group organized by my supervisor which provided each student with the opportunities to exchange the academic capitals; second, the Chinese teaching and practicing CoP which valued my mother tongue and home culture and gave me opportunities to have exchange linguistic and cultural capitals with English speaking Chinese learners. However, compared with the large number of ESL social networks, ESL reciprocal social networks were
still of a small proportion. Diverse ESL reciprocal social networks should be developed according to the linguistic and sociocultural values of all the participants in CoP and reciprocation should be a critical nature of the design of social networks in a multilingual and multicultural Canada.

**Conclusion**

In this auto-ethnographic study, I explored my investment and identity negotiation experiences as a linguistic and sociocultural minority during my informal English learning process in Canadian ESL social networks. The research findings showed that my high motivation to get involved in Canadian ESL social networks was out of proportion to my investment in terms of frequency, duration, conversation types, construction categories and interdependency with the other interlocutors. Furthermore, the key factors that influenced my identity negotiation during my investment include social isolation due to limited informal language learning opportunities, indifferent attitudes of the native English speakers towards visible and audible minorities, facing secret social values and rules without a transition and orientation process, and the lack of diverse reciprocal social networks which value the linguistic and sociocultural capitals of all the participants.

**Contributions and Implications**

This research could be considered as a pilot study that includes the voice of a minority researcher and ESL practitioner in theorizing the sociocultural aspect of adult informal language learning, which were used to be developed by Western mainstream scholars. It will promote the assessment and reflection of linguistic minority researchers’ experiences in natural language learning environment, which will enable linguistic minorities to develop empowerment strategies according to their own needs.

The findings of this research will help ESL program designers, educational policy makers, and social network developers to have a better idea of how to provide informal language learning opportunities to ESL minorities. In addition, this research will further enhance native English speakers’ awareness of their role in this multilingual and multicultural society, and encourage them to work as scaffolds in ESL learners’ investment in informal language learning through the reconstruction of ESL social networks and citizenship education.

**References**


Linguistic Minority’s Identity Negotiation in ESL Social Networks:
Hopes, Dreams, and Healing on the Edges of Adult Education: Readers’
Engagement with Self-help Books on Relationships, Careers, and Well-being

Scott McLean
University of Calgary

Abstract: Self-help literature has become an important domain of adult learning. Self-help books offer readers advice on how to take charge of their lives and achieve such goals as prosperity, love, happiness, and well-being. Despite the popularity of such books, there has been little research about them from scholars of adult education. This paper explores key empirical questions relating to this important domain of public pedagogy. What do adults learn through reading such books? How does such learning influence their daily lives? Do patterns of self-help reading vary according to gender, age, and formal educational attainment?

Theoretical Framework and Relevant Literature
Wright & Sandlin’s (2009) review of the literature “at the intersection of adult education and popular culture” contains no reference to the domain of self-help books, nor does Sandlin, O’Malley & Burdick’s more recent (2011) and extensive review of “public pedagogy scholarship.” These literature reviews make two insightful claims of relevance to the study of adult readers of self-help books: popular culture and informal institutions are very significant sites of adult learning; and few studies exist of the learning experiences of adults as they engage with popular culture. Wright & Sandlin (2009, pp. 133-134) argue:

Researchers need to complement the work that is currently being done within adult education analyzing popular culture as “public pedagogy” with work that places emphasis on the learning that is occurring as adults engage with popular culture in their everyday lives, from participants’ point of view.

This paper responds to this call to action through presenting the results of qualitative interviews undertaken with adults engaged in one of the most explicitly pedagogical domains of popular culture: the reading of self-help books.

My review of recent scholarly literature concerning self-help books revealed significant interest from various academic disciplines. While space constraints in this paper prohibit a detailed listing of publications, I found: ten feminist publications which assessed and criticized the impact of self-help literature on women’s lives; six sociological articles which examined the contributions of self-help literature to contemporary forms of governance that rely on internal forms of self-regulation; fourteen articles and books from health and human service professionals which assessed the use of self-help literature in the context of therapeutic and clinical practice; and eighteen publications from other social scientists which examined the cultural meaning and political-economic significance of self-help literature.

Unfortunately, very little scholarly research has been published which examines the actual learning experiences of self-help readers. This is remarkable, given the millions of dollars and hours spent by adults each year buying and reading self-help books. Authors and publishers
frequently make audacious claims about the effectiveness of their self-help books. Social scientists and cultural critics lament the vicious impact of the self-help industry on individuals and society. And yet, in this highly contentious and socially important domain, scholars of adult education have remained virtually silent – despite the fact that in other contexts we have developed reasonably effective concepts and methods for understanding and assessing learning and change experienced by adults.

Research Design and Participants

In 2012, we conducted interviews with one hundred Canadians who had read a self-help book, in the areas of career success, interpersonal relationships, or health and well-being, over the course of the previous year. Interviewees were recruited primarily through advertisements placed on the “books” sections of Kijiji websites for Calgary, Vancouver, Edmonton, and Winnipeg. We did not endeavor to engage in systematic or random sampling procedures. Therefore, our interviewees do not represent the full range of readers of self-help books. Among other things, it is unlikely that readers who had minimal levels of engagement with reading a self-help book would have responded to our recruitment efforts. Further, readers without internet access or without an ongoing interest in self-help reading would not have become aware of our study.

Qualitative interviews were conducted via online chat software, telephone calls, and the exchange of e-mail messages. The interviews were organized in five main sections: motivation; learning goals; learning strategies; learning outcomes; and impact. Questions were open-ended, encouraging participants to share their experience of self-help reading in their own words and with minimal direction. Interviews were transcribed verbatim or cut and pasted from chat software or e-mail messages. Participants completing interviews received a twenty-five dollar honorarium.

Of the one hundred participants, seventy were women. The mean age was 34 years, while the distribution of participants by age was as follows: forty in their 20s; thirty-five in their 30s; sixteen in their 40s; and nine in their 50s. Sixty-three of the participants had completed a post-secondary diploma or degree, with highest level of formal educational attainment distributed as follows: three with some secondary schooling; eleven with completed secondary schooling; twenty-three with some post-secondary education; thirty-five with a completed post-secondary diploma or degree; eleven with some post-graduate education; and seventeen with a completed post-graduate degree. In terms of occupation, the participants were engaged in the following fields: twenty-four in education, health, and social or government services; twenty in service, sales, and technical or artistic fields; seventeen in business management or administration; and fifteen in homemaking. In addition, fourteen participants were post-secondary students, and ten were unemployed. In short, participants to this study were predominantly female, relatively young and well-educated, and employed across a wide range of occupations.

Each interview focused on the experience of reading one specific self-help book. Titles of the books read by our readers are available at [http://www.ucalgary.ca/selfhelp/reports](http://www.ucalgary.ca/selfhelp/reports). Of the one hundred participants, forty-eight read books relating primarily to health and well-being, while twenty-eight read books dealing with interpersonal relationships, and twenty-four read books on topics relating to career and financial success. As Table One indicates, there were gender
differences in readership of different types of books; women were more likely to read books about relationships, while men were more likely to read books about career success.

Table One: Self-help Reading by Gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Health</th>
<th>Relationships</th>
<th>Careers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Female (70)</td>
<td>37 (53%)</td>
<td>23 (33%)</td>
<td>10 (14%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male (30)</td>
<td>11 (37%)</td>
<td>5 (17%)</td>
<td>14 (47%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total (100)</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In terms of general subject matter, patterns of self-help readership did not vary significantly by age or level of formal educational attainment.

Findings

Many of the readers of self-help books we interviewed presented narratives of self-directed, adult learning. They accessed pedagogical resources from popular culture to address issues in their private lives. They approached self-help books with explicit learning goals, and used various strategies to engage with the content of the books. Many, though not all of them, identified significant learning outcomes from the reading process, and attributed important changes in their thoughts and behaviors to that process. In this section of this paper, I provide a quantitative overview, with selected qualitative illustrations, of patterns in engagement with self-help books that emerged from the interviews we conducted with Canadian adults.

How do People Find Self-help Books?

Of the one hundred adults in our study, forty-six heard about the self-help book they discussed with us through conversations with friends, family members, or co-workers, while a further ten had received recommendations from health care professionals, workplace supervisors, or workshop facilitators. Thirty-one found the self-help book through browsing in bookstores, libraries, or online, while the remaining thirteen participants heard about their books through either previous familiarity with the authors, or the general fame of the books involved. In short, most self-help readers in our study found out about the books they read through word-of-mouth, while a substantial number came across the books while browsing.

Do People Approach Self-help Reading with Learning Goals and Strategies?

Eighty-six of our participants identified reasonably specific learning goals which they claimed to have had when they started reading their self-help book. In line with the overall subject matter of the books they read, the most common learning goals of our participants were related to health and well-being. Twenty-six participants stated goals relating to emotional or mental health issues (e.g., depression, recovery from loss, and stress management), while sixteen had goals relating mainly to physical health (e.g., diet, exercise, and chronic disease management). Twenty-eight of our participants expressed learning goals relating to relationships. Of these, thirteen were focused on spousal and other intimate relationships, six were focused on family relationships, and nine were focused on communication skills or other general relationship issues. Sixteen of our participants stated goals relating primarily to career or financial success (e.g., professional skills, career advancement, and building wealth). Of the fourteen participants who did not express clear learning goals, most indicated having a general interest in the subject matter.
of the book, while a few had received the book either as gifts or as a component of a training seminar.

In addition to having specific learning objectives, most of our interviewees also employed learning strategies beyond the process of reading itself. Forty-four took notes or highlighted passages in the text. Forty talked about the content of the book with friends, family members, or co-workers. Thirty-four read the book more than one time. Twenty-nine kept a learning journal or undertook exercises as suggested by the authors. Thirteen either subsequently read additional books by the same author, or took part in related seminars or online activities. Only fourteen did nothing either than read the text as one would read a novel.

What do People Learn from Self-Help Books?
Of one-hundred participants, ninety-six said that they had learned something important from the self-help book they had read. Most of this self-reported learning was related to one of the categories of books included in our research: learning relating to interpersonal relationships was cited by twenty-eight participants, while learning relating to health and careers was cited, respectively, by seventeen and fourteen participants. Interestingly, the most commonly cited type of learning (identified by thirty-three participants) related to personal development in ways which transcended these three categories. Finally, four participants indicated that their most important learning from self-help reading was the recognition that many other people shared their concerns.

Within the category of personal development, the learning themes which were expressed by participants were (in descending order of frequency): thinking positively (e.g., “Look at what positive things you can do with your life instead of focusing on the negative aspects”), taking responsibility for one’s life (e.g., “I am not a victim, and as such, I am responsible for my achievements and results”), caring for oneself (e.g., “Making sure that I am good to myself and not beat myself up every time I didn't make the ideal choice”), managing one’s emotions (e.g., “The ability to separate my emotions from my surrounding environment”), and setting and pursuing goals (e.g., “How to set priorities, clarify my wants, and achieve those results”). Within the category of relationships, learning themes (in descending order of frequency) related to communication (e.g., “By taking the time to really listen to someone, they are more willing to listen to you”), gender differences (e.g., “That when I express myself and my feelings, that I must be very cognizant of how men hear it”), parent-child relationships (e.g., “It's OK not to like that part of her, it doesn't mean I love her less as my mother, it just means that I recognize she is not perfect, as we all want to think our mothers are”), general principles of relationships (e.g., “Not everyone has the same personality style as you and once you understand them it’s so much easier to deal with people”), and love and sex (e.g., “I learned other important things to look at in a relationship…not just the immediate feelings of romance and sexual attraction”).

Relatively smaller numbers of participants reported lessons learned in themes more strictly related to health and well-being or career success. Of the seventeen participants identifying learning relating to health and well-being, nine of them reported learning about dietary recommendations and weight-loss strategies, while four reported learning about mental or emotional health issues. Further, one each reported learning important lessons about smoking cessation, exercise, foetal development, and taking personal responsibility for managing one’s
health. Of the fourteen participants who reported learning about career success, six identified lessons relating to persuading others or dealing with difficult people, while three identified character traits associated with success. Further, one each reported learning about problem-solving strategies, time management, career planning, working as an independent consultant, and professional singing.

**Do People Change as a Consequence of Reading Self-Help Books?**

While nearly all participants to this study reported having learned something of importance from reading a self-help book, only three-quarters were able to identify a change which they had made in their day-to-day lives as a result of such learning. The most common day-to-day change, reported by twenty-one participants, was that of approaching life with a more positive attitude. Themes of change reported by these participants included staying positive (e.g., “It has helped me to think about things in a more positive light”), supporting oneself (e.g., “I think I am gentler on myself when I now feel sad occasionally. I think I have more compassion for me and for others”), facing challenges more constructively (e.g., “I don’t get near as discouraged when things don’t work out as I think they should”), and having more self-confidence (e.g., “I also have a better sense of confidence because…I’ve been successful in following these steps”).

The second most common claim of our participants with regards to the day-to-day changes which ensued from their self-help reading – reported by seventeen participants – was that they attained a higher level of self-awareness. Themes of change reported by these participants included having a general sense of self-awareness (e.g., “I have become more self aware of my mental state and my outward attitude and how it affects me as well as others”), employing strategies to increase awareness (e.g., “I started writing a daily journal and I am trying to understand that I am hurting on the inside”), setting goals (e.g., “I now visualize and contemplate my goals on a daily basis”), and dealing with problems (e.g., “Because I have ways of dealing with sadness and loneliness, these emotions are far less daunting to experience”).

Thirty-seven other participants to our research identified more concrete, behavioural changes in their day-to-day lives. Nineteen participants reported changes to their behaviours in relationships, including: making general changes in patterns of communication with others (e.g., “I am more assertive in indicating clearly what is and is not ok with me”), changing how they interact with their spouse (e.g., “Knowing her love languages makes it easier for me to try to do those things that will let her know that I love her”), initiating concrete changes to relationships with their mothers or their children (e.g., “So I don't call daily or email daily which I was doing before”), and being kinder to others (e.g., “So in my daily life I like to step back and put myself in other people’s shoes before I criticize or jump into conclusions”).

Changes to health behaviours reported by our participants focused primarily upon dietary changes made by nine participants – all of whom claim to have changed their eating patterns in pursuit of better health. In addition, three participants reported starting or increasing the regularity of meditation, and one participant each reported quitting smoking, exercising more, and using stress management techniques. Only three participants reported behavioural changes which would be applied primarily in work environments. One spoke of how she had fundamentally changed her career path, and two identified making specific changes to their professional practices as a trainer and an opera singer. Of course, many of the changes reported
by participants to their attitudes and levels of self-awareness could also have an impact on career success and personal well-being.

**Do Self-Help Readers Actually Implement Authors' Suggestions?**

Virtually all of our interviewees claimed to have learned something of importance through reading a self-help book, and three-quarters claimed to have made some form of change in their day-to-day lives as a result of such learning. When we asked participants to describe any specific steps they had taken to act upon suggestions from their self-help book in relation to their careers, health, or relationships, fifty-six provided reasonably concrete responses indicating that they had indeed taken such steps. The most common domain in which specific actions were taken was that of health and well-being. Twenty-four of our interviewees indicated that they took specific steps to act upon health-related recommendations. The following list summarizes the nature of actions taken by these participants:

- Adopted dietary recommendations (five participants);
- Practiced meditation (three participants);
- Adopted a vegan diet (two participants);
- Purged and re-organized household possessions;
- Quit smoking;
- Joined pre-natal yoga;
- Implemented practical suggestions for managing Attention Deficit Disorder;
- Changed family meal-time practices;
- Spoke with friends about the emotional pain he was feeling;
- Pre-planned meals and menus;
- Started seeing a therapist;
- Started keeping a daily journal;
- Took a deep breath prior to responding to challenging situations;
- Became diligent about taking vitamins on a daily basis;
- Took concrete steps to live in the present moment;
- Implemented new regimes of exercise and diet; and
- Implemented strategies to think more positively about stressful situations.

Twenty-two participants claimed to have taken concrete steps to act upon self-help authors’ recommendations with regard to interpersonal relationships. The actions identified were as follows:

- Changed patterns of conversation with spouse (six participants);
- Took more time and care when communicating in conflict situations (three participants);
- Changed patterns of conversation with mother (two participants);
- Expanded range of sexual practices (two participants);
- Let go of negative feelings with regard to parents;
- Established a weekly ‘date night’ with spouse;
- Refused to engage in negative conversations;
- Showed greater interest in others, when meeting them for the first time;
- Strove to forgive rather than become angry in conflict situations;
- Became more assertive and positive in relationships;
- Renewed contact with people to repair relationships;
Took a deep breath prior to speaking with people; and
Ended an extra-marital affair.

Finally, just ten participants identified taking concrete steps to act upon self-help authors’ career-related recommendations. The actions taken were:
- Employed priority setting / time management techniques (two participants);
- Entered a training program and established a new business;
- Applied a three-step problem-solving approach to various situations at work;
- Restructured the staffing model in his business;
- Successfully requested a work assignment in a different city;
- Broke down large work assignments into smaller components;
- Implemented strategies to think more positively about work;
- Improved a difficult relationship with a supervisor at work; and
- Practiced vocal exercises to improve her professional singing voice.

Clearly, the participants to our research linked their self-help reading with a broad range of significant actions relating to health, relationships, and careers. Female participants were slightly more likely to have taken such actions as a result of their reading: sixty percent of women and forty-seven percent of men in our sample reported doing so. Neither age nor level of formal educational attainment had any influence on the proportion of participants reporting that they took action to implement suggestions from their self-help reading.

Implications for Adult Education Theory and Practice
The reading of self-help literature should be considered seriously by scholars of adult education working to understand issues relating to public pedagogy and popular culture. My research demonstrates that self-help books can be useful tools for adults engaged in important learning projects. The scope of readership of such books, along with the learning processes described by participants to my research, indicates that adult educators should be paying more attention to this domain of popular culture. From a critical perspective, scholars of adult education could also have a role in assessing the effectiveness of pedagogical methods used in self-help books, determining whether such books actually promote self-directed learning, elucidating the limitations and potential negative impacts of self-help reading, and theorizing connections between the growing popularity of such books and broader social changes.

Acknowledgement
I gratefully acknowledge that research for this article was supported by a standard research grant from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada. University of Calgary graduate students Kristin Atwood, Jaya Dixit, Brandi Kapell, and Laurie Vermeylen organized and undertook the interviews upon which this paper is based.

References
Reflexivity in Action Research: Does it Work Well in Music Education with Adults?

Marian McRory
Conservatory of Music and Drama, Dublin Institute of Technology

Abstract: This paper deals mainly with one aspect of my doctoral action-research study into appropriate music education pedagogies for adult learners, namely the reflexive process involved during, and subsequent to, the action research cycles. The research study itself evolved from personal experience teaching musicianship to adults at the Dublin Conservatory of Music and Drama in Dublin. The paper focuses on the genesis of the project, its educational context, the narrative of the research journey to date and the concept of reflexivity in action research in terms of musical learning for adults. The macro level of the reflexive process is explained and illustrated where adult learning theories and the psychology of the adult learner are being used as lenses to understand and learn from the journal entries across two years of action research cycles.

The Genesis and Education Context of the Research

My research stemmed from personal experience teaching musicianship to adults in the Dublin Institute of Technology (DIT) Conservatory of Music and Drama since 1990. Due to cut-backs during the period 1997-2003 there was a steady decline in availability of specialist classes for adults in the Conservatory. This resulted in adults and adolescents learning in the same classes: a learning environment unsuited to adults in particular. It became evident to academic staff generally, and to me particularly, that there was a demand and a growing need for a new pedagogical approach or a new discrete programme for the adult learner. Arising from my own reflective practice I felt there was a need to bring two sets of scholarship and pedagogical theory together in any new programme: music learning and adult learning. My reflections were based on my own practice and on the research I had undertaken in music education for my Master’s Degree at Trinity College, Dublin. To test the sustainability of my original ideas before undertaking formal research I asked a cross-section of the adult students in the Conservatory to write short reflections on the value they placed on music education in their lives. As an outcome of this informal research I wrote some magazine articles for peer feedback which would include not only their reflections, but my own reflections on my current practice at the time and how I, in some small way, could effect change. One article, A Positive Note for Music Education for Adults was published by Aontas, The National Association of Adult Education, in their Explore magazine.

Subsequently, I was invited to participate in their Adult Learning Festival which was held throughout Ireland, England, Scotland and Wales. The festival promoted all areas of adult learning in all contexts including further education and community-based projects. I negotiated a link between DIT and AONTAS, but, in order to participate in the festival I had to reflect on how I could bring my classroom practice at the Conservatory to a wider audience of adult learners. In that regard I felt challenged as I had always considered myself as a teacher/lecturer, not as a teacher/researcher. However I subsequently offered free music workshops for the public: A Taste of Music (2007) and A Musical Experience (2008) which were very successful and which underpinned my hunch that a discrete pedagogical paradigm is required when teaching music to adults. With hindsight, I now realise that most teachers, who,
like me, are trying to effect change, are already wearing the cap of teacher/researcher in their everyday practice. The reflective practice I had consciously and unconsciously engaged in over the years brought about this current research.

Authenticity in music education in schools was an area that I had researched in depth for my Masters programme and which had caused me to reflect on my own approach to teaching. Swanwick (1979) addresses this area and warns of the complacency among music teachers to settle for “packages of information” rather than constantly questioning their pedagogical approach in the classroom. Surely the same should apply to adults learning music? Increasingly I began to see the need for a truly authentic music education programme for the adult learner. What was currently available was no longer viable in light of the speed of progress in education overall. It was arising from all these factors that this project has grown organically.

I had considerable experience in terms of practice but had little knowledge of research or of the developments in adult learning globally. An understanding of the psychology of the adult learner, the learning context and the classroom dynamics amongst practitioner and participants is acknowledged as vital by many experts in the field including Tennant (2006), Rogers (2002) and Merriam & Caffarella (2007). I felt what was needed was a more holistic approach for adult music learning.

The Narrative and Immediate Challenges
My doctoral research, therefore, aspires to offer an alternative pedagogical approach to adults learning music in a formal higher education structure. To produce this new approach, or paradigm, an action-research model is being used, informed by current theories of adult learning and theories of music education. I designed two new part-time music education programmes at introductory and advanced levels and steered them through the formal approved procedure for delivery over two academic years, ending in May 2013. Two three-day Summer Schools were organised and delivered in association with the National Concert Hall and the Museum of Modern Art in 2011 and 2012. In all cases the participants were aware that they were collaborating in my research as well as participating as adult students. Concurrently, I have been using a reflexive journaling method to record both the narrative of the cycles of action research and three levels of reflective analysis. The three levels are: immediate response; relationship with scholarship and theory; identification of emerging insights into a possible new paradigm of adult learning in this field of practice.

Evaluation by participants has been a key dimension of the research. On commencement of the courses they completed questionnaires regarding their education, work, studies and their musical/educational aspirations. Mid-way through the process they wrote short reflective pieces on what the course meant for them – unlike the questionnaires this process was entirely individualistic and open in that they could write whatever aspects they saw as important for them. Almost all gave some biographical details regarding music in their lives – whether it was formal or informal. They have agreed to be interviewed on completion of the course. This will take place in two months from the time of writing. In terms of reflexivity this should prove to be a rich source of data collection as I will see how they have viewed the experience in terms of my own practice, my own history and how my observations have impacted on them in the learning context.
Two main issues, or challenges, emerged for me as a music educator starting out on cycles of applied action research in a real-life setting. Firstly, I had to negotiate the operational, procedural challenges associated with new academic programmes, with new pedagogical approaches and new syllabus content specifically designed for the adult classroom context. The programme needed to be well researched and accredited for the specialist music education institutions to take it seriously. Additionally, I had to recruit suitable learners who would engage with the new syllabus and pedagogical approach and who also provide feedback and analysis on their experiences.

Reflecting on these issues, I found myself caught between two dimensions – music education on the one hand and adult learning pedagogies on the other hand. I could confidently take “action” on the former but could I wear the cap of “researcher” when it came to the latter? McNiff and Whitehead (2006), Carr & Kemmis (2002) all acknowledge this feeling of uncertainty amongst action researchers. Nonetheless, action research, with its self-reflective spiral of plan-act-observe-reflect has proved the best methodology for this research. Reflexivity in the action research process was the methodology and part of the reflective journaling.

The Concept of Reflexivity

Central to my action-research is the use of critical reflexivity. My working definition of the term is that it is a looking back at oneself in terms of personal values, history, social science, social relationship and pedagogical approach. These reflect back on me as practitioner when I enter the teaching environment. Of course, this in turn, impacts on those I teach and observe while teaching. The self-reflective nature of the process allows me to bring my knowledge and expertise forward as researcher and to bring it into the teaching/learning context as facilitator.

When discussing teachers, researchers and curriculum, Carr and Kemmis (2002) claim that “social life is reflexive; it has the capacity to change as our knowledge and thinking changes”. Reflexivity therefore, allows me to reflexively study, in my case, music education for the adult learner with a view to improved reflection in this field by creating new knowledge or paradigms.

Reflexivity and action research are both concerned with values and values tend to be a grey area. Schon’s concept (2011) of the “swampy lowlands where the practitioner operates” is perhaps a good analogy in the context of reflexivity and action research in that both processes are wide open to the interpretation of the practitioner. McNiff and Whitehead, sum up for me the nature of what I am trying to do; to live in the direction of the values and commitments that inspire my life. Based on my own teaching and on the opinions the adult learners I have been privileged to teach in terms of what I have learned from them, I believe reflexivity in the action research process is the way forward in this context.

In reality, my approach was to use a system of reflective journaling with three levels, or deliberate iterations, of critical reflection as mentioned earlier in this paper. In order to do this, I had to research the various strands of literature relevant to this project. This included theories of adult learning, models of learning, psychology and the adult learner, action research and philosophies of music education. Models of adult learning in this project to date include Knowles’ Concept of Andragogy (1980), Illeris’ Three Dimensions of Learning (2002) and Jarvis Model of the learning Process (2006). Boud and his associates (1993) have written extensively
on experiential learning in adult education. It has been accepted that experiential learning forms the basis of learning since Dewey wrote his landmark book *Experience and Education* (1938). He justified education in terms of “learning by doing” which is very relevant to music. Other writers on experiential learning included to date are Kolb (1984), Jarvis (2001), Fenwick (2003) and Bryant & Johnston (1997). Mezirow’s theory of transformative learning, Brookfield’s writing on critical thinking in relation to the latter is important in this field. Friere’s Theory of Conscientization and Schon’s Reflection- in-Action, are also part of the theoretical framework.

The philosophical principles of Keith Swanwick, Bennett Reimer, David J. Elliott, and John Paynter have influenced the Allegro model. This resonates with all modern pedagogical approaches in music education today. It has been imperative in this project that adults learning music have the same authenticity as other learners. In broad terms the model encapsulates three dimensions of learning - aural skills, composition and listening. An audit trail of the philosophical underpinnings of each cycle has been included in the reflective journal.

### Reflective Journal

The four aspects of my reflective journal are listed below. After each class or encounter I make entries with particular references to any new or surprising elements (example below). There are many such entries in relations to all facets of the teaching and learning.

Sample of journaling:

**TOPIC:** Class aspect is aural training (rhythmic composition)

**Observational Notes:** First step: The aim is to introduce Kodaly concepts through practical aspect. The written aspect is not usually introduced yet but there is a real motivation to write down the rhythm which surprised me and meant I had to devote considerable time to this. Observing how engrossed they were in this formal style learning I changed the balance of the pedagogy and they really enjoyed the whole process. I was very taken aback as I would have thought it a tedious and rather uncreative aspect of the learning. They continuously asked questions as I passed amongst them and shared their ideas with each other. Reconnaissance – I have misjudged, possibly undermined, their capabilities – reflexive in terms of my values/expectations. Perhaps I was imposing my values on them. Personally I welcome any “surprise” as this educates me and requires further critical thinking in terms of the group dynamic as well as the pedagogical approach.

**Methodological Note** 2nd step– creates new material to assimilate both practical application and manageable written material – this time I allocate time for them to do some written work and interact with each other in the process. This session they composed rhythms and felt the need to “get it right” – once again interaction was a strong motivational element.

**Theoretical Reflection Learning** theories identified: Piaget assimilation (step 2 builds on material from step 1), accommodation (this allows for new material to be introduced effortlessly) - and equilibrium (the first two allow for the student to be more creative with rhythm – to create their own rhythms in a relatively short time after learning. They can put it into practice (Dewey). Vygotsky’s Zone of Proximal Development (1978) is relevant here in terms of the socio-cultural classroom context wherein students engage in dialogue. Development is relevant in terms of sharing of ideas both in the context of learning the rhythmic aspects and also in terms of Tiernan
sharing his experience with everyone (vignette below). The models of learning are more interactive in this class rather than instructional. Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs are, as always, present in the music learning environment.

Music learning - My role is to facilitate the learner to use the knowledge, to build on it in terms of practice and written and to find a creative aspect within the two parameters. Swanwick, Elliott, Reimer and Kodaly stress the importance of students learning to think for themselves. This would be even truer in the realm of experiential learning where the adult brings in their own life experience. Example of an incident in relation to the above:

Vignette – After performing rhythmic patterns on percussion instruments Tiernan, who plays double bass in the amateur Blow your Trumpet orchestra tells the class how he managed the rhythmic aspect of a passage at the rehearsal last night, “up to now I just could not grasp what the conductor wanted but it is now clarified here in class and I am delighted with myself. I know its small step but I now understand – that’s important to me”. Bridget replied “Good for you – what is happening is that you are putting your theory into practice”. Bridget’s response to Tiernan was quick and so astute!

Analytical note – In terms of reflexivity I should leave scope to allow them to offer their life experiences outside the learning context or I should encourage discussion as part of the experiential learning process and thus, facilitating them to share their musical experiences. Journaling in this context reveals that adult learners embrace the idea of musical composition and aural activities. A new approach to aural combined with written could prompt a new resource in terms of a new textbook.

The Action-Research Cycles

The first action research cycle was a three-day summer school Allegro for Adults in association with The National Concert Hall and the Irish Museum of Modern Art. The primary aim was to promote music education in lifelong learning in a different mode and to test my ‘hunches’ in the new curriculum. I gave three workshops in aural training, composition and listening and integrated other arts into the event–James Joyce literature, art, design, and dance with practitioners in these areas contributing to their separate fields of expertise. My workshops were concerned with the musical components.

The second cycle of action research was the two Allegro courses over a one year period. Classes were held once a week for 90 minutes. Throughout each semester, six assignments were given and at the end of each semester an assessment was given to test the learning outcomes. Assignments were done as homework whereas assignments were more a formal testing and were “class-based” exams. At the end of the course two further exams were given – one written and one aural. Also participants choose a topic for a project.

Unlike the classical curriculum that I teach, they had the choice of doing a music project on any genre they liked. In terms of reflectivity I am aware that the areas of pop, jazz, rock or ethnic music are not included in the course. This is because I do not have the background or expertise to teach these; but it is something I acknowledge openly to them and we have discussions about other genres as I do not wish to give them the impression that I am “elitist” in my thinking and teaching – thus reflecting my own biases on them! Classical music teachers are aware of this
perception of elitism. One of the emerging ideas from the curriculum would be the inclusion of pop and jazz as a starting point to others music later on. Similar to the summer school, I would invite experts in the field give such classes – indeed I have been approached by a pop music composer who is eager to give such a class. This is something for consideration in the near future as it would broaden the adults musical horizons.

The third cycle commenced in year 2 followed by the Allegro course in September 2012. The summer school was similar to the 2011 with 3 musical workshops and a pre-concert talk given by me at the National Concert Hall – followed by attending the concert. The course of this cycle will not be completed until May 2013.

In September 2012 a reflective aspect of the authenticity of the research process to when I was approached by head of academic studies at the Conservatory to have Allegro as a module on the BACCI Degree. These were young adults involved with pop as well as classical music and their degree encapsulates other cultural and creative studies.

Endnote
Reflexivity, in my view, works very effectively in the context of action research in music education for adults. Similar to action research, reflexivity is about change. The relationship between the two areas is clarified by Lisle (2000) when she states that reflexivity is a cyclic process in the same way as action research. She states “I see reflexivity as a process, a methodology, ontology and epistemology” (Lisle 2000). Reflexivity is concerned with the “I”: action research is also concerned with the “I”, the practitioner. Understanding of one’s one thinking, values and life experience is central to facilitating in the context of experiential learning. For this project reflexivity in action research has proven to be a valuable tool in the areas of understanding, knowledge, experience and expertise. In his article When you reflect are you also being reflexive? Ryan (2005) summarizes my personal viewpoint: “To be reflexive can actually nourish reflections as introspection leads to heightened awareness, change, growth and improvement of self and our profession”. This surely, is a credible approach to the teaching of music to adult learners.

References
Ryan, T. G. (2005). The reflective classroom manager
Responding to Crisis through Healing and Transformation:  
A Case Study of Kaqla Maya Women’s Group in Guatemala

Jackie McVicar & Behrang Foroughi
St. Francis Xavier University

Abstract: Founded in 1996, Kaqla is a network of primarily Maya indigenous women in Guatemala who organized to challenge the patriarchal society that kept them under a veil of oppression and violence during decades of internal conflicts. Members of Kaqla define it as a social movement with special emphasis on transformation, both personal and social, through political analysis and healing as its foundation. This paper is about the philosophy and practice of adult education at Kaqla. This is part of a larger ethnographic study on how healing has led to personal and social transformation for indigenous women in Guatemala.

Introduction
The year 1996 marked the long-anticipated end to Guatemala’s 36-year internal armed conflict, which saw the assassination of more than 200,000 people, thousands more forcibly disappeared and over 1.5 million internally displaced (United Nations, 1997). During this time women were victims of rape and sexual violence; they were kidnapped, tortured and murdered. According to the survivors of the March 1982 massacre of Rio Negro where close to 200 women and children were killed, indigenous women were accused of siding with the guerrilla forces; they were humiliated and systematically marched to their mass grave (personal communication with Iboy, an indigenous Maya Achi man who survived the massacre). When this violence was supposed to end with the signing of the 1996 Peace Accords, the country was facing a new crisis: what needs to be done in times of peace? For some, this crisis emerged as a time of creativity and change. As a response to the shifting political climate, indigenous women began to meet and organize as a means to challenge the patriarchal society that kept them under a veil of oppression and violence. Healing became a key component of this organizing as a way to better understand their shared and personal experiences. The women’s use of holistic healing approaches allowed them to better situate themselves as political actors in a society that had not acknowledged them in the past.

In this context, the Grupo de Mujeres Mayas Kaqla (Kaqla Maya Women’s Group - Kaqla) was created as a group of Maya indigenous women working for and with other indigenous women. Their work places a special focus on healing all forms of oppression and violence. “Oppression goes further than political, cultural, social and economic conditions, it affects our authentic self, our potentials, our emotional and spiritual self, and in order to overcome these effects and traumas, it isn’t enough to do a theoretical or political analysis. We must transcend” (Grupo de Mujeres Mayas Kaqla, 2004). Kaqla is a “space and possibility to be and do politics in another way” (Grupo de Mujeres Mayas Kaqla, 2004). The group has written five publications since its inception and their work is rooted in transformation, both personal and social, through emancipatory cultural changes.

Despite the growing number of studies focused on healing, there is little research that focuses on how indigenous women use healing as a tool for political empowerment and subsequently, to make transformative changes in their life. Although some studies show the importance and connection between social justice and healing (Haines, 2009; Shilling 2001), research, which explores the experiences of indigenous women in the Guatemalan context is lacking. This paper is a brief report of a larger ethnographic study that seeks to bridge this gap, examining how healing has led to personal and
social transformation for indigenous women in Guatemala. The study is a result of 8 years of work and observation in Guatemala, documentation review and key informant interviews.

Here, we introduce and discuss the work of Kaqla through the eyes and words of Abelina, a young and active member of the group who welcomed the opportunity to share her learning and experiences with Kaqla since early on. She began by emphasizing Kaqla’s focus on transformative learning through a reflective practice in challenging the local and national systems of oppression. According to Abelina, women with different perspectives and life experiences have joined Kaqla. She remembered that when women began to meet in Kaqla, there was a clash between so-called traditional indigenous women and non-traditional indigenous women; there was also a clash between the young and the old. Her first recollection was about her dilemma in using indigenous dress, “traje”, which she had stopped wearing because it drew racist remarks in public. As soon as she joined Kaqla and participated in their gatherings, she was sure to wear it. “Ni de loca - not even crazy - would I go without it,” she said; although she was initially unsure what other women might say or think about her. She said that she was confident that she had the rights, and that her traje was important, but every time she put it on, she felt like they (society) were going to attack her, or discriminate her. She continued,

“We knew our rights and what inequality is, but our heart and head have different ways of being…I knew that wearing my traje was right, but I was still afraid and too rational [to start wearing it]... I started wearing my traje once every part of body, my centre, felt like I could do it”.

Her emphasis on this story is because wearing traje has brought up questions about the homogenization of indigenous women: what they should wear and how they should act; and has engendered important conversations and debates about racism, ethnicity, and culture in the group. For Abelina, this was part of allowing and acknowledging feelings and emotions as part of a healing process by Kaqla women.

Kaqla’s Practice of Adult Education

Indigenous writers in the global north write about the need to include self-determination and liberation of a People and of a Nation in their own personal liberation (Ouellette 2002; St. Denis 2007). When Kaqla formed, the women began to engage in processes which allowed them to imagine an organization for Maya women. After initially coming together in 1996, they had done a needs-assessment by 1998 with 35 women to see how they should proceed and created a long-term work plan (Grupo de Mujeres Mayas Kaqla, 2006). During this process, they began with a humanistic philosophy for their education, and later called it holistic humanistic education; “We wanted to include everything,” Abelina emphasized. The process helped the women identify what they wanted to focus on, which led them from theoretical conversations to incorporating healing processes. Things started to change when the women began to talk about how racism hurt them, how their feeling of inferiority by oppression affected them, and how they got sick because of resentment. “And there were times when we began to cry together,” (Abelina) when the women talked about how they lived through sexual violence. “We were already conscious about our rights, about inequality, and we knew we needed to start taking the shape of a new kind of leadership” (Abelina).

In 1999, Kaqla started creating leadership and training processes for Maya women, which focused on reflecting on diverse kinds of oppression, developing Maya women’s leadership and contributing to building a way of thinking based on the history, philosophy and practices of Maya culture and universal
knowledge (Grupo de Mujeres Mayas Kaqla, 2002, p. 7). Through a “political healing” process, the women worked to understand and deconstruct the impacts of colonialism, the domination of cultural beliefs and values and the role of government in perpetuating oppression and definitions of liberation. In 2000 and 2001, healing became an essential tool in their leadership training (Grupo de Mujeres Mayas Kaqla, 2002, p. 7).

‘Political healing’ is necessary, which for Kaqla implied creating spaces and incorporating group therapies to talk and heal emotional, spiritual and energy traumas generated by oppression. Encuentros de Formación (trainings) constitute apt spaces to break the silence of the “great secrets of Maya women.” It’s about reflecting beginning with memory, theoretical analysis and awakening our body memory, through energy exercises (Grupo de Mujeres Mayas Kaqla, 2006, p.7).

The training sessions used a methodology that Kaqla had worked to create since its inception. Despite the strong indigenous movement in Guatemala, the experts, the women of Kaqla first looked to were typically men and Mestiza women or foreigners. This was also the case as they experimented with different healing practices; the women of Kaqla introduced bodywork into their healing, including Reiki, yoga and breathing techniques. Though, they initially looked outward for expertise and guidance, once they had more practice and deepened their learning, they began to look inward and connect with indigenous methods that would help them both in healing and political analysis. Abelina remembers, “[healing] was like an oasis…we worked through violence, the war…religion. We took it all in…but then it was our turn to become teachers”. The women came to use a distinctly indigenous approach, appropriate for the Maya women involved with the group.

With the purpose of recuperating a humane spirituality, Kaqla generated spaces of spiritual connection with the Heart of the Sky, Heart of the Earth, the energy of the universe, divine light and universal love. Thus, we incorporate elements of practices of Maya spirituality, which respects diverse ideologies, practices and beliefs (Grupo de Mujeres Mayas Kaqla, 2006, p. 8).

Incorporating elements of Maya cosmology was an integral part of their experience and has proven to be an opportunity to connect with elders in their communities. Abelina notes, “Cosmology is the network of life…a possibility to no longer only look at myself, to look at my belly button, but to see myself as part of the universe”. She emphasizes that the re-valuing of Maya cosmology has transformed her relationship with other women”. In 2009, Kaqla published, “Mujeres Mayas: Universo y Vida,” (Maya Women: Universe and Life) a compilation of interviews with indigenous women elders. The book is a collection of stories intended to honour and value the life and work of indigenous women. Abelina explains that diversity and the acceptance of difference has been an important aspect of Kaqla; “difference is explicit in Kaqla. Every new woman that joins will change how we work and are together”. Abelina as a young lesbian Maya woman has been accepted in the group, but she says that she still needs “lesbian spaces, and spaces to nourish her artistic self. “I am not only a Maya woman; I am an artist, a youth, so I need other spaces to nourish me. And that’s okay”, she concluded.

Transformative Learning through Healing and Political Action
Holst (2009) writes about broadening the understanding and use of education and training and its possible contributions to social justice. Likewise, Vella (2002) writes extensively about adult learning and notes that, “effective adult education is political” (p.77). Indeed, Kaqla’s approach to adult
education is political. At the heart of the group’s decolonization process is transformation and liberation; as they deconstruct oppressive colonial structures and participate in processes of critical reflection, personal and social changes have emerged.

Kaqla women seek a radical transformation of the systems that govern their lives. Cranton (1994, p. 16) writes, “Emancipatory learning, then, is a process of freeing ourselves from forces that limit our options and our control over our lives, forces that have been taken for granted or seen as beyond our control”. Mezirow (1991) also discusses liberation and its connection to transformation, and Brookfield examines how ruptures can “jerk people into awareness of how life could be different” (2005, p. 200). Likewise, Chovenac, Ellis and Lange (2008) write,

“Emancipatory, liberatory, radical or critical adult education is a form of adult education that is generally a response against repression, poverty, oppression and injustice and a struggle for justice and equality. Critical learning attempts to foster an individual’s consciousness of himself or herself as situated within larger political or economic forces and to act upon those forces for social change” (p. 188).

Since the beginning, Kaqla’s main goal has been to “transform the situation of oppression of Maya women, looking for profound social and political changes, through formation processes and constructing new dynamics of thought from the point of view of Maya women, based on Maya history, cosmology and culture as well as universal knowledge” (Grupo de Mujeres Mayas Kaqla, 2010, p. 9). To do so, they have applied gender, ethnic and class analysis to deconstruct the oppressive system in which the vast majority of indigenous Maya women live. Using this analysis, coupled with healing practices, has led to transformative learning. This transformation lends to a strengthening in political leadership and work towards social justice.

Kaqla: Feminist, Indigenous, or Both?

Abelina characterizes Kaqla as both a feminist and indigenous movement. Indigenous author Ouellette (2002) offers a distinct indigenous perspective on feminism through history and present day analysis. She notes how liberal, Marxist, radical and socialist feminism do not represent aboriginal women, and in fact, she considers Western feminist thought to be racist. Ouellette gives examples of this throughout the history of the feminist movement and notes that an indigenous worldview may not be in accord with any kind of traditional feminism. Ouellette looks at the impacts of colonialism, the domination of cultural beliefs and values, and the role of government in perpetuating oppression and definitions of liberation. This is also the framework within which Kaqla works.

Through their dialogical and learning circles and workshops, Kaqla women engages in discussions on political changes and alternatives to the status quo, which currently is a political hierarchy and culture that promotes violence, oppression and discrimination. Kaqla members, each, have their own way of describing the group. Abelina notes, “We’re post-colonialists”. She goes on to say that it depends on each member’s formación (previous training or upbringing). She continues, “But we share our own cultural understanding on body work, medicinal plants, any knowledge that can be used to protect the network of life”.

Personal transformation is at the core of the work of Kaqla. “If we want to eradicate oppression, we can and should exterminate the oppressor that is in each of us. We can’t change what’s around us if we don’t change ourselves” (Grupo de Mujeres Mayas Kaqla, 2006, p. 13). Abelina also believes that one must
take personal responsibility for the changes that happen in one’s life and situation. In the Guatemalan context, because of the implications of internalized oppression and paternalistic charity which has permeated Guatemalan civil society organizations following the signing of the Peace Accords, indigenous women are referred to as poor and helpless. Kaqla works to debunk that myth and help women take charge of their own lives, especially in the context of a patriarchal society that both blames women for the situation they are in and prevents them for seeking out their own solutions. “The work of Kaqla is to strengthen people and tell them, you are responsible for your own solutions. We tell our husbands, our sons, our community, our god that they are responsible” (Abelina).

Healing: A Challenge or an Opportunity?
For Abelina a challenge for Kaqla has been a constant feeling of being judged by others:

“As an organization, this is what has been challenging: having an organization where we incorporate tools because amongst ourselves, we are too demanding, we are perfectionists… We have done amazing things, but it’s interesting that we haven’t been able to share how much we’ve learned and grown for fear of being judged or not being perfect”.

In the cases where Kaqla has chosen to share their learning, for example through their publications, they have been subject to harsh criticism. In particular, the publication of their book, “La palabra y sentir de las Mujeres Mayas de Kaqla” (trans. “Word and Feeling of the Maya Women of Kaqla”, 2004) raised a lot of discussion and judgment in the social movement community, challenging Kaqla for incorporating healing as part of their mandate for political action for liberation. According to Abelina, since its beginning, many people, including the NGO community and indigenous women who knew of Kaqla peripherally criticized Kaqla for concentrating on healing and therapeutic processes. The women of Kaqla took this critique seriously and for a short period of time dropped healing from their work. Abelina remembers others outside the group saying:

‘They give them money so they can do their therapy…so they can go and cry’. Others said, ‘They are only receiving, they aren't giving anything back.’ We were focusing on healing but by this point, we had lost our political orientation... Kaqla wasn’t created to do healing…So, we decided to stop the healing processes”.

Though, some members saw the practice of healing as a waste of time, others began to consider it as an important step of a political process and helped reintegrate healing into the work of Kaqla and brought Kaqla to a full circle. Abelina refers to this period of questions and debates over the place of healing in their practice as Kaqla’s special and important struggle. As a result of this challenge Abelina said “We were transformed and we related to people differently”.

Conclusion
Kaqla is a political organization for Maya women, which was created to explore the impacts of internalized oppression on the indigenous population in Guatemala. It is a space where Maya women can come together to share ideas, debate and reflect. By analysing and understanding the historical implications of internalized oppression on indigenous peoples, the members of Kaqla incorporate mind-body-spirit healing practices aimed at healing past traumas and historical memory. Kaqla believes that healing is a necessary step in a holistic process to overcome the impacts of gender, class and ethnic oppression at a personal and social level. When healing and transformation happens, a person and a
group of people can propose new and creative ways of living and being in the world, which honour and respect indigenous culture, knowledge and history.

By learning how history has been told through a racist lens over generations, indigenous peoples can begin to deconstruct the impacts of colonization, heal from this history of violence and creatively imagine a new existence. “It’s our responsibility to recover our history. What pride, what self-esteem, and what identity are our children going to have if we don’t start to tell our story?” (Grupo de Mujeres Mayas Kaqla, 2006, p. 13). Kaqla believes it is important to use a myriad of healing techniques and practices, which they have learned from outside facilitators and indigenous teachers. They incorporate the use of Maya knowledge and traditions as a foundational element in their work. In many cases, reconnecting to their Maya cosmology and spirituality has been one of the most important and meaningful aspects of their participation within the group.

For Abelina, it is difficult to say how Kaqla will evolve. Many women have participated. They have changed their way of thinking and working. There have been ruptures and others have come back. There are many seeds that have been sown. Personally, she will continue to participate for Kaqla continues to nourish her as it has always been her source. “I can’t be without Kaqla because it’s where I go to think, re-examine… I learn, I evolve, my comrades challenge me… [Kaqla] gives me everything” says Abelina.

References


Finding Love in a Hopeful Place:
Unravelling Motivations, Mistruths, and Movements of
Queer Immigrants at Work

Robert C. Mizzi
Charles Sturt University

Abstract: This paper presents preliminary findings of a study on queer, immigrant, educators. In this case study, the author conducted in-depth interviews with five, gay-male, adult educators who are new to Canada. The data reveals how various forms of social regulation caused the study participants to problematize how Canada’s multicultural identity is still plagued by homophobic and racist undertones. Types of negotiation through difficulties are discussed.

Introduction
Canada is increasingly recognized as a world leader for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgendered (LGBT) rights, especially since the inclusion of sexual orientation in the Canadian Charter of Rights, the legalization of same-sex marriage (Walton, 2009), and recent advancement towards including gender identity and gender expression in the Human Rights Act (CBC News, 2013). This global recognition presents an attractive option for queer immigrants as they seek out countries that provide “safe” measures and promote “respectful” attitudes toward sexual and gender minorities.

Despite this progress in law, this study paints a very different reality of Canada when examining the difficult experiences of queer immigrants. Although much of the literature points towards a troubling process of social integration that includes racist undertones among queer and non-queer communities (e.g., Eichler & Mizzi, forthcoming), the purpose of this study is explore what and how homophobic and racist behaviours expressed towards queer immigrants go unchecked and unmediated in the workplace. This study has implications for adult education scholarship in that it engages with critical queer theorizing under a postfoundational umbrella to conceptualize contexts that may jeopardize learning and teaching practices. Significantly, this study decentres the heteronormative language contained in the literature on immigrants and calls into question the absence of sexual diversity in the scholarship on immigration and work.

This preliminary analysis of an empirical study begins with a theoretical framework (postfoundationalism) to situate the work, which is followed by a description of the research design. Afterwards, this paper presents the data uncovered in the project as well as discusses the findings. It is expected that a sociological analysis of adjusting to a new life and work circumstance will shed new insights for adult educators who wish to support queer immigrants to Canada.

Theoretical Framework
This work is underpinned by tenets of (post)colonialism, postmodernism and poststructuralism, and therefore postfoundationalism is an appropriate framework in which to analyze this work. Broadening out an analysis of social mobility to include multiple theoretical perspectives brings to light (a) overlapping marginalizations and identity, (b) the role that culture and language plays in constructing the subject, and (c) a “multiplicity of voices” and “creative responses” in day-to-day experiences (English, 2006). Postfoundationalism operates on the principles of multiplicity.
and dialogue and facilitates a complex analysis of human experiences with mobility. I chose to examine immigrant workers who identify as a sexual minority because they occupy a multiply-marginalized position based on citizenship, ethnicity and sexuality. Michael Warner (1991) in his book *Fear of a Queer Planet* argues that queer sexuality often conveys “a political form of embodiment that is defined as noise or interference in the disemboding frame of citizenship” (p. 12). Thus, an examination of how intersections between race, sexuality and citizenship become articulated as “noise or interference” may provide some understanding into the complexities that invariably shapes the lives of queer immigrants in their work situations.

**Literature Review**

Understanding the sociological experiences of queer immigrants has recently started to garner attention in social science literature, but mainly from a United States perspective. In a Canadian context, what is generally understood is that the immigration process to Canada is an uneasy one. For instance, the Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada (IRB) has been critiqued as being an obstacle for sexual-minority refugees, with Fairbairn (2005) stating, “a number of IRB members clearly did not believe that documentation provided by LGBT groups was objective and therefore credible information” (p. 239). This requires refugee claimants in Canada to prove their sexual orientation and same-sex desires as well as to prove the truth of their related homophobic encounters. For some, this demand for truth is often a complex task because justice authorities have been known to be unhelpful towards addressing homophobic violence.

A queer perspective on immigration provides one way to analyze how sexuality impacts and becomes implicated in the migratory processes (Naples & Vidal-Ortez, 2009). Largely viewed through feminist and poststructuralist perspectives, narrative accounts of queer immigrants highlight heteronormative systems that exclude queer realities in both home environments and new settings. Writing within the United States context, Luibhéid (2004) explains:

> Heteronormative policies and practices – which subordinate immigrants not just on grounds of sexual orientation but also on grounds of gender, racial, class, and cultural identities that may result in ‘undesirable’ sexual acts or outcomes (such as ‘too many’ poor children) – are deployed by the state to select who may legally enter the United States and to incorporate immigrants into hegemonic nationalist identities and projects. (p. 227)

Part of the problem, as Luibhéid views it, is that immigration officials mislead the public by stating that sexuality is “private” and not an issue in cross-border situations.

Yet, sexuality studies scholars such as Luibhéid (2004) and Chavez (2011) have pointed out otherwise. They argue that the State has very much made an intervention by structuring sexuality along heteronormative lines. For example, housing and shelter providers should consider sexuality and gender identity as the *cause* of homelessness among young people. In addition, transgendered individuals are challenged when sponsoring partners, even after sex reassignment surgery and legal marriage in other countries (Chavez, 2011). Visible cues can betray queer applicants. Such cues could include the time of arrival to the port of entry (e.g., just before pride parades), their belongings, third-party informants, organizational affiliations, and medical certificates that ask for a description of lifestyle practices (Luibhéid, 1998). In the case of
obtaining such certificates, this procedure implies that medical practices provide a venue for homophobia to be “mobilized, channeled and legitimated” (Luibheid, 1998, p. 489) in official medical discourse. Given the historical and controversial practice of medical professionals classifying, diagnosing, and treating homosexuality as a disease in the United States and elsewhere, the presence once again of screening out homosexuality through medical means is indeed troubling and eerily reflective of a dark past that traumatized queer citizens (see Terry, 1999). In response, queer immigrants have engaged with this structure as a means to denounce their home countries as being backwards and unproductive in exchange for American “beneficence” (Cantu, Luibheid & Stern, 2005).

**Research Design**

This research project employs a qualitative methodology in order to understand the systemic, cultural, social, political and economic complexities that shape human lives presented in this study. Through the use of case study analysis, I am able to conduct, as Lichtman (2010) explains, “an in-depth examination of a particular case or several cases” (p. 81). A case study is limited to a “characteristic, trait, or behavior” that the researcher identifies and sets limits around (Lichtman, p. 81). A case can be limited to one specific entity or situation, which then the researcher identifies “individuals who have or are thought to have the characteristic” that nuances the situation (Lichtman, p. 82).

The case for this preliminary project is based on the work experiences of five gay male-identified immigrants to Canada. Since my research experience tends to focus on adult educators, I remained with this group of workers in order to effectively inquire into the different kinds of challenges and constraints that adult educators may experience in their daily lives. I used in-depth interviews to collect data because a researcher obtains greater insight into the human experiences that make up the social phenomenon being researched. In-depth interviews can be structured as an informal dialogue between the interviewer and the study participant (Lichtman, 2010). The themes for the questions that formed the discussions centred on systemic, social, and personal challenges during the transition process to both the new country and to the work context. I selected these themes based on the literature that indicated how exclusion practices may occur towards and originate from the queer immigrant.

The questions that focus this study are: 1) What kinds of experiences shape queer immigrants’ perceptions of their work practices, values, and interactions? 2) How do queer immigrants respond to or avoid situations that they interpret as being oppressive?

**Data**

The following information represents the five individuals who participated in this study. All names have been changed to protect anonymity. Countries of origins have not been changed in order to reflect the global diversity involved in this sample.

*Nitin, Toronto, Community Educator*

Originally from Malaysia, with family roots in India, Nitin came to Canada as a student and decided to stay to pursue his goal of working in queer community development in Toronto. As Nitin shared his story, he constantly shifted between nations, Malaysia and Canada, and his interpretations of being “gay” and same-sex attractions. The topic of family occupied much of
the conversation with me when describing life in Malaysia, explaining he “never really told them” he was “different”. Nitin shared with me his difficult experience of Canada-born gay men. He explains “It’s when you go out to a gay culture in Toronto and having lived here, it is so structured. I’ve never felt I’ve ever fit in – I’m not even trying at this point – because you have to have a certain mannerism, a certain look, a certain walk…” Because of this difficulty to understand behaviours, Nitin finds himself leaving Canada every year so that he can “recharge himself” and feel normal about having wanting to reach out and connect to people.

In specific reference to his work environment, Nitin describes how the work culture in Malaysia is better than in Canada, given that the food is very fresh and accessible, and there are less rigid times to eat and work. The family unit also becomes integrated into the workplace whereas it is separated in Canada. Nitin reflects on his work experience in Canada: “I’ve heard so many people here in the west talk about how they can’t stand their parents”. This layers the comments heard at work that are racist and anti-immigrant, as well as, standardized by way of their interactions and work behaviours, such as building a sense of “cultural competence” that ignores his years of living in multicultural Malaysia. Aspects of these interactions create further distance between Nitin and his colleagues.

Michael, Toronto, Teacher Educator
Michael, who is originally from the Philippines and first arrived into Canada as a live-in caregiver and then became a teacher educator on LGBT issues. Unlike Nitin, Michael did not outright choose Canada, but decided to pursue an opportunity that allowed him to leave. Michael describes how having extended friends formed a new family unit for him in Canada and that this helped with his adjustment in an individual-oriented culture. During his transition to Canadian work, Michael noted how governing systems are very similar to Philippines, and credits Filipino history and its connection to the United States as being a possible reason.

In his work, Michael further observes how there is a lot of laughter and discomfort when he mentions sexual orientation and that affects the reality of how people are treated, but notes how his skin colour represents the first point of contact. Michael shares “I need to have a rough exterior because I am in a professionalized setting and have to be neutral in my teaching practices.” He comments how it is “hard to fit into distinct ‘competences’”, which pulls time away from thinking about his teaching practice.

Bolek, Northern Ontario (Rural)/Toronto, Teacher Educator
Bolek relocated to Canada from Turkey, although he is originally Slovakian. He relocated for love, and comments how “love moves mountains” when it comes to navigating through the Canadian immigration system so that he can be with his Canadian-born boyfriend. Bolek’s first involvement with Canada was through the Canadian International Development Agency in Turkey, where he noticed that he took a very long time to get a response about their involvement in local activities, in contrast to the other agencies. “The system told me these are the guidelines, this is how long it is going to take, this is what you do if you have any questions, this is how long you need to wait for the response, and all that. It was very lengthy.”

Upon his arrival into Canada, Bolek volunteered at a gay community centre to help him transition to Canadian life. He noted that when he moved to Canada, stories of homophobic
bullying began to emerge as opposed to his life in Europe and Turkey. For Bolek, he tries to integrate sexuality perspectives into his work in an effort to stop oppressive attitudes, but feels this approach gets misinterpreted as being political, rather than humanistic. Bolek shares additional encounters with prejudice in his work place, especially when he speaks because of his accent and how he doesn’t express himself as a “native Canadian”. Notably, these encounters anger Bolek because of Canada’s promise towards “multiculturalism” and that they are more severe than what he was experiencing in Turkey or Slovakia.

Adnan, Toronto, Community Educator

Jordan, like other places in the Middle-East, remains an uneasy and conflicted place to live for sexual-minority males. For Adnan, who was “itching for something different”, the promise of a more free nation that accepts homosexuality indeed inspired the possibility to live an open life without much complication around being a sexual-minority.

A part of the job adjustment meant coming to understand, communicate, and blend Canadian and Arab perspectives on sexuality in certain work and life situations. Adnan focused on negotiating a sense of self amidst a Western perspective of sexuality and how to blend these perspectives. He shares:

So I think actually my views on sexuality might be a bit more controversial, especially, for example, when I worked on some projects around sexual health and HIV/AIDS when we’d talk about – like I would talk about gay men or MSM and men having sex with men, or we would talk about other identities that include people that come from different cultures and move around the world differently and have sexual encounters differently and all that stuff.

It is through work that Adnan balances his cultural knowledge obtained from his Jordanian background and his present work/life situation in Toronto, and that this cultural work leads his adjustment.

Dragoslav, Toronto, University Professor

Originally from Croatia, Dragoslav received an academic position in Canada after completing a postdoctoral fellowship in the United States. Similar to Michael, Dragoslav never targeted Canada as a final destination, but a job opportunity presented itself to him. Much of the conversation with Dragoslav focused on his distant relationship with students, and explains how his sexual orientation is kept separate from them. Coming from a place where homosexuality was criminalized, Dragoslav still describes Zagreb and Belgrade as “liberal” because underground clubs and parties took place and reflects how things have changed now. He noted there was not much difference in Toronto when he spent the summer as a late teen and asked about gay clubs only to be shunned just as he would be in Serbia. He shares, “it’s a much more conservative area in the Balkans and so on, but it also depends on who is your circle of people.” For example, he shares how a professor is likely to give him a lesser mark if Dragoslav’s homosexuality was known.

Dragoslav was ‘outed’ to his colleagues by the immigrant process who asked for him to declare his partner, who is an American citizen. Dragoslav negotiates his sexuality and work by keeping
homosexuality out of the conversation, but noticed it has been difficult with his partner working at the same institution.

**Findings**
Preliminary results indicate that navigating through social regulation was a priority for these queer immigrants. More specifically, there were: 1) *motivations* to work in Canada without harm and to seek out love, albeit with a same-sex partner or job, 2) *mistruths* about Canada’s “openness” to difference that concern queer immigrants as interpreted through homophobic and racist acts, and c) *movements* (i.e., promotions and transfers) of queer immigrants in their respective workplaces to avoid oppressive situations and to gain power. I explain each in turn.

**Motivations**
In each of the situations described, Canada was acknowledged as being a safe space to live as a queer person. This is a stark difference than the literature on immigrant educators, where the focus is on economic development and social status. For example, when Adnan and Botek described coming to Canada and learning of the queer culture, I interpret this initiative as surveying the country for queer safety and queer inclusiveness. What has been noteworthy in this regard is how four out of the five participants saw their workplaces as being unsafe and restrictive. They also perceived standardized systems and procedures as locking out opportunities to promote individuality and develop teaching practice.

**Mistruths**
In four of the five narratives, there was a perceived mistruth about Canada’s openness to queer people. These participants described how homophobic violence surfaced more in their lives in Canada rather than in their home countries. Nitin goes further to state that he needs to “recharge” himself by leaving Canada and returning home to Malaysia. Typically, there is a common misperception, in media and public discourse, that portrays Canada as a safe haven for queer people and a welcoming space to immigrants in general. However, upon arrival, the study participants experienced both racism and homophobia, which countered their perceptions that they would be *free* to be open about their sexualities without recourse.

**Movements**
What is noteworthy in the study is the highly mobile nature of these participants’ lives as they moved between several countries and regions. I interpreted this on-going mobility as being a purposeful act, where immigrants conceptualize the world as a fluid space rather than one limited by borders to escape homophobic encounters and pursue their loves. Bolek’s remark on how “love moves mountains” represents this point as he continues to move around the world and within Canada following his passions. With this in mind, I am reminded how theoretical underpinnings to being queer is often marked by fluidity perceptions of the self. What runs up against this fluid perception is the deployment of professional discourses in the workplace, such as “competences” and “rules”, which results in limits being placed on this mobility.

**Conclusion**
In sum, this study contributes to adult education theory and practice by continuing efforts to 1) debunk the idea of a universal adult educator, 2) demonstrate how social learning is of importance to queer immigrants, and 3) confront the heteronormative nature of current empirical work around immigrants in Canada. Through the life experiences of these five participants, a
(re)consideration of the lives of new Canadians can take place. Most significantly, an inquiry of this kind explores how notions of ethnicity, sexuality and citizenship interact with adjustments to Canadian work contexts.

References


Anishnawbe Health Toronto Approaches to Aboriginal Identity, Spirituality, and Anti-Poverty Learning

Shirley Morrison
Brenda Wastasecoot
Anishnawbe Health Toronto / George Brown College
OISE/UT

Abstract: This paper describes and reports on findings from a participatory action research case study on Aboriginal learning in relation to the partnership between Anishnawbe Health Toronto, George Brown College and the Anti-Poverty Community Learning and Organizing research network. We identify key learning outcomes and the role of Aboriginal culture in the process of individual and community transformation.

Introduction
This paper reports on findings from a participatory action research (PAR) case study exploring how adult learning, cultural identity, history, community and organizing, as well as oppressions related to poverty are shaped by and in turn shape participation in the Anishnawbe Health Toronto's (AHT) Community Health Worker training program (CHW, affiliated with George Brown College). With the support of a broader CURA research network – Anti-Poverty Community Organizing and Learning (APCOL) (2009-2014) – this particular study speaks to the relationships between community-based educational programming on the one hand, and how community, organizing and adult learning responses to poverty issues take on a specific character in relation to Aboriginal culture, identity and spirituality on the other. It seeks to contribute to an understanding of these relationships, and at the same time inform discussions in Adult Education literature concerning studies of anti-poverty community organizing.

Findings of the research project speak to the ways in which the CHW trainee program not only provides invaluable, culturally-specific training and entry into post-secondary education, but that it may play a unique role in supporting understandings of anti-poverty work more broadly in terms of supporting participants in attaining and/or developing more deeply their cultural identity which they felt had been lost to them. These findings speak to concepts from the adult education field on the culturally specific interpretations and challenges of community and leadership development surrounding issues of poverty. Our data show how ensuring students have an understanding of the impact that oppression has had on them, their families and past generations is a foundational component to the possibility of anti-poverty organizing. We see how the program helps participants realize how they can become agents of change for themselves, their families, and their communities, and how historically and culturally specific adult learning issues related to healing are central to a full understanding of the possibility and barriers for anti-poverty work more broadly. We begin with an explanation of the context and organizations involved in the research, and then our research method.

Research Issues, Context and Method
For some time, adult education researchers have held concerns for the focus on individual learning in connection to formal education (cf. Foley 1999). Those before Foley and since (e.g. Freire 1970; Walters and Manicom, 1996; Cunningham and Curry 1997; Mayo 2000; English
2004; Hall and Turay 2006; Hall, Clover, Crowther and Scandrett 2012) have regularly sought to emphasize social action and organizing as particular important areas of adult learning. Central to these efforts, as Marjorie Mayo puts it in the preface to Hall et al. (2012, p.vii), has been the challenges of attending to the “two-way processes of learning, acquiring knowledge and skills in order to take action more effectively, and learning through reflecting on the experiences of social action that follow, engaging in movements for social justice and social change”. In terms of research on community-based anti-poverty issues in North America, these challenges have only rarely been dealt with (cf. Sawchuk 2010; Defilippis, Fisher and Shragge 2010). Most of anti-poverty research has continued to gather information with either no, or simply passing, reference to adult education and adult learning specifically.

More rare still is Canadian research in this area that specifically deals with Aboriginal cultural perspectives and the dynamics of adult learning (cf. Ramos 2009). In a broader way, we benefit from an awareness of adult education research that has focused on transformation, rather than simply adapting to situations (e.g. Welton 1995; Sawchuk 2006). These approaches take seriously how and why learning can be both a personal as well as a form of social struggle, and yet even here we find reference to distinctive Aboriginal cultural and historical perspectives lacking (see Burton and Point 2006) which, in our view, raises the opportunity to make an important contribution to the literature even if Aboriginal perspectives on adult education and adult learning are anything but new. As Burton and Point (2006) say,

…methods of education in Aboriginal communities, lifelong learning is a familiar, ancient construct … ethical, theological, historical, ecological, and political… [s]torytelling is an essential feature of the lifelong learning of adult members of Aboriginal communities. Furthermore, ceremonies play an essential role in imparting lessons and the further education of specialist. (pp.36-37)

Indeed, though not linked in the research to community learning/organizing as such, a key theme for us will be Aboriginal healing, and here the work of Restoule (2006) in the urban context is particularly helpful. Likewise, though also not linked to community learning/organizing, we see that research on adult learning and storywork with elders (e.g. Atleo 2009) equally relevant to our thinking about our research. In both cases, they provide support for understanding the ways in which Aboriginal cultures play a unique role in re-establishing positive perspectives on (and legitimation of) identity.

Here we make use of ideas and begin to respond to the on-going need for research to respond to important gaps. In this context, the specific case study research we discuss emerges in the context of the five year APCOL CURA research network was funded and established in 2009 (www.apcol.ca). Its aims are to focus on a diverse array of community-based adult learning, activism and organizing related to challenging poverty in the City of Toronto, while also creating new networks for cooperation and coordination. The APCOL research network has helped to organize and support a series of eight distinctive PAR case studies and popular education initiatives dealing with four core pathways to anti-poverty action in the areas
of i) educational reform/support, ii) community-based health and nutrition, iii) local good jobs campaigns, and iv) housing issues. The APCOL case study research is further supplemented by community-based arts-informed popular education initiatives, conferences as well as city-wide survey studies of adult learning (of active participants, past participants as well as non-participants) in relation to various anti-poverty issues, concerns and organizing. The APCOL network includes researchers from 19 service agencies and community groups, as well as those based at the University of Toronto, York University, Ryerson University and George Brown College.

Partnered with APCOL to create and complete the case study research discussed in this paper is AHT. With the assistance of George Brown College, AHT and APCOL researchers focus on the distinct adult learning dynamics and implications related to community health work and community health worker training. AHT is a culture-based, multi-service health organization. Its Aboriginal values, traditions and beliefs include the traditional Aboriginal approach to healing which is at the core of its organization. It is the driving force behind all that AHT does, and this perspective is likewise central to the case study research. AHT draws community members as well as students from First Nations within and beyond Toronto offering a unique entry point into the second year of the George Brown College's CHW program. The students represent many different Aboriginal nations from across Canada: Okanagan, Micmac, Cree, Ojibway, Mohawk, and Metis to name a few. Some are long-time residents of Toronto, while others are born in Toronto, and many others are newly-arrived to this city. They come from a range of economic and social circumstance: from homeless street people, adults who were adopted out to non-Aboriginal families and single parents, to those who live more comfortably but where money is often scarce. For many students, their involvement with AHT as well as the CHW program at AHT is the start of their healing journey, and this figures prominently in the case study research goals and focus. These people are looking for a sense of Aboriginal identity and belonging. They are often suffering from the effects of oppression which is manifested in many different ways – physically, mentally, emotionally and spiritually. Issues of culture, race, gender as well as poverty and social class are all involved.

It is in this context that, while participating in the CHW program, participants begin seeing healers, elders and traditional counsellors on a regular basis, attend healing ceremonies, and/or access medical care, either for the first time or for the first time in very long time. The courses taught (e.g. advocacy, community development, communications, academic writing & presentation skills, counselling and group dynamics) are focused on ensuring students have an understanding of the impact oppression has had on themselves, their families and past generations. It is very empowering for them to learn and understand the generational impact oppression has had on their communities. The program helps them realize how they can become agents of change for themselves, their families, and their communities. As a culture-based program, AHT’s CHW program offers participants access to traditional teachings on a weekly basis and they are able to attend the various ceremonies that are available. For many of these students, involvement with AHT and the CHW program is their introduction to Aboriginal culture and spirituality.

The PAR case study research was co-planned and co-coordinated by AHT researchers, teachers and students along with APCOL researchers from OISE. In relation to anti-poverty research, the
case study viewed the distinct challenges of Aboriginal communities, as well as the distinct forms of intervention, re-engagement in Aboriginal culture and the healing process as an important extension of the adult education and adult lifelong learning process. Guided by these perspectives, our research approach involved the following: a) supporting current instructors and students in the CHW trainee program (n=5; also interviewed); b) providing qualitative and action research methodology training for program participant-researchers carrying out and interpreting interviews with current and past participants (n=40); and c) utilizing research information to support emerging action goals such as solving on-going challenges to AHT CHW program as well as building greater recognition, capacity and participation in terms of advocacy. Active, participatory engagement (amongst participant-researchers, educators and academic researchers) in this approach was aimed at further development of the CHW program, but also the creation of new, evidence-based insights into the cultural dynamics of Aboriginal community learning on anti-poverty work more broadly.

Our research methodology specifically involved semi-structured interviewing with current and past participants guided by the following six main questions: i) What made you join the Community Health Worker Trainee Program at Anishnawbe Health Toronto?; ii) How did this program at Anishnawbe Health help you with your cultural identity?; iii) How did learning about the impact of oppression affect your sense of self, family, and community?; iv) In what ways has this increased knowledge gained from the program contributed to what you now do in your life?; v) What path did the program lead you to after leaving the program?; and, vi) Now that you have been through the program, how did it affect, either positive or negative, in the areas of health/nutrition, housing, employment, and education for you, your family or community?

### Research Findings and Discussion

My cultural identity is Ojibway. I gained a broadened view of my cultural identity. There was a big change, my life was closed, mainly with my family, and I felt I was doing fine, but I used to have moments of anxiety which I could not explain. I also despised the way my own people were- like the drunkenness of the men. When I went through this program, I realized I had internalized the oppression against Aboriginal peoples, and that is why I judged my own people. Now I have a better understanding of myself, who I am, and I can also be a better parent to my children too. Meeting and teachings by the Elders solidified what I already knew, but it was like a unifying experience. Now I know that that there are more native people, not different tribes, but one native peoples. (Paula) (note: all names of participants are pseudonyms)

Remarkable transformational learning was documented in this research, as Paula’s comments above suggest. These transformations revolved around the stabilization of one’s life, identity, family as well as re-connection to community. From these transformations, enormous individual and collective capacities are created.

AHT and the CHW program not only contributed to specific Aboriginal healing processes at the individual level, and, through this made contributions to healing the community which could build capacity for engaging various challenges – participation often flowed from community as well. Many past and current interviews specifically noted that it was through a family or other community member that they came to understand the potential value of participating in the CHW
program and the AHT. Identity was both an issue that drew participation and a focus of participation.

I looked Native, but I didn’t feel like I was, I had no knowledge really of anything of the culture and um so that really helped me to come to terms with my identity (Tanya)

Well it actually helped tremendously, when I reflect on all of my experiences I always identify this (CHWT) as being the turning point of a better understanding of my cultural identity (May)

It was an education where the component was Native American, which is what I am, [and] my beliefs …which made it really unique…Traditional training here, dealing with ceremonies, medicines, field trips. Native Studies within the program and just having a Native circle and Sweats within the city and as well as field trips which really helped (Amy)

I was really glad we had the option to go to Sweats every Friday, and with our peers it was really a great way to deal with what we were going through on our day to day. Employment…? It helped incredibly actually because you’re building a network, not only at Anishnawbe Health but also at other organizations. (Mike)

Learning was deeply supported, as another interviewee said, by the process of “getting back in touch with using the medicine wheel and going to ceremonies. It helped a lot in getting back to my roots… The program is so culturally-based that it gives you a foundation to your community and to yourself, it’s just connecting to your being” (William).

Moreover, while participating in AHT and the CHW programming helped many move forward with a career (within and beyond community health services), motivations for joining went beyond simply achieving employment in a certain field of work. Reasons revolved around “want[ing] to be something to help out the community” (Tina), as well as to heal:

I needed something positive in my life and to learn a little bit more about myself and my cultural spirituality and also for healing purposes [it’s been] a really healing part of my life… And it’s really helped me a lot I didn’t know who I was, I was really lost with myself when I first came to AHT and I really fought against my people because of what had happened in the RS [residential schools] and I thought all Native people were bad people but it was this program that helped to open my eyes about RS and how colonization and oppression and how internal oppression and assimilation work (Dawn)

Now [through AHT/CHW] my career path has totally gone in a different direction. So learning about that and seeing that made me want to actually continue with my healing journey. And I think working within the community, working so closely, certainly with my job I’m more focused on spirituality and the traditional side of things has really opened my eyes to a lot of things and helped me to actually place what I actually value the most, and things that are, that I consider to be important to me. (John)
Healing, creating and benefiting from community belonging – from a necessarily distinctive Aboriginal cultural/historical perspective, these were central to learning and future participation in facing on-going challenges of the person’s various communities. It proved central to being able to think about oneself, one’s culture and community, and about broader social problems. With very few exceptions in our research, it provided a foundation for asking critical questions about society: e.g. “it just helped me open my mind then see things clear and just question, that was good, questioning (Tracy); or, as Tina noted, “a lot of things were like an eye-opener like what is still going on in society you know, like a lot of racism and a lot of like oppression”. And, beyond helping to re-establish individual and collective cultural lives, we argue these are crucial issues in terms of understanding how Aboriginal peoples collectively may challenge oppressions, including those linked directly to poverty.

In fact, we see something unique in these dynamics that elude other APCOL anti-poverty organizing/learning research (see APCOL Working Papers Series: www.apcol.ca). There we see issues of immigration, anti-racism, creating identification with one’s neighborhood, building social networks, or popular education, arts and training interventions on specific issues (i.e. housing, education, employment, health/nutrition), for example, as the focal points. In the case of our research, the dynamics of reclaiming identity and healing, as necessary to effective collective response, are both distinctive and foundational. Out of these experiences emerged, in other words, a new motivation “to give back as much as I can to the communities here... do a lot of the political type things, [and join] different committees for trying to find a way of helping” (May); or as Dawn put it, to “break things down and to be able to try fight in a positive way like in a positive manner, and learning things, because I didn’t understand anything about what was going on”.

Conclusion

In part, this paper offers some documentation of the unique Aboriginal cultural and historical approach offered by AHT as well as the CHW program. In the basic sense, we discuss aspects of a program that attempts to bridge people to careers in the community health services field. It does this. However, in our view, it does much more than this. In the context of adult learning processes, community-based capacities, as well as the potential for anti-poverty organizing and critical thinking – we argue that this type of Aboriginal culture centred learning environment is unique, and has unique lessons to teach. As we noted, though there is research on Aboriginal history, collective struggle, atrocities against Aboriginal peoples, as well as studies of health, education, housing, employment issues – too few studies of community organizing have placed Aboriginal adult learning issues at their center.

To respond to this we partnered with university researchers of the APCOL network to carry out our own fact-finding, using our own students and educators, and focusing on the issues we felt were likely most important with an eye toward practical outcomes. The practical outcomes for us revolved around more clearly understanding what is distinctive and what works in establishing stability in the lives of Aboriginal people, their family and communities within (and beyond) Toronto. Healing, creating and/or renewing belonging to our culture are central to this learning.

References


They Were Aware”: Activist 'Invitation' and Knowing as Praxis

Kate Murray
University of British Columbia

Abstract: In November 2011, an Occupy Vancouver activist was interviewed on a morning radio show to discuss the City's application for injunction against the Occupy encampment. Drawing on critical, dialectical approaches to knowing and especially the work of Paula Allman, I explore the radio interview in light of possibilities for transformative dialogical praxis amidst contemporary alienating and disconnected experiences of both being and knowing.

My Line of Inquiry: Activist Practices of Knowing-as-'invitation'
On October 15, 2011, some 5,000 people converged at the Vancouver Art Gallery as “Occupy Together” events were held in 950 cities across the world. Vancouver Occupyers held a general assembly, set up a camp, formed education, outreach, and media working groups, began collecting books in a peoples' library, and co-hosted speaking events and marches with local social justice groups. These practices of educating and awareness-raising—practices of knowing—can be understood as invitations to a broader public to “understand things the way we do”, and based on this, “act with us”. While such practices of 'knowing-as-invitation' are integral to the engagement, mobilizing and organizing work of social justice struggles, simply ‘knowing’ about injustice does not translate to individual or collective action (Kilgore, 1999; Thompson, 2006).

Here, I draw on the engaged thinking of Paula Allman (1944-2011) whose theorizing (following that of Marx, Freire, and Gramsci) engages with a myriad of social, political, and cultural relations relevant to understanding the 'human condition' (including practices of inter alia colonialism, racism and hetero-patriarchy) within contemporary global relations of capitalism. I tend to use Allman's work in concert with the thinking of Jean-Paul Sartre, whose thinking influenced Freire and whose work coheres with Allman's in a shared attempt to dialectically grasp and transform the absurd degree to which human and ecological well-being have become subordinated to the logics of capitalist accumulation.

In my view, Allman’s (e.g, 1999, 2001) theoretical and experiential account of dialogical praxis provides a compelling model through which to re-imagine activist practices of awareness-raising as an 'invitation' to the transformative praxis of collective self-education. However Allman's own account of critical/revolutionary learning, and Lange's (2004) fascinating description of action research—inspired by Allman's work—both featured prolonged small-group engagements between committed teacher-learners and learner-teachers. Such contexts clearly differ from the often brief, fragmented, and highly mediated 'moments' in which many activists find themselves trying to to engage a 'broader public' in the praxis of social justice.

Interview as 'Invitation': Response and Reconnection
On November 16th, 2011, CBC morning radio host Rick Cluff interviewed Occupy Vancouver member and legal volunteer Sasha Wiley-Shaw about the City of Vancouver's court application for an injunction against the protest camp. This exchange can be seen as particular 'moment of invitation' which is remarkable (in light of the historical significance of the Occupy movement)
but also ordinary—typical of many conversational encounters between what are apparently mainstream, public concerns (in Vancouver and elsewhere in North America) and awareness-raising practices undertaken in the course of social and environmental justice work.

Cluff's job as interviewer is to pose tough questions on behalf of a silent audience. But these questions and critiques only make 'sense' in light of a broader historical, material and cultural backdrop. Thus, though the interview details are specific to the Occupy Vancouver court injunction, the conversation is necessarily about much more.

Through Allman's work, the interview can be explored as praxes of knowing. In his journalistic scrutiny of the protest, Cluff (perhaps necessarily) draws into the conversation a set of everyday discourses which evoke reified ('thingified') versions of dynamic relations. Cut-off from their relational origins and qualities, such concepts can function to obscure the concrete materialities and human practices upon which they are based (Allman, 1999). As Wiley-Shaw responds, she directly and indirectly confronts some of these abstracted and/or disconnected, often unspoken understandings—creatively reconnecting them to the underlying social, economic, ecological and sensual materialities which they both represent and obscure.

“Living there in tents”: Protest as Process
As the interview begins, Cluff asks Wiley-Shaw about upcoming injunction hearing. She responds:

we feel it's about our charter rights... and for us that means protecting the encampment...; the political expression of the occupy movement is embedded in the the notion of occupying... We'll be bringing forward information about our decision-making processes... [and] all the incredible health and safety and social service provision going on, on site.

Cluff presses the issue:

you've heard many times the Mayor and the police... and people say: “we don't disagree with your right to protest. What we disagree with is the fact you're living there in tents. We want the tents gone, but you're more than welcome to come back everyday to protest in front of the Art Gallery.” What do you say to that?

Later, Wiley-Shaw adds:

When you seek deep, systemic change, this is not something you can go protest for in an afternoon and accomplish. This... requires sustained process and protest, and it's the camps that sustain that.

Here, Wiley-Shaw identifies Cluff's unspoken reference to a particular, narrow, version of protest in which individuals briefly gather or march “for an afternoon” to garner public attention and/or make demands of political and/or corporate leaders. Her response suggests these regularized, time-limited and demand-centred acts of protest are unlikely to lead to deep and systemic social change (perhaps suggesting this is precisely why they have become so acceptable
in the first place.) Against this familiar and legitimated politics of demand, Wiley-Shaw highlights the political significance of the concrete practices embodied in Occupy's encampment—acts of mutual care which include provision of food, first aid and social services, and direct, inclusive decision-making. As a politics of the act, this approach holds that transformative social change cannot be enacted through pre-planning or hierarchy, but rather that individuals must work together to create the future to which they aspire. While Cluff's line of questioning (above) separates Occupiers' formal “right to protest” from the practice of “living there in tents”, Wiley-Shaw's response grasps and articulates these two elements as internally related—wherein the encampment is integral to and thus qualitatively transforms protest, and the 'tent city' is, in turn, fundamentally transformed by its political nature.

Later in the interview, Cluff challenges:

> Originally it was the 99% versus the 1%, and then all of a sudden we had a gentleman in here that talked about salmon farming... so... you can understand why some ... [observers] say “well, what's your point?” because it seems to be a moving target all the time.

Wiley-Shaw's response is patient and skilful:

> Ahh, I think all those pieces absolutely fit together. Underlying all of that, is a system of governance in which government is more... responsive to corporate interests than to the needs of the people. And so that has to do with exacerbation of wealth; that has to do with provision of social services; that has to do with lack of environmental protection... They all come into this same framework...[wherein] there are many many many of us—the 99%—whose voices are not heard and expressed in much of the actions of our government today.

Here, Wiley-Shaw identifies and challenges Cluff's unspoken claim that protests (as demand-centred) must have a (static versus moving) “point”, and that these seemingly disparate concerns (i.e. unequal wealth distribution and salmon farming) are, in fact, separate. Her response not only underscores the connectedness of these abstracted 'issues' but also articulates these connections relationally. Her description of governance as a responsive system, and of a government today that acts and (in theory) should hear and express the voices of people, implicitly grasps how Occupy formed in relation to governments and corporations as historicized, dynamic systems of practice.

Taking up Allman's thinking, it is also possible to explore this explicit conversation protest in relation to inexplicit, yet fundamental, notions of political power. Cluff's assertions that protesters are inconsistent and only supported by a“minority of the population” only work as critiques in light of a particular, commonsense idea of what politics should look like. Wiley-Shaw consistently, if indirectly, unsettles several of these taken-for-granted notions of political process. Throughout the interview, she is careful to emphasize her situated perspective as a member with her own analyses, who participates but cannot 'decide' or 'speak for' the Occupy movement; in this way, she provides a compelling demonstration of autonomy within collectivity.
In response to Cluff's question: “what if the court denies your application today and you're forced to move?” she states:

It's possible we might move, it's possible we might come back to the same site... individuals will come together in our groups and committees and make decisions about where we go from here...

In such moments, Wiley-Shaw demonstrates the very different, directly democratic and consensus-based approach that is integral to Occupy and its politics of the act. In contrast to liberal representative democracies wherein individuals delegate their political powers by voting—relying on leaders, and experts to deliberate and decide on their behalf (Allman, 1999; E. M. Wood, 1995)—direct approaches to democracy assert that individuals should retain much more active involvement. Consensus decision-making aims to be collaborative and egalitarian, wherein participants develop and consent to a shared proposal to achieve the best possible decision for the all group members. As well, these approaches hold that those most affected by a decision should be most directly engaged determining the way forward. In this way, they in many ways jar with liberal, representative democratic practices wherein individuals' interests are assumed to be 'given' (as rational calculations based on self-interest); where leaders should demonstrate clarity and surety (otherwise, they are 'dithering'); and wherein there is no expectation of compromise (it is 'fair' for the majority to trump the minority). Wiley-Shaw’s responses—and refusal to predict or pre-empt Occupiers' decision about whether or not they will move—demonstrate the movement's (and her own) conscious attention to political power, knowledge and decision-making as collective, emergent and as contingent on future circumstances. In these ways, she actively (if implicitly) demonstrates Occupy's vision of a connected—versus alienated—form of political power.

Contesting “health and safety”
These praxes of disconnection and connection continue as Cluff scrutinizes the Occupy encampment, citing complaints from fire officials and noting that the City's argument “of course is urgent action when health and safety were involved.” A little later, he asks:

a recent poll shows that approximately 29% of respondents asked about occupy Vancouver supported it, which means, 71% did not, so should taxpayers' dollars go towards something that the minority of the population agrees with?

Cluff's preamble reflects the rather uncontroversial suggestion that “of course”, questions of health and safety warrant urgent action by municipal authorities. This commonsense truth would seem especially valid in light of extensive news coverage (just days prior) of two overdose incidents on the Occupy Vancouver site—one, tragically, resulting in the death of a young woman. Wiley-Shaw's response brings into view the materialities and practices to which these representations of health and safety and costs to taxpayers correspond. With respect safety bylaws, she states:

we're told one thing one day and one thing the next day... Anyone who's watching... can see ... there's incredible amounts of work ... to improve health and safety on site... I personally don't feel... the City of Vancouver's focus is actually on safety... the
City is quite selectively picking their issues. I think they're looking for ways to make us go away... This week... Occupy Vancouver made strong calls for transparency in municipal election financing... So, as municipal elections become uncomfortable... [politicians] look for ways to try [to] silence the political voices rising out of the movement.

Later, she disputes the assertion that Occupy poses costs to taxpayers:

the Vancouver police department [said] last week saying there's been absolutely no need for criminal investigation or anything of that nature... And that's failing to take into account the huge range of social services that are being provided on site. I've heard estimates in the millions of dollars... so there is actually major social good being done by the movement...

While health and safety obviously exists concretely and sensually—for instance, in the bodily implications of fire, illness, and addiction—Wiley Shaw's interventions interrupt understandings of 'health' and/or 'safety' that are based in a kind of crass materialism in which representations of these are treated as descriptive or empirically 'given' (Allman, 2007 following Marx). Instead, Wiley-Shaw's response points to how particular versions of health and safety are constructed through situated and interested human praxis and can also be taken-up and wielded in relation to actors' goals.

In Vancouver, homelessness and addiction exist in crisis proportions. Approximately 1600 individuals are homeless; hundreds are turned away from shelters throughout the winter, and there is a death due to overdose about every third day (see City of Vancouver, 2012; Markle, 2011; Vallance et al., 2012). The city's downtown eastside continues to be over-policied and under protected, a reality well-known to local vulnerable (often indigenous) women who experience ongoing violence and who were—for a decade—systematically disappeared and murdered in the face of police and government inaction (see Dhillon & Bailey, 2012). While Vancouver's governing mayor and council were elected on a platform to end homelessness, their approach has consistently involved deregulating and subsidizing private development while privatizing the city's publicly-owned housing stock. In the downtown eastside, units affordable to people on disability or welfare have disappeared at alarming rates. Meanwhile, the City continues to proclaim 'success' in tackling homelessness using doublespeak; in press releases, the same housing investments are repeatedly re-announced, and units that will rent at market rates (e.g., $900/month) are called “social housing.” (see Crompton, 2013; Klein, 2013; Swanson & Drury, 2013) It is in this context that Occupiers were organizing free shelter, daily food, and basic first aid, accessible to individuals irrespective of health (including mental health, (dis)ability and/or addiction) status. In doing so, they attempted to radically confront and transform what are, in OECD countries, the most significant health and safety issues of all—inequality and poverty (see Mikkonen & Raphael, 2010; Wilkinson & Pickett, 2009).

Allman's thinking elucidates how Occupiers' political acts of mutual care exist in oppositional relation to contemporary arrangements through which human capacities and practices—including those related to social, health, and economic wellbing—have become alienated from our day-to-day lives and are instead organized via arrangements through which corporations...
make lucrative profits in the healthcare 'business'; technology-heavy acute interventions are funded while preventative environmental and social determinants are disregarded; and certain people (e.g. refugee claimants) are denied access.

Within the interview, Wiley-Shaw does not directly and fully critique these pervasive commonsense arrangements. Nonetheless, as she brings into view (developer) funding of ongoing re-election campaigns, her response invites listeners to grasp the City of Vancouver— not as a neutral arbiter of public good—but as a field practices coordinated by a governing mayor and council with whose political careers depend on facilitating conditions favourable to developers' accumulation of capital. As Wiley-Shaw address 'taxpayer costs', she calls into question the hundreds of thousands of dollars spent policing a group whose primary engagements were public transparent decision-making, and collective provision of free food and shelter. If only implicitly, Wiley-Shaw's response begs questions about who determines 'health and safety' for what purpose, and exactly who or what is being protected.

Serial knowing and a world... half made-up

Moments later, continuing her response to Cluff's statement (above, p.409) that the protest is only supported by a “minority of the population,” Wiley-Shaw makes visible the material and social relations within which 'public opinion' is formed:

we have a concentration of media ownership, and the result is that messages are very selectively sent out... there's been an attempt by much of media to show specific aspects of the movement and not others... I hope that people dig deeper than some of that media... because I think there's a lot going on there that everyone in the 99% would support if they were aware it was happening.

Despite initial, relatively positive public and media responses to Occupy Vancouver, mainstream press accounts were soon dominated by portrayals of the protests as confused, rag-tag, and comprised mostly of 'fringe' elements. In a particularly noteworthy display of journalistic 'objectivity,' The National Post published six negative articles during the first three days of the Canadian protest (Gutstein, 2011). Wiley-Shaw's response (above) disrupts reified, disconnected, versions of 'public opinion' by highlighting how this develops through ongoing social and historical praxis; she highlights that what is 'known' should be understood and scrutinized in relation to how this knowledge is formed (see e.g., Allman, 2001) Further, while suggesting that public disagreement may reflect uncritical absorption of media narratives, Wiley-Shaw nonetheless grasps this praxis of knowing dialectically—underscoring and inviting the possibility that listeners will critically “dig deeper” and decide for themselves.

But for each of Wiley-Shaw's critical interventions, it seems, there are layers of lived praxis which complicate her task. As the interview begins, Cluff notes that “the mayor and police” disagree with and “wan[t] to end” Occupy Vancouver; he recounts the fate of protests in other cities: “Occupy Wall Street has been moved, Occupy Oakland has been dismantled, Occupy Calgary is being forced to move—they're being moved.” In light of all this, he asks Wiley-Shaw, “how optimistic are you?” and “how long do you think Occupy Vancouver should be allowed to stay?”
As in matter-of-fact references to health and safety, these statements of 'fact' about recent events take for granted and gloss over an array of arrangements which should instead be exposed. The euphemisms used by Cluff (“dismantled” “end” “forced to move” “being moved”) obscure the significant practices of coercion, threat—and in several instances extreme violence—that were enacted against other Occupy protesters and are regularly carried out against people deemed illegal by virtue of their bodily location. Being “moved” (as Cluff vaguely puts it) by state justice systems can involve being hit, restrained, separated from loved ones, deported to conditions of hardship and repression, and/or experiencing financial hardship in the form of heavy fines or seizure of assets, etc. In the early days of Occupy Wall Street, one widely-circulated video portrayed an officer shooting pepper spray into the faces of corralled women. Meanwhile, the 'dismantling' of Occupy Oakland involved hundreds of police using tear gas, rubber bullets and batons in swat team-style raids; Oakland Occupyer and veteran Scott Olsen suffered a fractured skull after first being injured, then hit in the face with an exploding projectile—apparently launched by police towards the group that had stopped to help him (see Gabbatt, 2011; Seltzer, 2011). Following Cluff's vague allusions to various Occupy evictions, Wiley-Shaw manages a brief intervention before proceeding with the rest of her response: “yes, it's unfortunate that in some cases municipal authorities have cracked down...” [my emphasis].

Cluff's casual skirting of police violence can be seen to reflect a societal permissiveness towards both the slow violence of poverty, and even dramatic acts of state violence. For me, this reading evokes Sartre's elaboration of seriality within scarcity—pervasive human relations of threat and hostility in which we routinely relate to others—through things—as sub-human objects (see Hayim, 1980). For both Allman and Sartre, such conditions are fostered via alienating praxes of being and knowing through which we come to know ourselves as helpless—impotent victims of Others and of circumstances we are powerless to change (see Allman, 1999; Sartre, 1960).

This implicit 'storyline' of passivity and domination is also audible within Cluff's statements:

“how long... Occupy Vancouver should be allowed to stay?”
...
“been moved” “been dismantled” “forced to move” “being moved
...
“the site is in compliance”
...
“the court denies your application... and you're forced to move?” (my emphases)

Such questions and comments simply reflect the way things are but also convey “a world in which our actions seem to come to us from elsewhere—already half made-up and requiring no more than inconsequential additional touches..." (P. Wood, 1985, p. 41) In contrast, Wiley-Shaw's responses—though limited and mediated—consistently and creatively reclaim Occupyers' powers of collective human agency:

we're part of a global movement
...
we're not going away
...
there's incredible amounts of work going on everyday 
...
i think... we're making people politically uncomfortable 
...
individuals will come together in our groups and committees and make decisions...

To Deepen Everyday Dialogue?
Taken together, Cluff's interview questions coalesce to produce and re-produce Occupy 
Vancouver as an object of scrutiny against an opaque backdrop. Sedimented arrangements and 
understandings become a kind of unarticulated standard against which the protest is repeatedly 
evaluated—refocusing critical attention towards the art gallery lawn and obscuring and 
naturalizing the very system of arrangements which occupiers endeavoured to critique.

Clearly, Wiley-Shaw and numerous communities of activists already engage in many of the 
critical, relational, dialogical, and transformative practices of being and knowing that Allman 
describes. But as the interview ends, it is hard not to be left with an awareness of dissonance 
between (an admittedly dichotomized) 'Occupy' and 'public', captured in part by Wiley-Shaw's 
sense that “there's a lot going on [in the movement] that everyone in the 99% would support if 
they were aware it was happening...”

Allman's thinking helps to elucidate how each of the commonsense 'truths' that Wiley-Shaw 
seeks to disrupt are not disconnected 'ideas' but are underwritten for each listener daily through 
lived experiences—all too often often characterized by pervasive, serial relations of hostility, 
alteriority and alienated powerlessness. How might we cultivate everyday practices through 
which these historical, social, material and sensual experiences can be ever more deeply 
disrupted and transformed?

References
Allman, P. (1999). Revolutionary Social Transformation: Democratic Hopes, Political 
Possibilities and Critical Education. Westport, CT: Bergin & Garvey.
Critical Education. Westport, Connecticut: Bergin & Garvey.
Rotterdam: Sense Publishers.
privatization and deregulation of housing, The Mainlander. Retrieved from 
http://themainlander.com/2013/02/13/vancouver-misses-housing-goals-report-card-gives-
a-for-privatization-and-deregulation-of-housing/
columbia/inquiry-slams-police-in-pickton-case/article6477651/
Gabbatt, A. (2011, October 26). Scott Olsen injuries prompt review as Occupy Oakland protests 
continue, The Guardian. Retrieved from 
http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2011/oct/26/scott-olsen-occupy-oakland-review
Gutstein, D. (2011, December 1). How Canada's corporate media framed the Occupy movement,


Teaching Religion in Calgary Public Schools: Perspectives on Context

Afroza Nanji
University of Calgary

Abstract: Encounters with individuals who are religious in increasingly diverse and particular ways requires enhanced knowledge about religions, the contexts within which they are practiced and their role in sustaining societies. As an important dimension of their adult learning journey, the Canadian sociocultural context within which teachers are teaching about religion must be adequately considered to fully appreciate their experiences and associated changes in beliefs and attitudes. This paper demonstrates the contribution of religion in Canadian public policy, public space and public schools as important elements of the sociocultural context within which adult learning is taking place.

Introduction
On March 13, 2013, the world welcomed in a new Pope. I remember watching the white smoke with intrigue as I caught a scene of the Vatican on the news. Masses of people, pilgrims they were called, had gathered awaiting the news of their new religious leader. I was moved and inspired. It was the immense sense of faith and hope of my Catholic brothers and sisters that moved me. Being myself Muslim, one may wonder why I call Catholics my brothers and sisters? I realize that we can no longer consider ourselves separate from religious communities that differ from our own. We are interconnected now, more then ever before and increased mobility and communication between peoples of the world are causing increasing encounters with diverse others.

I was due to catch a theatrical performance at my children’s school that afternoon and as I headed over I thought of my need to send warm wishes and prayers for blessings to my Catholic friends and colleagues. This comforting thought however, was followed by a perplexing one. Apart from a handful of individuals I knew the religious identity of, for the most part I had no idea of the religious affiliation or lack thereof, of those I would consider to be my more intimate associations.

Background
“A religion or religious tradition is a set of symbols and rituals, myths and stories, concepts and truth claim, which a community believes gives ultimate meaning to life, via its connection to an ultimate reality or transcendent such as God” (Runzo, 2011).

The present condition presents itself with a large selection of individualized meanings of religious identification (Esposito, 2008; O’Toole, 2006; Taylor, 2008). There are a multiplicity of spiritual, religious and secularly-oriented paths by which individuals seek meaning.

According to Esposito (2008) we have moved away from traditional societies in which the “majority of people share common religious stories and rituals” (p. 5). We have also moved beyond modern notions of society in which science replaced religion as the most certain form of knowledge. Present conditions Esposito (2008) suggested, are characterized by a pluralism of worldviews in which religions and cultures intermingle to create diverse and particular beliefs and expressions. Thus although religion is about “an organized community of faith” (Tisdell, 2008, p. 28) uniting a group of believers, members within a community manifest their beliefs in unique and diverse ways.
My doctoral research seeks to investigate the transformative adult learning journey that teachers who teach about Islam embark on. More specifically it will explore the following research question: How are perceptions and understandings of Islam held by teachers changed if at all, as a result of teaching about Islam in Calgary public schools?

Based on the plurality and individuality of religious views and expressions that characterizes present times, my study is premised on the need to acquire and demonstrate religious literacy. Religious literacy can be defined as a basic understanding of the world’s religious traditions, the internal diversity of expressions and beliefs within each tradition and the role of religion in social, cultural and political life (Moore, 2006, 2007, 2010). Enhancing religious literacy nurtures critical analysis and understanding of how religious beliefs shape, and are shaped by the contexts within which they are expressed. Literacy of this nature promotes the development of positive relationships amongst diverse peoples. It is possible to enhance religious literacy through education. My study focuses on the public school teacher, an adult learner, who is contributing to religious literacy and possibly being changed in the process.

Since “learning is a personal process—but a process that is shaped by the context of adult life and the society in which one lives” (Merriam, Caffarella & Baumgartner, 2007, p. 1), my research will pay special attention to how Canada and the public school system has addressed religious diversity and how this extends into a teacher’s learning experience. This paper presents a literature analysis of the historical and sociocultural context within which teachers are teaching about religion. The paper commences with an exploration of Canadian constitutional policy as it relates to religion along with a discussion on religious diversity in Canada and religion in public space. Subsequently the paper delves into the place of religion in public education and more specifically in Alberta public schools.

**Religion in Policy and Numbers**

The Government of Canada acknowledges and protects religious diversity and religious freedom through the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms proclaimed in 1982 and the Multiculturalism Act passed in 1988. Thus although we are essentially and culturally a Christian society (Beamman, 2006; Biles & Ibrahim, 2009, Bramadat & Seljak, 2012), the constitutional protection of religious freedom is an explicit affirmation of the value of religious diversity and bestows freedom to practice one’s religion without prejudice (Bramadat, 2009). However until recently Bramadat (2009) claimed, Canadian multicultural policy has largely ignored the question of religion. Rather, it has focused on the promotion of ethnic diversity, combatting racism (Anctil, 2011; Biles & Ibrahim, 2009; Bramadat, 2008; Bramadat & Seljak, 2012) and upholding cultural practices (Rowe, 2009).

A report commissioned by the Department of Citizenship and Immigration Canada in 2010 identified that “the place of religious diversity within multiculturalism has not yet been adequately debated or explored” and that in fact “religion is now the most controversial domain of multiculturalism” (Kymlicka, 2010, p. 18). In addition, the Multiculturalism Act and Charter covers freedom of religion, but does not provide guidance on dealing with increasing religious diversity (Anctil, 2011).

One can turn to Canadian religious demographics, which Bramadat (2007, 2008) stated is expected to see drastic changes, to obtain a sense of the increasingly multiple ways in which
Canadians identify themselves religiously. A snapshot of changes between 1991 and 2001 demarcated the number of non-Christians, such as Muslims, Buddhists, Sikhs, and Hindus had more than doubled (Statistics Canada, 2003). It is estimated that by 2017, more than 10 percent of Canadians will be non-Christians (Bramadat, 2007).

Beaman (2012) suggested it is important to query, how are people religious? That is, “when Statistics Canada asks people to identify their religious affiliation we learn almost nothing about how people are religious or what they think religious behaviour is” (p. 270). Increasing plurality of interpretations and expressions along with the meaning associated with religious beliefs and practices cannot be appreciated through statistics.

**Religion and Public Space**

According to Bramadat (2009), the lack of understanding of how people are religious is attributed to a sense that conversations about religion are considered to be too volatile to talk about in public space, and are reserved for the private sphere. For those conversations that do enter public space, there is a tendency “to frame the religious phenomena …in terms of a binary essentialism in which all religions are essentially oriented toward love, peace, kindness and egalitarianism” (Bramadat, 2007, p. 121). This de-contextualized approach that uses neutral language may contribute to ‘safe’ conversations but does not contribute to understanding that in fact religions are constituted by people, and thus by their beliefs, interpretations, expressions and assumptions (Bramadat, 2007; Bramadat, Seljak, in press).

Taylor (2008) recommended a need to understand private and public in a manner that supports a positive rather than a subtraction story as it relates to religion and society. That is, by the term secular one cannot assume that a commitment to religiosity has waned. It is not that we are more secular due to the erosion of religious belief. Rather, from a positive viewpoint, there are a plethora of options and commitments today such as sacred, religious and spiritual varieties along with secular ones. Secularism in public space is in fact directed to the state and its institutions (Bouchard & Taylor, 2008; Woehrling, 2011), ensuring their neutrality with respect to religion. “In point of fact, religions already occupy this space and pursuant to the charters, religious groups and the faithful have the freedom to publicly display their beliefs” (Bouchard & Taylor, 2008, p. 43). A post-secular society as proposed by Bramadat and Seljak (in press) would have principles in the Charter of Rights and Freedoms and in the Multiculturalism Act yet enable individuals to reside in public spaces in ways that are religiously open and meaningful to them.

The intersection of increasing religious diversity with understandings of religious freedom and neutral public space highlights elements of the sociocultural context that informs religious literacy. As a microcosm of broader public space is the school classroom. Turning to religion in public schools, this paper will now explore perspectives on the rationale of teaching about religion in response to its recent introduction in Calgary public schools. A fairly recent amendment to the Alberta Human Rights Act will serve as an example of the tensions associated with its introduction.

**Religion and Public Schools**

**Backdrop**

As of 2005 the Calgary Board of Education (CBE) permits the teaching of courses on religion within the Alberta Program of Studies (Calgary Board of Education, 2012). According to the
CBE, this will enable students to gain understanding of world religions and the influence of religion in such areas as politics, economics, history, literature and the arts (Calgary Board of Education, 2007).

The fairly recent introduction of religion in the curriculum manifests against a historical backdrop of the secularization of schools. Commencing in the 1960s, through to its widespread prevalence by the establishment of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms in 1982, removal of religion from Canadian public schools secured state neutrality and accommodated for religious diversity (Seljak, 2008, 2009). The virtual absence of teaching religion in public schools has led to an intellectual gap and religious illiteracy (Bramadat, 2007; Bramadat & Biles, 2005; Moore, 2006; Moore, 2007; Seljak, 2008, 2009; Sweet, 1997). According to Moore (2007), few teachers had the opportunity to learn about religion in a way that is appropriate for teaching in public schools and are “teaching about religion in the context of deeply rooted and widespread religious illiteracy” (p. 181).

Why Teach About Religion?
“Although there is a growing consensus regarding the need to teach about religion in public schools”, (Moore, 2007, p. 6), there exists an ideological spectrum with those that dissent on one end and those that fully support it on the other (Greenawalt, 2005; Moore, 2007). On one extreme end is the confident articulation that “schools should ignore religion” (Greenawalt, 2005, p. 79) as this is the responsibility of the home and communities with a fear of the neutrality of the state being diminished otherwise. A question arises however if abstaining from teaching about religion is a sign of neutrality or in fact one that imposes a secular worldview (Benson, 2007; Greenawalt, 2005)? On the other end of the spectrum is the prospect of fully presenting worldviews and the need for public schools to include a major subject of human concern. According to Biles and Ibrahim (2009) the need for religious education takes on an urgency in order “to tackle the deep-seated fear of religion that has taken hold in Canadian public circles” (p. 169).

In an analysis of the value of teaching about religion in public schools, Moore (2007, 2010) highlighted three important reasons for this undertaking. Firstly, religion is an important part of human experience. Religion plays a role in various dimensions of society including politics, economics along with social and cultural dimensions. Simply for its important role in world events (Benson, 2007), religion should be recognized as an important part of the curriculum. Basinger (2011) claimed that whilst most students are aware of the multiplicity of religions, they “have very limited knowledge of such religions” (p. 281). A second reason posed by Moore (2007) is that teaching about religion encourages critical thinking and a questioning of assumptions held by learners. The ability to discern the role of religion in world events and how economics, politics, social and cultural factors contribute is heightened. Thirdly, teaching about religion increases knowledge without which misunderstanding results. Misunderstanding and misperceptions compromises genuine respect for others (Basinger, 2011; Benson, 2007; Moore, 2007). All this being said, the various benefits of teaching about religion are realized when an appropriate curriculum and pedagogical approach are developed and utilized.
Teaching About Religion in Alberta Public Schools

In September 2010, Bill 44 became effective and Section 11.1 of the Alberta Human Rights Act was added to “provide transparency between schools and parents when controversial and sensitive issues are discussed” (Gereluk, 2011, p. 75). The Alberta Human Rights Act protects the equality of persons regardless of their religious beliefs. The amended Act requires teachers to provide notice to parents when religion is approached in subject-matter (Bill 44, 2009). For teachers the implications include practical challenges along with more philosophical ones. The burden of having to inform parents and the need to manage situations in which students are allowed to stay in class, but not participate are examples of more practically oriented challenges (Gereluck, 2011). Discussing his own experiences with teachers at Lord Beaverbrook School in Calgary, Wallace (2012) commented on philosophical challenges that the amendment has caused. Teachers have had to change how they teach and the requirements of informing parents along with the repercussions of not doing so has instilled a sense of fear in them. As for students, Bill 44 has the potential for preventing them from challenging the assumed beliefs of their families which has ironically “pushed back rights of children” (Gereluk, 2011, p. 75). In addition, Wallace (2012) questioned whether “students get a deep and rich education if they don’t get to discuss ideas different from their own” (p. 40). It is evident that the amended Human Rights Act has serious implications for teaching about religion in public schools. An ongoing uncovering and analysis of experiences associated with its implementation will reveal its impact on why, what and how teachers teach about religion.

Conclusion

On the day the new Pope was elected I saw thousands of religious Catholics on the news. Around me, I saw few. The apparent familial connection I felt with Catholics as the Pope was declared is marked by a significant lack of understanding of Catholicism and the lived religious and cultural experiences of Catholic Canadians. Conversations about religion in public space are increasing due to the intersection of increased religious diversity, with public policy that protects religious freedom. However, how people are religious in daily life and conversations that inform us about the particular lived experiences of our friends and colleagues seem scarce. The plurality of religious worldviews one is encountering necessitates an appropriate religious literacy in order that one is equipped to analyze and discern the role of religion in a fellow human being’s life and within society in general. Teachers as adult learners are important conduits of religious literacy, nurturing, developing and demonstrating it themselves. Since adult learning “is indeed an interactive process between the learner and the social context” (Merriam et al. 2007, p.1), this paper has aimed to uncover the literature around religion in policy, public space and public schools in order to understand important elements of the sociocultural context within which teachers are teaching about religion, and embarking on their own learning journey in the process.

References


Traditions, transitions, and innovations (pp.ix-xii). Toronto: Canadian Scholars Press Inc.


Conservation Effects of Later Life Learning: An Exploration of the Association between Educational Participation and Positive Wellbeing among Older Adults

Miya Narushima, Jian Liu, Naomi Diestelkamp
Brock University

Abstract: This study examined the association between lifelong learning and psychological wellbeing in late adulthood. A cross-sectional survey was conducted with 699 older learners (aged 60 years and older) enrolling in a public continuing education program in Ontario. The results of logistic regression analysis suggested a positive association between the duration of learning and wellbeing even after key covariates such as age, gender, income, education level, social support, and chronic health conditions were taken into account. The authors discuss the results using Shuller’s (2004) “sustaining effects of learning”, underscoring “continuation” as a key factor for conserving wellbeing among older learners.

Introduction

In recent years, psychosocial states such as “wellbeing” and “happiness” have gained more attention among the public, as well as in the adult education field as a broader outcome indicator of lifelong learning beyond economic development (Field, 2009; Gouthro, 2010). Nevertheless, people in post-work are still a low priority under Ontario’s vocation-oriented “lifelong learning” policies. Publicly subsidized non-credit, general-interest and recreational forms of continuing education programs for adults and seniors, which are often taken for granted as a natural resource in communities, have been facing challenges such as program cuts and user fee increases over recent years.

Canada’s graying population, combined with the current policy emphasis on “ageing in place” (i.e. enabling older people to live in the community as long as possible) (Wiles et al., 2011), has made it important for older adults to remain physically, mentally and socially active in order to maintain their quality of life, while coping with chronic health conditions and other challenges arising in late adulthood. Although studies have shown that continued engagement in various social activities in late adulthood plays a significant role in successful aging (e.g., Gilmour, 2012; Preece & Findsen, 2007; Jarvis 2001), as of yet only a limited number of studies (Jenkins, 2011; Leung & Liu, 2011; Narushima, 2008) have empirically examined the connection between lifelong learning and well-being and health among older adults. Given these sociopolitical contexts combined with the dearth of research on the impact of later life learning on health and aging, this study examined the association between participation in lifelong learning activities and psychological wellbeing among older adults by taking demographics and states of health into consideration.

Theoretical Framework and Related Literature

In order to analyze the effects of lifelong learning on older adults’ wellbeing, we employed Shuller’s (2004) matrix of “effects of learning” -- a comprehensive taxonomy of wider benefits of lifelong learning -- as our framework. Based on their extensive study in the UK, Shuller and his colleagues found that outcomes of adult learning were too complex to be understood with a single notion such as “adaptation”, “change” or “transformation”. They thus classified the effects of learning into quadrants with the two axes (“individual - community” and “transforming -
sustaining”) with each of the quadrants including the four different types of learning outcomes: “personal change”, “self-maintenance”, “social fabric”, and “community activism” (p.25).

According to Shuller (2004), “sustaining” effects -- which include “self-maintenance” and “social fabric” -- are where “education prevents decay or collapse (at the individual and/or community level) or consolidates a positive state of stability, in addition to those instances where it brings about change of a more or less dramatic kind” (p. 25). For example, an individual’s and a community’s ability to prevent ill health and/or to maintain a positive state of wellbeing, “where learning enables people to continue to live fulfilling and useful lives” (p.27) epitomizes these effects. This model sheds light on the relatively invisible “sustaining/conservation effects” of lifelong learning.

Shuller’s view (2004) of the wider benefits of learning has been buttressed by other literature which has generally found that adult learning brings not only vocational and economic development, but also psychological and social benefits such as increased life satisfaction, active social and civic participation, enlarged social support network and a health-promoting lifestyle (Dench & Regan, 2000; Hammond, 2004; Field, 2009). However, as mentioned before, studies that directly examine the association between older adults’ participation in lifelong learning and their wellbeing are still scarce. Leung and Liu (2011), based on their study to identify the relationships between lifelong learning, quality of life and the self-efficacy of older learners (n=1003) in China, found that what significantly affects older adults’ wellbeing is not the amount, but the “continuation” of learning. Jenkins’ study (2011), which used data from a national longitudinal study of aging in the UK, examined the long-term effects of three different types of learning on the subjective wellbeing of older adults. This study found that leisure type courses rather than narrowly focused vocational courses were most likely to sustain older adults’ participation and consequently enhance their wellbeing over time (Jenkins, 2011, p.414). Both studies found the “continuation of learning” as a common key contributing factor to sustain mental wellbeing among older learners. These studies also suggest that outcomes of later life learning, especially psychosocial states such as “wellbeing” and “happiness”, need to be analyzed over a longer time frame with the concept of “sustaining effects” advocated in Shuller (2004). This research follows these studies, examining the association between older adults’ duration of learning in a local public continuing education program and their psychological wellbeing.

Methodology

Study Design & Participants
The study employed a cross-sectional survey design (n=699). Participants were “older learners” (aged 60 years and older) who were recruited from a public continuing education program in Ontario. The program is run by a local school board in partnership with various community facilities such as high schools, adult learning centers, community centers and retirement homes. The program offers general interest courses in four types of subjects: arts and crafts, music and dance, physical fitness and exercise, and language and computer skills. In fall 2010, data was collected from a total of 158 classes using a take-home self-administered questionnaire. Ethics clearance was received from the research ethics boards of the researchers’ university and the school board. A total of 1331 older learners were approached, 921 (69.20%) individuals responded, and 707 of those gave their consent. Of the 707, 699 provided enough data to be included in the analysis.
Survey
We collected three types of information: 1) participants’ demographics and health related information (e.g., self-perceived health, chronic health conditions including chronic diseases and difficulties in performing daily activities, lifestyle factors including regular exercise, and the number of confidants), 2) the state of psychological wellbeing measured by the Psychological General Well-being Index (PGWBI) (Dupuy, 2004), and 3) participation patterns including motivations, perceived outcomes, and the duration of taking the current course or subject. The PGWBI, a 22-item instrument, has been shown to be reliable and validated by numerous studies in assessing mental health and quality of life in the general population and those with chronic diseases (Dupuy, 2004; Wu, 2004; McDowell, 2006). It asks participants to rate their subjective wellbeing levels over the past six months in six dimensions: 1) depressive moods, 2) anxiety and stress, 3) self-control, 4) concerns about general health, 5) life satisfaction, and 6) vitality. Each question is assigned a score from 0-5 to generate dimensional scores as well as a global score of general well-being which is divided into three levels: “severely distressed” (0-60), “moderately distressed” (61-72), and “positive wellbeing” (73-110). The duration of learning was split into 3 groups: 4-18 months (n=106), 19-48 months (n=141), and 49 months and longer (n=169) to make the size of each group comparable. Those who had participated for 3 months or less (i.e., those who were in their first term) were excluded as they were likely still adjusting to the program.

Data Analysis
The data analyses were conducted using SAS 9.2.2., following three steps, and p-values from two-tailed tests were used to find statistical significance. First, we found overall patterns in health status and wellbeing and participation. Second, the association between duration of learning and wellbeing level was examined using logistic regression analysis with three models. The dependent variable in these models was overall well-being (yes: the global PGWBI score >=73; no: <73). Two indicator variables were created for “19-48 months” and “49 or more months” with “4-18 months” as the referent. In the first model, we adjusted for age and gender, relationship status (a social support indicator), and education status (a socio-economic indicator). In the second model, we further adjusted for the number of chronic diseases (a health indicator). In the third model, we further adjusted for the number of confidants (a social support indicator) and regular exercise (a lifestyle indicator). Following the logistic regression, as the third step, we further compared the demographic characteristics, health states, and participation patterns of the three duration groups to find out if there were any other factors that potentially influenced the association.

Results
Demographics and Health Overview
Out of 699 participants, 26.47% were male and 75.53% were female with an average age of 69.21 years. The level of education was generally high with 63.93% of men and 66.80% of women holding a college or university degree. One out of five participants fell into “low income” with annual incomes of less than $25000. More than half of participants were married, while nearly 31% of participants classified themselves as either “divorced or separated” or “widowed”. Over 90% of participants perceived their health in positive terms such as “excellent”, “very good” or “good”, while nearly 35% of them also reported some functional difficulties in daily activities and almost 14% of male and 17% of female participants reported more than two
chronic diseases.

State of Psychological Wellbeing

The majority (72%) reported an overall “positive” state of psychological wellbeing, scoring 85.74 out of 110 on the global PGWBI score (86.52 out of 110 for male, and 85.49 out of 110 for females; n=699). The comparison among the six dimensions of the PGWBI scores found that older learners scored slightly higher in “self-control” and lower in “depressed mood” compared to the other dimensions such as “vitality” and “life satisfaction”.

Association between Duration of Learning and the PGWBI Score

Regarding the association between duration of learning and the level of psychological wellbeing (i.e., the PGWBI global score), the results of the logistic regression analysis suggested a positive association between the duration of learning and wellbeing in later life even after key covariates such as age, gender, income, education level, social support, and chronic health conditions were taken into account. When we examined how likely a participant was to have positive-well-being when compared to the shortest duration group (i.e., 4-18 months), compared to those taking courses for 4-18 months, those who took the courses for 19-48 months were 1.95 (95% CI: 0.95, 3.93) times more likely to have a higher level of wellbeing, and those taking them for more than 48 months were 2.9 (95% CI: 1.36, 6.34) times more likely to experience a higher wellbeing after adjusting for age, sex, socio-economic status and social support (Model 1). Further adjustment for other covariates such as the number of chronic diseases, the number of confidants, and regular exercise (Model 2 and 3) did not change the relationship, though the odds ratios varied slightly. The results of logistic regression models, also indicated relationship status and the number of confidants (social support indicators), and the number of chronic diseases (a health indicator) as significant factors influencing the association between participants’ duration of learning and well-being level throughout all three models.

When we further examined the characteristics of the three duration groups in demographics, health state and participation patterns we found some statistically significant differences between groups in terms of age, type of subject, motivations and perceived benefits. Not surprisingly, the average age of the longest duration group was 6 years older than the shortest duration group. Over 60% of those in the longest group were taking an “arts and crafts” type of course, while the most popular subject type for the shortest group was computer and languages (31%). “To keep me mentally active” and “for the joy of learning” were the most frequently reported motivations, while “learning what I wanted to learn” and “joy and satisfaction” were perceived benefits. Motivations in the social domain (e.g., “to be socially active”, “to meet people and make friends”) and perceived benefits in the health and social domains (e.g., “keeping mentally alert”, “seeing the doctor less”, “developing a new social support network”), however, were much more frequently reported by the longest duration group.

Discussion

The level of psychological wellbeing reported by older learners in this study was fairly positive: the majority of older learners reported a “positive wellbeing” (85.74 out of 110 on the global PGWBI score). This was also verified by the fact that over 90% of them also reported their perceived health in positive terms, while maintaining healthy active lifestyles despite the “risk conditions” – e.g., functional difficulties in daily living, living alone, low SES -- facing some
participants. The majority of older learners also reported a strong sense of taking control of their lives as well as resilience, i.e. not letting things make them depressed. Bringing these results together, one can assume the positive influence of lifelong learning on older adults’ wellbeing.

Given the limitation of a cross-sectional design and the general methodological challenge in assessing the impact of lifelong learning while taking into account many possible confounding variables (Field, 2009), we were unable to determine causation. These results, however, certainly provide additional support to previous research which found learning in adulthood is a contributing factor to health, mental wellbeing, quality of life (Hammond, 2004; Field, 2009) and social participation as key determinants of successful aging and happiness (Guilmour, 2012; Cooper, et al., 2011). Moreover, these benefits at the individual level overlap with the concept of “self-management” – one of the “sustaining effects” of learning advocated by Shuller (2004).

The results of our logistic regression analysis suggested a positive association between the duration of learning and wellbeing in later life even after key covariates were taken into account: the longer people continue in the same course, the better psychological wellbeing they reported. This result implies that not only participation, but continuous participation holds a key to sustain older learners’ positive wellbeing. In fact, one unexpected result is that the level of education did not significantly influence wellbeing in any of the three logistic regression models, despite the accumulated evidence of the lifelong effects of formal education as “human capital” for an individual’s wellbeing and health (Mirowsky & Ross, 2005; Mirowsky & Ross, 2008). A reason this might be is that both the direct and indirect effects of schooling at a young age on health may change across the life-course, as a study found that the schooling-income effect increases until age 60, plateaus and then declines after age 80 (Lynch, 2006). This finding overlaps with those of Leung and Liu’s (2011) and Jenkin’s (2011) studies that drew attention to the importance of continuous participation and the link between lifelong learning and long-term wellbeing among older adults.

Why does “continuation” matter so much? Although we need further studies to answer this question, the existing literature suggests two levels of supposition. At the individual level, in order to maintain one’s abilities for “self-management” (Shuller, 2004), psychological qualities such as “self-esteem”, “self-efficacy” and “resilience” – which are immediate benefits of learning -- may need to be frequently reinforced in late adulthood in order to make them into long-term benefits. Constant learning practice, which provides the “right level of challenges” and consequently a “sense of achievement and self-growth”, helps older adults sustain positive wellbeing, and cope with the larger challenges faced in later life (Hammond, 2004). At the social level, continuous participation in the same course may help older learners develop a stronger “sense of community”. The motivations and perceived benefits reported by the three different duration groups in this study partly reflect the growing needs in late adulthood: social support and health related items were much more frequently reported by the longest duration group (therefore the oldest group as well), while cognitive interests and desire for self-growth were shared by all three duration groups. Clearly, long-term learners see the benefits of lifelong learning not only in individual terms, but also as a “social fabric” or “a collective environment that is conducive to sustaining health” (Shuller, 2004, p. 27).
Implications for Adult Education Theory and Social Policy

This study suggests a few implications for further research and policy making. Compared with “transforming effects”, the “sustaining effects” of lifelong learning are less visible and dramatic, and thus tend to be understudied. However, in the context of later life learning, where learning is not directly linked with the vocational and economic advance, assessing and examining the “sustaining effects” of learning on “soft outcomes” (Hammond, 2004) such as psychological “wellbeing” and “happiness” becomes increasingly important. In addition, our study raises a methodological and conceptual question: whether a psychosocial quality such as wellbeing gained from “continuous” learning should be viewed not only as an “outcome” but also as an ongoing “process” of adult learning. Policy makers need to take a fresh look at continuing education programs in neighbourhoods as an important determinant of wellbeing for older adults, and consider how to more effectively utilize these programs within their policies.

Acknowledgements

Our appreciation goes to the participants who generously took time to share their information. Our thanks also go to the school board staff and instructors for their kind cooperation during the data collection period. We also acknowledge the three research assistants (Iris Hartwig, Joycelyn Affrifa, and Jenn Brailsford) who carried out the data collection. This study was funded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC) (Grant No. 410-009-2255).

References

Adult Education in a Precarious Age:  
The *Hamburg Declaration on Adult Learning* Revisited

Tom Nesbit, Simon Fraser University  
Michael Welton, Athabasca University

**Abstract:** UNESCO’s 1997 CONFINTEA V conference produced one of the most utopian statements about adult education and learning of recent times. The *Hamburg Declaration on Adult Learning* declared adult education key to building “a world in which violent conflict is replaced by dialogue, a culture of peace based on justice…and the creation of a learning society committed to social justice and general well-being.” However, the *Declaration* also recognized that there were many practical challenges to its implementation. In reviewing recent changes in the social, economic, environmental and political spheres, we assess how far the goals of the *Hamburg Declaration* have been achieved.

Since 1949, UNESCO’s 12-yearly international conferences on adult education (CONFINTEA) have brought together thousands of adult educators and government officials to review the latest initiatives, debate issues of mutual concern and recommend policy areas for future research and practice. Although each one has provided a major opportunity for adult educators to gain some appreciation of worldwide developments, the 1997 conference held in Hamburg (CONFINTEA V) was especially significant. Acknowledging that so much non-formal and popular adult education was provided by NGOs and professional and community groups, UNESCO formally invited their representatives to participate for the first time. CONFINTEA V also “marked a turning point in the global recognition of, and commitment to, adult learning and non-formal education…and used adult education as the platform with which to plan for human development within a global context” (Alfred & Nafukho, 2010, p. 95). Considered the high-water mark of international policy-making, the Hamburg conference focussed adult educators’ attention on addressing the challenges of democracy, peace and human rights, respect for diversity, economic and environmental sustainability and work force development.

The conference produced a remarkably utopian document: the *Hamburg Declaration on Adult Learning and Agenda for the Future* (UNESCO, 1997). Building upon two earlier influential UNESCO reports (Delors, 1996; Faure, 1972) and crystallizing the efforts of numerous adult education scholars and civil society organisations, the *Declaration* contains a preamble of 27 statements and ten themes, each highlighting different areas in which adult education might help build “a world in which violent conflict is replaced by dialogue and a culture of peace based on justice” (p. 1). The *Declaration* also promoted active citizenship and full participation of all citizens towards the goal of “a learning society committed to social justice and general well-being” (p. 1). However, it also recognized that these laudable goals faced many practical challenges and identified several that would seriously hamper their realization: economic globalization, gender and racial inequity and oppression, rapid yet uneven development of science and technology, drastic demographic changes, the shift to knowledge- and information-based societies, intensifying crises in the environment, major changes in patterns of work and employment, and increasing tensions between social groups. With the benefit of over 15 years hindsight we note that, sadly, these predictions have come to pass and the worldwide appearance and expression of adult education now seem very different from 1997. Given the shifting nature
of policy discourses, and the challenges facing the international field of adult and continuing education, we feel it important to review how international social, economic, environmental and political spheres have changed in the intervening years and assess how far the goals of the Hamburg Declaration have been achieved.

Surely, no-one can argue that the world is any more peaceful, safer or more just than it was in 1997. Inequalities continue to grow. Economic crises have deepened, threatening democratic and financial systems the world over. Nationalisms are resurging and civil wars proliferate. Although some of the most egregious examples of human rights abuse are now better known and finally being challenged, there is still much that remains. Diversity is now more widely acknowledged and respected in principle, although its better practice remains elusive. Environmental sustainability, while more commonly appreciated, is still poorly and erratically implemented. Work and workplaces have so been so affected by technological innovations and economic uncertainty that jobs are increasingly shifted from “developed” to less-developed (i.e., cheaper) countries while workers’ rights and benefits and their organisations remain under constant siege.

Also, adult education has faced its own challenges. Misunderstood and often marginalized in educational and political circles, the field has made questionable advances since 1997. While virtually all nations emphasize the education of young people as a central institution of their societies, they consider the education of adults far less favourably. As Agostino (2010) acutely observes, adult education “is one of those fields where everybody seems to agree that it is important but not many people are actually interested in providing the support it requires” (p. 460). Of course, adult education is regarded and conducted differently in different countries, but although they rarely agree upon one definition of it, in general, they under-estimate its benefits and systematically underfund it. Further, “state institutions are not homogeneous, and adult education programmes take place across several units, departments, secretaries, or even ministries, very often competing for resources and recognition and making institutional collaboration difficult if not impossible” (Torres, 2011, p. 48). Thus, the marginality, convoluted organisation and inadequate financing of adult education render it vulnerable to shifts in political influence and its organisations cannot be (or seen to be) overly critical of those who provide fiscal or political support.

How have such changes been reflected in recent UNESCO documents? To what extent have the goals of the Hamburg Declaration been realized or otherwise affected by current events? To explore these concerns, we consider several issues. The first concerns the political dimensions of adult education—an aspect that lies at the heart of the Hamburg Declaration and fundamentally shapes the contexts in which adult education takes place. We list some of the most pressing national and international political issues of recent times and consider if and how they are addressed in UNESCO’s policy statements on adult education. Next, we focus on one particular theme of the Declaration to illustrate how adult education can influence the development of civil society. Then, as one of the tasks of progressive educators is to unveil opportunities for hope, we next list some of the positive changes that have taken place since 1997 and conclude with some suggestions about how the hope and promise of the Hamburg Declaration can still be reaffirmed and re-energized.
The Political Dimension

Analysis of recent UNESCO documents suggests that the utopian ideals and goals of the *Hamburg Declaration* are still far from realization. Indeed, it appears that its avowedly political tone has been significantly watered down. Of course, the Hamburg conference happened during a period of rapid change, filled with anger at the world’s injustices but infused with hope and enthusiasm for the transformative possibilities of civil society and adult education. Regrettably, this passion seems to have waned; expectations fragmented and weakened into a more precarious age of uncertainty and instability. Capitalism now appears even more entrenched in the established order and there is far greater accommodation of, and adherence to, the strictures of neoliberalism. Issues of peace, justice and human rights have become increasingly subjugated to economic viability. In general, adult education now seems to focus less on the aspirations of what it can be and more on documenting and monitoring the planning, implementation, or evaluation of what currently exists. Although recent UNESCO documents provide myriad descriptions of the “what” and the “how” of adult education, there’s correspondingly little on “why?” Rarely is there much sense of the *Hamburg Declaration*’s (or any other) overarching vision of adult education or how broader issues or political and cultural realities might be addressed.

For example, most of the country reports collected for the *Global Report on Adult Learning and Education* (UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning, 2009) neither refer to nor reflect upon the national and international political issues that have marked recent times. The rise of global terrorism, the rapid increase in and effects of economic globalization, the widening gap between rich and poor, growing unemployment (particularly among women, young people and immigrants), the drift toward various fundamentalisms and ethnic bigotry, continuing hostilities in the Middle-East, highly visible wars in Iraq and Afghanistan (and a few other less conspicuous conflicts), the demise of the Soviet Union, genocide in Rwanda, “ethnic cleansing” in Sudan and the former Yugoslavia, continuing famines, pandemics and disease, transnational migration, challenges to the rights of indigenous people and minorities, environmental disasters and a selective concern for the democratic and human rights of others hardly merit a mention. Even though the country reports were designed to focus on national approaches to adult learning and education, why did they not mention such issues, if only tangentially? Or are such concerns considered irrelevant?

Further, among all the calls upon adult education to help strengthen civil society, address pressing social issues, or re-engage with a social mission, there’s often too little sense of how to go about it or analyze specific examples of where it’s already been achieved. Perhaps, it all boils down to the interplay of two distinct and competing visions of adult education: one grounded in human rights and focused on inclusiveness and the expansion of equal access and achievement, the other on lifelong learning, generally conceived as a key component of human capital and central to economic growth. These two visions and the differences between them can be seen most clearly in the *Hamburg Declaration* on the one hand; and by the statements and policies on education produced by the Organisation for Economic and Community Development (OECD), the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank on the other.

Of course, while the expression of differing values and perspectives should be encouraged and debated, domination by a narrow instrumental focus on adult education for economic growth
presents a clear threat to realizing the Hamburg Declaration. Indeed, there is some evidence that this is already happening. For example, both the US and Canadian country reports prepared for CONFINTEA VI appear as standard bureaucratic products that provide detailed but bland descriptions of state and provincial government-sponsored adult education and the extent of federal initiatives (Hill et al., 2008; Rubenson & Nesbit, 2011). Their lack of information on, or discussion about, the adult education provided by NGOs and civil society groups, their disregard for learners’ perspectives and the absence of any analysis is striking. No attempts are made to identify any particular strengths or weaknesses in the current systems, situate current approaches in any historical or socio-political context, or suggest where improvements might occur. This is entirely consistent with the approach promoted by the OECD (and increasingly by UNESCO) which tends to encourage an emphasis on certain aspects of adult education (such as state functions and approaches) while downplaying others (such as critical reflexivity, social change or learner participation). To explain the folly of this approach, we now turn to a more in depth discussion of the first theme of the Hamburg Declaration.

From Subjects to Citizens
Theme 1 of the Hamburg Declaration boldly proclaims that active citizenship and full participation of all citizens is the necessary foundation for “the creation of a learning society committed to social justice and general well-being” (p. 4). It further advocated that future societies create “greater community participation,” raise “awareness about prejudice and discrimination in society,” encourage “greater recognition, participation and accountability of non-government organizations and local community groups,” and promote “a culture of peace, intercultural dialogue and human rights” (pp. 11-13). The comparative document from the CONFINTEA VI conference—the Belém Framework for Action (UNESCO, 2009)—while committing itself to creating mechanisms for civil society involvement in decision-making, has muted and toned down the boldness of the Hamburg Declaration. Instead, it demonstrates considerable hesitancy towards active, engaged citizenry by using language such as “constructive and informed involvement” and engagement where “appropriate.”

Yet, two recent examples of social protest suggest such hesitancy is misplaced. Both the widespread campaigns for democratic change known colloquially as the “Arab Spring” and the international Occupy Movement demonstrate the continuing relevance of adult education to the development of civil society. While their causes are complex and diverse and their outcomes as yet uncertain, each movement suggests ways that adult education can continue to revitalize the public sphere. Both movements came about in response to popular frustration and indignation at the growing disparities between the rich and poor and the expectation that ordinary people should pay for crises caused by a wealthy unaccountable elite supported by the media and political establishments. Despite differences in context and specific concerns, these are the very same issues that motivated many adult education pioneers a century ago and continue (at least in Canada) to this day. Also, both the Arab Spring and the Occupy Movement use social media and other forms of communication to mobilise support and promote civic engagement that draw upon several long-standing adult and popular education approaches. So, in providing windows on the state of participative democracy in 2012, both movements reveal deep-seated aspirations for people to “become more involved in public decisions, through various practices and instruments that will make them more mature players, better able to cooperate with one another” (Galeano, 2010). These two examples also show that public spheres often have to be created through civil
disobedience and action. Yet, from an educational perspective, this latter form of learning and struggle rarely merits mention in recent UNESCO documents. To us, this represents a wasted opportunity. Highlighting the gap between policy statements and decision-making processes might provoke adult educators to consider how they might better nurture the moral and ethical motivation to act justly in an evil and degraded world. As Maclure and Taylor (2011) argue, we must “learn to coexist and…establish bonds of solidarity [where] belief in an ethics of dialogue respectful of the different moral and spiritual options [is] best able to promote that learning process” (p. 110).

Reasons for Hope
Apart from modifying their rhetoric to incorporate some notions of lifelong learning, most national approaches to adult education have changed only minimally since 1997. However, as several of the authors in Nesbit and Welton (in press) describe, more encouraging developments can be seen at other levels. For example, there are new ideas about, and enhanced appreciation of, literacy issues and a concern for greater quality, especially in African countries and among women and young people worldwide. Women-led NGOs are challenging narrow classifications of learning outcomes and the continued transmission of “traditional” but disempowering values. As a result, the circumstances of women throughout the world are now far more closely embedded in the wider and general principle of human rights. The recent development of learning cities and regions and the growth of International Adult Learners’ Weeks—now taking place in over 50 countries—embody the best ideals of the Hamburg Declaration. There is heightened attention to issues of sustainable development and climate change seen in the rise of Green parties in several countries and the closer linking of environmental concerns with other issues of human rights. A dramatic increase in the use of information and communication technologies in educational settings has created new concepts and widened access to educational resources, enhancing opportunities to access and create knowledge. Major international organisations like the International Council for the Education of Adults (ICEA) have enjoyed a resurgence of energy and enthusiasm and ICEA’s regional associations have built alliances with other similar groups to impact regional policies, especially in Southeast Asia. UNESCO itself has promoted adult education for adults in prison and has created academic chairs in this area and in community-based research and social responsibility of higher education. Several transnational networks—such as PASCAL—have emerged and, within Europe, the success of research programs like Grundtvig have led to increased international cooperation and the parallel development of a new adult education academic journal (see www.rela.ep.liu.se). All these examples show where the hopes and promise of the Hamburg Declaration can be rekindled and hold out the possibility of creating a future we want, rather than one dictated to us.

What Next?
Wanting to change is not enough; one also has to be able to make change. While UNESCO can make recommendations and advocate for change, lasting educational reforms depend upon government policies and their will and capacity to implement them. So the Hamburg Declaration while remaining influential as a policy statement still requires others to animate it. Perhaps what’s needed is less planning and more activity; an approach implicit in the adoption of “From Rhetoric to Action” as the motto of CONFINTEA VI. Of course, we should not expect,

The whole world of policy to be transformed in the direction of critical thinking and critical theory. But at least we may hope that blind technocratic orientations
or policies based on bureaucratic and authoritarian rationality in adult education might become the exception rather than the rule. (Medel-Añonuevo, Torres, & Desjardins, 2011, p. 3)

In a world marked by rapid change, fundamental issues like justice or equality can become obscured. Also, as the polarizations between rich and poor and between privilege and oppression grow ever wider, these problems can easily be regarded as someone else’s responsibility. Yet we live in an interconnected world: we’re all (well, the 99% of us) in it together. This simple fact underpins the campaigns for greater democracy and accountability and the demonstrations against financial and political institutions described earlier.

Adult education is a fundamental human right—not only in itself but also because it is vital for realizing other rights. It has long championed commitment to a greater sense of social purpose than individualism, material acquisition, competition or self-interest. It has also, throughout its history, demonstrated that no matter how bad things might get, people can always intervene, usually collectively, to improve them. However, what is possible is shaped, in part, by our visions. The greatest threats to realizing utopia come not just from government inaction but also from cynicism and passivity among us all. So, we must strive to rekindle the “optimism of the will” that Gramsci (1971) claimed as essential to creating a new kind of global order and genuine social and economic change. Current economic, environmental and political crises clearly require us to reconstruct societies along more democratic, egalitarian and rational lines. Better than any other recent call to arms, the Hamburg Declaration still offers that utopian ideal; the rest, however, is up to us. Budd Hall, who helped craft the Hamburg Declaration, puts it succinctly, “We have the right to a new utopian vision, a vision that responds to the collective needs of the majority of persons in the world, not simply the few.” But, he adds, we also “need to grasp the power of the utopic vision for ourselves” (2009, p. 197). As an old popular education expression puts it: “We dig where we stand.”

References


Abstract: The purpose of this paper is to theoretically explore the relationship among education, employability, and work. The dominant employability discourse maintains a technical-rational perspective on learning and employability. Education is regarded as an instrumental preparation for the labour market. Discussions have been dominated by an alleged mismatch between individual competence and the demands of the world of work. There is no consensus regarding how the gap should be described or bridged. New demands on educational design have emerged, and ideas related to liberal education have been reinserted into the political agenda, offering general preparation for a wider array of challenges.

Introduction
The world of work has undergone major structural changes in recent decades and is currently characterised by uncertainty and unpredictability (Beck, 2008; Sennet, 1998). This trend has been driven by technological innovation, increased demand for efficiency, international competition, and new ways of organising work. To ensure economic prosperity, governments and organisations strive to increase the competence (i.e., knowledge, skills, and attitudes) and employability of the workforce.

The professional development of employees has become increasingly individualised. To be competitive in the labour market and secure income and social status, among other things, individuals must continuously invest in, develop, manage, and market their employability to employers in an increasingly competitive labour market (Garsten & Jakobsson, 2004; Nyström, 2010). Career changes are becoming more common and career paths have increasingly begun to resemble a series of individual projects. There has been a shift from lifetime employment to lifelong learning. This development has led to new conditions and labour market demands (Nyström, Abrandt Dahlgren & Dahlgren, 2008).

Highly specialised technical competence is becoming obsolete in an increasingly rapid pace and is decreasing in importance for obtaining and retaining a job. Rather, labour market demands are associated with a broader range of general competence and personal characteristics (Tomlinson, 2008). Employees are expected to be flexible, capable of orienting themselves quickly within new contexts, and able to continually learn and develop throughout their professional careers (Nyström et al., 2008). Employable individuals are educated, qualified, independent, adaptable, creative, and innovative entrepreneurs. Individuals must continuously invest in and manage their employability, principally by investing in formal education (Nilsson, 2010).

A central focus of this paper is the relationship between education, employability, and work with regard to the purpose and impact of education. In recent years, this issue has arisen with the increasing dominance of instrumental perspectives of education in discussions and public policy debates (Biesta, 2009). Nevertheless, few studies have investigated the changing relationship between education and work that can constitute an alternative framework for the dominant human capital discourse and the technical-rational perspective of learning on which education
policies are generally premised (Knight & Yorke, 2004). The purpose of this paper is to theoretically explore the relationships between education, employability, and the world of work in Sweden.

The Employability Discourse
Employability is a central concept in the educational and labour market strategies of the OECD countries (European Commission, 2010; ILO, 2000; OECD, 1998). Employability has been studied from macro, organisational, and individual perspectives, all of which focus on different groups to identify potential employability aspects. From an organisational perspective, the meaning of employability has changed from primarily referring to a person's health and age to focusing on how individual competence is compatible with employer demands. The notion of employability includes various forms of general and specific competence (Nilsson, 2010). Employability is often associated with an individual's preparedness for work, capacity to manage work and retain his or her job, continued career development, and potential for mobility in the labour market, including the ability to obtain work after a period of illness or unemployment (Hillage & Pollard, 1998; Knight & Yorke, 2004).

The current governing discourse is characterised by a relatively narrow perspective on the relationship among education, employability, and the labour market (Brown & Tannock, 2009; Moreau & Leathwood, 2006). Labour market policies and educational strategies, as well as organisational recruitment, training, and competence development policies, are generally based on a market-driven technical-rational approach to matching supply and demand for labour at the macro, organisational, and individual levels. This approach can be traced to a human capital perspective (Becker, 1964). Investing in one’s human capital, primarily through formal education, is expected to increase one’s productivity in a proportional manner. Formal education thus becomes a proxy for the productive capacity of an individual.

This approach has endured criticism during the past half century. From a consensus perspective, employability can be viewed as a driving force for social evolution. However, from a conflict perspective, employability can be regarded as a means of legitimising inequalities. Not all individuals have the same opportunities and access to formal education or certain positions in the labour market. Moreover, investments in formal education may have limited effects on productivity and economic growth (Livingstone, 2010; Moreau & Leathwood, 2006). The responsibility for investing in employability and career development has been transferred from organisations to individual workers. Increased individual employability is often associated with career progression, intra- and inter-organisational job mobility, and boundaryless careers (Defillippi & Arthur, 1994). However, there is an ongoing debate regarding the extent to which careers are boundaryless and subject to individual agency and the extent to which career opportunities and choices are constrained and shaped by contextual or structural factors. From a critical perspective, the shift towards individual agency is associated with social and economic inequalities and the marginalisation of less privileged groups in society (Pang, Chua & Chu, 2008).

Individual employability includes nearly all aspects that are relevant to an individual’s ability to obtain a job and perform the tasks associated with the job. Research has shown that formal education and competence are central to an individual's employability; however, other aspects, such as gender, ethnicity, personal qualities, health and work ability, also affect an individual's
potential to obtain a job and perform the tasks that the job demands (Nilsson & Ekberg, 2012; Nyström, 2010; Smith, 2010).

**Perspectives on Education**
A principal means of securing a supply of skilled labour that is equipped to handle the increasingly complex and changing labour market involves increased investments in formal learning and education (Knight & Yorke, 2004; Livingstone, 2010). Education is primarily regarded as a means of educating, training, socialising, and qualifying individuals in relation to labour market demands. For example, education increases the human capital or employability of students upon graduation (Teichler, 2000). A narrow functionalist or instrumental perspective on education, which focuses on the concept of human capital and the employability of individuals, has begun to usurp the utopian view that, for example, dominated in the Nordic welfare state in past decades. An instrumental and technical-rational view of education has resulted in increasing demands for education curricula to adapt to the demands and the logic of the market (Gaskell & Rubenson, 2004).

The purpose of education can be understood from various perspectives (Barnett, 1990). For example, the earliest universities focused primarily on scholastic vocational preparation in the classical professions. However, during the Age of Enlightenment in the 18th century, the function of education widened. Education institutions began to develop and incorporate softer values that addressed highly abstract ontological and epistemological theories related to the spiritual and political arena and that were intended to affect the norms of individual action. Education began to incorporate human liberation, critical enlightenment, and the notion of “bildung”. This perspective may be traced to rationalists such as Descartes and Kant, but it is primarily associated with Wilhelm von Humboldt (1767-1835). The educational system in Sweden, for example, has traditionally been strongly influenced by this Humboldtian tradition (Bron & Schemmann, 2003; Liedman, 2002). From this perspective, education should develop and enrich individuals without considering primarily the direct use-value of education (that is, the benefit of education in relation to the specific demands of the labour market). Educational design focuses on students’ open learning, emancipation, interdisciplinarity, inclusion of philosophical issues, and the development of critical thinking, and reflecting thinking subjects (Bron & Schemmann, 2003). The central idea is that liberal education creates knowledgeable subjects who develop their potential and their intellect by speaking, writing, and thinking more competently. From this perspective, direct vocational preparation for the demands of working life is considered a secondary outcome or an unintentional by-product (Liedman, 2002).

In recent decades, the Anglo-Saxon model, which governs the education institutions in North America, has strongly influenced curriculum reform in the European continental model. From this perspective, instrumental labour market adaption and vocational preparation are key factors. Business-oriented professional management influences the governance of education institutions in Europe, and competitive models are being strengthened. Demands for efficiency, relevance, and accountability are increasing. For example, the Sorbonne Declaration (1998), the Bologna Declaration (1999), and the London Conference (2007) initiated and developed and the processes of creating a harmonised European Higher Education Area and the aspirations to increase comparability among different education systems that focus on the employability of graduates.
Studies have indicated a mismatch between education and the world of work (Livingstone, 2010; Nilsson, 2010). Formal educational job entry requirements have increased since the Second World War, but the actual requirements to perform such jobs may not have increased to the same extent. Numerous studies observe an inflation of formal educational requirements and a gap between worker capabilities and formal job requirements (Tomlinson, 2008). There are concerns that the rapid expansion of education has led to over-education and underemployment. Several studies have suggested that employers, workers, and students believe that professional education programmes supply inadequate preparation for working life (Livingstone, 2010).

From an instrumental perspective, higher education increases the formal and/or actual competence of students. An education programme may have use-value in the labour market by increasing the productive capabilities of graduates in different ways. However, education may not always be capable of directly preparing students for the specific tasks that they will encounter in professional practice (Jørgensen, 2004; Nilsson, 2010). Education and training can be viewed as a means of preparing individuals to cope with challenges by contributing to an individual’s ability to develop and change jobs. Formal education increases an individual's likelihood of obtaining a job, but it does not provide a guarantee that his or her actual competence has increased. The credentials and diplomas that are gained from education programmes also have a symbolic function and a labour market exchange-value that is used for sorting and selecting potential employees. Education is central to the allocation of individuals to various positions in the labour market and in society. Thus, education may lead to the reproduction of inequalities (Collins, 1979; Brown & Tannock, 2009; Gaskell & Rubenson, 2004). Overall, from these instrumental perspectives, educational design is expected to primarily consider the labour market that awaits students upon graduation. However, this goal is not an easy undertaking. Education programmes have different focuses, prerequisites, functions, and impacts. The purpose of liberal arts courses is likely to differ from courses in specialised professional or vocational programmes, both in terms of the students' personal motives and the teachers’ views about how it these courses should be planned and executed.

**Challenges for Education**

Professional and vocational education is important for allocating people to different positions in the labour market and in society (Collins, 1971; Nilsson, 2010). However, the role of education in relation to the world of work appears to be changing. The expectations of employers are inconsistent with the central discourse of education and labour market policies today. A technical-rational perspective on learning and employability seems to be dominant. However, the expectations of the market may be more consistent with the ideas of liberal education, which can offer general preparation for the wider array of challenges and work tasks that individuals encounter in the workplace. It is important to clearly connect educational design to the prerequisites of specific professional practices and to focus on development of generalist meta-competence and promoting generally enlightened and knowledgeable workers.

It is possible that society might be currently undergoing a shift from a credential-based society (Collins, 1979) to a lifelong-learning society in which factors other than formal credentials or merits are gaining importance and becoming more influential in the allocation of people to different positions in the labour market and in society (Kariya, 2009).
Broader access to education has been associated with increased opportunities for social and economic progress for many people, which is positive from the perspective of democratic equality. However, employability is a complex and relational concept, and not all individuals have the same opportunities to develop various aspects of their employability. Depending on factors such as gender, ethnicity, socioeconomic conditions, and class, different groups in society receive differing benefits from formal education with regard to employability (Kossek, 2000; Moreau & Leathwood, 2006; Nyström, 2010). The concept may be relevant only for those with specific human, social, and cultural capital. Formal and informal learning is not equally distributed in the working population (Rubenson & Desjardins, 2009). In the employability discourse, some individuals encounter more barriers to participation than others.

There are indications that the rapid expansion of the educational system, which currently leads to more graduates with university degrees, may result in an overall decreased emphasis on the merits of formal education. Currently, formal qualifications are not sufficient to secure a job. Previous employment history, health, work ability, as well as ethnicity, gender, physical appearance, and other less easily identifiable factors are also central to the education and employability of individuals (Nilsson & Ekberg, 2012; Nyström, 2010; Tomlinson, 2008). Individuals who lack proper training, qualifications, or experience with skilled work may not have the same resources and opportunities to participate in activities in which they can develop and fully implement their employability. Opportunities for learning and development are often designed in a manner that places individuals who do not fit into the standardised employability discourse at a disadvantage (Nilsson & Ekberg, 2012).

The shifting relationship among education, employability, and the world of work that has been presented above could also be related to Rubenson’s (2006) notion of three generations of lifelong learning. For the first humanistic generation of lifelong learning, which was associated with humanistic ideals, critical theories, democracy, and social equality, lifelong learning was viewed as a way to reduce gaps in society. The second generation of lifelong discourse was driven by an economist or neo-liberal agenda, which has become central in national education and labour market policies. Education was regarded as a way to increase human capital and individuals were expected to be flexible and to adjust to a society that was not responsible for shaping them. In the softer third version of the economistic generation of lifelong learning, issues of social cohesion and equality are reintroduced. The primary rationale of education and training is still associated with employability and it is regarded as a way of increasing individual and societal prosperity (Rubenson, 2006). In this new employability discourse, secure employment is a thing of the past and there are increased demands for mobility, self-reliance, and individual agency. The acquisition of generalist meta-competence is central to being able to quickly adjust to new circumstances. The responsibility for the investment in lifelong learning is increasingly individualised, resulting in increased inequalities with regard to participation in learning, the labour market, and society. However, we emphasise a more optimistic interpretation of the third generation of the lifelong learning discourse because it can be interpreted as a shift towards learning outcomes similar to a more humanistic approach to lifelong learning. Learning to learn, critical reflection, and equality have been reinserted into the political agenda.

The current requirements of the labour market appear to be inconsistent with the technical-rational perspective on learning and the instrumental view of individual employability. In the
third generation of lifelong learning, expectations of the labour market may be increasingly consistent with the traditional idea of liberal education as offering general preparation for a wide array of challenges in the workplace. It is essential to clearly connect educational design with a discussion of what the purpose and impact of education is and what it normatively should be. An implication of the theoretical discussion above is that it is not only important to focus on substance or content when planning, designing, conducting, and evaluating education; it is also imperative to clearly connect educational design to the prerequisites of the specific professional practice and to consider promoting the general enlightenment of students. Furthermore, it is important to provide opportunities for reflection and to promote the development of meta-competences. In a sense, the foundation of employability as it relates to competence appears to significantly overlap with the fundamental ideas of liberal education.

References
Community of Practice as a Theoretical Framework for Informal Learning in Trade Unions

Jeong Rok Oh
University of Minnesota-Twin Cities

Abstract: The first purpose of this study is to explore communities of practice as the core of knowledge management by conducting an integrative literature review. The second purpose is to investigate the relationship between communities of practice and informal learning in trade unions. The final purpose is to apply the conceptual model for communities of practice to informal learning in trade unions in order to discuss implications for trade union officers and learning representatives. Ultimately, this paper aims to be an exploratory study on the significant implications of communities of practice for the understanding of informal learning in trade unions by providing a useful theoretical framework of the relationship between them.

Communities of Practice as a Conceptual Model
According to Wenger (2004), “communities of practice are groups of people who share a passion for something that they know how to do, and who interact regularly in order to learn how to do it better” (p. 2). According to Lee and Oh (under review), a conceptual model for communities of practice is useful to help researchers and practitioners better understand the dimensions and constructs needed for successfully instituting communities of practice. The first dimension, motivating employees to participate in communities of practice, consists of three constructs: (a) intellectual reasons, (b) emotional reasons, (c) as a means to an end. The second dimension, organizational culture that encourages communities of practice, is composed of two constructs: trust and organizational learning. The third dimension, organizational support for communities of practice, is comprised of four constructs: (a) management support, (b) rewards, (c) knowledge management system, and (d) knowledge management support group. The fourth dimension, barriers in the organization to creating and sustaining communities of practice, has five constructs: (a) cultural issues, (b) internal fear, (c) external confidentiality, (d) lack of time, and (e) shortage of technology.

Relationship between Communities of Practice and Informal Learning in Trade Unions
Jacobs and Park (2009) proposed a comprehensive conceptual framework of workplace learning by using three variables to understand workplace learning: (a) degree of planning (unstructured vs. structured), (b) role of trainer/facilitator (passive vs. active), and (c) location of the learning (off the job vs. on the job). Using Jacobs and Park’s first two variables, degree of planning and role of trainer/facilitator, a two by two matrix can be created in order to show the interactions of the four combinations.

Based on Jacobs and Park’s (2009) framework, each quadrant can be explained as follows: In the upper-right quadrant (unstructured/passive), learning occurs without use of a systems approach and with limited involvement of a trainer/facilitator. In the upper-left quadrant (structured/passive), learning occurs as a result of using a systems approach and with limited involvement of a trainer/facilitator. In the lower-left quadrant (structured/active), learning occurs as a result of using a systems approach and with the direct involvement of a trainer/facilitator. In the lower-right quadrant (unstructured/active), learning occurs without use...
of a systems approach and with direct involvement of a trainer/facilitator. Jacobs and Park also provided useful examples for these four combinations in each quadrant.

Communities of practice and informal learning in trade unions are located in the same place, the upper-right quadrant (unstructured/passive) because they usually both occur without use of a systems approach and with limited involvement of a trainer/facilitator. Therefore, it is possible to say that communities of practice and informal learning in trade unions share core characteristics with each other in terms of workplace learning (e.g., Ball, 2000, 2003; Cooper, 2005, 2006, 2009). According to Jacobs and Park (2009), the only difference between communities of practice and informal learning in trade unions might be location of the learning, whether they occur at the actual work setting (communities of practice) or away from the work setting (informal learning in trade unions). However, if informal learning in trade unions can be based on the actual work setting in an everyday trade union context, the actual work setting can mean a variety of activities in trade union practice, and, as a result, it is possible to say that informal learning in trade unions also occurs at the actual “work” setting. For this reason, informal learning in trade unions was added to the Jacobs and Park’s examples of workplace learning.

Implications of Communities of Practice for Informal Learning in Trade Unions
Table 1 shows that the conceptual model for community of practice can be applied to informal learning in trade unions because there are close relationships between the two in terms of workplace learning. The four dimensions of the conceptual model of community of practice, which are (a) motivating employees, (b) organizational culture, (c) organizational support, and (d) barriers in the organization, can be understood from the perspective of trade unions. Specifically, in a trade union context, constructs of each dimension of the conceptual model are also applicable to informal learning in trade unions. For example, the terms of organization, employees, and management, can be regarded as trade union, trade union members, and trade union executive officers respectively in Table 1.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dimensions of Community of Practice</th>
<th>The Perspective of Trade Unions</th>
<th>Constructs of a Conceptual Model for Community of Practice</th>
<th>Applicability to Informal Learning in Trade Unions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Motivating Employees to Participate in Communities of Practice</td>
<td>Motivating Trade Union Members to Participate in Communities of Practice</td>
<td><strong>Intellectual Reasons:</strong>&lt;br&gt;Attaining different ideas, developing useful knowledge, finding career opportunities, multiplying influence, and building network in organizations</td>
<td>Applicable if <em>organization</em> can be regarded as trade union.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Emotional Reasons:</strong>&lt;br&gt;A sense of satisfaction by helping others, gaining peer recognition, increasing confidence, and forming relationships</td>
<td>Applicable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>As a Means to an End:</strong>&lt;br&gt;Higher compensation or increased benefits by enhancing performance.</td>
<td>Applicable if <em>performance</em> can be regarded as the effectiveness of trade union activity/practice.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizational Culture that Encourages Communities of Practice</td>
<td><em>Trade Union</em> Culture that Encourages Communities of Practice</td>
<td><strong>Trust:</strong>&lt;br&gt;Trust creates openness, interpersonal connection, motivation, and engagement, which enable and facilitate knowledge-sharing.</td>
<td>Applicable if <em>organizational learning</em> can be regarded as union members’ collective learning in trade union activity/practice.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Organizational Learning:</strong>&lt;br&gt;Effective knowledge-sharing within communities of practice depends on organizational learning.</td>
<td>Applicable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizational Support for Communities of Practice</td>
<td><em>Trade Union</em> Support for Communities of Practice</td>
<td><strong>Management Support:</strong>&lt;br&gt;Support from top management is essential in implementing knowledge management.</td>
<td>Applicable if <em>management</em> can be regarded as the executive officers of trade unions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Rewards:</strong>&lt;br&gt;Organizational reward systems can promote active knowledge-sharing practices in organizations</td>
<td>Applicable if <em>organization</em> can be regarded as trade union.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Knowledge Management System (KMS):</strong></td>
<td>Applicable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barriers in the Organization to Creating and Sustaining Communities of Practice</td>
<td>Barriers in the Trade Union to Creating and Sustaining Communities of Practice</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| KMS support the communication of members in communities, collect shared knowledge, and distribute best practices through organizations.  
**Knowledge Management (KM) Support Group:** KM support groups facilitate and coordinate the activities of knowledge creation and sharing within communities of practice. |  |
| **Cultural Issues:** Communities of practice which can be successfully applied in one organization may not work for organizations that have members from a different culture or multiple cultures.  
**Internal Fear:** Employees can be self-conscious and reticent about sharing their knowledge and experiences within communities of practice for many reasons.  
**External Confidentiality:** Corporate security can restrict exchange of information and knowledge that would be critical to the organization.  
**Lack of Time:** Time pressure can be a critical problem in motivating employees to share knowledge.  
**Shortage of Technology:** Lack of appropriate infrastructure and technology which effectively assist sharing activities could be a serious barrier to communities of practice implementation. | Applicable  
Applicable if *organization* can be regarded as trade union.  
Applicable if *employees* can be regarded as trade union members.  
Applicable if *corporate* and *organization* can be regarded as trade union.  
Applicable if *employees* can be regarded as trade union members.  
Applicable |

*Note.* Table developed by the author based on Lee and Oh (under review)
Implications for trade union officers and learning representatives can be discussed based on Lee and Oh’s (under review) recommendations for community of practice. To facilitate informal learning in trade unions as communities of practice, trade unions should first create an environment where their members can freely ask questions, exchange ideas, and discuss new approaches. Second, trade unions should promote a culture of interpersonal connections and trust among their members (Ardichvili, Page, & Wentling, 2003). Third, trade unions should apply security restrictions to reduce limitations on transfer of knowledge, while maximizing the value of exchanging knowledge among their members. Fourth, trade unions should also offer their members enough time to input their knowledge to a knowledge management system and exchange it with others within communities (Riege, 2005). Finally, trade unions should construct proper infrastructure and provide technology tools, such as Intranet, e-mail systems, and inclusive groupware to assist in reducing formal communication barriers.

References


Higher Learning, Radical Integration and Adult Education:
Connecting Disciplines

Linda Pardy
University of the Fraser Valley

Abstract: Higher education is being tasked with improving learner engagement, internationalization, indigenization, and access for a growing diverse population. It is also challenged to ensure graduates leave equipped for a logical and global workplace, fueled by a learning economy. This is a mammoth task and one that requires revisioning higher education. This paper draws on Keeling and Hersh’s (2012) work to stimulate dialogue and explain why the work of Adult Education and Student Services should be connected. This type of cross-discipline work has the potential to inform how the higher education experience can be enhanced.

Introduction
Adult Education and Student Services are two key contributors within higher education and the community, but they rarely collaborate. I uniquely straddle these two fields and have come to appreciate the many commonalities each share. I’m puzzled by the lack of cross pollination between the disciplines, especially given the growing challenge to improve post-secondary access for unique and often vulnerable populations. My work in adult education includes formal undergraduate instruction and research with learners at risk. I have also held various leadership positions over a 20 year period in college and university student services. And long before Keeling (2004) advocated for student services to have a broader, more integrated role in the overall post-secondary education of students, I experienced the positive outcomes, and transformation of students when using adult learning principles as the base for my student services work.

This approach was considered risky because it did not follow a traditional institutional service model. However, as students struggle, for example, with educational and financial planning, wellness, or registration there are rich teachable moments that contribute to their learning and work/life readiness. When I approached my student services work strictly from an institutional perspective of service delivery and policy enforcement these moments were lost. Harrison (2006) eloquently described this as student interaction with the institution as “wastage of potential” (p.377). In contrast, embracing elements of transformative learning and building on informal, and incidental learning provided opportunities for learners to not only access education, but also graduate equipped with self-agency and work/life readiness.

Many years later this approach of blending adult education and student services theory is being held as a radical ideal for improving higher education. Keeling and Hersh (2012), world leaders in student engagement and higher education reform promoted this integrated approach as the key to higher education and higher learning revisioning. This paper draws on this literature to stimulate dialogue and explain why the work of each discipline should be connected. Cross-discipline work has the potential to inform how the higher education experience can be enhanced.
Working Cross Discipline: Definitions

Words are powerful and provide clarity, understanding, and organization. Words, when not ambiguous, facilitate the transferring of information from one to another (Pardy, 2011). It is ambiguity that often overshadows the ability to engage in research and dialogue across discipline. Adult education and student services, as formal disciplines within higher education, and workplace/community learning can have slightly different definitions. As a result, it is critical the key terms are made explicit.

The term post-secondary education is being used to capture the full range of adult learning opportunities and experiences. Post-secondary education (PSE) is defined as skills and knowledge taken as an adult, 19 years of age or older, at the university, college, career, vocational, or technical level. This paper refers to formal, informal, and incidental learning as a way to situate learning opportunities. Merriam and Caffarella (1999) defined formal learning as an activity that takes place in relationship to the offerings at an educational institution and that leads to credential granting; and informal learning as learning that takes place as a result of everyday life experiences. Schugurensky (2000, p.4) clarified that incidental learning refers to learning experiences that occur unintentionally, but after the experience individuals become aware that learning has taken place. Often there is no intention or even awareness that learning may be a consequence of engagement with student services. Merriam and Caffarella (1999) stressed that these types of experiences should be turned into formal learning activities, but that the lines are blurred and pose instructional and policy related challenges.

Challenges

PSE is struggling to increase student engagement, internationalize and/or indigenize curriculum, address student mental health, and educate towards life, work, civic, and global participation. Several years ago the instrumental work of Keeling (2004) challenged higher education to reconsider seriously the responsibility of educating the whole person and enhancing the student experience as a holistic approach to work/life readiness. This same challenge remains today. How can formal higher education revision its purpose and address the needs of a growing diverse student population? The roots of higher education run deep and historically change within higher education has been said to be glacial (Kershaw and Safford, 2001).

Basic to what Keeling et al., (2012) called radical integration is the incorporation of adult learning and transformative learning theory, as well as student development theory – although they do not use these terms explicitly. They declared that current teaching and learning practices are not working. They described how both students and the world have changed. Their primary recommendation is that first preparing students for life, work, and an increasingly complex world of civic participation is essential in the development of the whole student and should be the focus of all teaching and learning endeavours. They stressed that having students attend lectures as passive recipients does not equate to engagement. “Staying in college, or for that matter, finishing it does not in of itself, signify higher learning. Permitting getting through college to pass for higher learning is the great failure of higher education” (Keeling et al., 2012, p. 12).

They stressed that the touchstone for higher education decision making is “not learning, but throughput: getting enough students recruited, admitted, enrolled, retained, and graduated (Keeling et al., 2012, p.17). If throughput is the goal then measuring it comes in the form of
quantitative benchmarks like the number of graduates, research funding, and more sadly rankings in the popular press. Did students learn? They suggested that what is being measured is realistically if students were taught. However, when it comes to learning in the sense of personal growth, emancipation, transformation, and the ability to transfer new knowledge into the world this type of assessment is an afterthought. For learners to be fully engaged participants in their own learning journey they need to be in “a powerful intellectual, social and developmental process. That process requires rigorous self-discipline, effort, and commitment; demanding, well-trained teachers; an inspiring, motivating, and diverse curriculum; and an intentionally designed, challenging, formative, and supportive learning environment” (p.20). Unfortunately most PSE institutions do not follow these principles, but the good news is that research supports such learning and “begs for a reorientation of higher education towards a learning-centric model” (p.21).

Drawing from the student service literature there is substantial empirical data on the importance of participation, engagement, and success of students (e.g., Kuh, Kinzie, Schuh, and Whitt, 2005; Pascarella and Terenzini, 2005; Usher, 2004). One conclusive fact across the data is that students who are actively engaged in educationally purposeful activities, both inside and outside the classroom, have stronger skills to persist from start to graduation (and this then transfers to the workplace). Educationally purposeful activities are an individual’s “effort and involvement in the academic, interpersonal, and extracurricular offerings on campus” (Pascarella et al., 2005, p.602). This is what student service educators know and embrace in their praxis.

Educationally purposeful activities are a key indicator of how effective an institution is in creating an engaging environment. Harper and Quaye (2009) recognized that “it is entirely possible to be involved in something without being engaged” (p.5). Attendance alone is not engaged participation. Yet in the context of most formal educational environments attendance alone is often cited as a measure of engagement. In essence for higher learning to occur within PSE there needs to be a holistic approach to learner development inside and outside of the classroom that involves all aspects of formal, informal, and incidental learning.

Assessment strategies have to be authentic, formative and a priority. Teaching and learning need to be recognized as not one in the same. Teaching is only one small component of learning. Learning needs to be collective, collaborative, and embrace intellectual, developmental, social, and emotional transformations. Learning needs to be embraced as horizontal and vertical – creating opportunities for the incremental acquisition of core competencies and skills, but at the same time surrounded by synergistic mindful, coherent, and integrated design promoting critical thinking, and perspective taking (Keeling et al., 2012, p.21).

To address accountability PSE is being asked to demonstrate that students graduate with both an education and skills. Institutions across Canada are in the process of developing Institutional Learning Outcomes (ILO) and Co-curricular Records (CCR). The University of the Fraser Valley (UFV), where I teach, completed its ILO exercise last year and is now in the process of implementing ILO’s across all disciplines. In the ILO’s reviewed on a national level, I found many common threads. At UFV the ILOS’s are: 1) demonstrate information competency; 2) analyze critically and imaginatively; 3) use knowledge and skills proficiently; 4) initiate inquires and develop solutions to problems; 5) communicate effectively; 6) pursue self-motivated and
self-reflective learning; 7) engage in collaborative leadership; 8) engage in respectful and professional practices; and 9) contribute regionally and globally. These are the articulated goals for all graduates leaving UFV – regardless of area of study.

UFV is also in the early stages of implementing Co-curricular Record (CCR) and aligning the CCR with the ILOs. The implementation of the CCR in Canada is being led by student service educators. It is a formal mechanism to validate learning that occurs outside the classroom space – informally and incidentally. Institutions such as the University of Calgary and Wilfred Laurier University are recognizing skills and abilities acquired informally and not reflected on a traditional academic transcript. PSE leaders and faculty are challenged with how best to educate and assess the type of learning outlined in ILOs and CCR.

Learning is no longer an individual quest for content/information acquisition. It requires social interaction and collaboration. For example, social learning theory, commonly found in both adult education and student services can help educators bridge informal and formal learning environments. Educators today are responsible for more than delivering content; they need to develop learners capable of building lifelong learning pathways. This is a mammoth task, one that is faced with a rapid pace of change and pressure from learners to access an education that is both locally and globally able to keep pace. It is also uncharted practice for the majority of educators in higher education. However, for adult education and student services many of these emerging themes/trends are not new. Each discipline has invaluable expertise to contribute.

**Theorizing Solutions**

Both disciplines hold many of the solutions that higher education is looking for. Mezirow (1995) suggested that the day would come when adult learning theory, in particular transformative learning, would become critical to the survival of people and, in turn, the reshaping of the traditional view of higher education. This day has arrived. Likewise Hardy Cox and Strange (2010, p.237) stressed that “in terms of quality of experience, it has been those in student services who have welcomed, oriented, housed, engaged, and supported students in the process of their development as they have pursued the best of what higher education has to offer”. Keeling (2004) stressed the importance of academic departments embracing student services as an integral contributor to their teaching and learning agenda. Cross-discipline collaboration and research is needed.

It is no secret to adult educators that people learn in a variety of ways and often face barriers to formal learning. It is also no secret to student service educators that students face these same challenges and that before they can engage in learning they need to feel safe and welcome. For decades, student services educators have been supporting students with alternative learning styles and multiple barriers navigate the formal learning space. This work often remains unrecognized. In the higher education literature there is a growing concern for having to accommodate a growing population of non-traditional or at-risk students (Harper and Quaye, 2009). It is also common to find that higher education looks to student services to improve student engagement and success by working directly with students outside of the classroom to improve their chances of being more successful in a prescriptive classroom environment (Kuh, et al., 2005) However, this is not enough. Student engagement needs to live inside the classroom as well. The formal learning space needs revision so that all learners can flourish.
Both adult educators and student service educators know firsthand that learning is a process involving relationships and interactions, and that for learner engagement to occur it is more than a quick fix outside of the classroom. Adult education researchers provide ongoing insight into transformative learning strategies that provide students with opportunity, and equilibrium to balance matters of work/life readiness across the scope of a diverse society. Student service educators provide insight into student development and learner identity. Harper and Quaye (2009) accurately described the dichotomous nature of higher education claims about inclusion (such as internationalize and indigenization) along with opportunity for diverse learner populations and the result of being met with empty promises.

I discovered barriers to learning have no real boundaries. There are many complex variables that play out in determining what work/life readiness path a person starts out on or how they are transformed (or not) by their education (Pardy, 2011). Kuh et al., (2005) stressed that diverse student populations are growing in epidemic proportions and despite the ongoing discourse on the topic there has been little progress made within formal education spaces towards creating learning strategies that work. However, in student services and adult education great progress is being made.

For example, Canadian adult education scholars such as Groen and Hyland-Russel (2012), Lange, Chovanex, Cardinal, Kajinr, and Smith (2010), and MacKeracher, Suart, and Potter (2006) contribute insight into how adults facing significant learning barriers are able to participate in higher learning. Likewise Canadian student service researchers illustrate how such learners can be supported to engage with higher education and establish a personal identity as a learner (Hardy Cox and Strange, 2010; and Pardy, 2011). Between both bodies of literature there is however a disconnect.

Adult education literature is rich with insight into how and where learning occurs and at the same time expressed a need for greater understanding into how to best support the development of marginalized populations in accessing higher education. In the student services literature educating towards learner self-agency and the expertise to meet logistical challenges (i.e. finances, transportation, health, housing, and emotional support) are reported as well understood. Student service educators, however, report frustration with having to handle the erosion of learner self-esteem following interaction with faculty and the formal classroom (i.e. Harper & Quaye, 2009; Pardy, 2011).

Examining the implementation of instructional practices towards the ILO movement, internationalization, or indigenization adult education theory is essential. The ILOs cannot be measured through a quantitative “test”. Authentic assessment tools as outlined by Fenwick and Parsons (2009) need to be employed. Higher education instructors need to be trained in experiential learning techniques and the development phases of adult learning (e.g. Cranton, 2000; MacKeracher, 2004). Additionally, work needs to done to advocate and educate towards the incorporation and more importantly the acceptance of an indigenous pedagogy. Lange’s (2012) work on transformative learning, learner identity, and how a Freirean pedagogy can be used in “ways that honor indigenous social relations and diverse forms of traditional knowledges while remaining vigilant to injustice in any form” (p.17) could serve to better inform higher
education as it embraces indigenization.

On a practical level, student service educators have a long history with pedagogy of hospitality. This is not “party” hospitality. It is a skill in authentically creating conditions in which learners feel valued and welcomed. Diverse learner populations need hospitable, honest, and safe places to learn (Pardy, 2011). Bennett (2003) described hospitality in an educational setting to be “the radical openness to the other – openness in both sharing and receiving, then revising and sharing again, and so forth. Practicing hospitality means inviting and providing reciprocity” (p.56). Derrida (2000) explored hospitality in terms of attending to otherness, and while in reference to teaching foreign students, contributes to understanding our own otherness. hooks (1994, p.70) attributed hospitality to constructing communities through conversation, personal testimony, and “the production of libratory praxis because it forms the basis of our theory making”. When true effort is made to attend to the other then “boundaries, barriers, and thresholds are crossed and transformed rather than destroyed” (Bennett, 2003, p.57).

Next Steps
In sum adult educators value all forms of learning and they extend the theoretically development for how best to enhance learning – especially for non-traditional or vulnerable learner populations. Student service educators have decades of experience working in the informal and incidental teaching and learning space. For higher education to raise to the challenge of embracing a growing diverse learner population and at the same time improving the quality of higher learning radical integration across both cultures and constructs of what a “good” education is will need to occur. However, before this can happen PSE needs to be equipped and this is where radically integrating the work of Adult Education and Student Services is advised. Together both disciplines have the potential to contribute research, knowledge construction, and skills useful in addressing the complex challenges facing higher education to ensure higher learning occurs for diverse populations. The next step is to encourage cross-discipline dialogue and partnerships.

References


Engagement in Internationalization – A Faculty of Education Perspective

W. James Paul
University of Calgary

Colleen Kawalilak
University of Calgary

Abstract: This paper makes a case in support of faculties of education being authentically committed to and engaged in internationalisation as a direct response to globalisation. The authors explore ethical and pedagogic responsibilities required of faculties of education if they are to guide authentic, adult learner engagement during complex and dangerous times.

Globalisation and Internationalisation

We, the authors, seek to better understand what members of a faculty of education should be in service of with respect to internationalisation commitments and engagements and how this understanding may contribute to providing rich and culturally sensitive learning for adults within a faculty of education.

Globalisation is a slippery term, concept, and set of practices, often riddled with each definer’s conceptual, political, economic, and cultural values. The same could be said for internationalisation. However, Knight (1999) argued that ‘globalisation’ is “often confused with or used in conjunction with internationalisation…thus it is important to explore further the relationship between globalisation and internationalisation” (p. 13).

Smith (2003), in Teaching in Global Times, maintained that there are three basic, albeit interconnected and contestable, forms of globalisation operating in the world today. Globalisation One is a form of dominant political economics arising from what can broadly be called the revival of neo-liberalism and neo-conservatism featuring deregulation, sophisticated technologies, and financial processes driven by global investment markets in support of free trade and competition dating back to the 1980s administrations of Reagan, Thatcher, and Mulroney. Globalisation Two represents the various pragmatic ways people around the world have and are responding to Globalisation One through acts of both accommodation and/or resistance. Globalisation Three focuses on emergent local-global dialogues regarding globalisation and the possibility of what it will take for persons and communities to live within sustainable, balanced futures. Within higher education contexts, we believe ‘internationalisation’ resides at the heart of Smith’s Globalisation Three. We further assert that faculties of education must generate pedagogic and ethical responses to globalisation as a “process of integrating an international/intercultural dimension into the teaching, research, and service functions of the institution” (Knight, 1994, cited by Knight, 1999, p. 16). Within universities, faculties of education “are contingent on the context, values and educational practices of a given faculty” (Taraban, Dipp, Fynbo, & Alsop, 2006). As such, we claim faculties of education are responsible, pedagogically, to inquire into and confirm their core contributions, shaping how pre-service and graduate teacher education is understood and practiced.
In this paper, we contribute, thoughtfully and purposefully, as members of a faculty of education, to conversations on the meaning and significance of engaging *with* internationalization as a response to globalization. We argue that it is necessary for faculties of education to continuously readress questions related to *how* a faculty of education understands the necessity of its engagement with globalization. Thus, to do so should result in a better equipped faculty navigating through competing tensions; namely, the current focus on higher education institutions to be more globally corporate and competitive, while remaining, at least in terms of optics, committed to sound critical pedagogy and learner-centered education.

**A Case for Internationalization**

In this paper, we *make a case* in support of thoughtfully engaging responses to globalization via a call for faculties of education to advance internationalization as educational policy and practice. Drawing from our own experiences and understandings (Bateson, 1990, 1994) as teachers and scholars within a faculty of education, we recognize the critical importance of committing to deep-seated, ethical requirements and pedagogic responsibilities to guide and support our engagement. Most post-secondary institutions are being impacted by constant change – most of which are responses to globalization. Yet, in this climate of change, there *are* opportunities. We believe the scope, richness, depth, and breadth of our commitments to knowledge creation, production, dissemination, and our scholarly and pedagogic mandates, must address globalizing tensions between local, national, and international contexts and agendas. We believe that internationalization must be understood theoretically, pragmatically, and pedagogically as ‘the core 21st Century enterprise’ of a faculty’s ethical, educative mission, its diversity-awareness capacity development, and its professional, scholarly, and pedagogic responsibilities to students.

**Critical Questions**

Within our own Faculty of Education context and practice, we pose two critical questions to guide our understandings of internationalization practices. We offer these as a pump primer for conversations showing how and why a faculty of education must work, pedagogically, for our own and our learners’ wellbeing within the tensions between globalization and internationalization.

1. Within an increasingly corporate university, what is or ‘should be’, if one were looking for a more textured conversation, meant by the evolving world-concept of ‘internationalization’?
2. How will a faculty refine, respectfully and continuously, its commitments to ‘internationalization’ in ways that align with its historical and contemporary academic, pedagogic, scholarship, and service mandates and practices?

*Question 1 – Within a university, what is or ‘should be’, if one were looking for a more textured conversation, meant by the evolving word-concept of ‘internationalization’?*

In Canada and around the globe, most nationally accredited, advanced degree granting universities have long been engaged internationally. Most universities promote, as core to their foundational mandates, the honouring of heritage knowledge products and practices, as well as the generation of and dissemination of new or refined knowledge products and processes. Such universities have supported scholar/researcher/practitioner efforts to establish international research communities, to practice excellence in international scholarship and knowledge dissemination, and to secure international reputations as sterling disciplinary-based, knowledge-
broker, learner-service providers in traditional and emergent fields and/or disciplines. In many respects, these modern universities, with strong scientific research-inquiry and scholarly-communicative activities, have been a ‘globalizing’ educative force long before current definitions and operations of ‘globalization’ were claimed as an innovation by the brave new world of mega-business, multi-national corporate, border-crossing economic managers. Simply put, many businesses and economic market sectors, across nations and across history, have gained from university knowledge-research disseminations. However, the late 20th Century-early 21st Century globalizing corporations operate in virtually any and every space or place and they do so now in universities. Universities, then, are increasingly becoming engaged in and defined by aspects of the current economic definitions and practices of new-world order globalization.

However, with respect to internationalization as an ethical and dialogical concept and practice within a faculty of education, and with most universities caught in globalization trends and pressures to increasingly become more ‘corporate’, we advance the case that internationalization is not and should not be understood as just another form of globalization. Gunew (2004) wrote, “‘Internationalization’ could perhaps be reserved for the ways in which each nation state (and smaller groupings) chooses to respond to globalization, as far as possible, on its own terms” (p. 54). A faculty of education then, acting institutionally, via its teaching, scholarship, and service mandates, must make a case against being globalization-corporate in nature.

Internationalization is about the realization of an internationalist perspective, one realized through a consciousness evident in faculty practices with students featuring a dialogical process that activates academic, pedagogic, and ethical self-awareness. Such self-awareness, in turn, fosters openness to a diverse world locally, nationally, and globally. Thus, openness to complexity and difference must be present in all the activities and organizational and functional mandates and practices of a faculty. Recognizing the necessity of internationalization has the potential to actually transform a faculty to act more directly, purposefully, intentionally, and responsibly within a range of shifting global landscapes. In the absence of reflexive connectivity, shaped dialogically through compelling conversations about what a 21st Century faculty of education is, does, and should become and do, a faculty may be seduced, in varying degrees, into assuming a corporate model. Senior administrators often believe that this corporate model will somehow serve to empower a faculty as a globalizing agent. Even though, and by definition, the scientific inquiry and research knowledge dissemination mandate of most universities is historically international in nature, this does not mean that any given university may be considered as being already ‘internationalized’ or in the process of ‘internationalizing’. For this state of faculty internationalization to become and be the living normative case, two basic missions of a faculty – (a) teaching/educating learners, and (b) service to communities – must have a critical, international perspective. What can and should not happen regarding faculty internationalization is to have corporatized versions of ‘for-profit’ research and scholarship trump other academic responsibilities of faculty members with respect to learning, teaching, and community service. Thus, internal, reflexively dialogical meaning-making processes, specifically engaged in by faculty members and learners, must be functionally structured towards understandings of the complex and diverse relationships evident between globalization and internationalization. As such, faculty members and education students, in the service of as researchers, scholars, and educators?
In this regard, internationalization of Canadian higher education has taken greater urgency since the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada (AUCC) first commissioned Jane Knight in 1993 to study internationalization across Canadian campuses. AUCC’s Canadian University Survey (2006, p. 3) provides five primary reasons for internationalization of campuses:

1. To prepare internationally knowledgeable graduates;
2. To build strategic alliances with institutions abroad;
3. To promote innovation in curriculum and diversity of programs;
4. To ensure research and scholarship addresses international and national issues; and,
5. To respond to Canada’s labour market needs.

This report confirmed internationalization is “the process of integrating an international and intercultural dimension to the teaching, learning, research and service functions of a university” (p.1).

Stier (2004) offered three ideological rationales for internationalization in tertiary education, namely: Idealism, Instrumentalism, and Educationalism. The Idealism rationale advances the view that universities may “contribute to the creation of a more democratic, fair and equal world [through international engagement and the] fostering of citizens that adhere to an emancipatory outlook on the world” (Stier, 2004, p. 88). Illustratively, Margaret Somerville (CBC, 2006 Massey Lecture Series) maintained, “[that] common humanity and universal responsibility link us.” The Instrumentalism rationale advances a pragmatic view of the economic opportunities realized through internationalization by recognizing that tertiary education has become a globalized commodity in international marketplaces. The Educationalism rationale advances the view that internationalization is core to contributing to the university’s positionality regarding what it means to become an educated person in today’s globalizing world. Student-citizens need to “understand that there are numerous perspectives and interpretations” … and … “grasp the anatomy of a perspective and how it distorts our conception of reality” (Stier, 2004, p. 92).

There are obvious tensions evident between globalization, the university’s increasing tendency to embrace a corporate administrative model, and a faculty’s need to participate in understanding its mandates through understanding internationalization. So, who decides between Stier’s (2004) three rationales for internalization? Are there other ways to realize internationalization?

**Question 2 – How will a faculty respectfully and continuously refine its commitments to internationalization in ways that align with its contemporary academic, pedagogic, scholarship and service missions, mandates, and practices?**

Agnew and VanBalkom (2007) argued that a faculty’s local needs and aspirations actually demand universities and its faculty members embody international perspectives. Shore and Groen (2009) cautioned that, for internationalization to become sustainable and meritorious work within a faculty of education, there must be thoughtful and careful faculty-wide strategic planning and priority setting. So, how – pragmatically, philosophically, and pedagogically, does a faculty of education move towards internationalization with an intentional and ethical internationalist perspective and practice?

In our own Faculty of Education, we aim to strengthen our engagement in internationalization by accepting two positions – first, we link internationalization to our faculty as a learning organizational adaptation. Schön (1967) noted that sustainable societies, institutions, and
organizations – across and throughout history – have succeeded because they remained open to a continuous dialogical process of micro- and macro-transformations. However, the key to such transformational sustainability requires persons and organizations learning to understand, shape, and manage all sorts of pending and actual transformations (Senge, Cambron-McCabe, Luca, Smith, Dutton, & Kleiner, 2000). Agency, in this process, is dependent on member and organizational awareness, development of, and a commitment to a capacity for undertaking critical and reflexive audits of a faculty’s heritages and its adaptive nature at learning how to respond to changing and mutating local-global situations.

In our Faculty of Education, we have located this awareness-to-realization in the leadership of an appointed Associate Dean International and an Internationalization Advisory Committee (IAC). The Associate Dean International and IAC contribute to and support continuous learning opportunities regarding what internationalization in action means. These individuals also advocate for a change to the merit and promotion criteria, thus linking faculty members’ internationalization efforts with individual performance merit assessment.

Internationalization within a true learning organization becomes about intentional conversations and actions among scholars-educators-leaders and learners who must turn to face their own historically defining traditions, and with courage be open to allow different, or new, or foreign ‘otherness’ to be encountered, engaged with, and understood. Our second positioning is to engage in authentic dialogue, a process of inquiry that “carries the potential to transform perspectives and relationships [where] convictions [are] suspended, sensitivities [are] expressed and experienced, and an authentic listening for the flow of meaning appear[s]” (Bohm, 1996, p.6). Cissna and Anderson (2002), in the text Moments of Meeting, made reference to the seminal work of Martin Buber and wrote, “Buber ground[ed] dialogue as radical availability to otherness, an otherness of cultural differences, interpersonal styles, new ideas, and unanticipated horizons [and that] dialogue in Buber’s sense, therefore, involves an exceptional openness to otherness” (pp. 6/7). Gadamer (1975), writing about dialogue, took up the work of Buber and wrote:

In human relations the important thing is ... to experience the ‘Thou’ truly as a ‘Thou’, i.e. not to overlook [Thou's] claim and to listen to what [Thou] says to us. To this end, openness is necessary .... Without this kind of openness to one another there is no genuine human relationship. (p. 323)

We are reminded that dialogue is so much more than skilfully applied techniques (Cissna & Anderson, 2002). Rather, authentic dialogue is shaped and informed by values, attitudes, and perspectives, open spaces, and a genuine willingness to engage with diversity in support of ‘meeting moments’. Dialogue invites a collective exploration of experience, perceptions, and emotions, thus testing traditions, definitions, beliefs, and assumptions (Kawalilak, 2004). This a process of ridding oneself from a sense of urgency and necessity, calling forth openness to explore and to gain a deepened understanding of perspective and lived experiences of self and others (Bohm, 1996/2002). Dialogue can help to shape a third possible space if we loosen the grip on tightly held assumptions, notions, and beliefs, to make room for the unknown. Indeed, a critical element of dialogue is to be vulnerable and open to change. Cissna and Anderson (2002) advocated for openness in the dialogical process and argued that to dialogue is to “speak from a ground that is important to us, but we do not defend that ground at all costs” (p. 10).
Dialogue serves as an invitation to step beyond the comfortable and the familiar. In the ‘beyond’, we are often presented with opportunities to achieve a third space that post-colonial critic Homi Bhabha (1988) argued for. This third space, not to be interpreted as hierarchical or linear, but that which emerges from, within, out of, and beyond, is where we turn to face that other presence which may be alien or different or diverse. In such a third possible space – the space between here and there, and this or that, and we or them - there could be an exchange of beliefs, values, histories, and associated ascribed meanings. This is a space where true potential for authentic, engaging communication resides. Let us remember that:

> Communication is central to all of these worlds (that we build together), not in the sense of control, which a positivist ontology naturally favors, but in the sense of dialoguing an ongoing process that respects the autonomy of different reality constructions, enables each participant to interrogate his or her history and grow beyond it. Dialogue probably is the most noble form of human interaction, and communication scholars should be the first to appreciate its outstanding human qualities. (Krippendorff, 1989, p. 94, as cited by Anderson & Cissna, 2008).

We, the authors, support the notion that incommensurability lives when globalization and internationalization engage. Pinar (2003) wrote that such incommensurability, led by awareness of internationalization, is almost existential and contributes to a transformation of a historically situated, geo-politically defined person into a global citizen with an internationalist perspective. In fact, Pinar (2003) argued that awareness of the incommensurability between globalization and internationalization leads to the recognition of the necessity in life of heterogeneity and diversity. Within such recognition, one’s identity is seen as being constantly created and re-created, produced, and reproduced anew, indeed, through transformation because of the very existence of difference.

**In Summary**

In this paper, we argued that faculties of education must be, or certainly become, fully engaged through authentic dialogue with internationalization. A faculty of education must, today and tomorrow, be committed to preparing itself, its faculty, and especially its learners, within an internationalist perspective. An escalation in the standardizing of globalization is often realized through significant economic pressure and thinly veiled as regimes of accountability on the Academe to become all-things corporate. Let us even acknowledge the ubiquitous consumption-production mega-economics at play progressively dominating both the Academe and the world at large. In such a world, a faculty of education must be even more alive as an authentic learning-teaching-service organization committed to internationalization as a practice that call us to reflect, individually and collectively, on the ethical and pedagogical soundness informing our local, national, and international engagements.

We must honour our core scholarship, teaching, and services mandates and our essential ethical and moral responsibilities to provide all learners, local or international, with the knowledge, skills, and attributes to ensure that they are contributing citizens to their own and others’ lives betterment, regardless of nation, affiliation, or circumstance. We must commit to building capacities and preparing current and new generations of educators and learners for today and tomorrow’s world.
We must also acknowledge our ethnocentrism. Internationalization, then, when engaged with by a faculty of education, authentically and dialogically, is that academic, ethical, social, and cultural interruption to the monolithic-ethnocentric forces of globalization.

Internationalization offers faculty members/education learners a pedagogic invitation. This invitation features a commitment to the necessity of being returned, as learner academics, research-scholars, and teaching stewards, to debating our core, life-sustaining academic mission which is, we believe, to generate, acquire, and disseminate heritage and new knowledge skills and attributes. In this way, we will deepen and enrich our and others’ textured and diverse learning-teaching understandings of self-other-world.

References

A Critical Multiculturalist Approach to Community Service Learning

Jay Penner
University of British Columbia

Abstract: This paper discusses the opportunities in applying a framework of critical multiculturalism to service learning pedagogy for education on social and cultural difference. First, I define service learning and its opportunities for critical engagement. Second, I argue this requires a shift from a neo-liberal to critical multiculturalism. Lastly, I provide a brief snapshot of how such a framework can further students’ commitment to social responsibility as suggested by literature, and summarized in a student outcomes document by the Community Learning Initiative of the University of British Columbia.

Introduction
Community service learning is an important arena of practice for communities and higher education. It offers opportunities to engage students with communities and can provide context and experience through which students can understand classroom theories and knowledge. Service-learning also has the potential for multicultural education, and by connecting faculty, students, and communities, raises issues of race, multiculturalism, and social justice (Jay, 2008). Addressing these issues, however, requires intentionality and foregrounding of such issues by educators. The aim of this paper is to explore a critical multicultural educational framework for educators whose courses include a community service-learning (CSL) component. I summarize service learning and a critical approach to multiculturalism, and then suggest the latter as a critical framework to learning about social and cultural difference. Lastly, I draw on a document of student outcomes developed by the University of British Columbia’s Community Learning Initiative (UBC-CLI) to demonstrate the opportunities of employing critical multiculturalism in planning and practices of CSL. In my discussion, I draw on the work of Peter McLaren (1994), Joe Kincheloe (1997) and Shirley Steinberg (2012) and their callings for a critical perspective on multiculturalism and multicultural education. I suggest that critical multiculturalism is valuable theory to draw upon for the development of critical community-service learning (CSL) pedagogy. I follow Butin’s (2003) notion that CSL is not monochromatic, recognizing the multiple means and goals of service learning. Multiple perspectives of service learning are imperative to “alternative conceptualizations of foundational goals and pragmatic enactments” (Butin, 2003, p. 1684). Consequently, consideration must be given to the goals and perspectives before applying a critical multicultural framework.

Defining Community Service Learning
CSL is a form of experiential learning, rooted in Deweyan educational philosophy (Saltmarsh, 1996). Although CSL has decades of history in the US, it is a relatively new educational practice in Canada (Chambers, 2009). The multifarious range of service-learning practices across institutions and educators extends the challenge of establishing one agreed upon definition of “service-learning” (Mitchell, 2008). The Canadian Alliance for Service Learning defines service learning as “an educational approach that integrates service in the community with intentional learning activities. Within effective CSL efforts, members of both educational institutions and community organizations work together toward outcomes that are mutually beneficial” (in Gemmel & Clayton, 2009, p. 9). Thomas Ehrlich (1996) defined service learning as the various
pedagogies that link community service and academic study with each strengthening the other. Eyler and Giles describe it as experiential learning occurring through a cycle of action and reflection, where students simultaneously apply learning to community problems, while reflecting on their experiences (in Chambers, 2009, p. 78).

Despite multiple definitions the maturation of the field and the recent accession of theory and critiques of service learning have created a general understanding and agreement its pedagogy, design, partnership and learning processes (Gemmel and Clayton, 2009). The context, or site of learning, garners attention when considering CSL as an educational practice, and should not be seen as a one-size fits all practice, appropriate to all settings and situations. Traditionally heralded for increasing engagement with community, service learning enables students to apply knowledge to real-world experiences, closing the gap between theory and practice. Purported student outcomes from service learning literature can be categorized more broadly under intellectual growth (Bringle & Hatcher, 1996; Eyler, Giles Jr, Stenson, Gray, & At, 2001; Gemmel & Clayton, 2009), civic engagement or social responsibility (Butin, 2007; Gemmel and Clayton, 2009; Smye, Josewski and Kendal, 2010; Kahne and Westheimer, 2006), and Personal Growth (CAS standards and Guidelines, 2005). When applied as pedagogy for cross-cultural engagement, social responsibility becomes the area of central focus.

Possibilities for Critical Engagement?
CSL literature is flourishing with debate on whether service learning can act as a method for critically engaging students. Following Butin’s understanding of CSL as a heterogeneous arena of practice, belief that all CSL courses and activities will automatically induce critical or transformative experiences in students falls flat. However, the increasing popularity of CSL in Canadian higher education in recent years has elevated service learning to dangerous heights given the postulation that, paired with classroom learning, CSL inherently connects to a model of social justice (Mitchell, 2008). Mitchell maintains two approaches to service learning exist: “a traditional approach which emphasizes service without attention to systems of inequality, and a critical approach that is unapologetic in its aim to dismantle structures of injustice” (p. 50). For Mitchell, three elements distinguish traditional service learning from critical service learning; (1) an orientation to social change, (2) working to redistribute power, and (3) authentic relationships in the classroom and community. If service learning is to be considered as pedagogy to engage students in critical reflection on social and cultural difference, it can only be done through a critical model—not those that fail to address inequitable power relations, and only further perpetuate the status quo. Traditional models of service learning have been further criticized for “transmitting ‘mission ideology’” (Yoder Clark, 2009, p. 1); an imposition of a dominant group on a non-dominant group, in the name of “service”. Many scholars have started turning to critical theory in their discussions and criticisms of service learning. Yoder Clark's (2009) doctoral dissertation provides thorough discussion on the implication of power in service learning and points to the influence of the works of Freire in the early stages of service learning and its development, though mostly absent CSL literature (Yoder Clark, 2009).

Lastly, much of the critical literature on service learning focuses on power imbalances, issues of privilege, and the dangers of affirming the status quo. Power and privilege should be recognized as inherent and inescapable aspects of service learning:
Students will undoubtedly have a greater societal privilege than those whom they serve. Whether it be race, class, age, ability or education level, and in some cases the privilege of time (which may also manifest as class privilege), students in some way (or in all these ways) have more power than the constituencies in the service agencies where they work (Mitchell, 2008, p. 56).

Though more often than not this holds true, power imbalances do not always function one directionally, inevitably privileging the student. Power manifests itself differently across race, class, gender, sexuality, ability and other differences, and its possible that a student, while privileged by class through their positioning as “student,” may be subject to other power imbalances and oppression based on race, gender, ability, sexual orientation and other differences. In some community spaces the very positioning as “student” tips the scales of power either way depending how they position themselves or, are positioned in relation to others.

**Multiculturalism**

The discourse of multiculturalism emerged onto the public stage around the late 1960s, early 70s after gaining political support on a national level from the Canadian and Australian governments (Rattansi, 2011). Multiculturalism is not, and has never been one static concept. Nor is it universal, but holds different meanings in different places, often shaped and conceptualized through government policies and strategies developed to “manage the problems of diversity and multiplicity which multi-cultural societies throw up” (Hall, 2000, p. 209). Canada’s official multicultural policy came in under the Trudeau government (Willinsky, 2012). Since then, the discourses of multiculturalism have seen a multitude of changes in Canada. Through “unspoken parts of the multicultural journey”, tones of multiculturalism have traveled through the discourses of tolerance and diversity, anti-racism, post-colonialism and Critical Race Theory (Willinsky, 2012, p. 16). For some, ‘multiculturalism’ as they knew it has perished; its rise and fall have left behind a myriad of alternatives. Some of these alternatives include post-multiculturalism (King, 2005; Vertovec, 2010), and interculturalism (Carr, 2012), which are still intricately linked to the policies of nation-states, and cosmopolitanism (Harreveld, 2012), a type of global ‘socio-cultural literacy’, still aimed at promoting nationhood, but through both a national and international lens. Were it not for lack of attention to class difference, cosmopolitanism may also have offered an appropriate conceptual framework to service learning.

Mainstream multiculturalism is built on the pillars of neo-liberalism and takes a failing approach to multicultural education. It exoticizes and celebrates difference and plurality, positioning them as necessary knowledge to function in the global economy. Issues of power and domination are neglected, and how both exist in dynamic and oppressive relations created by the intersection of race, class and gender differences (Steinberg, 2012). Such an approach also fails to critically analyze issues of privilege, and lacks tenets of social justice through the avoidance of the concept of oppression (Kincheloe & Steinberg, 1997). Moreover, Canadian neo-liberal multicultural policy has, historically and presently, failed Indigenous peoples (Mackey, 2002; St. Denis, 2011). Multicultural policies undermine Aboriginal sovereignty, functioning as a colonial instrument helping to “erase, diminish, trivialize, and deflect from acknowledging Aboriginal sovereignty, and the need to redress Aboriginal rights” (St. Denis, 2011, p. 309).
Critical Multiculturalism
What critical multiculturalism offers service learning more than any other multiculturalism alternative is a heavy attention to power, privilege and the role of race, class and gender in shaping these power dynamics. Joe Kincheloe & Shirley Steinberg’s (1997; Steinberg, 2012) typology provides a spectrum of positions of the public discourses of multiculturalism; conservative, liberal, pluralist, left-essentialist, and finally what they have called critical multiculturalism. For Steinberg, the issue arose from the pluralist perspective’s failure to challenge dominant norms and consider how power functions within social relations of race, class, gender and ethnicity, maintaining privilege and the status quo (Steinberg, 2012). Critical multiculturalism maintains that difference must not be separated from cultural histories and ideologies. Differences are seen as occurring both between and among groups and “in relation”, rather than free-floating, as to avoid reduction and de-contextualization (McLaren, 1994). Critical multiculturalism becomes both, simultaneously, pedagogy and a philosophy acting as “mirror images of each other”, representing different perspectives on the essential goal of achieving educational quality, accessibility and social equity (Gay, 1995, p.156). Critical multiculturalism, like critical pedagogy, strives to develop educational programs and practices that are grounded in equality and effective for a diverse population, not a perpetuation of dominant knowledge and exclusion. They both employ critical thought and language and practice resistance, possibility and hope (Gay, 1995). Though much of the discourse of critical multiculturalism education is situated in formal schooling and curriculum, it is by no means restricted to the classroom. Thus, it can be appropriately infused with service learning pedagogy, where students must encounter and engage with the politics of difference in community spaces. Regardless of the setting, critical multicultural education has a place in our structural analysis of the particular contexts in which it is situated at the time - social, historical and political; the power dynamics that play out within these non-static structures; and how multidimensionality and intersectionality (Choo & Ferree, 2010; Ferree, 2009) of diverse identities are shaped against dominant, socially constructed norms, producing power for some and marginalizing others. Critical multiculturalism becomes applicable to all diverse sites of education and learning (Kincheloe and Steinberg, 1997), applying a different criticism depending on place and space and recognition that “different kinds of criticisms occur in different contexts and different spaces of criticism” (Chicago Cultural Studies Group, in Goldberg, 1994, p.161). Thus issues may play out differently in different regions, different organizations and the different student experiences that emerge from service learning, but a critical multicultural framework demands critical reflection and analysis of the powers at each of these places.

Bringing the Two Together
Through civic engagement, CSL has potential for students becoming more socially responsible citizens (Seider, 2012) and developing a deeper understanding of community contexts, social difference and underlying systemic factors affecting communities (Butin, 2003; Hollis, 2004; Kahne & Westheimer, 1996; Smye, Josewski, & Kendall, 2010). Furthermore, through engagement with communities and critical reflection on their experiences, students have increased potential to develop a deeper understanding of difference and its dynamic nature. Through the continued development of the Community Learning Initiative (CLI), the University of British Columbia has been committed to increasing community engagement. Part of these increased efforts has included curriculum development and implementation of a community service learning component for courses new to CSL. In order to understand and point to CSL
benefits, they have created a list of student outcomes and indicators derived from literature. These outcomes and indicators serve as a tool of evaluation for faculty and inform further development of CSL endeavors. The possibilities brought by merging critical multiculturalism and CSL connect closest to the outcome of “intercultural understanding and commitment to anti-discrimination” and the following four indicators (UBC-CLI, 2012, p. 8-9): (1) increased understanding of the complexity of the dimensions of diversity, (2) increased ability to create safe space for people of diverse identities and socio-cultural backgrounds, (3) increased participation in promoting a society that recognizes, respects, and nurtures diverse socio-cultural identities and backgrounds, and (4) increased awareness of systemic factors underlying oppression and marginalization. Space limitations allow for only a snapshot of the possibilities of applying a critical multicultural framework but extend beyond this limited analysis.

Complexity of diversity
Such an ‘outcome’ requires us to consider the dynamic nature and intersection of identities, and that these identities cannot be separated from and are constructed by the social, cultural and historical. Similarly, critical multiculturalism also considers the intersection of identity and understands race, gender and class in relation to one another and in a structural context and emphasizes the ways that power has worked historically to construct identities (Kincheloe and Steinberg, 1997).

Safe Space
Creating a safe space first demands recognizing the need for such a space and how dominance and privilege have silenced and oppressed people and knowledge, marginalized by hegemonic practices of dominant. This safe space is essential for learning and working across difference and different ways of knowing. Students must come to realize their own assumptions, stereotypes and worldviews their function in marginalization and oppression. More importantly is the role of teachers in helping students overcome social barriers “by engaging them in the exploration of different ways of reading the world, methods of resisting oppression and visions of progressive democratic communities” (Kincheloe and Steinberg, 1997, p. 29).

Promoting Diversity
Without attention to critical issues around power and oppression, CSL only perpetuates liberal or pluralist discourses of multiculturalism. Through its commitment to social justice critical multiculturalism serves to move beyond recognition and aims to transform society and create equitable relationships that foster learning from difference (Kincheloe and Steinberg, 1997).

Marginalization and Oppression
By naming the wielders of power and demonstrating how dominant discourses function on a systematic level, students become aware of historical oppression of marginalized groups. Taking this one step further, critical multiculturalism offers pedagogy of resistance as a way for students to identify dominance and power that exist on systemic level, which serves to privilege some and marginalize many.

Conclusion
While service learning has potential for creating greater connections between education and students’ lives, we must be cautious about the power of the institution of schooling and the traditional curriculum’s role in knowledge subjugation. Critical multiculturalism would garner
attention to such matters as key considerations in the planning and practices of service learning courses and practices. It is also important that we don’t see ‘outcomes’ as finished work, but as a road map, part of an ongoing process of multicultural education through pedagogy of service learning. Critical multiculturalism provides a framework to inform these processes of teaching and learning undertaken through a service learning pedagogy. The practice of service learning cannot act alone, but must be linked with classroom activities and discussion that facilitate critical reflection on issues that arise in student service learning experiences. Critical service learning should strive to problematize, not perpetuate the status quo (Yoder Clark, 2009). Critical multiculturalism can give service learning a solid foundation to act as pedagogy for learning about and working across social and cultural difference. It requires us to contextualize knowledge in local socio-political and historical contexts. It challenges students and educators to consider power and privilege, and recognize other ontologies and epistemologies outside those of the dominant discourse. Thus, examining how a critical multicultural framework can be applied to CSL creates space for further considerations on how adult educators can work to decolonize our local CSL practices.

References

doi:10.1080/0273217049048829


doi:10.1111/j.1468-2451.2010.01749.x


Creating ‘Authentic Collaboration’ in Feedback to Program Facilitators

Eileen Piggot-Irvine
Royal Roads University

Abstract: This paper introduces an ‘authentic collaboration’ model (Piggot-Irvine, 2012) that outlines incrementally deepening levels of interaction in evaluator feedback to facilitators of adult learning. The deepest, dialogical and non-defensive, level of interaction is rare. More often facilitators are provided with written summative feedback that has limited developmental outcomes for either the facilitator or program. In this paper, a rationale for skill development in authentic collaboration in feedback is provided, alongside comparison with inauthentic collaboration. An introduction to the model and attendant skills are outlined with reference to empirical research associated with outcomes of application of the skills via a case study.

Rationale for Skill Development in Authentic Collaboration

I want to begin by clarifying what the word ‘collaboration’ means. It is derived from ‘co-labour’ which implies joint work, but also has links to notions of consultation, involvement, participation, partnership, cooperation, agreement and consent. It is variably interpreted. Cardno (1990), for example, elaborated a definition in the form of a ‘vision’ for collaboration where processes were quite structured, directed, informed and associated with effective communication skills. I believe that the directedness stance in this definition underestimates the joint, co-operative, interactive elements in collaboration that are so vital to openness and trust establishment. Unlike Hattori and Lapidus (2004), who imply in a case study cited that trust is a precondition for collaboration, I suggest that it is a consequence of collaboration: in fact a “hard earned outcome from effective collaboration” (Piggot-Irvine, 2012:91). Collaboration necessitates highly skilled co-labourers if it is to be effective in feedback and of critical importance in trust development is the adoption of a dialogic stance.

MacKeracher (2004) reminds us that learning is a dialectical process but she also notes that the word ‘dialectical’ is often replaced with ‘dialogical’ because:

“… it involves a dialogue – whether carried out internally with oneself or externally with others – that explores alternative viewpoints in order to develop an integrated viewpoint synthesized from the best aspects of alternatives” (p.8).

The notion of dialogue is central to this paper and the definition provided by MacKeracher tightly distills what I have described (Piggot-Irvine, 2012) as associated with the deepest level of collaboration in feedback: a level I have claimed to be ‘authentic’. Unfortunately I have rarely observed such authentic collaboration in two decades of work observing, teaching, writing about, evaluating and practising feedback to facilitators in the adult learning context. In contrast I have repeatedly experienced, and sadly regularly practised myself, highly defensive responses on the parts of both those providing and receiving feedback. In this paper I do not attempt to critique the practice of others, but draw on my own experience to discuss initially what I mean by authentic (and conversely inauthentic) collaboration in feedback.
Inauthentic and Authentic Collaboration in Feedback

I am going to begin with inauthentic collaboration because it is the approach that I am well aware I adopted when first providing feedback in the adult facilitation context. Such a position was not intentional and I was considerably ignorant that it was occurring: an ignorance that is described as common by authors such as Argyris and Schön (1974).

Inauthentic collaboration, in my view, falls under the realm of ‘defensiveness’ - a common predominant response when there is threat or difference of opinion (Argyris & Schön, 1974; Bifano, 1989). Argyris (2003) defines defensiveness as the tendency to protect ourselves and others from potential threat and embarrassment. Avoidance and control are the two key strategies. In a tense feedback context ‘protection’ (of ourselves and others) often dominates and includes covering up or withholding vital information/evidence from the facilitator because the evaluator often feels it would ‘hurt’ them. This is an avoidance key strategy. Alternatively, or frequently additionally, in such a tense context evaluators are frequently indirect by giving mixed rather than clear messages (this is potentially either avoidance or control), or often aggressively confronting with the facilitator but with low levels of evidence (strongly controlling). In each of these situations, even in avoidance, decision making is unilaterally controlled by the person giving feedback and minimal collaboration occurs. For example, if the evaluator is excessive in stating their own perspective when giving feedback but does not allow significant response from the facilitator, they are defensively unilaterally controlling the feedback.

Alternatively, in authentic collaboration in feedback, there is striving for shared (bilateral) control in the feedback by employing what is sometimes called a non-defensive or ‘productive’ orientation (Argyris, 2003; Cardno, 2001; Senge, Cambron-McCabe, Lucas, Smith, Dutton & Kleiner, 2000). Here, a more consensual approach to feedback is adopted that involves a balance of articulation of evidence and reasoning linked to observations and perceptions (advocacy) alongside invitation for careful checking and open understanding of facilitator's perspectives without prejudgement (inquiry). With advocacy and inquiry in balance a two-way conversation or ‘dialogue’ results, leading to mutual understanding and agreement (or agreement to disagree) about evidence that is shared in feedback (see Piggot-Irvine & Doyle, 2010, for detailed elaboration on elements of dialogue). Preskill and Torres (1999) suggest that, through dialogue:

“… individuals seek to inquire, share meanings, understand complex issues, and uncover assumptions. In other words, dialogue is what facilitates the … learning processes of reflection, asking questions, and identifying and clarifying values, beliefs, assumptions and knowledge …” (p.53).

I have been struggling to adopt this non-defensive, more productive, bilateral and dialogical, stance for the last two decades and along with a colleague (McMorland & Piggot-Irvine, 2000) part of our learning in this struggle was to clarify our thinking about interactive challenges in collaboration from superficial, defensive, types of collaboration through to what the ideal, or deepest, level of dialogue might look like. A model of collaboration levels resulted.
A Model for Authentic Collaboration

Recently I further adapted (Piggot-Irvine, 2012) our earlier model of deepening levels of collaborative challenge, showing progression from superficial (Level 1) to the deepest, authentic, type (Level 5). As noted at the beginning of this article, at the deepest level (5) there is openness that generates trust, as shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Deepening Levels of Interactive Challenge in Collaboration

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Challenges of Interaction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Level 1</td>
<td>Introduction (seeking and enjoying exploring commonality, excluding discussion of difference, collaborating in a superficial and task-specific way, and with little demonstration or examination of defensive values or strategies)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 2</td>
<td>Recognition of potential of self and others (with rising awareness of differential between self and others, waning enthusiasm for exploring commonality, and increasing willingness to entertain multilateral perspectives on reality, but action is usually limited despite personal perceptions of the value of self-contribution, and if doubt arises the response action is likely to be defensive and self-protective)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 3</td>
<td>Gaining an inquiry perspective (increasing empathy for the perception of others, and coming to genuine acceptance of the validity of another’s way of being/thinking, seeing the world through others’ eyes)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 4</td>
<td>Transition to collaboration (suspending one’s own known perceptions and opening up to unknown other perceptions while allowing for exploration of creativity, true inquiry and genuine collaborative action)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 5</td>
<td>Trust and co-generation (achieving new levels of awareness of both our own and others’ perspectives, emerging as courage is expressed and inquiry leads to action – a process distinguished by spontaneity, synergy and creativity, and leading to openness, trust and learning)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Piggot-Irvine, 2012:94)

I also graphically interpreted these levels in the following Figure 1. Note that although the figure shows multiple participants in collaboration in some levels, the principles apply equally when there are two people collaborating, such as a feedback situation.
The increasingly deepening levels of non-defensive, authentic, collaboration in a feedback context that are shown in later levels of the model that are most associated with trust and co-generation involve skills that can be learnt.

**Attendant Skills for Authentic Collaboration**

Acquiring the deepest, trust engendering, dialogic openness shown in Level 5 in the model is far from easy because most of us have been conditioned to a defensive response and changing from that is difficult, as noted by Piggot-Irvine and Doyle (2010):

“... it requires significant, profound, shifts involving exposure, examination and alteration of defensive values at a deeply personal level which is both cognitively and emotionally difficult and is a lengthy process. … the approach on its own is extremely complex and usually involves months, maybe years, of training. The reason for this is that the approach requires rethinking and altering our underlying value systems, and this involves changing many automatic, conditioned responses. Such values and responses cannot be changed in two hours!” (p.61)
I will use a case study to show how these skills were employed with facilitators in a national pilot program for developing leaders where I was appointed as program evaluator contracted by the Ministry of Education. I negotiated that I would trial a combination of summative (end point) feedback for all of the six regions in the pilot, and an intensive formative (ongoing) element to feedback with one region. This was an approach that I believed was appropriate because of the ‘‘pilot’’ nature of the program when the opportunity for the designers, facilitators, and the regional and national coordinators to have developmental feedback was important. As I noted in Piggot-Irvine (2010):

The latter is not unusual, but the employment of specific action science (Argyris, 2003) strategies for feedback set this evaluation apart. Here, the goal was to detect and correct gaps that may have existed between what Argyris and Schön (1974) term espousals (predetermined program goals, aims, and curriculum) and practice (the facilitated program). (p.315)

The more intensive feedback occurred immediately with individual facilitators following each program session and with the entire facilitation group and the regional coordinator at the end of each day. Observation, documentary analysis (espoused session objectives, plans, content, process outlines, outcomes etc) and program participant comment provided evidence for the feedback. I was clear about my intent in the feedback to utilize an authentic collaboration approach i.e. the adoption of dialogic, productive, non-defensive, skills associated with Level 5 in the model approach.

I had a pattern in the feedback of initially focusing facilitators on their own ‘‘mapping’’ of the session objectives, plans and desired outcomes and then asking them to articulate whether they thought there was any espousal–practice gap. My own evidence in the form of observations, documentary analysis and participant comment was provided incrementally as our dialogue about the evidence unfolded. My own implementation of authentic collaboration skills using dialogue was not perfect, but I strove to be as open as possible by:

• using evidence rather than assumptions about the observation (an advocacy tool);
• coming to the point quickly if there was any concern with the evidence rather than ‘easing in’ with information (an advocacy tool);
• getting the facilitator to check my interpretation of evidence continuously and I acknowledged when I may have misinterpreted information (inquiry);
• trying to allow the facilitator to have majority input (inquiry);
• using open-ended questioning, paraphrasing, and listening skills (inquiry); and
• constantly seeking explanations for any espousal-practice gap (inquiry).

I always progressed our dialogue by moving to ‘next steps’ that included clarifying that we had mutual understanding about what was observed, and identifying and prioritizing improvements by finding mutually acceptable solutions (including checking of intended and unintended consequences).

Although the espousal-practice gap frequently existed in the facilitation there was not a single situation when that was either already identified by the facilitator or they were quick to recognize
it when I showed evidence of the gap: no defensive response was observed with facilitators. Had such a situation arisen, I was aware of a need for further clarification of the data/evidence.

These steps that I have described for achieving dialogue in authentic collaboration have been reported in Piggot-Irvine (2012, adapted from Piggot-Irvine & Cardno, 2005), as summarized in Table 2.

**Table 2: Dialogue Steps for Achieving Authentic Collaboration**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>State your perception in a hypothetical way, i.e. open for challenge and checking.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Provide evidence for your perception.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Outline your reasoning and rationale for your perception. Collectively Steps 1, 2 &amp; 3 are often referred to as ‘Advocacy’ Steps.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Seek responses [check what others think, feel and perceive] without being defensive. This step is often referred to as the ‘Inquiry’ Step.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Summarize shared understanding or the need for more information and determine if there is an espousal–practice gap.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Repeat steps 1 – 5 if necessary before moving on.</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Jointly suggest and evaluate solutions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Decide together on a solution(s).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There are multiple underpinnings to the steps described in Table 2 (and elaborated in Piggot-Irvine & Doyle, 2010), including:

- Withholding assumptions by staying low on a ‘ladder of inference’ (Senge et al., 2000);
- Reflecting-in-action and retrospectively reflecting-on-action (Schön, 1983); and
- Engaging in double-loop learning (Argyris & Schön, 1996) i.e. examining and changing underlying defensive strategies and values.

A key question is: ‘is there any evidence that such an approach works?’ The final section of this paper provides some initial evidence from the case discussed.

**Evidence of Outcomes from Authentic Collaboration**

As reported in Piggot-Irvine (2010), tentative evidence suggests that the intensive, authentic collaboration, feedback approach described in the previous case study had impact. Qualitative data collected in interviews, a large scale survey, and focus groups confirmed that facilitators in the region that received this intensive feedback felt the program was strengthened due to the feedback, as the following quote from the regional co-ordinator illustrates:

“If we were rating it 1–5, I would give the formative feedback a 5. It was VERY useful for facilitators to sit down with her, discuss how they were going, and take on board what was relevant. For an evaluation to be ‘win - win’ it is a great model and I would warmly support that approach.”

More informally, another impact was shown in an increasing request for feedback from facilitators as the program progressed, often with them seeking me out for this. I also observed
increasing implementation of ideas for improvement directly aligned to outcomes from the ‘solution generation’ steps (6 & 7) in Table 2.

When quantitative data (in a series of four questionnaires to all participants, facilitators, co-ordinators) from the case study region were compared with other regions, there were significantly higher summative questionnaire mean ratings (using the Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test at the .05 level) for incremental curriculum improvement in several areas: program delivery in a variety of formats; facilitators catering for range of learning styles; a logically delivered curriculum; enabling participants to create new ways of thinking for leadership; enabling application of new knowledge to practice; increased knowledge of leadership; and enhanced reflective practice. Of importance is the fact that overall no questionnaire ratings for this intensive feedback region were significantly lower than those from any other region and interestingly program participants in this region rated higher that they had more confidence in applying for senior leadership roles. Participants in this region also had significantly higher response rates overall for all summative electronic questionnaires.

I am the first to acknowledge that these outcomes need to be considered as tentative impacts from the authentic collaboration approach to feedback provided to facilitators in the case study region. I also suggest however that, though tentative, they are sufficiently encouraging to warrant both that further research is warranted and continuing employment of the approach is justified.

References


Abstract: This paper brings together two compatible analyses of how power operates that have not previously been theorized together in adult learning. Situating ourselves between two approaches to knowledge production, institutional ethnography and embodied learning, we explore how a combined institutional analysis and embodied practice interrogate the operation of power. We propose an analysis of power as interactional and relational, rather than a structure that stands over and above people. In understanding power as relation, we propose deconstructing and transforming existing power constellations through embodied practice. Our model builds on adult learning theories whereby explicit connections between consciousness, analysis, emotions and feelings are theorized together, and felt in the body.

Social Hierarchy as Performance: An Institutional Ethnography of Accountability
The paper begins with a study by one of the authors, which presents an empirical investigation of how social services to local residents are shaped and enforced by municipal funding requirements in Canada. The research traces how local funds are linked, through key policy and operational texts, to provincial and federal accountability measures. This study used institutional ethnography (D.E. Smith, 2005) to demonstrate, in material terms, how the social operates, by tracing the actual behaviours people did to be accountable at the interface between municipal government and residents.

The study begins with the premise that accountability is an ideological frame in Canada. An ideological frame is an ideology, a way of seeing and being in the world, that has been transferred so completely into material practice that we no longer question or see the way human made ideas and technologies give us the words to name our lived realities, the practices to reinforce them, or frame our expectations of what is possible and real. Ng (1995) states an ideological frame “identifies ideologies as processes that are produced and constructed through human activities” (36). Allman (2001) explains, “when concepts come to be designated by words, their active, sensuous and relational origins are extinguished or masked” (166). As humans continually find new ways to reinscribe social power, scholars must continue to name how people come to have social power, and how we use it.

Research Process
This research was conducted in a mid-sized city in southern Ontario. As in many cities in Ontario, for over a decade the municipal government funded volunteer residents’ groups to run

32 We purposefully avoid naming the study city to protect the confidentiality of research participants.
social programs. Residents’ groups worked year-round in 12 neighbourhoods around the city, largely through the contribution of volunteers interested in ‘improving quality of life’ for themselves and other residents in their neighbourhoods.

Residents’ groups reported that they used municipal funds to pay for actual expenses such as space rental, material costs (e.g., craft materials or food ingredients), as well as to pay staff for summer camps, after school programs, and administrative work. There were great differences among residents’ groups in terms of the material resources they had access to, as well as the kinds of services they provided. Some groups had meeting and program spaces in municipal buildings. Other groups rented townhouses, where they located offices and programming spaces. Other groups were run out of peoples’ homes, where organizing took place around kitchen tables. At the time of the research, some residents’ groups had been in existence for over a decade, while others were less than a year old.

Each residents’ group had its own ‘Board’, which in reality was a group of volunteers that did most of the organizing and delivery of events, as well as liaising with government officials. Each of these ‘Boards’ was supposed to rotate membership every 2 years. However, in some cases, the same volunteers had been on the Board in their residents’ group for several years. In addition to their own, neighbourhood-level Boards, the residents’ groups had an Association, made up of the 12 groups from around the city. At the time this study was conducted, the residents’ group association had been in existence for at least 7 years (reports varied as to the start date of the association). Each residents’ group sent one or two members to association meetings, which typically occurred once a month. The primary purpose of the residents’ group association was to give members a chance to network, share programming and fundraising ideas, and exchange information.

Each residents’ group had its own processes for communicating internally with volunteers and local residents. The residents’ group association met once a month to share program ideas and information among the 12 member groups. The residents’ group association also made decisions about how to divide the $125,000 they received annually from the city. The 12 groups did not get an equal ‘share’ of the money. Instead, residents’ group members went through a lengthy process each year to allocate funds based on identified need and social priorities, as defined by association members. Once association members made decisions about the allocation of funds to each group, the city would disburse funds accordingly into the bank accounts of each residents’ group around the city. Residents’ groups would then do quarterly reporting about their spending to the city, and annual reporting to other residents’ groups.

Government officials worked with residents’ groups to help them make funding applications, co-facilitate meetings at the neighbourhood and association levels, share information, and coordinate the municipal reporting process. Government officials worked at both the provincial and municipal levels. All government officials were involved with the volunteer residents’ groups in some way, anywhere on the spectrum from approving their funding once a year to working in direct contact with the groups on a daily or weekly basis. For example, some
government officials provided one-on-one support to residents’ group members who needed a ‘professional’ to be able to perform some of the tasks required of them to maintain their funding.

Over a period of 6 months, interviews occurred with 12 residents’ group members from 10 different groups around the city, and 11 government officials from the municipal and provincial levels of government. Residents’ group association meetings were observed for a full calendar year. Association documents and relevant policy papers from the municipal, provincial and federal government levels were also reviewed.

**Approach to Knowledge Production: Institutional Ethnography**

Institutional ethnographers investigate and describe *ruling relations*, which D.E. Smith (1999) defines as “the forms in which power is generated and held in contemporary societies” (79). As a concept, *ruling relations* refers to text-based domination, “a new and distinctive mode of organizing society that comes into prominence during the latter part of the nineteenth century in Europe and North America” (D.E. Smith 2005, 13).

Dorothy Smith (2005) explains that because language is used to translate abstract thoughts and experiences among people, *disjunctures* between lived experiences and institutional understandings are “not avoidable; they are of the transformation, the process of going from the actual to words or images that represent it” (187, emphasis original). She emphasizes that the point of disjuncture is a “transfer of agency…integral to how the institution assumes the capacity to act” (187). Smith argues that this place of disjuncture is *a significant place where power is exercised*, where people’s subjectivities are organized, and the location where institutional ethnographers should focus their study. In this study, participants struggled with tensions between what they believed (their values) and what they did (their actual work). They continually walked a fine line to keep their jobs, to keep their funding, or be seen as good people, even when the actions they had to perform were in discord with their personal views and values.

Discord exposes subjectivities. Ng (1995) reminds us that “ruling does not only involve politicians and government officials; it occurs in many sites simultaneously, involving vast numbers of people who do not consider themselves part of ‘the government’” (38). The power of texts is that they coordinate local, specific, material experience with *translocal* ruling relations, or the coordination of multiple locations simultaneously (D.E. Smith 2005), such as the application of a federal law in diverse regions of a nation state. Individuals are both organized by texts, such as policy documents or laws, and operationalize texts, such as job descriptions or schedules. At times people are aware of their dynamic relationship with text (Campbell 2006), while at other times they carry out the domination written in text without knowing it (Griffith 2006).

**Residents Groups Being ‘Seen’ Through Text**

Each year, members of residents’ groups in the study city were required to generate particular documents to *account* for the money they receive from the municipality. One document they prepared was a statistics form, which was pre-designed by government officials and linked directly with a report municipal staff were mandated to prepare for the provincial government. In the statistics form, residents’ group members had to show the number of people involved in different kinds of programs. The statistics form framed how people’s lived experience of the residents’ group program became *known* through certain categories.
For example, programs, and thus their participants, were divided into two types: ‘recreation’ and ‘social’. Residents’ groups had to list each of their programs by name and also categorize them according to ‘registered’ and ‘drop-in’. In the form, groups were required to record and produce the number of: individuals registered for each program, the number of people that actually attended, the number of times each program was offered, and the number of program hours. Finally, residents’ groups were also required to subdivide their attendance information for each program into one of five different age categories: 0-6, 7-11, 12-18, 19-54, and 55+ years. Certain realities were made visible through the form, such as age of participants, while other realities were made invisible, such as why participants chose to be involved.

Residents’ groups were required to produce this statistical information four times per year, in congruence with the municipal fiscal quarters, in order to maintain their funding from that level of government. In addition to producing statistical information, residents’ groups were also required to produce receipts for all of their expenditures of municipal funds, their group bank statements, as well as a report about how their programming reflected the core values of the municipality, as described in the city’s corporate Strategic Plan.

**Accounting as a Performance**

All of this *accounting* work done by residents’ group members was a *performance*, part of the ideological frame of accountability. We use the word performance here specifically because it simultaneously means “the accomplishment or carrying out of something”, “the quality of execution of such an action…when measured against a standard”, and “the extent to which an investment is profitable” (Oxford English Dictionary 2012, online). Performance also means “interpretation” as in a dramatic play (Oxford English Dictionary 2012, online). Residents and government officials in this study often performed their accountability work as if acting from a script.

In Lentricchia and McLaughlin’s 1995 edition of *Critical Terms for Literary Study*, Henry Sayre contributes an essay defining “Performance.” He describes performance as “the single occurrence of a repeatable and preexistent text or score” (91). In his essay, Sayre refers primarily to performances of literary works, such as Shakespeare’s *Hamlet*. Performances are a set of actions and ways of being that bestow merit upon a subject, creating subject positions within a supposed social hierarchy (social text).

Sayre goes on to say that “the assumption, of course, is that the audience is in a position to make such judgments, that it somehow knows or understands what the “master” work is in its ideal realization” (91). Coleman (2006) argues that Anglophone Canadians are taught, from a very early age, what being civilized is, and what it is not – how to *act* civilized. Thus, just like an audience, the dominant, white, middle-class in Canada acts as an audience for political interplay, using British, Christian, capital-oriented, individualistic values to make judgments about Others’ performances of *civility*, including other white people.

As an example, when residents or government officials in the study broke from the dominant social script, such as when some residents talked all the way through a municipal meeting – as a show of their full attention and participation in the meeting – their actions were considered *disrespectful and inappropriate* by the meeting facilitator.
In a second example, as residents’ group members negotiated with one another to secure funding for their groups, social class was also performed, as if in a play. Residents’ group members living with higher incomes sometimes used complex language to achieve their goals in the group, reflective of higher education or professional work experience in which language is used to denote superiority. Residents living with higher incomes also had ‘costumes’ (clothing) that demonstrated their wealth and social power. Residents living with lower incomes often used their knowledge of residents’ group association history (many had been volunteers and members for a number of years) to rebut or argue for their goals.

However, the relations of ruling in the accounting performances (the filling out of statistics forms and the use of particular language to advocate for resources for one’s group) described above were often accepted as normal by participants, almost completely hiding the ways actors were using socially constructed power to achieve their own ends. The socially constructed differences, as well as the technologies that conflated to convey trust in the relationship between the state and residents, as well as among residents living with different levels of income, seemed natural, acceptable and necessary to many participants. In fact, government officials and residents expressed that while accounting practices were “oppressive”, “difficult to learn”, and “time consuming” most also indicated that performing accountability was their own desire for themselves and others. When one comes to desire the use of particular tools for social interactions, the ideological frame disappears from view, and is silently, uncritically reproduced. Doing the performance of collecting and presenting particular statistics equated with accountability, which led to a government official (who was not part of program planning or delivery) deciding that a program was “good” or “bad.” Ultimately, the knowing created by the statistics form led to access to resources – continued funding – or not.

**Material Reality Subjugated to ‘Textual Knowing’ Becomes Reality**

A central issue that surfaced in the data from residents was that dominant accountability texts and performances assumed homogeneity among residents. By the time accounting texts (statistics forms and financial statements) came to government decision-makers, the complex lived realities of residents delivering and accessing programming in the diverse neighbourhoods around the city were invisible. This hiding of different lived realities served to perpetuate social hierarchies and made it extremely difficult for residents to work collaboratively to understand different forms of social need around the city.

As social hierarchies are invented, they need constant care and attention to be regularly reasserted. We must perform the hierarchy and buy in to it in order for it to work. The data in this research show that participants were not just doing performances because of documents (texts). Most participants believed in the documents, that numbers were a true representation of Other people, and of collective social value.

In her book *Cruelty* (2009), neuroscientist Kathleen Taylor asserts that human malice is always a choice, and that all humans are capable of this. She argues that the choice to be cruel is based on a hard-wired part of human biology meant to differentiate friend from foe, danger from safety, in a split-second. Taylor contends that this differentiating among humans, which she calls othering, begins physiologically, and is then interpreted by the brain through patterned thought.
According to Taylor, the patterned thoughts we use to respond to chemical stimuli are learned from birth. We are taught to overlay our physical experiences with thoughts, which Taylor calls beliefs. Citing Wyer’s work on social cognition (1997), Taylor cautions that, “beliefs need not be conscious to affect behaviour” (150). Consequently, Taylor suggests that when humans feel acute or chronic stress, feel they are in danger in some way, or have been taught to know themselves and others based on hierarchical assumptions of good and bad human/citizen/person, we are more likely to do violence to other humans, in many cases believing we are morally justified in doing so.

Learning to Conceptualize the World in an Embodied Way
Allman (2001) writes “…consciousness is not just our thoughts and ideas as they exist on an objective level; it also involves our subjective, or emotional, responses” (165). Allman advocates for “critical education” to disrupt the bifurcation of thought from emotional experience in learning (169). The primary purpose of learning to connect our thoughts and emotions when making sense of the world is “to critique and overcome ideological thinking by developing the ability to dialectically conceptualize the world” (169). Here, Allman draws from Marxist dialectics, which posits that both physiological (emotional) and intellectual experiences shape our understanding of reality and our actions within it.

In the majority of Western educational spaces, and spaces of government organizing, mixing an awareness of emotional learning with intellectual learning is considered spirituality. Despite inconsistencies, spirituality is considered inappropriate in publicly organized spaces in Canada, including government institutions such as municipal meetings or public school classrooms. Thus, in formal primary, secondary and tertiary curricula, in which subjects are prepared to participate in upholding dominant social norms (Armstrong and Ng 2004), emotional awareness and understanding are not often taught. However, when we look outside Cartesian traditions, there are other possibilities of teaching emotional awareness and intellectual learning together.

For example, Roxana Ng taught Embodied Learning at the University of Toronto. Rejecting the dominant notion that “spirit ‘belongs’ to theology or religious studies” (2012, 2), Ng taught Qi Gong, a series of physical movements and breathing exercises, in a graduate class. Qi Gong is “based in Chinese medical theory that treats the mind, spirit or soul, and body as completely inter-related” (2012, 2). Ng argued that “power is enacted never as mere intellectual encounters. All intellectual encounters are exercised through confrontations of bodies, which are differently inscribed” (3).

In her Embodied Learning class, Ng’s students read theory, did daily Qi Gong exercises and kept a journal about their embodied learning experiences. Ng saw embodied learning as “a form of decolonizing pedagogy” (13). Ng wrote that embodied pedagogy:

- contrasts with the common sense usage of the concept of “decolonization” as a political and intellectual project having to do with the reclamation and reformulation of nationhood…For me, the notion of decolonization dissolves the boundaries between self and collectivity, between the individual and the systemic.

---

33 For example, in Canada, 4 statutory holidays are related to the Christian celebrations of Easter and Christmas. No other religious or spiritual tradition practiced by Canadians enjoys statutory holidays.
It interrogates how we, as individuals living within and being part of collectives reproduce and sustain systems of oppression… (13).

Another educator teaching embodied learning is Jean-Paul Restoule. In his research on Aboriginal identities (2005), Restoule draws on Simpson’s (2000, 171) work to explain that Anishinaabe ways of knowing are based on seven principles:

- Knowledge is cyclical, holistic.
- There are many truths, depending upon individual experience.
- Everything is alive.
- All things are equal and related.
- The land is sacred.
- There is an important relationship between humans and the spirit world.
- Humans are the least important beings in the cosmos.

Restoule teaches graduate Aboriginal Education courses at the University of Toronto, in which students practice smudging and talking with the Creator as part of the learning. Students are also actively encouraged to talk about their emotional experiences of the course material, which Restoule connects with learning through listening, paraphrasing students’ narratives, connections with theory, and storytelling. During one session of the class, Restoule told a story about a white student working to understand human identity formation through Anishinaabe ways of knowing. He recounted that the student asked what would happen if the concepts of Self and Other were understood by everyone through Anishinaabe teachings. Restoule replied “those concepts would disappear; they wouldn’t exist.”

**Conclusion**

Ng and Restoule’s teachings and pedagogical styles refute hierarchical thinking about Self and Other. It is vital for us to seek out opportunities to learn how to feel our emotional experiences of the world with greater awareness. Cultivating embodied awareness is a part of understanding how power operates among differently inscribed bodies, as well as paying attention to our own physical experiences of interacting with differently inscribed bodies. The information we derive from paying attention to both our physical and emotional bodies always informs how we interact with Others. As we develop skills for embodied experiences of reality, we have the potential to move beyond invented social categories, acknowledge humanness, as well as decolonize our own awareness and interactions with others.

**References**


A Regional Emergent Ontology of Critical Reflection

Donovan Plumb
Mount Saint Vincent University

Abstract: Drawing on the philosophical resources of Critical Realism, this paper takes first steps towards developing a regional emergent ontology of critical reflection. Understanding critical reflection as an emergent property and power of human individuals, identifying the neurological structures that enable humans to have the power of critical reflection, and tracing the evolutionary, developmental and learning interactions that give rise to these powers can place adult educators in a much better position to assess the ways critical reflection can support learning that can enhance capacities for individual and collective transformative social agency.

The Metaphysical Emergent and Stratified Ontology of Critical Realism
The metaphysical ontology of Critical Realism (Bhaskar, 2008) provides a powerful basis upon which to develop a specific account of the nature, emergence, and causal powers of critical reflection. Drawing on the philosophical resources of Critical Realism, this paper takes the first steps towards developing a regional emergent ontology of critical reflection.

The philosophical ontology of Critical Realism holds that reality is comprised of a hierarchy of entities each of which is composed of other entities that are their parts (Bhaskar, 2008). These smaller entities, in turn, are composed of still smaller parts, and so on, all of the way down in the hierarchy to the most basic constituents of our universe. The emergence of new entities from parts occurs when parts are organized or related in specific ways that give rise to powers and potentials that the parts themselves do not possess (Collier, 1994).

Thus, while Critical Realism provides a basis for understanding the emergence of new entities from parts, it insists that emergent entities cannot be reduced to their parts (Sayer, 2000). For example, a human heart is composed of a multitude of different muscle cells arrayed together in a specific pattern that enables the heart to develop the emergent power of being able to pump blood. While it is very helpful to understand the function of the parts of the heart, understanding these parts alone cannot fully illuminate the emergent properties of the heart.

The metaphysical ontology described by Critical Realism has operated strongly in the physical sciences. For example, scientists widely accept that atomic particles are the parts of atoms, which are the parts of molecules, which are the parts of materials, and so on. In the social sciences, however, the stratified and emergent ontology described by Critical Realism is far less prevalent (Sayer, 2000, 2010).

One of the most important reasons for the resistance in the social sciences to an emergentist ontology is the prevailing view that the essence of the human, be it our minds, spirits, or souls, are not composed of parts, especially material parts (the meat of our bodies). Instead, we view ourselves as unified spirits, somehow above and independent of our material selves. From this perspective, any effort to understand our human powers as emerging from the material parts of our bodies is reductive and debasing (Elder-Vass, 2007).
What is so often missed in this perspective is the transcendent character of entities and properties that can emerge from interrelated parts (Sayer, 2000). Investigating the ways our most important human powers emerge from the very complex and specific interrelations between the parts of our neurological systems is thus not reductive. As Critical Realist, Dave Elder-Vass, makes clear, exploring the mechanisms through which parts give rise to entities and their properties helps explain the emergence of these entities and properties, but it “cannot explain them away” (Elder-Vass, 2011).

Another complication that makes the ontology of Critical Realism less acceptable in the social sciences is the foggy causal relations that exist between human beings and social structures. Thus, although it seems clear that social structures are produced by human beings, it is also clear that social structures have great power to shape the dispositions of human beings. Faced with teasing out the complicated patterns of causation (do people cause structures or to structures cause people?), social scientists/theorists tend to adopt what the Critical Realists call a “flat ontology,” whereby causal powers are one-sidedly located in a single entity (Joseph, 1998, p. 85).

Critical Theorist, Margaret Archer, uses the term “conflation” to characterize the error made by social scientists/theorists who adopt a flat ontology. She identifies three main variants of conflation. In the first, “upward conflation,” social scientists overemphasize the power of individuals to shape themselves and society (Archer, 2001, p. 5). A good example of this is the Rational Choice Theory of people like Milton Friedman (2002). According to this theory, people are always and fundamentally free to choose their own path through life. Social structures might exist as barriers to circumvent, but they do not disrupt the underlying capacity of people to think rationally to achieve their goals.

Interestingly, very much the same nostalgically inflated view of an individual’s power to rationally control her or his own life persists in adult education. Whether it is explicitly stated or not, an unproblematic notion of adult “self-direction” remains a broadly-held perspective in adult education (Knowles, 1970; Long, 1992).

Archer identifies a second variant of conflation: “downwards conflation” (Archer, 2001, p. 5). In this instance, social scientists overemphasize the power of social structures to determine the lives of humans. For many, our sense of ourselves as capable of rational action is illusory. We are embedded in material and cultural structures to such a point that we have little individual power to shape our lives. Archer identifies Pierre Bourdieu’s (1992, p. 53) notion of the *habitus* as a prime example of downwards conflation (Archer, 2007). Bourdieu argues that, instead of being capable of free rational action, human beings are so deeply conditioned by socialization and enculturation that we rarely act in unfettered ways.

In recent years, adult education has been broadly influenced by downwards conflationists. While Bourdieu has had some influence, in our field, Michel Foucault and his exploration of the ways social power, especially its subtly intrusive pastoral forms, has been particularly influential (Edwards, 2010). Poststructuralists like Foucault have deeply disturbed the easy complacency adult educators had with the individualistic, over-rationalistic, and implausible imaginings of earlier liberal forms of adult education. Intriguingly, despite their rather dismal claims about the
power of society to condition thought and action, all but very few of these later adult educators present themselves as somehow immune to these determinations.

Archer identifies a third, slightly more sophisticated although ultimately flawed form of conflation: “central conflation” (Archer, 2001, p. 5). Instead of flattening reality in either an upwards or downwards fashion, the central conflationists flatten it towards the middle and contend that neither individuals nor society possesses unique or independent powers but instead possess one mutual power that simultaneously constitutes them both. Although British social theorist, Anthony Giddens (1986), articulates this position most clearly, similar central conflationist views pervade contemporary social theorizing. Perhaps one of the prime examples of central conflationism in adult education is the notion of “communities of practice” in which both the powers of social structure and the human agent get melded together in an obscure process of mutual constitution (Wenger, 1999).

Whatever its variant, conflationism has the same overall effect on social science research: it posits reality as established and ongoing rather than unfolding and becoming. Conflationary theorists explain causality in terms of the interactions of existing entities, but they seldom account for the origins or nature of entities or their powers.

This is true for the notion of critical reflection in adult education. Despite its pride of place in our field, adult educators actually know very little about the workings of this important phenomenon. Because it is posited as a taken-for-granted human capacity, very few questions are ever asked about what critical reflection is, where it comes from, how it develops, or what it can actually do?

Things become very different if we approach the phenomenon of critical reflection with a stratified and emergent ontology in mind. Suddenly, a host of important but rarely (if ever) asked questions come to mind. For example, is critical reflection, itself, an entity, a property of an entity, or simply an event that occurs when entities interact? If critical reflection is an entity (and I will suggest that it is not), what are its parts? What makes up critical reflection? If critical reflection is a property of an entity (this is what I will argue), what is the nature of the entity that has this power? What are the parts of the entity that has the power of critical reflection? How are these parts interrelated? What are the mechanisms that give rise to this particular configuration of parts with its power for critical reflection? What powers are at play in the emergence developmental becoming of critical reflection (Archer (2001) uses the term “morphogenesis” to describe the mechanisms involved in a phenomenon’s evolution or developmental becoming)? Is there only one path towards the morphogenesis of critical reflection or are there many paths and perhaps many variants of critical reflection? In what way do different social structures like norm groups, cultural meshworks, discourses, organizations, global economic networks, and cultural/social power structures play a role in the development of the properties of critical reflection? Does critical reflection play a role in the development of these varied social structures? How does it do this? How does critical reflection affect human agency? And, importantly to us in adult education, how does critical reflection (richly theorized as an emergent property) impact human learning (also richly theorized as an emergent property)?
All of these are extremely complex questions for which, as yet, we have very few answers. In the view of many Critical Realists, the social sciences have only taken the first steps towards developing an adequate theory of humans and their social structures. According to Dave Elder-Vass (2010), however, a productive way forward is for social scientists to adopt the broad metaphysical ontology of Critical Realism and then to deploy methods for developing what he calls regional emergent ontologies (small and limited empirical accounts) of entities and their powers that make up the broader and stratified hierarchy of our world. Working up and down the varied strata of a regional hierarchy, identifying mechanisms underlying the emergence of entities from parts on a more basic strata, and tracking the ways different entities act to produce specific worldly events can contribute much to what we know about our social reality, including the nature of human thought and action.

Towards A Regional Emergent Ontology of Critical Reflection

Researchers in adult education can play an important part in developing social scientific knowledge about entities and powers most at play in the realms touched by our theories and practices. Although a comprehensive exploration of critical reflection is clearly beyond the scope of this paper, I would like, in the following, to show how a series of methodological steps identified by Elder-Vass (2010) have great potential to guide an investigation of critical reflection. A good part of the reason for this, I suggest, is that his steps encourage us to greatly expand the parameters of our normal realms of inquiry. Spurred by Elder-Vass, I will identify a range of important research enterprises that have potential to deepen our understanding of the nature of critical reflection.

Entity, Property or Event

The first step in developing a regional emergent ontology is to sort out the types of phenomenon encountered in the region under consideration. In adult education, the phenomenon of critical reflection is nestled in amongst a range of different phenomena that are only weakly differentiated. So the first question, “what is critical reflection?” is not as straightforward as it might seem. According to Elder-Vass (2010), based on what we know of the nature of an emergent reality, there are a few criteria we can apply to sort out if a phenomenon is an entity, a property or an event. An entity is a phenomenon that is comprised of interrelated composite parts. Although it might be possible to construe critical reflection as having parts, this is not obvious. In fact, critical reflection seems more likely to be the expression of an emergent property or causal power of an entity, rather than an entity itself. What, we might next ask, is the entity that possesses the emergent power for critical reflection? Even though there might be some basis for arguing that a small social group joined together in dialogue is engaging in dialogue and engaging in critical reflection, this characterization is not entirely satisfactory. Many people have had the experience of critical reflection in their own minds outside of their participation in a group. So, despite the dialogical quality of critical reflection, it is the individual person and not the social group that possesses this emergent power.

The Parts of Human Beings

According to the metaphysical emergent ontology described by Critical Realism, all entities are composed of parts brought together in a particular set of relationships that enable the emergence of the entity’s properties and causal powers. As I discussed earlier, human’s are material beings comprised of a vast and intricately interwoven assemblage of biological parts that support the
emergence of our complex properties and powers. It is becoming increasingly clear that a much deeper understanding of the varied neurological parts of human beings is very important if we are to understand the emergence of the range of human cognitive powers. Fortunately, rapid progress in the neurosciences is providing a far deeper understanding of the ways the human brain supports the emergence of human cognition.

The Mechanisms of Critical Reflection

Exciting accounts of the function of the brain by neuroscientists like Antonio Damasio (2012) and Sebastian Seung (2013) provide a basis for understanding how the brain provides a sense of our consciousness and self-consciousness. Neuroscience research like theirs also provides cognitive psychologists like Alain Morin (2005) and Daniel Kahneman (2013) with a way to explain the emergence of higher cognitive functions, like thinking and critical reflection from the interconnected workings of the human brain.

According to Kahneman (2013), recent neurological research is revealing that, whereas our experience of the world feels like it is emanating from a unified consciousness, in actuality, our brains do not work in a singular fashion. Kahneman identifies two very different cognitive systems constantly at work in our brains: a fast, automatic and largely unconscious system (he calls it System 1) that handles most of the minute and everyday perceptions and actions that flow through our senses and that activate our bodies; and a much slower, deliberative, and conscious system (System 2) which kicks into play when we solve problems. According to Kahneman, although we invariably privilege our System 2 capacities, most of the cognitive load of our lives is carried by System 1. Neurologically, most of these speedy functions take place in fast neurological pathways located in our parietal and temporal lobes and midbrain structures. Most of the System 2 functions are located in the recently evolved forebrain structures. According to Morin (2005), even though complex cognitive functions invariably involve neural pathways connecting structures throughout the entire brain, higher order processes like self-awareness and, especially, inner speech, largely take place in the frontal lobes. Whereas we once might have assumed that it would be impossible to locate or understand the neurological parts that give rise to our emergent powers for critical reflection, recent brain research seems to be coming close to offering us a much clearer sense of the mechanisms that generate this emergent power.

The Morphogenetic Causes of Critical Reflection

It is not enough to identify the mechanisms that support the emergence of critical reflection. Providing a thorough regional emergent ontology also requires us to account for the morphogenesis of entities capable of critical reflection. According to primatologist and cognitive scientist, Michael Tomasello (1999), a full understanding of human cognition requires that we explain how these capacities evolved in ancient humans.

Tomasello’s own research is especially consistent with the emergentist ontology of Critical Realism. Extensive research he has conducted into the similarities and differences of human cognition and the cognition of our closest living relatives, the great apes, has revealed that, in addition to possessing the vast capacities of our primate relatives for understanding the intentions of other members of our species, human beings can form collaborative bonds that enable them to take the perspectives of our conspecifics and join with them in joint enterprises. According to Tomasello, our emergent cognitive capacities for sharing intentions with others has resulted in
the emergence of our ability to produce culture, including meaningful artifacts, language, transmittable skills, and so on. It has also opened a window through which, for the first time, we see ourselves as if through the eyes of others. As a result of participating with others in shared cultural contexts, where humans are embroiled in taking the perspective of others in order to understand their concerns, humans begin to develop the capacity for self-awareness. In Kahneman’s terms, humans begin to acquire the capacity for separating themselves from the automatic and unconscious flows of System 1 existence and begin to deliberate more consciously on aspects of themselves and their existence. According to Morin, our capacities for inner speech play a key part in our powers for critical reflexivity.

Margaret Archer (2012) adds additional layers to our understanding of the morphogenesis of critical reflection. Rather that being a unitary power, she contends that the emergence and development of human reflexivity is variously shaped by people’s socialization. Critical reflection, in her view, can develop in four distinct modes. Communicative reflexivity, autonomous reflexivity, meta-reflexivity, and fractured reflexivity develop in different contexts and provide people with different powers for shaping their world. For Archer, while reflection is not the only factor that shapes the lives of people, it is a substantial human power.

**The Power of Critical Reflection**

As the previous paragraphs hopefully attest, even the briefest move towards developing a regional ontology of critical reflection provides an enticing new view of this important cognitive power. The next step in the process of developing this concept is to explore the power of critical reflection to shape human individual and collective social action. Despite Kahneman’s warning not to overestimate the power of System 2 thinking, there is real reason to believe that critical reflection is a veritable human causal power. Of course, given that all events in our world are shaped by multiple generative powers, and given the massive determining power of vast social structures that currently transfigure our world, the capacities of human critical reflexivity to bring about meaningful social changes remains a question to be thoughtfully investigated. It is very likely, however, that, even in this task, the emergent ontology of Critical Realism and its methodological precepts remain a useful resource for adult education researchers.

**References**


Cambridge University Press.


Against the Grain: Oral Histories from Adult Literacy Workers in New York City

Dianne Ramdeholl
Richard Wells
SUNY-Empire State College, New York City

Abstract: Adult education in the United States has had its roots in the struggle for democracy. Early in the twentieth century, adult education was often described as a movement; a series of efforts to better understand the world and to build a better one democratically. Education in its broadest sense - learning to name the world - was at the center of that movement (Heaney, 2010). Rethinking how adult education is framed in this country by implementing models that foster sustainable community development is essential and urgent (Purcell-Gates and Waterman, 2000). This study focuses on the continuing struggle for democracy within adult education, explicitly situating adult education’s history within a social justice framework, honoring and building on people's localized truths and complex realities while also situating that history in a broader political-economic context.

Research Questions:
- What role can narratives play in preserving the field of adult literacy’s original connection to social justice education?
- What conditions inside and outside the field do we, as adult education workers, need to support this?

The Neo-liberalization of Adult Education

Adult education continues to be a greatly marginalized area of research (Comings and Soricone, 2007). Yet given the dire economic climate in this country, the education of adults is ever more important. According to the 2003 National Assessment of Literacy Survey, 93 million people in the US are at either basic or below basic levels in prose or quantitative literacy. The 2008 census reports that 44% of the population live below poverty thresholds. 32 million adults, about one in seven, lack the literacy skills to read anything more complex than a children’s book. Since the 1966 Adult Education Act, adult literacy education has seen steady increases in participation rates.

However, that increased participation has come at a cost. With the passage of welfare reform in 1996, adult education and literacy programs have been forced to function in a climate wherein funding is increasingly contingent on programs taking on a more instrumentalist approach to learning. The ideology of welfare reform in the U.S. is rooted in the notion that poverty is the result of individual failure, bad choices, lack of initiative. Thrown in was an emphasis on the need for education, narrowly conceived, as a kind of “magic bullet” that would solve all problems associated with inequality. In this context, adult education would come to be measured not by how many engaged citizens it created but by how well it prepared and placed poor and working class women and men for and in positions at the lower end of the labor market if not for engaged, critical citizenship. (Rivera, 2009).
Indeed, the original values of adult education stressed a much different political calculus, a process of empowerment of those who lacked access, a kind of learning that built a critical consciousness from the ground up. As Horton and Freire (1990) and Freire (1970) stressed, it was all about situating—through participatory pedagogy—the more localized struggles of students in broader political and economic inequalities, and trying to build the collective energy to fight those inequalities from there: learning, in other words, to read and therefore name the world. Of course, adult education and literacy practitioners have always operated within certain parameters. They have always needed funding from either the state or private entities with their own agendas, and have always had to tie their mission to certain “practical” ends. But as one of narrators noted (and other research has shown) up until the 1980's there was at least some space for participatory pedagogy and critical learning, some way to link adult education to sustainable community development and civic engagement (Martin, 2000; Darder, 2003).

In aftermath of welfare reform adult education has become, one might say, neo-liberalized, more attuned to a political-economy that needs low-wage workers with certain “skills”—among them good manners and obeisance to management—than to the ongoing struggle for democracy at the workplace, in the community, in the nation. In any event, it has become increasingly difficult to design, construct, fund, and maintain programs that adhere to the historical values of adult education. The narrators’ stories speak to this transition: On the one hand, they give first hand accounts of the meaning of adult education in a society structured by inequality, and on the other, they reveal their frustration and worry over how that meaning, in the present context of austerity and instrumentalism, is changing.

In New York City, publicly funded adult literacy programs (programs funded under the Workforce Investment Act) privilege dominant interests and agendas. Nowhere on funders’ checklist is there acknowledgement that literacy education is connected in any way to social change. (Macedo, 1994). Instead, adult literacy funding is currently intricately tied to perpetuating and maintaining an army of workers ready to occupy the low wage, mostly non-union jobs in the service industry; a sector of the economy that has seen rapid growth over the last 30 years. (Stuckey, 1991; Moody 2007). By only recognizing programs’ success in terms of gains students make on standardized tests, an extremely limited and deficit driven definition of literacy is being privileged. E. Peterson (personal communication, September 30, 2008) points out; the system uses numbers inappropriately to maintain itself. In doing so, adult education programs—perhaps inadvertently—are doing something that Freire (1970) warns of: they are incorporating the poor and working class into the current structures of oppression rather than creating avenues for its transformation.

The brief oral histories presented below not only highlight the ways in which funding for literacy programs is now steeped in the broader priorities of neo-liberalism. This study, an attempt to preserve the historical memory of a field during a time when financial strain and an inhospitable climate threaten our practice, can help to affirm both who we are collectively and who we—along with our students—might become (Nadeau, 1996). One of the main themes that emerges from these histories is the belief that ordinary people, in all their rich diversity and despite their current subordination, were not simply worth listening to; they were, as Gramsci might have put it, organic intellectuals, with the potential to create the collective power to change not only their communities but society at large. (Gramsci, 1971)
The Struggle for Transformational Literacy

David Greene, an adult educator, taught adult literacy at the Department of Education for many years before retiring. When he began his work in New York City as an adult educator in 1987, he was building off rich experience with community and labor groups in West Virginia. That experience, he says, always included an educational component, whether it meant organizing in the Welfare Rights movement, mining families around black lung, or attending conferences with community leaders at Highlander, a center for popular education in eastern Tennessee. Indeed, “education,” as it were, seemed to emerge organically from these other kinds of political work:

I actually ‘joined the field’ in 1987 when my wife and I moved back to New York City. . . In truth I had worked for many years with adult education and community organizing in West Virginia, between 1967 and 1987. . . I had been to Highlander many times with community leaders and was involved in the Welfare Rights and Black Lung Movements, and the education that was part of those efforts.

As he put it, he “did not choose to become an adult educator, but fell into the New York jobs to support family.” But his past experience seemed to confirm the basic insights of transformational adult education:

It is clear that people’s stories of their experience are a fundamental part of our learning from each other, as teachers and students. There are so many stories of adult students organizing, speaking publicly, developing leadership skills, teaching others (teachers and students)—including many experiences from other communities, countries and cultures. . . The story that a student tells . . . validates and elevates the learning process, the individual and the collective accumulation of experience. This collective aspect serves to broaden the picture of social issues and is basic to empowerment – that we all can see the boat we are in, and potentially what we need to learn and do to change the world. I see literacy campaigns and popular education/particular forms of adult education as important spaces discussions and learning, as tools to understand more, see the broader picture, organize with others and take action for social change. Participation of the working class – poor and working people, I see as fundamental to real democracy. The more I understand, and see my commonality, the more I can contribute my particular strengths and experience to change society.

Furthermore, learning to read the world—the broad, politically purposeful notion of literacy that Freire talked about—transforms the way we, the “educators,” must then see the content of education. As Greene put it:

The lessons of history and development provide knowledge and experience of past efforts. Learning where things came from and how they developed, can guide our current efforts toward social justice. Ignorance of that history keeps us in the dark as to what is happening today, and about the direction that things are moving.

Indeed, the social movements—most of which contained some educational drive, or component—can form the basis of a curriculum of discovery:
The social movements in the U.S., and world movements for a better world, have a wealth of material for adult education classes. Understanding the past developments in the context of economic, political and social forces is not the exclusive territory of Harvard, Stanford or Oxford. This material is grist for the mill of leadership development and social transformation, using the most illuminating and participatory adult education. Adult education can be the means to move toward a real democracy that we dream about.

John Gordon, a New York City program director began his adult literacy work being a teacher-director at The Open Book, a grassroots community based adult education program in Brooklyn, NY. He brought with him his organizing experience as a rank and file taxi driver in NYC in the 1970’s. As a long time leader and activist in adult literacy, he says, transformation was always at the forefront for many who entered the field in the 1980s.

Many of us came into adult education because we believed in the transformative power of adult education, because we believed that learning to read and write would not just open doors for some individuals but had the potential to give students the skills to understand and act on their world more effectively, to gain control over their lives, to act in concert with others to change the conditions of life in their communities. Implicit in this view was a notion that education itself was good, that by learning to read people would be opened up to new experiences and ideas, and in the process become different and perhaps more powerful people. This potential of education; to sponsor and provoke change, rather than the hope that we could help then get jobs (no matter how important that is) is what inspired many of us to become teachers.

As Gordon suggests, an important part of the practice of adult literacy programs is the struggle to preserve the connections between literacy and social justice. And in recent years, the political and funding landscape has gone from one in which space could be found to make those connections to one in which that space is increasingly closed off.

Another long-time activist and practitioner, Vincent, (one of the primary architects of the main public funding source in NYC) says the following:

It felt like there was more space for progressive dialogue. The first NYCALI proposal included expectations of class sizes, curriculum, and staffing that were all rooted in progressive philosophies. However, at that time there was only federal money. It just felt great to be able to institutionalize all the coalition work that we’d done for years. We wanted NYCALI to have a strong research component because so much of it really grew out of the community experience and the mission of social justice. In the 1980’s the struggles were more about building capacity that was high quality. In the earlier period of NYCALI, we looked at all the key elements not just the federal accountability measures. We asked: do we have the voices of learners? Are we collaborating across city agencies in ways that are making the best use of the resources? Can we strategically expand the resources that are available in equitable ways? We invited people to help us look at this. Researchers like Hannah Fingeret,
Steve Reder, Hal Beder, Tom Sticht. We were constantly asking people, ‘What do you think?’ That’s much less the case now. The government’s broader agenda (being the main funder) sets the agenda in New York in many ways. Before, funders and practitioners would talk about how we could make learning relevant to students’ lives. How can that learning be transformational? How does it impact the community in ways that create more equity? Now that has changed. With only part time teachers, the field is weak. Short term funding changes constantly, legislative priorities change, amounts of funding change and programs are chronically underfunded. The implications of these shifting priorities are enormous. The students certainly are marginalized; the practitioners are also marginalized even though they may have been in the field their whole lives. There’s the impact of what the public’s willing to spend money on, how adult learners want to invest their time, the demands and changes in the school system and what that means to parents in terms of the support they need to give their children.

In speaking about the steady eroding of students’ rights in the face of mounting data requirements, Vincent adds:

Data collection has come more to be seen as an accountability measure as opposed to informing policy and developing quality practices. The students’ voice at the table and active participation has been totally lost or marginalized. Now there really is no organized access to funders. Welfare reform shifted things enormously. Literacy programs were forced to shift their focus from education to employment. Be on time, listen to your boss, and respect authority (as opposed to a model of empowerment, of community development, of change). For sure, there is a gap right now. All of programs’ work gets translated into a report card with just four outcomes on it and only one of them has to do with education. None of them have anything to do with the content or purpose of education. Because these report cards may jeopardize funding, they end up driving the discussion, the energy and what few resources are available. We need to continue to push for more meaningful information that really expands the dialogue otherwise we’re left with no ammunition to support the education work that we do and counter welfare reform, immigration policy, and national security priorities. All of these things radically impact how adult education feels nationally. The changes of politics in our state reinforce this and combined with the ongoing marginalization of the field through inadequate funding and a part time workforce, the field is disabled from even advocating. Basically what’s left are individuals who are very much on the margins…

Paul Wasserman, another adult literacy activist and leader in NYC, who with John Gordon, brought to adult literacy his experiences being a rank and file taxi driver in NYC, says the following:

When I first started, literacy was more about bringing students into the world of reading and writing. There was a very clear historical reality of underprivileged
folks who didn't have much schooling because of social realities. There are a huge number of people in literacy programs who if they'd had interventions or support would have been fine. Still, their experiences were shaped by an unjust social system but the ways that has impacted people's literacy is more complex. Because there's been a disappearance of viable job opportunities, people are coming to programs not from a framework of "I want to learn" but "I need a GED to get a job." There's a kind of desperation. The motivation is different because people are desperate and getting more so. It's not a coincidence that adult education funding is now workforce funding. The field is filled with people who are passionate but policy and students are focused on jobs. Now it's become all about outcomes. Things aren't going to change unless there's a rebellion because people in the field are at the mercy of funders' priorities and other than preserving space for good work and exploring ideas that can support students fighting this climate, the emphasis now is about giving funders the outcomes even though everyone knows the outcomes aren't based on the reality of what's happening in programs. Unless people say there's something wrong with the whole notion of saying terrain is being defined by funders, we can't change this....and the field can't change this if it's not happening in society. Then we're trapped and being pushed and pulled by the winds of the policy world. In an economy where there was extra money, there was money for literacy for literacy's sake. Now funding is all about supporting agendas of people in power. Unless the paradigm of conformity is challenged, this will continue. One idea might be to start a data boycott. Funders set data benchmarks and programs have mastered getting data right. Yet everyone acknowledges this isn't the reality in their program but policy makers treat it as something valid. This makes the field complicit in this data charade. Every state wants to outperform each other. This sets up a competition among programs. State Ed just keeps programs jumping. Helping students understand to understand their social realities needs to be more at the heart of what we do. My philosophy is to try to make sense of the world by bringing various intellectual frameworks to mind....that serious political commitments that can help make sense of the world. I guess I believe there's a certain stance of wanting to live what you believe and that defines how you live and the choices you make. While I did bring the 60's student movements to bear, more recently I was very inspired by movements in Latin America. There's a notion of solidarity economics. The Zapatista movement in Mexico feels very hopeful. Where they've ended up is that they'll take leadership from the communities. People are actually being brought into leadership roles. There's a concerted effort to create a space and commitment for people learning....so the challenge is how to apply that to this context. We need to fight to democratize institutions we're a part of. If we're serious about building a democratic society, we need to be serious about challenging undemocratic practice where we are. I believe leadership can happen where students' lives are grounded. It's more about giving students tools to recognize that the way things are organized can be changed.

Conclusion
This research project was conceived as a way to contribute to a larger collective dialogue, shaping educational practices and policy in ways which can foster expanding spaces and sites of possibility. From people’s words we can see that in order for adult education to be consistent
with fostering democracy/collective action, space must be made to include/listen to actors’ voices at every level of program planning, decision-making and policy. In addition, policy must reflect and reconnect to the interests of the field. Adult literacy programs must reengage in emancipatory models of education if students and practitioners are to become agents of change in a more equitable society.

**References**


Peterson, E. (personal communication, June 16, 2008).

Purcell-Gates, V. & Waterman, R. (2000). *Now we read, we see, we speak*. Mahwah, NJ. Lawrence Erlbaum.


Exploring the Connection of Transformative Learning to Teacher Authenticity in Adult Educational Contexts

Linda J. Rappel
University of Calgary

Abstract: The purpose of this paper is to explore how transformative education encourages authenticity through the development of critical and reflective attitudes in learning. Ideally, transformative teaching and learning provides avenues for self-expression and the development of self through critical reflection. Approaching adult education in this way supports the conception of adult teaching and learning as an interdisciplinary and holistic educational practice that connects content to context through authentic engagement of educators and learners. This emancipatory view of transformational learning leads individuals, learners and educators, toward a greater understanding of self and society through supporting consciousness raising activities and behaviours.

Introduction

Though adult education has traditionally been recognized as a social and political endeavor with strong connections to social and business practice, it serves an essential social function in an information society where knowledge must be positioned within context and acknowledged through relationships (Brookfield, 1995; Jarvis, 2006; Cranton, 2001). In light of these changing and fluctuating environments, today more than ever, educators need to recognize their role as facilitators of knowledge that encompasses a broad range of understanding rather than acting as gatekeepers of information.

Cranton and Carusetta (2004a), whose research on authenticity evolved through an examination of transformational theory, believed that authenticity is an individual manifestation born of transformation, leading learners and educators toward an understanding of self, other and context. Kreber et al. (2007) conceptualized authenticity as a personal and professional foundation that encourages individuals to become “more whole, more integrated, more aware” in their work as educators (p. 24). In general, an ethic of authenticity allows educators to recognize self in others, helping to achieve self-definition through work and better equipping educators to make informed decisions about the education of others (Kreber et al. 2007, p. 41).

Authenticity in teaching incorporates both critical and humanist traditions into educational practice in addition to recognizing holistic aspects of teaching and learning (Cranton & Carusetta 2004a). One of the major tenets of this educational practice is to develop an awareness of self that relies on attitudes of openness and acceptance of others. In fact, recognizing and accepting diverse views in educational settings through authentic action provides opportunities for educators and learners alike to meet in solidarity and understanding, thereby sidestepping educational environments that primarily support mainstream values, norms and behaviours (Merriam et al., 2007, p. 262).

A Transformative Approach to Learning

As Mezirow (1991) explored in developing a theory of transformative learning, educational atmospheres that encourage learners to acquire knowledge through questioning individual and
collective assumptions offer opportunities for education and learning to transform habits of mind through the development of a critical consciousness. Dirkx (1997) explained that at the foundation of a transformational teaching practice lies a vision of learning that leads individuals to acquire greater levels of self-awareness and consciousness of society through developing a sense of reason, reflection, and rationality (p. 87).

Progressing from instrumental learning to communicative and emancipatory areas of knowledge (Habermas, 1971), transformative learning environments that centre learning on communicative and emancipatory aspects of knowledge allow transformative educators to employ social and political frameworks in adult educational environments. It is this extension of instrumental learning that provides opportunities for the development of self-awareness through reflection on experiences and the positioning of self within those activities and contexts (Taylor, 2008, p. 11).

In particular, a focus on personal and professional growth in transformative learning environments creates an inner awareness of how we operate as individuals or groups within educational and social settings, encouraging educators and learners to become conscious of their own attitudes, behaviours and motivations as well as those of others. For this to occur, though, transformative educators need to be "open to change; accepting of difference; and receptive to new and fluid notions of self, learning, and teaching" (English, 2006, p. 22). It is in taking such a position towards learners and learning that allows educators to let go of authoritarian stances and accept ambiguity and uncertainty in educational environments, thereby lessening the effect of power relations in educational contexts (English, 2006, p. 22).

Developing Critical and Reflective Attitudes
Taylor (2008) outlined how transformative learning can take us closer to individuation, which involves the "discovery of new talents, a sense of empowerment and confidence, a deeper understanding of one's inner self, and a greater sense of self-responsibility" (p. 7). In fact, becoming self-aware through developing a critical consciousness about self, other and context recognizes how critical, reflective and authentic attitudes can contribute to learning in adulthood (Cranton & Carusetta, 2004b). According to Cranton and Carusetta (2004b), authenticity includes "being genuine, showing consistency between values and actions, relating to others in such a way as to encourage their authenticity, and living a critical life" (p. 7).

Outlining the value of introducing critical thinking in learning environments, Harris (1972) suggested that our natural tendency to be passive towards society, authority and finally, life, is a result of our unconscious belief in magic (p. 99). He stated that actions based on superstitious imaginings exemplify our "human capacity for willful self-delusion" stemming from the false hope of magical thinking or basing actions on the assumption that problems will solve themselves or just go away entirely (Harris, 1972, p. 99). To circumvent this attitude, critical thinking and authentic action attempt to address unconscious functioning.

Failing to consider the possibilities of reflective action through critique of our own personal and collective contexts, educators and learners risk following normative educational patterns that reinforce habitual or hierarchical patterns and organizational schemes with little hope of effecting individual transformation or societal change. Giddens (1991) articulated this idea by describing how "the compulsive enactment of routines" prevents individuals from acting creatively or taking leaps into the unknown towards critical thinking and authentic action (p. 41).
So, rather than clinging to old habits and routines out of fear or insecurity, individuals who strive towards authenticity are more able to participate in creative activities instead of relying on rote or routine behaviours to guide individual or collective actions.

Positioning Authenticity as a Transformative Educational Process
In addition to developing a sense of self-awareness and recognition of collective functioning, the view of authenticity as being connected to our capacity to recognize something greater than our own self-interest has been echoed through the research on the topic of authenticity (Jarvis, 1992; Brookfield, 2006a, Chickering et al., 2006; Cranton, 2006; English 2006). Through examining the various conceptions about authenticity, Kreber et al. (2007) noted that qualities of authenticity involved a broader range of factors than simply a recognition of self in context and a congruence of thought to action. Varga (2012) explained that there is a predictive, outward reaching nature to authenticity that connects to expectations beyond the individual and rests with an outcome for the common good (p. 29). As a result, through developing a critical consciousness, adult educators who strive towards authentic ideals are more able and prepared to attain an awareness of how their teaching may contribute to making the world a better place by incorporating broader social and political contexts as part of learning thereby increasing learner capacity to become valuable and contributing members of society (Brookfield, 2006b, p. 178).

Attaining this type of motivation and intention, educators become better positioned to perceive social and cultural realities that serve to advocate for individual and social change in order to establish educational goals based on those objectives. In particular, questioning our cultural or familial attitudes and assumptions becomes a platform for educators to recognize learners as complex and multi-faceted individuals. Educators are then able to relate theory to practice and position learning within broader categories (Brookfield, 2006b; Palmer, 1998; Jarvis, 1992, 2006). In this way, transformational learning theory is linked to authenticity through the development of a critical spirit that supports individual and collective reflection on teacher practice and the recognition of how holistic elements enter into diverse learning environments.

Still, establishing a teacher practice that encourages reflective, critical and authentic teaching and learning processes takes courage because it involves risk through the potential to render unanticipated or unpredictable results (Brookfield, 1995; Palmer, 1998; Tisdell, 2003). In essence, demonstrating our authenticity through speech and action may produce tension and create a sense of vulnerability. Tisdell (2003) noted how expressing our authenticity often contrasts with the expectations of others. Recognizing how individual authenticity can be situated within a larger realm of collective needs or practices, she highlighted the importance of developing a sense of self that is "defined by oneself as opposed to being defined by other people's expectations" (p. 32).

Essentially, it is this sense of evaluating authority and hierarchical structures with a view of questioning collective motives or instrumental reasoning that paves the way for authentic action to emerge through accepting personal truths. When positioned through a centered, inter-relational and intersubjective framework, authenticity can then be recognized as an individual and unique core that asserts itself through action and interaction with others (Ferrara, 2009, p. 24). To confirm the idea that acting authentically involves an inner perception of self in relation
to others, Weigert (2009) suggested that authenticity is "a call for personal freedom intrinsically interwoven with responsibility for others toward a shared future" (p. 39).

A Holistic View of Transformative Learning

Because of the various dimensions of aims and purposes for adult education, it has been and will likely to continue to be an interdisciplinary practice that is moulded, shaped and refined by outside forces. Consequently, a broader view of transformative learning that includes the use of elements such as insight, intuition, emotion, relationships and personality to examine, assess and reinforce cognitive structures as well as question assumptions on which instrumental learning and communicative knowledge are based leads to a holistic approach to education and a development of emancipatory knowledge (Cranton, 2001, p. 65). For this reason, transformative learning theory can serve as “a catalyst for personal and professional growth” (Servage, 2008, p. 68), shifting the focus from instrumental or technically-based educational goals to ones that emphasize change or transformation.

Through a holistic view of teaching and learning, transformative education is concerned with the connections between individuals within the context of their lives and social structures, acknowledging the individuality and authenticity of learners and educators within the collective framework of the learning situation (Tisdell, 2003; Cranton, 2001; Cranton & Carusetta, 2004ab; Dirkx, 1997, 2006). Because this view of teaching and learning may incorporate moral and ethical dimensions, it allows for adult learning to be placed within broader educational themes. In effect, authentic action based on honesty, democracy and inclusivity offers educators the option of rethinking traditional values that hold instrumental views about learning, opening up to the possibility of new applications of adult learning that support the goals of lifelong education. In fact, the transfer from adult learning to a concept of lifelong education includes holistic approaches to education through the acceptance of the learner as individual with capacities for cognitive, social, emotional, spiritual, and physical applications to learning (Jarvis, 2006; Dirkx, 2006; Taylor, 2008; Cranton, 2001; Tisdell, 2003). Recognizing learners as complex individuals with diverse personal and professional histories also encourages an attitude of acceptance in the way of acknowledging prior learning and personal experiences that are brought into the learning environment. This view of education as being sequential, operating on a building process of acquiring new skills within a variety of contexts recognizes learners as complex and evolving individuals with capacities for a diverse learning experiences, including formal, informal and incidental learning (Jarvis, 2008).

Originating from a modernist ethical ideal, authenticity can be now positioned in current post-modern social, political and cultural contexts that include an acknowledgment of the learner as diverse and unique, yet belonging to various collective groups. According to Apple and Carlson (1999), the fragmentation of cultures, breakdown of communities, and "instrumentalization of self within a market logic" opposes such authentic approaches to learning and life through an emphasis on uniformity and conformity (p. 1). In contrast to encouraging a sense of plurality of difference, these reactionary stances to globalism and post-modern diversity run contrary to a global and holistic view of education.

Consequently, a goal of adult educators in these types of learning environments is to examine rather than reinforce hegemonic social structures, thereby developing teacher practices based on
authentic views and positions that foster a holistic and wholehearted engagement of educators and learners (Briton, 1996, p. 119). Adult education historians, Selman, Selman and Dampier (1998) noted that the primary activity of adult educators to change people or help people change themselves carries with it a responsibility of becoming cognizant of beliefs and values and offsetting those in educational practice (p. 338). Acknowledging this, the extension of transformative learning to include holistic and authentic elements offers the opportunity to view learners and educators as individuals who have unique ideas, skills, experiences and talents. However, current educational climates that accept a narrow view of society, culture and education make this difficult to do. In response to this situation, Apple and Carlson (1999) suggested that post-modern times provide opportunities to revisit modernist culture in order to attain new theoretical insights based on authentic views, incorporating traditional ideals into newly constructed social and educational contexts (p. 3). Consequently, rather than simply following normative attitudes and behaviours, educators and learners are more able to view themselves honestly in secure and trusting learning environments that accept rather than reject diversity. In these types of learning situations, there is greater likelihood of impacting lasting change and transformation that are conducive both to the development of authenticity and social movements through education (Cranton, 2001; Brookfield, 1995; Palmer, 1998).

In order to translate this eclectic and broad view of education to teacher practice, Cranton and Carusetta (2004b) maintained that educators “learn about teaching through experience, reflection on experience, and dialogue with others” (p. 6), not from resorting to prescriptive techniques out of fear or lack of interest. To extend this perspective, they explained that educators work towards being authentic through bringing a sense of self into their teaching by questioning what is right and appropriate from the literature in order to develop a personal style and, consequently, communicate with others in genuine ways (Cranton and Carusetta, 2004b, p. 6).

Still, a sense of increased freedom must be tempered with an increased sense of responsibility. Kreber (2010) acknowledged the connection of humanist approaches to learning and developing identity by stating that the image we create of ourselves through authenticity portrays a view that "links identity to humanist notions of individuation, self-actualisation and gaining greater self-awareness of who we are" (p. 171). Hence, as humanist tradition suggests, learners and educators claim a sense of responsibility that goes with developing an individual sense of self through the context of work or learning, invoking a sense of consciousness about and respect for the consequences that result from chosen human activity (Elias and Merriam, 1984).

**Conclusion**

Though the process of becoming self-aware is primarily an individual endeavor, it is manifested in social environments, highlighting the importance of personal, relational and social contexts in transformative and authentic educational settings. In essence, a focal point of this approach to teaching and learning is the process of examining cultural attitudes and assumptions while recognizing embedded social realities. By incorporating authentic elements into transformative teaching and learning environments, educators are more attuned to social and cultural realities that surround the learning environment and are better able to advocate for individual and social change.

As such, choosing to be authentic through manifesting a sense of self through workplace activities enables people, educators and learners, to develop unique talents and express values
and judgments through work (Fox, 1994). According to Freire (2005), a humanizing approach to adult education is the path by which men and women become conscious of their presence in the world and recognize their impact on others. Overall, an ethic of authenticity supports adult and lifelong learning environments as described in Freire's (1984; 2005) theory of conscientization where people become conscious of themselves and their positions in society through dialogue and empowerment. As Dirkx (2006) explored:

The craft of teaching is intimately bound up with who we are as a person. We can teach from the heart only if we recognize its role in our life and develop a conscious relationship with it. As much as many policymakers and politicians would like, we cannot separate the art of teaching from its artisan. As a goal for professional development, developing authenticity in one's teaching is barely a blip on the radar screen. Yet on the horizon one can discern promising and hopeful indications that this state of affairs is changing, and that the inner work of the teacher is at least as important as the outer work of developing texts and managing classrooms (p. 37).

References
Lifelong Learning in the Least Developed Countries: towards an Alternative Model

Kapil Dev Regmi
University of British Columbia

Abstract: This paper problematizes the terms ‘developing countries’, ‘third world’ and ‘global south’ and argues in favour of ‘the Least Developed Countries (LDCs)’ as a category to explore the relevance of lifelong learning for poor nations. It argues that foreign assistance is a hindrance to enable the people of LDC to solve their problems and explores how humanistic approach to lifelong learning – that goes against the idea of knowledge based economy – could direct us towards the development of a pro-poor model of lifelong for solving the problems of those impoverished nations.

The Least Developed Countries
The world now is not the same as it was in 1952 when Alfred Sauvy categorised the nations into: the first, the second and the third world (McMichael, 2012). Similarly, the binary category of ‘developed’ and ‘developing or underdeveloped’ countries has also been problematic because some developing countries like China, India, Brazil, South Africa and Russia have been significantly influencing the world economy. The division of the global North and the global South is also problematic because Australia and New Zealand are rich even though they are located to the South of the equator.

No classification is free from limitations; nonetheless, the categorisation made by the United Nations – the Least Developed Countries (LDCs) – seems to be more useful for exploring the issues and problems of the poorest people of the world. Moreover, this category comes out of some specific criteria: Gross National Income (GNI), Human Assets Index (HAI), and Economic Vulnerability Index (EVI). Currently there are 48 nations (33 in Africa, 14 in Asia, and 1 in America) in this category. The LDCs have diverse range of problems and challenges, however, because of their concentration in two parts of the globe (Africa and Asia) and their similar colonisation and decolonisation history, they have multiple problems such as: weak productivity, poverty, unemployment, gender discrimination, internal conflict, and illiteracy.

A number of attempts have been made from the international community, especially Western donor agencies – such as the World Bank (WB), International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Trade Organisations (WTO) – to help LDCs develop. However, such attempts have not solved those problems in a sustainable manner. I argue that in the name of international assistance the people of LDCs are often undermined. Through these approaches, they have been made the objects of external help thus devaluing the human, physical and other natural and non-natural resources they currently have and need more of. The capacity of the people of those countries has been continuously misrecognized and their traditional wisdom and epistemology have been colonised through processes that seek to make them more modernised in the fashion of donor countries. Instead of encouraging them to use their brawn and brain, the donor agencies are routinely telling them that ‘without external help, development of LDC is impossible’. Such argument echoes the sad history of European colonisation. Thus, international assistance – to a great extent – continues the colonising process that has brought very negative consequences for
LDCs: their self-esteem has crumbled, their attempts towards self-sustainability have been thwarted, and their capacity for self-determination has been weakened. A huge amount of literature that came out during 1980s such as Coombs (1985) speaks to a crisis in the education system of those nations. Thus, an alternative model of education is much needed.

**Lifelong Learning for LDCs**

Lifelong learning in its very fundamental sense – learning throughout life – existed in the educational histories of major civilisations and traditions in China, India, Greece and Europe (Borg & Mayo, 2005). Institutionally, the concept of the term ‘lifelong learning’ was used in the 1960 International Conference on Adult Education in the name of ‘education permanente’ or permanent education which was later called ‘lifelong education’ and ‘recurrent education’ (Jakobi, 2009).

The term ‘lifelong learning’ is often used synonymously with ‘adult education’. However, in recent years many institutions including the UNESCO have replaced ‘adult education’ with ‘lifelong learning’. Obviously, lifelong learning covers the domain of adult education but the vice versa is, perhaps, not correct. As stated by Rubenson (2010) the principle of lifelong learning was spread by transnational organizations such as EU, OECD and UNESCO and has at least three features: (i) it is lifelong because learning extends from cradle to grave; (ii) it is life-wide because learning occurs in many different settings; and (iii) it is continuous because it is not limited to formal education. During 1990s, a major terminological metamorphosis occurred and the term ‘lifelong education’ shifted into ‘lifelong learning’ (Borg & Mayo, 2005). Now the popular term is neither adult education, nor lifelong education, but lifelong learning.

The concept of lifelong learning has also gone through “considerable transformations” generating much discussion and policy debate (Hasan, 2012, p. 471). Some of the interrogatives that ignited debates are: Is lifelong learning a western concept of education? Is it a globalisation in educational culture? Is it a new form of social learning? The answers of these questions are often contested. Different scholars have used different nomenclatures and represent mostly dichotomous perspectives such as humanism versus global capitalism (Rubenson, 2011); new social movement versus commodity (Jarvis, 2011), democratic learning versus human capital learning (Hyslop-Margison & Sears, 2006), and progressive social democratic approach versus neoliberal welfare reform approach (Griffin, 1999). These two perspectives are being institutionalised by some supranational organisations including the World Economic Forum and the World Social Forum. The former encourages countries to achieve global competitiveness through human capital formation or knowledge based economy, whereas the latter claims that lifelong learning should ‘contribute not only to economic development or employment but also to the welfare of individuals and communities to the promotion of democratic citizenship’ (Copeland, 2011; Torres, 2011, p. 42).

The proponents of this theory, such as 1979 Nobel laureate Theodore Schultz, claim that “investment in education has positive correlation with economic growth and development” (Olaniyan & Okemakinde, 2008, p. 157). Similarly, through a series of writings, George Psacharopoulos advocated the role of education for economic development that helped to diffuse the HCT to developing countries (Jimenez & Patrinos, 2003; Psacharopoulos, 1986). However, the capitalistic notion of lifelong learning has been the main strategy of OECD and EU countries.
For these countries, lifelong learning is a tool for achieving economic growth and global competitiveness. The educational policies of these nations have been structured according to the demand of the market (Cruikshank, 2008). For example, in March 2000, the Lisbon Strategy set the goal of EU to become the most competitive and dynamic knowledge based society in the world (Borg & Mayo, 2005). Similarly, through two reports – *Education and the Economy in a Changing Society* (1989) and *Lifelong Learning for All* (1996) – the OECD claimed that investment in lifelong learning is required for “keeping up with technological change and maintaining competitiveness” (Rubenson, 2011, p. 413).

Some of the ‘developing countries’ such as South Africa, Botswana and Namibia are trying to adopt lifelong learning as a major educational policy reform in their countries. But it has not been formally adopted by the LDCs and has been “a marginal significance in guiding educational policy” (Hasan, 2012, p. 489). However, due to the influence of supranational organisations such as UNESCO, World Bank, WTO, and IMF the educational policy discourse of LDCs are gradually infused with the notions of lifelong learning. The capitalistic notion of lifelong learning has been hegemonic in the OECD and EU contexts and same notion is being carried forward to the LDCs because foreign aid comes along with foreign policy and ideology. Here I am arguing against such trend because this notion of lifelong learning may not solve the problems of the LDCs. I would argue for a pro-poor model of lifelong learning that is aligned with the humanistic notion.

**Pro-poor Model of Lifelong Learning**

Any form of lifelong learning that is pro-poor must bring some innovative as well as practical ideas that could solve the problems and challenges such as weak productivity, poverty, unemployment, conflict and illiteracy that the LDCs have been enduring for a long. It is widely believed that knowledge and understanding that comes through education has brought this world into this stage of science and technology. Undoubtedly, modern education has made crucial breakthroughs in the field of medical, natural and social sciences. Prominent philosophers of the pre-modern world (such as Plato, Socrates and Aristotle) and educationists of the modern world such as John Dewey have advocated the inevitable function of education for a better society. Nearly two decades ago, Jacques Delors and his associates claimed that “education has a fundamental role to play in personal and social development… [it is] one of the principal means available to foster a deeper and more harmonious form of human development and thereby to reduce poverty, exclusion, ignorance, oppression and war” (UNESCO, 1996, p. 13). If this is the role of education, then a lifelong learning framework that is pro-poor would address the problems identified by Delors decades ago.

The pro-poor model of lifelong learning becomes more humanistic and less capitalistic (Rubenson, 2011) when there is demand by society rather than the market (Bagnall, 2000), and follows progressive social democratic approach, rather than the neoliberal one (Griffin, 1999). Two important questions still remain: what went wrong in the history of LDCs that hampered the development of pro-poor education system? And, how could the problems and challenges faced by LDCs be addressed by the proposed pro-poor model of lifelong leaning? The succeeding paragraphs would attempt to answer these questions.
Despite the widespread belief that continuous learning is an inevitable prerequisite for enhancing socioeconomic conditions of human lives, nobody can force ordinary people to participate in learning. It is at the discretion of individuals to choose from among the options available for them. But certainly “we can help those who want to develop a thirst for knowledge” that ultimately provides an impetus to a society to be a learning society (Griffin, 1999, p. 330). The people suffering from growing level of poverty and hardships should be motivated intrinsically to participate in learning by removing a wide range of barriers coming in their lives (Rubenson & Desjardins, 2009). Any model of lifelong learning that is pro-poor must have optimum level of functionality for enabling people participate in learning activities.

As argued by some promoters of lifelong learning, it can reduce poverty and lead a society towards “sustainable socioeconomic development” (Walters, Yang, & Roslander, 2012, p. 10). In this respect, lifelong learning has more – not less – relevance and necessity to LDCs than it has in the OECD and EU countries. But the problem is that because of the scarcity of food and shelter for daily survival we cannot be sure that the LDC people would place same value on education as people of rich countries do. Undoubtedly, the outcomes of investment in education are not immediate all the time. For example, a family has to wait at least 15 to 20 years for getting the investment made to their child’s education returned, which is contingent upon a number of factors such as availability of job opportunity for the credentials s/he would earn. Similarly, at the societal and national level, investment in lifelong learning is justified by the assumption that “education can contribute to higher rates of economic growth” (Hasan, 2012, p. 486). But there is no convincing evidence that such economic growth would take place immediately to give relief to the poor people. Thus pro-poor perspective of lifelong learning must increase short-term returns to the investment in education without compromising its functionality for long-term sustainable socioeconomic development.

I argue that the attempts made by transnational organisations – basically WB, IMF and WTO – to strengthen educational systems in LDCs have not been pro-poor and don’t provide short-term benefits to the people of LDCs. Following the seemingly plausible argument by George Psacharopoulos – also known as Psacharopoulos legacy (Jimenez & Patrinos, 2003) these institutions are discouraging poor countries from investing in higher and adult education because, as they argue, the “rates of return are higher in primary education, followed by secondary and then university level” (Psacharopoulos, 1988, p. 101). His argument has been counterproductive for LDCs. Investment in adult education – basically vocational education and the promotion of indigenous knowledge and skills that could provide immediate outcomes – is seen more relevant for these countries (Bhola, 2005). For example, when adults of a particular society are educated, other people in the society would follow the forerunners that could thus create a learning environment where some of the dispositional barriers to participation in lifelong learning would be removed (Rubenson & Desjardins, 2009). Furthermore, as the status of the family is improved the children are less likely to be deprived of education and become poor in the future.

The goal of investing in education in the LDCs – often under the auspices of Western donor agencies including the World Bank and the IMF – has been economic growth justified by the assumption that economic growth can reduce poverty (Tarabini & Jacovkis, 2012). But even after much intervention in the economic, political and economic systems of the LDCs, the number of poor people has not decreased (UN, 2011). In a sense it has been proved that the
attempts so far made by the leadership of donor agencies have neither increased economic growth nor reduced poverty. A paradigm shift, therefore, in the educational system of poor countries is required. Pro-poor model of lifelong learning has the challenge of fulfilling the demand created by this paradigm shift. The new paradigm – however I would argue – is not about dismantling the existing mechanism of international assistance and cooperation. Nor does it go against the importance of economic growth that is anticipated to take place through human capital formation. Rather, the pro-poor lifelong learning model would encompass a fuller account of both economic and social demand for education, based on considerations of the role of education in the development process, social cohesion, equity, and use of education in poverty reduction strategies (Hasan, 2012). To achieve the type of human capital the LDCs produce should match with the demand of their own society; not of the corporate elites who are benefitting from the framework of neoliberalism and globalisation where education itself has been treated as a marketable commodity: “something that could be sold to the highest bidder” (Ahmed, 2011, p. 291).

In the Western societies, the lifelong learning approach has been criticised because of its market-led approach. The responsibility to continue learning for maintaining competitiveness in the changing job market has been bestowed upon the individuals and the people are compelled to fight in “the global war for talent” (Brown & Tannock, 2009). This tendency has not only made education delivery a ‘private good’ but also increased the gap between the people those who can afford education and those who can’t. Those people who are not able to compete – because of various reasons – are put in the losing side of the war. Even if this approach of lifelong learning is useful for economic growth, it couldn’t minimise the gap between the rich and the poor, which is one of the emerging problem in all newly developing economies and the LDCs.

Development is an ultimate goal for all LDCs; however, the type of development often advocated by donor countries that is limited to mere economic growth shouldn’t be the only goal of lifelong learning in the LDCs. As argued by Amartya Sen – 1998 Nobel laureate – development is a person’s capacity to make good choices – the capability approach. In this respect, development can be seen “as a process of expanding the real freedoms that people enjoy” while participating in learning activities that not only enhances the learners capabilities but also makes them able to choose the best option for uplifting their socioeconomic conditions (Sen, 1999, p. 3). Such an approach towards development through lifelong learning can enhance both productivity and sustainable socioeconomic development of LDCs.

Even though poverty is structural and shaped by political, economic, social and historical conditions, it is experienced at individual level by the men, women, and children of poor families. The lifelong learning model developed for LDCs must enable these people to understand those structural conditions and move towards breaking the vicious circle of poverty through ‘conscientization’ (Freire, 2010). For example, their learning should help them avoid “their own exploitation at the hands of officials, patriarchs, preachers, shopkeepers, money lenders and learn to assert their own personal dignity and human rights” (Bhola, 2005, p. 110). The lifelong learning model developed for LDCs should explore the possibilities for promoting self-employment and entrepreneurship, rather than giving false expectations of getting employment in the job market. For this, all forms of learning including indigenous and traditional knowledge and skills should be promoted with a new spirit and enthusiasm so that
national education systems of LDCs can be an effective interface between the Western and indigenous epistemologies. A new interface can move towards a proper balance between vocational and general forms of education. Low participation in vocational education and training so far experienced in the LDCs could be complemented by incorporating indigenous and traditional occupational skills in the form of vocational education (Kinga, McGrathc, & Rosed, 2007; Psacharopoulos, 1988). This approach would increase capacity of the learners for productive employment that would fulfil their basic human needs. And, “when most of the population is literate, decently fed and sheltered; class tensions and radical political orientations tend to diminish” leading all LDCs towards peace and prosperity (Diamond, 1992, p. 486).

References


Massive Open Online Courses and the Future of Adult Education

Jean-Paul Restoule
Aboriginal Education
Ontario Institute for Studies in Education
University of Toronto

Abstract: Do Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) have the potential to transform adult education? In this paper, I will offer a critical analysis of my recent experiences teaching the online course Aboriginal Worldviews and Education to over 21,000 learners worldwide through Coursera, currently the largest provider of MOOCs. The potential impact of MOOCs for the field of adult education is significant. Online free learning promises to remove cost and distance barriers to higher education and democratize the process of learning itself. But what is the reality like?

Drawing from literature in the fields of adult education and transformative learning, I will consider the implications that this new technology holds for the future of adult education theory and practice. Using comments from the discussion forums of Aboriginal Worldviews and Education, a MOOC offered in early 2013 at University of Toronto as an example, I will describe some key design choices and challenges that might illuminate the potentials of MOOCs for adult education.

What’s a MOOC?
In the span of just a few years MOOCs have gone from relative obscurity to being touted as the most important recent innovation in higher education. MOOC stands for Massive Open Online Course. The “Massive” refers to enrolment numbers, typically in the thousands or tens of thousands. The “Open” refers to the price tag of enrolment: completely free to anyone with access to broadband Internet. And that’s also the “Online” part. The course content is available through the Internet, usually at the users’ convenience and without a “real time” participation component. The “Course” part is that a MOOC covers standard course material over several weeks with assignments and quizzes to assist in absorption of course content, grading and often the obtainment of a certificate of completion.

Online learning now includes the MOOC, but a MOOC is not the only form of online learning. There are at least two features distinct about the MOOC format: scalability and lack of course fees. Unlike conventional online course offerings, MOOCs are designed to scale up to support an indefinite number of participants. Accordingly, course design platforms and considerations must take into account the potentially global reach and the widely divergent starting points of course participants vis-à-vis knowledge and experience. The lack of course fees means that the course is open to all students. Accordingly, many enrol and may have little intention or motivation to complete the course. Completion rates for MOOCs are estimated to be 4-5%. However, as Balch (2013) notes: “MOOC completion rates aren’t really low in the context of Internet engagement. A click through rate of 5% for a Google ad is considered a strong success. Convincing 5% to engage intellectually for 8 weeks is, I think, a big deal.”
The two features detailed above are likely behind much of the hype (and backlash) associated with MOOCs. MOOCs have variously been called the end of higher education as we know it and the realization of extending education as a fundamental human right to everyone. The potential of MOOCs in terms of scale, reach and size contribute to the democratization of learning from an optimistic standpoint, and potentially entrench the cultural imperialism of higher education from a critical perspective. The scalability is what gives MOOCs such great global reach, accessibility and cost savings over time and per capita. However, the scalability is what may also attract investors to for-profit MOOC ventures. MOOCs in a capitalist environment will ultimately influence accessibility. The largest and most well-known MOOC providers are currently highly reliant on the prestige of the universities they partner with. In essence, to draw students to the courses, they are using the brands and prestige that the names of world-leading higher education institutions provide. Koller’s TedTalk (2012) often references the “top tier” education available through coursera’s partnerships.

The high quality free course offerings is the main appeal of the MOOC to those who sign up. Peterson states that there is one word that matters more than any others in assessing MOOCs:

That word is “free.” MOOCs can provide the liberty to learn as adults so often must. Without relocating. Without reorienting. Without unpaid, unpayable debt. If MOOCs can simply educate adults for zero cost as well as the expensive for-profit colleges upon which people presently rely, then their admitted imperfect enterprise will still do real good in the world by chasing real evil from it. (Peterson, 2012).

Presciently, Peterson sees MOOCs as challenging not higher education institutions in general, nor even the prestigious universities being courted by the various MOOC platforms. The real threat is to the many for-profit institutions currently offering online education opportunities marketed to adult professionals who can’t afford the time, money or space to attend the renowned brick and mortar schools.

At the time of this writing, Coursera is the largest MOOC provider. A social entrepreneurship company founded by two Stanford University computer scientists, the company partners with well-known universities, such as Stanford, Michigan, Princeton, UPenn, Duke and the University of Toronto, to deliver courses online. These courses are open and free for anyone to take, anywhere in the world. For my Aboriginal Worldviews and Education course, offered through Coursera in partnership with OISE/University of Toronto in early 2013, enrolment peaked in week one at 23,300 and levelled off at 21,120 by the final week. Of this number, 10,433 watched at least one video, 3,483 took the first quiz, 2,514 took the second quiz (although it remains open at the time of writing), and about 3,558 submitted the main assignment.

Transforming the MOOC Experience: Indigenizing Online Learning

As I developed the Aboriginal Worldviews and Education course, I was concerned about the behaviourist pedagogy that typically comes with a course of this size and platform. The primary mode of organization in the Coursera platform is the video lecture. These act as the primary content or anchor funnelling the student to the assigned readings and resources. Discussion
forums, a key component of each course, enable students to interact with each other about course material.

*Aboriginal Worldviews and Education* featured video lectures released on a weekly basis and related resources tied to each video, such as additional readings, video screenings, and websites. Each week about 10 videos were released with approximately 2-3 hours of content in total per week. The course had one assignment that was peer-assessed and worth 50% of the final grade. Two quizzes were worth 20% each and a participation mark of 10% encouraged students to post in the discussion forums often. To receive the full 10% they had to post a minimum of 20 times. In addition, there were three optional non-graded activities that were designed to encourage forum participation on key topics. Video lectures and “screenside chats” would also encourage students to make comments about the lecture material in the forums.

For Coursera, instructors videotape their lectures in advance and upload them for captioning and transcribing, a service that increases accessibility, especially for a global audience. This can take a few days which is one reason why producing content ahead of scheduled release dates is important. In some regions, students have to travel to an Internet provider, download the content onto a hard drive or memory stick, take it home to absorb and return to the ISP to post questions and comments or submit assignments. To have to “attend” class in real time is not possible.

I struggled with having to produce the majority of the content ahead of the course offering. A key component to teaching in an indigenous way is interactivity, responsiveness to the particular group and its needs, reading the feeling of the group and responding accordingly. I wanted to avoid what Freire called the “banking concept” of education where students are passive recipients of content. As Sumner (2000) states, “one-way technologies leave little room for communication in the true sense of the term—communication as emancipative, non-dominative discourse designed to promote understanding.” (p. 279). I began to ask myself, how could I engage students in meaningful dialogue? How could we make this online experience more connectivist? How might I apply Freire’s notion of conscientization to this course and contribute to social change?

Using transformative learning as a conceptual framework, I sought to find ways to bring a more reflective and critical discourse to the MOOC. Merriam, Caffarella and Baumgartner (2007) assert that “Transformational Learning is about change, dramatic, fundamental change in the way we see ourselves and the world in which we live” (p. 123). Imel (1998) states that teachers should foster a learning environment of trust and care, and that students should share the responsibility for establishing a learning atmosphere, in which “the transformative learning can occur” (Imel, 1998, p. 4). Working with a team of graduate assistants, we began to actively seek ways to create an online space in which people felt comfortable and safe to share their personal experiences and stories.

*Translating Indigenous Education to an Online Environment*

One characteristic of indigenous education is seeking ways to engage the whole person in developing spiritual, emotional, intellectual and physical aspects of their being. Using a medicine wheel as organizational principle, our course activities sought to focus on these different aspects of being. Activity One asked participants to describe a place that has special meaning to them.
Many people interpreted this icebreaker as a spiritual question. Indeed there is an intuitive aspect to the question that engages students in describing why a place draws them to it. Activity Two involved writing a response to what it feels like to experience loss of life and knowledge. Students complete a list of ten names all of which have taught them something valuable. They are then directed to strike off a name one by one until only one name is remaining. In the debrief students learn that in some regions 90% of the North American indigenous population was killed by disease, warfare, and other means over the course of a few generations. What is the impact on knowledge and learning and cultural worldview? This activity had an emotional component. Another activity had students analysing a segment of discourse from Prime Minister Harper’s Indian Residential Schools Apology of 2008. It was largely an intellectual exercise. The peer assessment assignment required creativity as students used ethnographic writing to describe with detachment and cultural insight, an event or location that is familiar to them.

A key focus of our course design efforts was to ensure the forums would be used often as a place for deep discussion and dialogue, just like a face-to-face indigenous education class would make space for this kind of exchange. The discussion forum in particular was helpful in creating a more “horizontal student-teacher relationship” (Taylor, 1998, p. 18) and demonstrating how much students have to contribute to the learning environment. The online forum is used by students to support one another and answer each other’s questions. For Aboriginal Worldviews and Education, there were a total of 43,879 posts in the forums made by 4,685 participants. There were 326,266 views of forum posts. These numbers lend credence to the idea of four student archetypes Hill (2013) suggests: lurkers who read but don’t post; passive participants who look at the material and do the assignments but don’t participate in discussions or postings, active participants who engage with the material and their peers in numerous ways, and drop-ins, who become deeply involved in aspects of the course, subtopics that interest them, but do not attempt to complete the whole course.

Diversity of Voices
The open online platform offered great opportunities for diverse voices and media to be shared as part of the content. Available open source material is vast and selecting the right video, resource or reading became a tricky task. I incorporated videos from Aboriginal Elders and community members to provide a diversity of voices. The online platform proved particularly helpful in this regard as we were able to hear from a broad range of indigenous scholars, thinkers and activists. The response from course participants demonstrated the effectivity of this approach:

Dr. Restoule's MOOC uses the Internet to provide links to highly relevant materials that provide the essence of the course. These materials include more than 90 hyperlinks to relevant professional articles, Government Reports, United Nations’ Documents, interviews of other departmental faculty members and graduate students, segments from interviews by other professionals, talks given at professional conferences, blogs, YouTube videos, interactive graphics, historical footage, short films, tours of significant museums, photographs of other locations, stories of indigenous people and even access to 4 hours of CBC programing. (Canadian equivalent to PBS programs). Something that would be impossible to provide in a classroom setting.
The feel is something entirely new to me. … Dr. Restoule, provides something more like a docent in a museum tour. He exposes you to a wide range of material about which he is very knowledgeable, and draws your attention to things you might otherwise have missed while keeping the tour group moving along. While you may not actually visit the museum again, you know that if you do go back, what objects you like to look at in more detail.

A different participant responded to our approach and also touched on another goal in the course design: to encourage students to take up their own learning long after the course was complete:

i've just been ruminating on this the entire time.... the way the teaching in this class really has been different from my other experiences in Coursera and classes in general. i really felt like a great effort was made to give us lots of different KINDS of resources, to get us to think on our own, investigate and ponder on our own, imagine, understand, create. this is the only class out of several i've taken on Coursera where there were so many additional resources of all kinds, where there was such a creative kind of essay assignment, and where the lectures themselves seemed to wrap throughout just like a medicine wheel. in other words, we learned about the content just by being a part of the class!

**Transformative Learning Potential**

This goal of pushing the students to become responsible for their own learning harnessed the power of open sources and finding materials that are no cost and accessible online. Indeed, this is the core group MOOCs are targeting and hoping to pull into higher education:

I am so grateful that Dr. Restoule, the University of Toronto, and Coursera are sharing this information for free. Where I live, there are very few (if any) courses on Aboriginal/American Indians within a 50-mile radius. …Also, at this point in my life, I can't afford to attend college courses (it's very expensive in the US -- I'm still paying off my student loans from 1997!). Anyway, it would be a lot harder to learn about this topic without a free course like this.

We watched as students took learning into their own hands, creating Facebook study groups, in-person meet-ups and a twitter hashtag for the course so students could immediately share their thoughts on the course and their learning. There is a notion that the learning process could continue after the course is over and that authentic networks of people interested in lifelong learning could be promoted. As the four-week course progressed, we watched as this critical reflection became more substantial and students engaged in the notion of praxis, “moving back and forth in a critical way between reflecting and acting on the world” (Taylor, 1998, p. 18). It was clear students were challenging themselves to think in a new and transformational way as in this example:

… The course also got me thinking much more critically about knowledge and goals for obtaining it - not acquiring units of categorizable information, but envisioning it as something deeply personal outside the bounds of an external authority. While I don't
come from an indigenous heritage, much of what we learned about knowledge struck me as intuitively "right" somehow.

**More Than Two Paths: Proceed With Caution**

It’s important to remember the larger context in which the MOOC providers have risen. Sumner’s (2000) words of caution regarding online learning in general are worth heeding now in relation to MOOCs.

However, in this information age, distance education exists within a larger context, corporate globalisation, described by Ratner (1997) as a world system in which powerful, interconnected, stateless corporations nullify national boundaries and incorporate whole societies as cost-effective sites of production. Within this corporate context, distance education becomes a business opportunity, not only for cash-strapped universities, but also for multinational corporations. Jarvis (1993) explains that within a capitalist economy, any commodity produced is an object that can be sold, including distance education materials. Campus-based universities hire marketing managers to sell these commodities and expand the market beyond the university itself, which makes the distance education package ‘a more attractive marketable commodity’ (p. 168)” p. 280.

In the *New York Times*, Friedman wrote about MOOCs as:

...the budding revolution in global online higher education. Nothing has more potential to lift more people out of poverty — by providing them an affordable education to get a job or improve in the job they have. Nothing has more potential to unlock a billion more brains to solve the world’s biggest problems... more potential to enable us to reimagine higher education than the massive open online course, or MOOC, platforms that are being developed by the likes of Stanford and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and companies like Coursera and Udacity.

It’s important to remember that these companies are for-profit companies that will be seeking revenue generation to pay back their investors. Data mining is one way; looking at how students participate in courses and using this data to improve teaching and learning strategies and curriculum design; employer-student matching services; fees for certification or exam proctoring before issuing statements of completion or achievement; licencing fees for smaller institutions. The revolution in learning is still circumscribed by a capitalist model. Sumner (2000) cites Menzies and Marcuse to tell us “it is important to remember that history is not on the side of education for the lifeworld. Like the other technologies that preceded it, computer technology is more likely to control teachers and learners than to serve them (Menzies, 1994). Critical theorist Herbert Marcuse (1969) anticipated this control when he stated that technology serves to institute new, more effective, and more pleasant forms of social control and social cohesion.” p. 278.

There is little doubt that MOOCs have the potential to transform adult education. But exactly how this will play out remains to be seen. As in all things new, the wildest hopes and the darkest fears are rarely the only options and a measured middle way is the path we’re most likely to see. If the Aboriginal Worldviews and Education course is any indication there are ways to make a MOOC experience responsive to horizontal learning that respects the holistic learner and leads to a transformative learning experience. In the same way we seek space for these kinds of adult
learning opportunities in traditional higher education institutions, we will continue to do so in the MOOC environment.

References


Organizers of Cultural Events: Creating Community and Telling Stories of Resistance and Change

Carole Roy
St. Francis Xavier University

Abstract: Different authors have recently written about the importance of collective learning (English & Mayo, 2012; Gorman, 2007). Cultural events, like documentary film festivals, provide sites for such collective learning. Organizers of such events are necessary catalysts that play different roles, from programming to fundraising and audience development to promotion and volunteer coordination. As organizers they contribute to events that foster media literacy and critical thinking through the presentation of often ignored stories and alternative information, promote collaboration and a sense of community, and encourage active engagement.

Background and Purpose of the Study
Adult educators often engage in practice and research towards social justice. Increasingly, social movements are recognized as significant sites of adult learning (Clover, 2006; English & Mayo, 2012; Gorman, 2007; Hall & Turay, 2006; Preskill & Brookfield, 2009). English and Mayo suggest a notion of citizenship “that embraces collectivity and movements rather than the idea of atomised individual citizens” (p. 19). Gorman also challenges the notion of the autonomous, at times competitive, learner and instead suggests that we need to pay attention to the collective nature of learning, especially when discussing social movements, resistance to status quo, or struggles for social justice and political equality. However, while collective events or actions may happen spontaneously, generally they require some degree of organization. Yet we live at a time in North America when “community is made difficult by social and technological developments that force us further and further apart into a chaotic assemblage of fractured individual existences” (Preskill & Brookfield, 2009, p. 199). Preskill and Brookfield also suggest that finding ways to bring people together, disseminate alternative information, and encourage collaboration and engagement is crucial to building solidarity.

Films are excellent catalysts to stimulate discussion. English and Mayo (2012) wrote, ”Media and the arts are among the many exciting trends and strategies that are part of the toolkit of community development and education” (p. 136) and can become important tools “to increase meaningful engagement and participation in matters that affect all our lives” (p. 138). Film festivals are popular cultural events, from local community-based festivals to industry-sponsored festivals that can attract half a million people, as does the Toronto International Film Festival (Wong, 2011, p. 49). There are different types of film festivals: some showcase the corporate film industry while others focus on a specific theme, for example human rights, mental health, gay and lesbian films; a specific genre, like experimental, science fiction, or documentary; or a specific geographical area. In this study, I look at community-based documentary film festivals aimed at providing alternative information with a view to citizen engagement and greater democracy. These film festivals provide a network for independent filmmakers to offer alternative information; such festivals also promote community building as well as citizen engagement. Belenky, Bond, and Weinstock (1997) suggest that collective events provide a public space for questioning and learning while Clover (2006) adds that ”innovative and creative pedagogies are required if we are to assist adults to address social and cultural problems and
become more active and imaginative citizens” (p. 4). In this paper, I focus on organizers of documentary film festivals and their role as catalysts for events that provide important alternative information and perspectives, foster critical thinking, promote a sense of community that values diversity, and encourage a sense of possibility towards change. As Young (2006) said, “Change seems to be a process that can be tapped but not muscled” (p. ix).

Research Design
The data analyzed for this paper were collected between 2008 and 2011. It includes 15 semi-structured interviews with:

1) 3 experts in the uses of films and the arts towards social change
2) 7 organizers of the World Community Film Festival (WCFF), Courtenay, British Columbia (BC), which started in 1990 in an effort to link local and global development. Their program is now available to an average of 10 communities in British Columbia, Yukon, Saskatchewan, Manitoba and Nova Scotia through the Travelling World Community Film Festival (TWCFF).
3) 3 organizers of the ReFrame – Peterborough International Film Festival, Peterborough, Ontario (ON), which started in 2005 to foster local community building and international solidarity. It initially showed films from the TWCFF program and uniquely includes visual art displays and local performers.
4) Comments from 2 attendees at these film festivals (part of a much larger group of interviews with attendees)
(* denotes the use of a pseudonym for some interviewees)

Preliminary Findings
Organizers of these two community-based documentary film festivals are often people who have been involved in some form of education, although not always. Some organizers came to the festival through their work in education and their interest in films while others were activists involved in various movements for social change. However, each festival is clearly a team effort by volunteers who generously share their skills and a significant amount of time. Team members work on different aspects of the festival: coordination; programming; fundraising and community outreach; publicity including graphic design of promotional material; and volunteer recruitment, training and scheduling.

Curatorial Role: Encouraging Media Literacy and Critical Thinking
One of the key roles in organizing a film festival is the curatorial role of programmers. As programmers of these festivals select documentaries by independent filmmakers, they act as curators that allow stories, often ignored by mass media, to be told, at times in contradiction to mainstream media reports. One of the founding members of WCFF, Frank Tester, explained the importance of the film festival showcasing alternative views:

I think it’s really important because the mainstream media, with rare exceptions, does not say the things that are said in these films. It doesn’t. Not entirely. I mean if you go to Doc Zone on CBC or The Fifth Estate, and even with the Vancouver Sun, there’s at least one columnist who takes a critical look at things. But the media is so mainstream. Bland. It doesn’t have a critical edge. By and large panders very much to the status quo. And even
when it doesn’t, is consummately liberal. You know - mushy. It’s sort of hard to disagree with or agree with anything that’s said. We just don’t have media with a really critical cutting edge in this country. (Tester, personal communication, February 7, 2010)

In Courtenay, programmers have responded to feedback from viewers and make efforts to strike a balance between films that expose problems and those that share successful struggles or creative projects. In fact both of these documentary film festivals have become an excellent embodiment of Freire’s (2004) pedagogy of indignation, which includes denouncing injustices and announcing possibilities, the importance of which organizers learned by listening to viewers. As a result, their selection present new and significant perspectives that offer inspiring stories but also challenge assumptions and foster critical thinking.

*Critical thinking and media literacy.* Festival attendees often made comments in interviews which indicated that organizers/programmers are successful in simulating critical thinking and media literacy. For example, many attendees ask why they do not see these films on the television, conveying their awareness of the limited representation available through mass media. Another example would be a discussion after the film *¡Salud!: Cuba and the Quest for Health* (Field, 2006) when people expressed surprise at the contribution that Cuba has made by sending many doctors to countries all over the world when needed, despite being a very small country. The discussion and comments after the film revealed that many assumptions about Cuba were challenged, including what a small communist and agrarian society could do. This also revealed how Cuba is not often portrayed as an innovative society in the media. Perhaps more importantly at a time when the medical system is under serious threats of cuts and privatization across Canada, viewers made comparisons with their local medical system, its often inadequate provision of timely service, and even suggested they would appreciate a community-based health care system similar to Cuba’s. Through their curatorial role, festival programmers were able to challenge the current belief that our medical system is either one of the best or else that privatization is the only answer. The same type of reactions could be heard from attendees who saw *The world according to Monsanto* (Robin, 2008) and what that corporation does to seeds; or those who saw *Tapped* (Soechtig, 2009), which exposed the bottled water industry and its ecological impact. Such programming also supports independent documentary filmmakers:

They make films because they want to reach as many people as possible. … that’s why film festivals of this sort with this kind of content are utterly unique and … play a very important … role in countering the lies, the deception, the falsehoods that are associated with a world run by transnational corporations that have one thing in mind, and that is growth, selling more products and making a profit any way they can. … The film festival] plays … a major role in keeping a significant number of people sharp and thinking critically. (Tester, personal communication, February 7, 2010)

A woman who was involved with the tremendously successful Canadian Images film festival in Peterborough in the 1970s and 1980s, and which showcased Canadian films, suggested that the current ReFrame Film Festival in Peterborough is “actually hooked to a larger educational agenda” and “is part of a really well thought out program of education and consciousness raising and political activism” (*Lorraine, personal communication, January 29, 2008). Ferne Cristall,
another organizer in Peterborough adds to the educational nature of the film festival by drawing in the stimulation of creativity:

I think that culture is a great organizing tool and should be part of all organizing because creativity brings good ideas in all sorts of ways, to all sorts of organizing. I mean it makes people’s minds loosen up and be more divergent. … But I don’t necessarily think that having an audience at a film is [political organizing]. It’s a good starting point … especially when they get to talk about it afterwards. (Personal communication, January 22, 2008)

Through their curatorial role, programmers of these film festivals provide material that promotes discussions as well as media literacy, a very important aspect in a democratic society.

Critical self-reflection. In their curatorial role, programmers also provide stories that may allow people to reflect not only on the mass media but on their own personal beliefs and actions. A former educational consultant for the UN who was interviewed after the WCFF festival had watched the film *Schooling the world: The white man’s last burden* (Black, 2010), a film about the impact of the modern schooling system in Ladakh, an Indian state where those who attend school dream of going away to urban centers, never to return. And if they return, they lack the knowledge and skills necessary for survival in their agrarian community. The film raises questions about the definition of wealth, about schooling and its resulting exodus from rural communities to distant urban locations, about the destruction of traditional and sustainable agriculture, and the lack of recognition given to traditional knowledge. The former consultant reacted strongly and ultimately asked herself, “What is interesting to me is ‘why did I stay in that field when I really don’t believe in it?’” (*Joan, personal communication, February 8, 2011*) The ability of the film to break through the perspective of a highly educated individual who had encountered diverse cultures before, yet after this film was reassessing her former role and questioning her engagement in a system that she did not believe in. What we learn from this example is the power of some of the documentaries to promote critical self-reflection and consideration of previous beliefs and roles.

Community Building: Audience Development, Collaboration, and Intersectoral Exchange
Organizers of these festivals generally have a strong sense of belonging to their community and are motivated to contribute, as illustrated by Krista English, an organizer of ReFrame in Peterborough, who said: “I want my community to be the best thing out there (personal communication, January 30, 2008). These organizers engage in community building by bringing different concerns and realities to the same event where each group can learn about others’ lives as well as see their own concerns or contributions represented to a larger audience, generating a sense of acceptance of various issues and recognition for different contributions.

Audience development. One approach organizers engage in for community building is audience development. The organizers in Peterborough have a very effective approach as they link audience development to sponsorship, which also brings funds. In their unique approach, they contact a wide range of potential sponsors (over 120), namely community and grassroots organizations as well as local small businesses, and suggest specific films that might be of particular relevance to a potential sponsor. This ensures that the interests of various groups in the
community are represented. It also draws members of specific organizations to the festival given their particular interests, validating their own causes or recognizing their contribution while also ensuring a wide diversity of topics that brings new perspectives to the diverse audience. While this approach brings necessary funds, more importantly perhaps this networking allows members of the organizing team to better understand their own community and expand their personal and collective networks. The range of sponsors in Peterborough is truly remarkable, “amazing and impressive” (Cristall, personal communication, January 22, 2008). According to Cristall, such a film festival is an invitation to the community, whether by sponsoring, volunteering, organizing, or attending. As English and Mayo wrote, “The greatest challenge for adult education is to educate for solidarity without destroying the individual character of movements. After all, the concept of “movement of movements” … is said to be characterised by “its heterogeneous constituency” (OSAL & CLACSO, 2003, p. 264, cited in English & Mayo, 2012, p. 126). Documentary film festivals are cultural events that allow specific movements to keep their integrity yet creates a rare opportunity to showcase a wide range of issues and contributions side by side to a diverse audience.

Collaboration. A collaborative practice is emblematic of each festival under study: just as making films is by nature multidisciplinary, so is organizing a film festival. These festivals encourage cooperation at all levels, within the organizing team as a whole and within each subgroup working on specific aspects of the festival. The noteworthy list of sponsors in Peterborough alluded to above also conveys the message that many organizations are required to create an event that attracts a cross-section of the community. Given that we live in a capitalist and consumerist society that has effectively encourage the atomisation of individuals for many decades, collaboration cannot be taken for granted. For some organizers, working in such a collaborative manner harkens to a previous time: “it was just nice to work in a collective again, after working in a hierarchical institution. … Most of my adult life I have been working in a collective, so working collaboratively I think was one of my favourite things” (Cristall, personal communication, January 22, 2008). Yet she continues, acknowledging that many may not have experienced such collaborative work:

Working in a collaborative, somewhat collective way is complex, especially when the majority of the people in the group … don’t have that work experience. It is not a way people know necessarily how to work. I think one of the reasons it went quite well [in Peterborough] … partly it’s the nature of the women who have gotten involved and the fact that we’ve been a primarily women’s committee, not by choice but by accident of those who were interested in organizing it. (Cristall, personal communication, January 22, 2008).

Organizing such an event is in itself a practice of collaboration as decisions are made collectively in light of the different knowledge, experiences, and interests of committee members.

Intersectoral exchange. Organizing team members typically come from different sectors of the community, for example labour, environmental/human rights/social justice organizations, art organizations, academic institutions, and small businesses. In fact, a diverse organizing team is important to attract a diverse audience. Yet while these festivals attract a wide range of people, many are activists. These festivals have proven excellent sites for activists to learn about issues
beyond those they are already familiar or already involved with. For example, in 2012 the WCFF in Courtenay, BC, screened the documentary *Black wave: The legacy of the Exxon Valdez* (Cornellier, 2009), one of the biggest environmental disasters in North America when, in March 1989, an Exxon Mobil oil super tanker ran aground in Alaska and discharged millions of gallons of crude oil affecting coastal waters and communities. Despite facing serious environmental, social and economic consequences from the oil spill, including the destruction of their fishing grounds, residents near the spill, many involved in fisheries, are still waiting for compensation 20 years later. This film was followed by *Oil in Eden: The battle to protect Canada’s Pacific Coast* (Gillis, 2010), a documentary on the current controversial pipeline planned to bring bitumen from the Alberta Tar Sands to the coast of British Columbia, and in particular about the Great Bear Rainforest, one the last pristine wilderness areas in the country, a spectacular, rich in wild life, but fragile region which will be in the path of oil super tankers if Enbridge builds that pipeline from the Alberta Tar Sands to the BC coast as oil tankers will carry the bitumen to China. The result was a labour activist claiming these films had strengthened her backbone considerably, enough to invite the pipeline campaigners to the next local labour council. Labour and environmentalists are not always on the same side on environmental issues.

**Implications for Adult Education**

“A community greatest strength, as Freire suggested, is its unity through diversity, its commitment to a set of principles arrived at after rich and varied deliberations.”

(Preskill & Brookfield, 2009, p. 193)

Documentary film festivals are cultural events that tell stories of resistance and change, offer alternative information and networks for independent filmmakers, promote critical reflection and media literacy, foster a sense of community, and at times inspire citizens to active engagement. Organizers of these festivals provide a concrete example of engaging differences with respect and in a stimulating setting. English and Mayo (2012) state:

We do not limit ourselves to “ideology critique” but seek to ferret out the concealed positive potential that connects with people’s preoccupations and quotidian experience. … The task of critical adult education is to analyze issues systematically and collectively with learners in order to develop a coherent vision for reconstruction. (p. 1)

Organizers of documentary film festivals do not engage in direct visioning exercises with festival attendees, yet indirectly they provide the space and the examples, through the stories told in films, to help create preferred visions of the future. As Clover (2006) put it, “innovative and creative pedagogies are required if we are to assist adults to address social and cultural problems and become more active and imaginative citizens” (p. 4). Organizers are on the front line of such collective imagination.

**References**


Black, C. [Director]. (2010). *Schooling the world: The white man’s last burden* [Documentary]. USA/India: Lost People Films.


The Political Economy of the Collection and Classification of Adult Learning and Education

Kjell Rubenson
University of British Columbia

Abstract: This paper examines how supra national organisations collect and classify information on adult learning and education. The findings reveal major differences in how the OECD and the EU defines and measures adult learning resulting in competing imaginations of how adult learning and education can and should be approached in public policy.

Background and Purpose
The recent interest in the policy community for statistics on adult learning and education is embedded in the evidence-based reform movement and an understanding that effective adult learning and skills policies are vital for a country’s economic and social wellbeing. The purpose of this paper is to examine how evidence of adult learning is being measured and classified and the constraint this causes in how adult learning and education can be imagined in public policy.

Theoretical Sensitizers
The work is located within the sociological tradition and the approach can be labeled as policy sociology. This means that it starts from the position that the nature of the collection and classification of adult learning and education should not be understood as a purely technical issue but is embedded in broader political economic forces. In the analysis, policies are treated as operational statements of values, 'statements of prescriptive intent' (Kogan, 1975). In doing policy sociology one must try to explicate the intellectual climate and the wider debates that characterize the policy context (see e.g. Ritzvi and Lingard, 2010). Defining policy and policy research in this way draws our attention to the importance of power, control and conflict in evidence, the construction and interpretation of evidence on adult learning and education.

The recent interest in the collection and classification of information on adult learning and education should be seen as part of the supranational organisations’ strategy to institutionalise an evidence-based policy regime. The strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training (Europe 2020) notes, ‘it is vital that better empirical evidence is available to underpin reforms’ (EC, 2011a, p. 3). The fields of first medicine and later social work have seen the establishment of evidence-producing organisations like the Cochrane Collaboration (medicine) and the Cambell Collaboration (social work) which have become the Gold Standard (Hansen and Rieper, 2010). So far education has not officially developed an equivalent Gold Standard procedure but the OECD’s Programme for the International Student Assessment (PISA) has increasingly come to play that role. PISA together with the recently launched OECD Programme for the International Comparison of Adult Competencies (PIAAC) are seen as providing a reliable and objective base for countries to develop evidence-based skills and lifelong learning policies.

In questioning the official position on ‘objective-evidence’ this study draws on the critical tradition of social statistics that has illuminated the role of a national census in establishing racial government through what Watts, (2002) labels Making Numbers Count. As Clark (1998) astutely observes, while numbers seem to be a way to avoid the contaminating subjectivity of opinion (p.
decisions about what should be counted and how it should be classified are subjective judgement decisions. Foucault’s governmentality thesis provides a fruitful approach to understand how the process of collecting and classifying official statistics transforms ideology into discourse which then comes to provide justification for recommending a specific policy agenda (Naughton, 2005, p. 47).

Methodology
The study follows two steps. First it explores how the concept of lifelong learning is being understood and presented in key policy documents on lifelong learning from EU, OECD and UNESCO. Thereafter the focus shifts to a critical review of the questionnaires used to collect information on adult learning and education (2011 PIAAC-OECD; EC-EUROSTAT AES 2011, 2011 and the Canadian 2008 ASETS survey) and the proposed classification schemes used in the analysis of the data.

Supranational Discourse on Adult and Lifelong Learning
The last forty years have left us with two competing paradigms of lifelong learning informed by UNESCO’s respectively OECD’s worldview. UNESCO and OECD paradigms can be seen as the two halves of a Janus face that together express the ambiguous nature of lifelong learning (Rubenson, 2009). UNESCO’s idea of a humanistic inspired paradigm of lifelong learning has mostly been embraced by civil society while national policy initiatives have almost exclusively been driven by the OECD’s, and to a large extent also EU’s, economic paradigm of lifelong learning. In the dominant supranational discourse on lifelong learning the relationship between work and lifelong learning is formulated as a production function. The underlying assumption is that learning activities help develop workers’ characteristics which drive productivity and wage prosperity and ultimately result in individual and social benefits.

Towards the end of the 1990s, policy makers had come to the insight that while the New Economy holds the promise of increased productivity and an improved standard of living, it also introduces a new set of transitions and adjustment challenges for society, industry and individuals. If not met, these challenges could increase the permanent exclusion or marginalisation of segments of the population and exacerbate socio-economic divisions. This does not in any way imply that the economic motives are subsiding but rather that the balance has shifted somewhat. The subtle shift in discourse coincided with adult learning coming into the policy focus. After more or less having neglected adult education for close to forty years, it was a noticeable event when, at the end of 1998, the OECD Educational Committee launched its Thematic Review of Adult Learning (OECD, 2003). The initiative was a follow up to the 1996 decision by OECD educational ministers to make lifelong learning for all the key educational goal in member countries (OECD, 1996). Realising the limited opportunities that existed for adults, the ministers called on the OECD to review and explore new forms of teaching and learning appropriate for adults, whether employed, unemployed or retired (OECD, 2003, p. 4). However, it is noticeable and surprising that the concerns regarding adult learning policies and reforms are absent in OECD’s recently launched Skills Strategy (OECD, 2012). In fact, adult learning strategies are not raised as an issue in the Skills Strategy.

It is interesting to observe how EU gradually seems to divert from the more narrow OECD perspective on lifelong learning. The EU’s philosophy on lifelong learning for all, as outlined in the Memorandum on lifelong learning (EC, 2000), was part of the agenda to establish the EU as
the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world while sustaining economic growth with more and better jobs and greater social cohesion. Reflecting this idea within what is loosely understood as the European social model, the Memorandum emphasises that there are two equally important aims for lifelong learning: promoting active citizenship and promoting employability. However, during the last five years the issues of citizenship, democracy and social cohesion have increasingly taken on a new urgency in EC policy documents. In addition to the economic goal that has dominated the policies on adult and lifelong learning, there is a growing realisation that more attention needs to be given to how adult and lifelong learning can contribute to democratisation and individual fulfilment. In this spirit it is noted that adult learning policies should pay more attention not only to the need of skill upgrading but also contribute to the growth of social awareness and an inclusive society with a high degree of active citizenship and shared values to promote the development of social capital and social cohesion (EC, 2011a). In the context of the renewed emphasis on the social dimension of education and training the EU’s policy documents recognise that adult learning is being offered in a variety of environments like educational institutions, local communities and NGOs as well as at work and covering learning for personal civic, social and employment-related purposes (EC, 2010). Thus, the EU discourse has shifted in such a way that the previously more or less invisible humanistic paradigm of lifelong learning has become more visible. The attempt a decade ago by the OECD to move in the same direction seems to have ceased with the introduction of the skills agenda and as a consequence the only side of the Janus face that is visible in the OECD lifelong learning strategy is the economistic.

As both OECD and the EC strongly promote evidence informed policy-making, it is of interest to explore if the recent divergence in lifelong learning discourse is being reflected in how evidence on adult learning is being collected and classified. In this perspective it is also of interest to explore if Canada in its collection of statistics on adult learning follows the OECD or the EU. For non-formal courses, detailed questions are asked only about one randomly selected course that a learner took for job-related reasons. This limitation in the ASETS creates problems using the typology for correctly classifying and estimating the rate of non-formal foundational learning activities. There is no information on what kind of activities those who took a course for non-job-related reasons were engaged in.

It is apparent that the limitations put on what course to follow up in the ASETS restricts the usefulness of the typology. A second issue stems from the fact that many of the respondents reported having been engaged in more than one non-formal job-related learning activity.

**Findings**

*OECD-PIAAC*

OECD’s collection of information on adult learning and education is an integral part of the recently launched Program on the International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC). This is the most comprehensive international survey of adult skills ever undertaken and will come to play a crucial role in countries’ benchmarking of adult learning and education. The document introducing PIAAC’s conceptual framework (OECD, 2009) does not attempt to address the classification of adult learning but briefly touches on the issue and notes that participation in lifelong learning is a crucial issue for governments of the OECD member countries. Behind this urgency hides a narrow economic perspective. “Formal education, formal
training, and informal training all contribute to the stock of human capital, and countries will display different profiles in how the human capital stock is built up. PIAAC will provide a snapshot of human capital investments by the incidence and intensity of training during the previous 12 month period” (p.5). It is further stressed that to assist policy development it will be important to collect information on how much of the adult learning and education activities is taking place for work-related reasons.

PIAAC, in contrast to e.g. EUROSTAT, never developed a specific classification system for adult learning but it is possible to gauge a general understanding of their approach to adult learning from the survey instrument and the classification options afforded by the data. Learning events are divided into two broad categories: formal learning and other organised learning (i.e. non-formal). Despite earlier OECD policy documents stressing the importance of taking into account informal learning (see e.g. OECD 1996) no attempt is done in the PIAAC background questionnaire to assess informal learning. The questions on adult learning and education reflect a fairly narrow perspective on which learning activities contribute to the human capital generation. Consequently there is a strong emphasis on formal educational activities taken towards a diploma, certificate, degree, or license (see B_Q4A). Thus, not surprisingly the questionnaire has a bias towards formal learning. The opening question on non-formal learning activities is broadly cast “We would now like to turn to other organised learning activities you may have participated in during the last 12 month, including both work and non-work activities” (B_R12). This gives the impression that adult learning and education is broadly conceptualised but a review of the follow up questions would indicate that is not the case. First, the specific questions on non-formal participation focusing in on the format asking about 1) courses conducted through open or distance education; 2) organized sessions for on-the-job training or training by supervisors or co-workers; and 3) courses or private lessons not already reported. Moreover the follow questions have a strong job-related focus. So for example the initial question on motivation asks: *Were the main reasons for choosing to study for this qualification job related?*” If the answer is yes the respondent is asked to identify in what respect it is job-related. Other motives for engaging in adult learning and education are not explored. Further, the remaining questions all focuses on the learning activity in relationship to work. In the OECD world non-formal adult learning activities that are not taken for direct work related reasons are of no policy interest. In view of the importance given to non-formal learning and informal learning in earlier OECD documents on lifelong learning conceptual framework, it is puzzling why greater attention is not paid to broader exploration of adult learning. This reluctance may well undermine PIAAC’s policy relevance, especially in terms of the relative efficiency of different policy levers applied to lifelong learning.

**EU/EUROSTAT AES 2011**

The European Commission/Eurostat has conducted the most elaborate work to date on a classification system of adult learning. This work is not only sophisticated but was also specifically developed to support a coherent European survey on participation in adult education and training.

The EUROSTAT classification system is organised around learning activities, defined as *any activities of an individual organised with the intention to improve his/her knowledge, skills and*
The typology uses single learning activities as basic building blocks of a classification system that can capture and describe all learning activities. The framework creates a flow chart able to classify activities as formal, non-formal and informal learning respectively, using three key criteria and thus recognising the full spectrum of lifelong learning. The first criterion is “intention to learn”. If there is no intention to learn the activity is not a learning activity. Consequently this framework excludes all incidental learning. Learning activities deemed to be intentional then meet the second filter: institutionalization. Learning activities are considered institutionalised when there is an organization providing structured arrangements including a student-teacher relationship especially designed for education and learning. Institutionalised learning activities happen when there is a providing agency/body responsible for: determining the teaching/learning method, scheduling of the learning, admission requirements, and location of the learning/teaching facility. Informal learning activities are not institutionalised (p. 23). The institutionalised learning activities are then filtered through a third criterion: whether or not they are included in the National Qualification Framework (NFQ). The NFQ could take the form of a regulatory document, which stipulates the qualifications and their relative positions in a hierarchy of learning achievements as well as the awarding bodies that provide or deliver these qualifications. Activities that fulfill this third criterion are classified as formal learning activities while those not included in the NFQ are categorized as non-formal learning.

The 2011 AES questionnaire (EC, 2012) suffers less from a general human capital or more narrow “job-related” bias than the one developed by PIAAC. The questionnaire does not privilege formal over non-formal activities but does an extensive probing of both. The questions on non-formal learning events do ask questions in relationship to work but to more or less an equal extent also about non-work related aspects of adult learning and education. So for example the opening question asks: “During the last 12 months have you participated in any of the following activities with the intention to improve your knowledge or skills in any area (including hobbies)” (NFE). This is followed up by asking about participation in courses and/or workshops at the workplace or in your free time (e.g. language courses, computer courses, driving courses, management courses, gardening courses or painting courses). There is a specific question asking about planned periods of education, instruction at the workplace organized by the employer. The specific questions in the AES addressing motives, usefulness and financing pay equal attention to work and non-work related aspects. Hence, the EUROSTAT approach is well in line with the EU’s recent broadening of the policy discourse on adult and lifelong learning.

Canada ASETS

The ASETS survey suffers from the same core biases and limitations as the PIAAC survey. First, it covers formal and non-formal learning but provides no information on informal learning. The vast majority of questions covering participation in adult learning and education focus on formal learning events. For non-formal learning events, detailed questions are asked only about one randomly selected course that a learner took for job-related reasons. Just like in PIAAC non-work related informal learning seems to be deemed as irrelevant from the outset. This limitation in the ASETS creates problems using the typology for correctly classifying and estimating the rate of non-formal foundational learning activities or exploring the economic and or wider benefits these learning events may have.
Conclusion

The brief review of OECD, EU and Canadian surveys on lifelong learning hints at fundamental shortcomings in most of these surveys and the way the data have been classified. In fact, the importance attached to adult learning in Canadian and supranational policy documents seems at odds with efforts made to secure data reliable enough to support evidence-based policies. First, there is a mismatch between the heavy investment in developing instruments to measure competencies and the lack of focus on the role of different parts of the 'adult learning system' in generating and maintaining these competencies. In view of the privileging of formal adult learning and education in the OECD and Canadian surveys it should be observed that analyses of the International Assessment of Adult Literacy Survey (OECD, 2000) and Adult Literacy and Lifeskills Survey (OECD 2005) reveal that non-formal learning activities are important for a country’s pool of competencies.

Second, there exists a noticeable job-related bias in ASETS as well as in the PIAAC survey. This prevents certain learning activities from being followed up, making it impossible to identify learning that could be defined as social/personal. The rationale for this approach is never discussed but the logic seems to suggest that only job-related learning activities are important for the national skills pool. The problem with this argument is that it is difficult to justify such a policy on existing evidence. Not surprisingly previous research show that people studying for job-related reasons do apply the acquired skills or knowledge at work to a higher degree than those who participate for personal development, as the literature shows. However, more interesting is the extent to which what is learned in one context can be transferred to another. Thus, in the 1997 Adult Education Training Survey, half of those taking courses for personal reasons reported that the acquired skills or knowledge were also greatly or somewhat useful at work (Statistics Canada, 2001). The same finding, albeit to a lesser extent, is true for courses taken for job-related reasons, which also benefit participants in their personal lives (see for example Statistics Canada, 2001). Thus, from a strict economic perspective, it is important not to neglect studies taken for other than job-related reasons. Further, the literature does not support a simplistic division into job-related and non-job-related, as there are many simultaneous reasons for actively engaging in learning.

The OECD policy discourse centres almost exclusively on production and labour-market concerns, yet social and cultural practices are shifting in ways that require higher levels of skills for full participation in democratic processes, cultural life and increasingly complex everyday contexts. For example, the increasing sophistication of basic public services, even consumption, requires adults to possess a heightened level of general skills in order to avoid new modes of social exclusion and tension. In this all-encompassing perspective, the debate on adult learning and skills formation – now occupied primarily with national differences in job-related education and training – needs to be substantially broadened to embrace the many forms of participation in lifelong learning.

The OECD approach to data gathering on adult and lifelong learning, with its deep roots in the skills agenda, creates a ‘reality’ of adult learning where the broad humanistic traditions of adult education are non-existent. Consequently it becomes impossible to question the wisdom of present strategies through an evidence-based policy strategy that is being driven by this reality. The EU approach on the other hand which is based on a more inclusive discourse on adult
learning, and an adult learning and education survey that reflects this discourse, allows for evidence-based policies that has the potential to address not only economic concerns but also broad humanistic and democratic ambitions.

In conclusion, with evidence-based policy playing an increasingly central role and surveys like PIAAC becoming the Gold Standard, it is crucial that adult educators practitioners and scholars get involved in the discussions on how information on adult learning and education should be collected and classified. If not the political economy driving surveys like PIAAC will remain hidden behind a naive believe in interest free and objective statistics.

References
An International Study of the Adult Education Philosophies and Practices in Public Librarians in Canada and the United Kingdom

Kathy Sanford
Darlene E. Clover
Fatma Dogus
University of Victoria

Abstract: Almost since their inception, libraries have been critical sites of adult education. Major changes over the past few decades, particularly around technology and other types of societal shifts, have had an impact on libraries and on librarians. This international study explored the adult learning and education philosophies and practices of librarians and medium to large-scale libraries in Canada and the UK, including central and reference libraries. Findings show a committed group of women and men who still believe in the public good.

Although libraries are valuable sites of adult education, there are few contemporary studies on their work (Clover, Sanford & Jayme, 2010). Using interviews and focus groups, this international study explored the adult learning and education beliefs and practices of 23 librarians in 18 medium or large-scale libraries, including central and reference libraries in Canada and the UK. We also examined the websites of libraries as they, in this age of computer saturation, convey, shape and produce particular meanings and according to Irving and English (2011) are “important tools for… institutions working for the public good because they represent their formal online presence” (p. 5). Findings show a push towards skills development and ICT skills but also some hopeful signs in the face of technical rationality and the onslaught of neoconservative individualized learning discourse and practice.

Literature Review

Blewitt and Gambles (2010) write “in the nineteenth century [libraries] were perceived by elites as a means of reconciling capital and labour and educating the working classes away from the radicalism promoted by social reformers and political revolutionaries” (p.36). Issues of morality in the 1920s and 30s saw libraries actually banning books from the shelves, guarding others by ‘request only’ to keep them out of the hands of those who “spoke a course jargon” (Tippet, 1990, p.50) and with separate ladies’ rooms for those of a more delicate nature (Lerner, 2009). But as the world changed, “knowing how to learn for oneself; how and where to locate information; how to evaluate; how to apply and how to use information” (Vainstein, 1966, p. 20) saw the library become increasingly more accessible, ubiquitous and “quite conceivably…the primary free public agency which could contribute positively to [adult] learning” (Brooks & Riech, 1974, p.3). Some studies suggest that in the heady days of library development, librarians eagerly defined themselves as adult educators as much collectors or processors of information (Adams, 2007; Kronus, 1973). Yet others tell a different story.

Steinbarger’s study in 1951 found a resistance amongst librarians to take on the role of adult educator, and such an absence of adult education training that he concluded “the public library as a social agency would probably never be able to help the community realize desirable avenues for social change until the librarian [became] an active educator” (p.245). A study by Smith in 1955 found that adult education had diverse meanings to librarians and many could only speak of
what the library ‘did’ rather than how it ‘educated’. Other findings show that rather than see themselves as educational agents, libraries were comfortable to simply provide a link to adult education agencies. It is not surprising then that a survey by Penland in 1961 uncovered a discrepancy between the educational expectations of librarians and management in terms of their “involvement in adult education” (p.239).

Profound technological changes for libraries has on the one hand provided an excellent opportunity for adults to develop the multi-literacies required to feel empowered in the new knowledge economy (Adams, Krolak, Kupidura & Pahernick, 2002; Cameron, 2003). Others, however, caution that rapid changes in ICT places librarians in perpetual learning mode and makes their education practice fragmented (Crowie, 2010). While some studies suggest librarians highly value helping people to develop as citizens (Gorman, 2004), Imel and Duckett (2008) argue these once progressive institutions that had such strong links to community groups are now so over-professionalized and so focused on job skills training and fact-finding that it has all but obliterated the strong social purpose they once had. In fact, Neil (1980) had argued over 30 years ago that libraries had to be “impartial in the service of social change…Therefore, libraries must be ‘conservative and wait for change, not act as a catalyst” (p.18).

Research Sites and Design
Past studies and changing times raise important questions about adult education in public libraries today. Our international comparative study aimed to provide understandings about the visions and work of libraries in an interdependent world where librarians face similar situations and challenges (Harris, 2007). Questions that guided this study included what understandings of adult education librarians have today; what beliefs drove what they do and how they do it; the type of backgrounds and training they had; how they coped with the challenges of government, social and technological change; the role and place of art in their institutions; and how they imagined themselves and their role in society today. Twenty-three librarians in small, medium and large-scale public libraries in Victoria, Vancouver, Surrey, Richmond, Ottawa and Toronto in Canada and London, Birmingham, and Glasgow, UK were involved in our study. We used individual interviews as well as focus groups to stimulate a conversation as a more genuine social interaction between participants, to speak and respond to each other, to compare experiences and to react to what others in the group were saying (Bauer, & Gaskell, 2000). We also perused the websites of 24 public libraries to see how they portrayed understandings of adult education. Interview and focus group transcripts were examined by the researchers, coded and re-coded for patterns, common phrases and themes and anomalies (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2007). As this is an international comparative study, we also explored the data for similarities and differences across countries.

Findings
English and Mayo (2012) argue that now more than ever, “adult education is under assault from a variety of capitalist and neo-conservative forces” (p.1), a comment that reflects a difference between Canada and the UK. Despite media attention and public pressure “the UK has quietly lost more than 200 branches over the past year, according to a detailed national survey” (Flood, 2012, n/p). Many of the UK interviewees noted that paralleling library closures, not surprisingly, was a substantial reduction in librarians in those that were left. Although in Canada public libraries have fared much better, this has not been without struggle and there has been a reduction in library staff. While in England the decimation of the library can be attributed
directly to government funding, in Canada some suggested the reduction in librarians was related more to the introduction of technology, such as the express check-out machines and Internet to locate information.

Building on this, some participants expressed exasperation at trying to always keep up with the technology, often times noting how they were but a few steps ahead of those they were teaching. However, these comments notwithstanding, all librarians saw the introduction of technology – the single most profound change to libraries on both sides of the Atlantic -- as overwhelmingly positive. They showed us with pride the banks of computers, almost all of which were in constant use. They spoke of how the computers had opened up the world to people, given them new areas of teaching and learning and actually brought in more people. Even the websites were noted as effective in terms of enhancing the usership of the library:

The website for us is like another branch, a service provider, as opposed to simply a marketing or communication tools. It is very much a resource or another way for the people in [this city] to use the library. The numbers testify to that, as there are a lot of library users who probably never come to the branch but they can browse and use the materials (Karen).

Some of the participants expressed hesitancy to call themselves adult educators when asked because they equated education with children’s learning: “When we’re talking about our library services…we mean by the education programme that it is aimed at children.” Others felt outside agencies were the ones who provided the adult education because “we don’t do it ourselves” (Tanya). However, the majority of participants were clear that “definitely, yes, I see myself as an adult educator” (Lynn, UK) and they were firm that the key role of the library was as an education/learning site: “I would say we do a huge amount of adult education but I think we do it from very different perspective. Our definitions probably are quite different and I suspect the result is quite different but I would say that is a lot of the biggest services we do offer” (Len, Canada). A perusal of the websites and discussions with participants in both countries showed an eclectic mix of learning and education activities, ranging from author talks and lectures, to book clubs, from business, legal, and personal finance workshops, to career and job search activities, from computer courses to concerts, and from ESL courses and workshops on citizenship to filling out income tax forms. And yet of the 18 library websites we perused none had a section called ‘adult education’ and only two had sections called ‘learning’. None referred specifically to adults although ‘families’ and ‘children’ were commonly mentioned. The websites, as noted, did have sections on events or programmes and although these could be argued as ‘adult education’, they are never contextualized or articulated as such. By way of explanation, Kindra in the UK stated this:

It’s probably just differences in terminology because we tend to talk about community learning in this city rather than adult education. Adult education is a terminology that went out of use here some time ago. We talked about adult learning, but that has now shifted to community based learning.

In terms of their educational backgrounds, save the older members who had been in library service for over 25 years, all the librarians had a degree in Library Science and none of the
courses had focused on adult education although, as Angela suggested “I guess you could argue that some did talk about customer service and working with the public, but nothing about adult education. Library work is taught as a science, not an art.”

Having said this, some libraries were beginning to recognize that understanding adult education and learning was in fact critical to their work:

That is why I say it is very interesting that you are asking about this because we are doing a workshop at the end of the month on teaching skills, how to teach adults. It is a day-long workshop for most of the librarians and some of the information technicians as well who are interested in having some skills in the adult education area. We need to teach the librarians how to teach because you do not learn how to teach in library schools (Belinda).

In addition to internal training, five participants had gone to university to obtain certificates or diplomas in adult education and they all agreed it had been invaluable in terms of having an impact on their practice, as this comment by Teresa in the UK illustrates:

Yes, it did change my practice [computer skills training] in a big way. We were shown the practice and importance of doing the group work, of bringing people together to learn from each other. This made me realize why I used to get quite frustrated because the onus of teaching was on me. For example, I would be showing them [community members] how to do things and check it myself, and they would not even look at me and then they would go to the printer and print their stuff and that was it. However, now I get them to check each other’s work and the focus is on them rather than on me, and that is really how it should be. I realized I was wrong in the past and as a consequence I have become the least important person in the room, which is how it should be.

From the comments above we can see other trends in education and learning. Returning to Kindra’s comment, there has been a major shift in all arts and cultural institutions in Canada and the UK towards the concept of ‘learning’, similar to what has happened across the board to adult education in general (English & Mayo, 2012). Jim in Canada explained the reasons behind this shift like this:

When you look at education there is a curriculum, somebody set an expectation and desirable outcome, and there is kind of levels or standards or criteria. It is much more formal process and probably overseen by another body or a group whereas if we are looking at learning it is self motivated, self driven, there is no kind of particular standard.

Critical to this new focus on learning is the ‘customer driven’ approach. This means some of the librarians saw their role as simply a ‘facilitator’, responding to, rather than in anyway directing “how individual customers define what their need to learn and what they think adult education is.” Edna added:

People say libraries are about knowledge. Libraries are not about knowledge. Libraries are places where people come and they access the stories of other people’s lives. They access information and what they do with it is to “internalize” [to make] the knowledge happen. Knowledge is what I make of the world around me. It is the wisdom that I gather
from how I interpret and how I listen to other people’s stories. It is what happens inside me. Libraries always have been one of those unique places where knowledge and learning are self-driven.

In other words, as many librarians noted, libraries are places that teach people how to learn.

Linked to this, in the UK in particular although also in Canada, there has been a major push by government towards more ICT, jobs-skills and other more market-oriented training. Libraries are responding: “In the adult education area, I would say computer skills and job hunting are two of the biggest needs in our community and we have found a real niche. We seem to be able to be an institution that people send learners to because they know we are doing these classes. I mean it is not only us, but libraries from all over…are doing this upgrading and skills enhancement work” (Gemma).

Yet the majority of participants in Canada and Scotland in particular saw libraries not solely as job-training sites and computer stations for individuals but as critical social spaces with “strong connections to progressive community groups” (Allison). They took pride in what they saw as a continued, strong social and creative purpose. On the social side, they spoke of reaching out to and helping new immigrants feel they belonged in the country, and of being an active and engaging social space “where people can just come and be with other people. It is not all silence now, you know. We have spaces where people can sit quietly and read, but as you can see, we have places where they can meet and talk to each other over a coffee” (Edna). Others talked of the value of the library to the homeless – although one librarian suggested this were only true if they “behaved themselves and didn’t smell too badly” -- both in terms of a safe and welcoming social space but also, providing them with what they needed, even if what they felt they needed did not always conform to what governments thought they needed, which librarians noted was job skills. This comment from Robert in Canada: “We get a lot of homeless people in here and that is great. And do you know what many of them want to learn? Astronomy. They sleep rough under the stars at night and they want to know what they are looking at, where they are, who they are.” Canadian libraries have also picked up the Human Library project idea and when asked why this particular activity, Deborah argued

The human library really is about bringing community together, about bringing diverse groups of people with different background or points of view together. Because in some of locations we have such a mixed demographic, it seems natural to have the people that are here on a daily basis, conversing…It’s geared toward people who realize that they maybe have stereotypes or a hang up or something, and want to explore it, and either do something about it, or just have a discussion or hear another point of view.

When we asked them if they saw themselves as an art institution, for the majority, the response was an emphatic yes. They showed us around contemporary visual arts and puppet exhibitions, and talked authors’ readings, photography courses as well as dance lessons in disco or hip-hop. These were all organized in partnership with other arts and cultural institutions or community groups: “We have the space and the audience, and they have the talent, content and the speakers, who usually are actors or directors, or a lecturer from the university who will do a talk on the play. That is a good example of a partnership in with another cultural programme” (Bethany).
Discussion and Conclusions

In 1988, Marsick wrote that in an age of unprecedented challenges, adults “are pressed to learn continuously and transformatively in a world that demands higher order thinking” (p.119). Findings in our study show that libraries and librarians are at the forefront of enabling this learning, helping adults from all walks of life to navigate the many streams of change in their personal and professional lives. A passion for developing self-directedness in adults, helping them to find the information and develop the skills they require, remains at the heart of what librarians see as important educational work, something Brooks and Reich (1974) suggested was perhaps the most important role of libraries.

Brooks and Reich (1974) also talk about two other areas of importance, “the ability to help the individual recognize areas of…interest and responsibility” (p.6). In terms of the latter, in our study this was illustrated by the idea of helping adults to make meaning, what one of the participants called ‘wisdom’, and guiding them to recognize “the multi-faceted and multi-dimensional aspects of learning which they could independently pursue” (p.5). This is what educators such as Marsick (1988) refer to as learning to learn, and it is more than an essential skill. What is perhaps challenging here is what critical adult educators refer to as the neoliberal problematic of lifelong learning. While no one is critical of learning per se, scholars are concerned in the way it has been taken up as “a way of downloading responsibility for education to individuals and blaming them for failed economies and states” (English and Mayo, 2012, p.10).

Technological changes, and teaching people how to be in the world of perpetually advancing technologies is also seen as key to the educational work of the librarians in this study. We can see this work as critical to equality, as critical to ensuring everyone fits into the knowledge economy. However, we must also be cognizant of what Weber called ‘technical rationality’ and the reduction of education to the instrumental use of the equipment rather than dialogues informed by concepts of human agency (Clover, 2007; Ferneding, 2003).

Although the majority of librarians did see themselves as adult educators, challenging the findings of Steinbarger’s study in 1951, few receive training as adult educators. While this is not a problem in itself, many are recognizing the value of certificates and diplomas or even doing their own in-house training.

Finally, the future of public libraries in England is very bleak although, of course, artists are speaking out. For example, in her article in the Guardian, Flood quotes playwright Lee Hill as saying,

> men and women in the north-east have fought, generation after generation, for the right to read and grow intellectually, culturally and socially – to be as ‘civilised’ as anyone else....It is a heritage [libraries] that took decades and decades to come to fruition but will be wiped out in a moment. You are not only about to make philistines of yourselves [the government], but philistines of us all (n/p).

Our study shows that librarians have not in fact followed Neil’s (1980) suggestion to keep clear of social change. Through theatre, visual arts, connections to progressive community...
organisations, events and conversations about equity and diversity, to name but a few educational activities, they are critical players in shaping a more just and inclusive society.

Selected References


Understanding and Overcoming Alienation Through Anti-Poverty Organizing: Considerations From Two Case Studies in the Toronto-Area

Joseph E. Sawan
Ontario Institute for Studies in Education
University of Toronto

Abstract: How can we understand everyday activities as resistance to estrangement, powerlessness and isolation? Can further development of theoretical and conceptual approaches to understanding (de)alienation provide us with necessary tools to understand how social movements relate to de-commodification and basic human needs? This paper presents an overview of discussions of Marx’s theory of alienation, followed by an exploration of Cultural Historical Activity Theory (CHAT) as a method to understand learning and transformation among social movement participants. I conclude with an analysis of two case studies in the Toronto-area and explore how learning (de)alienation opens new possibilities in understanding and facilitating social change.

Introduction

As resistance builds against current systems of oppression and domination on a global scale, there appears to be a multitude of forms and dynamics that are occurring in various locales, with diverse agents, utilizing a myriad of tactics. These activities may be loosely defined as social movements – “conscious, concerted, and sustained efforts by ordinary people to change some aspect of their society by using extra-institutional means” (Goodwin and Jasper, 2003, p. 3) – and thus maintain some commonalities in their relationship to each other and society, no matter how divergent their social, political and cultural forms may be. I propose that under the broad umbrella of anti-poverty movements there seems to be an interest in recovering the dimensions of the mode of production writ large and re-establishing systems of mutual reliance on the local level.

While every social movement has its unique set of dynamics, there is a potentially common thread that can be attributed to the social agents involved in each instance. Each scenario takes place in a particular community in which people have become estranged, to a greater or lesser degree, from their basic human needs and, as a part of globalized capitalism, established a degree of dependency on institutions that are significantly alien to the respective communities. Fundamental to both the problem and the action individuals and groups take in response to it are the dynamic practices, relations, mediations and experiences of human alienation and de-alienation.

Through an exploration of two case studies in the Toronto-area, this paper aims to address the learning of one’s alienation and the learning of one’s de-alienation among social movement participants. I begin with a brief review of classic and contemporary discussions of Marx’s theory of alienation, followed by an exploration of Cultural Historical Activity Theory (CHAT) as a potential method to understanding learning and transformation among social movement participants. Finally, we look at two narratives from anti-poverty activists in the Toronto-area and explore how learning (de)alienation opens new possibilities in understanding and facilitating social change.
Research Questions & Methodology

Before proceeding, it is important to make a few notes regarding research methodology and the focus of this paper. As a part of a larger research project, this paper highlights case study data that addresses the following research questions: How do participants engage in activities that establish spaces where relations mediated by use-value are predominant? Do contradictory interests among anti-poverty movement participants affect opportunities for learning one’s alienation and taking steps towards overcoming it? Rooted in these questions is an emphasis on learning processes that take place amid social movement activities, and how locating such learning can become a transformative exercise in itself.

The case study data is from the Anti-Poverty Community Organizing and Learning (APCOL) research project, where participatory action research (PAR) studies were conducted across various anti-poverty related campaigns. By looking at the in depth, qualitative/interview narratives of participants in two Toronto-area neighbourhoods (n=32), I explore the above research questions on learning, alienation and social movement activity;

Recovering Marx’s Theory of Alienation

Scholarly discussions on alienation, anomie, estrangement, disconnect, isolation, powerlessness; to name a few, are expansive across multiple disciplines and moments in history. Focussing on the sociologic tradition of studies in alienation, I examine the theoretical and conceptual discussions regarding issues of social alienation as outlined by Karl Marx in the Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844 as well as Bertell Ollman’s discussion of Marx’s method and theory of alienation (1976). It is in these texts where Marx outlines the four forms of alienation; from human labour (activity), products (material), each other and the “species” (Marx, 1961). The last separation, from the “species”, can be interpreted as a separation from oneself or human nature. Rather than separate and distinct categories, it becomes a question of emphasis within the different parts of a whole, hence a question of relations. Key to understanding Marx’s method is to approach it as a ‘philosophy of internal relations’ where ‘mutual interaction’ between the various parts, make up a whole:

[I]nteraction is, properly speaking, inneraction… Of production, distribution, consumption and exchange, Marx declares, ‘mutual interaction takes place between the various elements. Such is the case with every organic body’. What Marx calls ‘mutual interaction’ (or ‘reciprocal effect’ or ‘reciprocal action’) is only possible because it occurs within an organic body. This is the case with everything in Marxism, which treats its entire subject matter as ‘different sides of one unit’” (Ollman, 1976, p. 17).

Such a dialectic approach to understanding social relations is fundamental for a holistic exploration of how (de)alienation manifests among social movement activists. Furthermore, we may only be able to understand alienation “as the absence of unalienation, each state serving as a point of reference for the other” (Ollman, 1976, pp. 131-132). For social movement activity, this

---

34 APCOL is a five-year SSHRC/CURA funded project, whose mission is to “examine grassroots popular education and learning strategies within anti-poverty community organizing campaigns in a sample of the highest poverty neighborhoods in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA).”
is especially important as individual and collective action is often rooted in a vision of an alternative social condition.

‘Losing reality’ and Basic Human Needs
As the individual’s sense of reality is dominated by the commodity-form and its production/consumption, there is a distancing from her human needs, now determined by external, alien products; “So much does labour’s realisation appear as loss of reality to the point of starving to death. So much does objectification appear as loss of the object that the worker is robbed of the objects most necessary not only for [her] life but for [her] work” (Marx, 1961, p. 69). Such a disconnect is at the heart of what drives collective action as there is a need to reconnect our activity to our basic human needs. The notion of losing reality through such estrangement poses questions related to how one’s activity contributes to the learning process, and results in further alienation or opportunities for de-alienation.

Contemporary Research in Alienation Studies
Recent discussions that explore questions of alienation (and struggles to overcome it) have been mostly theoretical in nature (see Berardi, 2009; Biro, 2005; Oldenquist, 1991), often with minimal emphasis on the practical implications relevant to facilitating positive social change. At the same time, it is important to note that direct references to alienation, its effects and the need for collective action are numerous in scholarly and popular texts, including but not limited to texts that reference alienation from a Marxist perspective and with the intent to encourage collective action as a response to growing alienation under advanced global capitalism (e.g. Holloway, 2010; Schmitt, 2003). For Schmitt (2003), he concludes strongly with a call for de-commodification, arguing that the need to humanize our activities is urgent in the face of global changes;

We can continue this downward path toward a society ever more regimented, manipulated, and self-deceived, or we can band together with groups of friends and, looking away from our own comfort and convenience, face the poverty, cruelty, and tyranny that dominate the world. In bestirring ourselves to heal the world, we reassert our humanity and reclaim our lives for ourselves. Protesting our own commodification, we can affirm once again the humanity of each of us—that human beings are ends in themselves and should not be treated as means to the ends of power-hungry governments or corporations seeking fatter profits… Turning our backs on the seductive comforts and narcotizing conveniences of the world of commodities, we shall try to build a free society where each furthers his or her own well-being and promotes that of the others. (p. 134)

Though most of the literature on social alienation falls under sociology and philosophy, generally, the potential for adult educators to explore these ontological questions and consider opportunities

---

35 Ivan Illich provides some helpful commentary to reflect on the changing nature of needs in modern society: “Increasingly, needs are created by the advertising slogan, purchases made by prescription. One’s action is not the result of personal experience in satisfaction, and the ensuing adaptive consumer substitutes learned for felt needs. As people become experts in the art of learning to need, learning to identify wants from experience becomes a rare competence” (1977, p. 23).
where we may facilitate de-alienating experiences must not be ignored. While these concerns are not new in adult education (e.g. Brookfield, 2002; Freire, 2000), there is significant opportunity to broaden the potential for understanding the role of learning in collective efforts to overcome alienation.

Social Movement Learning and Everyday Life
Individual and collective action take place in various sites of everyday life, motivated and directed by human needs, though at times contentious with overt objectives for social change, my interests here are particularly concerned with how they are often seemingly ordinary activities that demonstrate attempts to attain an unalienated condition. Such humanizing activities can be located in various areas of everyday life, but are most evident (wherever they occur) when activity is mediated by use-value (i.e. direct satisfaction of human need, mutual need/reliance, creative expression, social justice) as opposed to exchange-value (i.e. commodification of goods and services, and the satisfaction of human need indirectly vis-à-vis market relationships). Furthermore, the opportunity to emphasise aspects of everyday human activities from a perspective of use-value allows us to begin an exploration of alternatives to existing systems of market capitalism that may emerge from current productive activities. It is at this basic distinction between everyday activities that we may begin to delineate the learning that takes place in social movement activities, as well as the possibilities for facilitating de-alienating experiences through collective action. In particular, this approach emphasizes the informality of learning as everyday experiences that carry significant opportunities for emancipatory learning and social change, which has been elaborated by the work of Paolo Freire (2000), and more recently outlined by scholars of workplace learning (see Colley, Hodkinson, & Malcolm, 2003) as encompassing “any activity involving the pursuit of understanding, knowledge or skill which occurs without the presence of externally imposed curricular criteria ... in any context outside the pre-established curricula of educative institutions” (Livingstone in Colley et al., 2003, p. 27). By locating these learning processes among social movement participants, including paid and unpaid members, there is a unique opportunity to better understand opportunities for social change that may emerge from sites of informal learning.

Furthermore, there is a need to understand questions of everyday life and activities as central to understand how we engage in de-alienating activities, particularly through an understanding of use-value versus exchange-value mediated activity. With such a synthesis, there is a unique opportunity to explore the relevance of the expansive literature on (de)alienation to adult education and social movement activity.

CHAT, Transformation and Strategies for De-Alienation
Human nature is a process of overcoming and transcending its own limitations through collaborative, continuous practices aimed at purposefully changing the world. In other words, it is a process of historical becoming by humans not as merely creatures of nature but as agents of their own lives, agents whose nature is to purposefully transform their world. (Stetsenko, 2008, p. 483, emphasis in original).

36 See Sawchuk (2006) for an elaboration on use-value/exchange-value mediated activity from a Marxist Cultural Historical Activity Theory standpoint.
Among various sociocultural approaches to learning, a Marxist approach to Cultural Historical Activity Theory (CHAT) provides a distinctly dialectical approach rooted in a “transformative relation to the world” where “it posits that human development is both continuous with and radically different from the processes in the rest of the animate world” (Stetsenko, 2008, p. 483). The long tradition of CHAT comes from Soviet Russian psychology in the works of Vygotsky, Leontiev and Luria who were deeply influenced by the work of Marx and Engels (Engeström, 1999). Beginning with activity as the unit of analysis, with the intent to present a “multivoiced theory” that “should not regard internal contradictions and debates as signs of weakness; rather, they are an essential feature of the theory” (Engeström, 1999, p. 20). These “contradictions” that emerge are central to breaking “down the Cartesian walls that isolate the individual mind from the culture and the society,” which provide opportunities for learning through mediation that involves “using and creating artifacts” (Ibid., p. 29). In social movement studies, the appeal towards CHAT stems from its central goals of transformation and social change, and more specifically with the tools provided to understand cognition from the individual and collective, simultaneously.

By approaching activity as the unit of analysis, we find a unique way to understand how individuals engage in social movements while addressing the complex array of motivations. In CHAT terms, the concept of object/motive is central to this argument as it “may be either material or ideal, either present in perception or existing only in the imagination or in thought” (Leontiev in Sawchuk, 2010, p. 12) and is a part of a complex set of internal and external relations that produce “a dialectical, internally referential whole” (Sawchuk, 2010, p. 13). If we consider how anti-poverty movements are often rooted in a vision for an unalienated future condition, then we may look closer at social relations where the object/motive can be cited as de-alienation. While there are numerous artefacts mediating the participant’s engagement with a particular activity, it is within the object/motive that we may facilitate a learning process that encourages transformation and positive social change.

### Preliminary Findings

The experiences of anti-poverty activists in Toronto demonstrate an initial example of how certain spaces, tactics and movement dynamics affect the degree to which the participant could locate alienating conditions and reflect on strategies to overcome these conditions. The nature of ‘activism’ among these participants varies significantly, where even the term is often viewed with hesitation and the forms of organizing activities are often dynamic. Beginning with the issue of space and its role in encouraging use-value mediated activity, we look at the experiences of a seasoned community organizer, who is a paid staff member for a community-based organization. His work centres on building capacity among residents to engage with local politics and devise ways to make positive changes in the community. In the following quote, it is evident that he is often conflicted by his role and faces challenges in doing what he believes is to be done.

The space may be available, but the policy of that space, and rule and regulation of space hinders people from using it. Then the other thing is the lack of legitimizing spaces that people use, but as an institution do not see those spaces as official. For instance, a youth meet in a coffee place, they socialize and talk, but I can't go there to have meetings in a coffee place and decide that these decisions are kind of official, we're suppose to come to a formal place a community centre. That's where decisions are made, but we can't...for
instance if people meet in their own homes and talk, especially migrants that's what they do with each other like women, and they make decisions, very, very key decisions, but you don't legitimize that because it's in people's homes. (KGO17 Interview)

As a representative of an organization, he finds himself de-legitimizing the spaces and consequently the decision-making and existing power of residents. This is a very complex question as it falls into the heart of alienation in modern society. We establish supposedly necessary laws and regulations to maintain civility and justice – while simultaneously de-humanizing existing social relations – resulting in a complex web of policy that only the privileged can (seemingly) navigate and utilize to effect systemic reforms. As is evident from the interview, the participant is quite aware of the contradictions facing his work and consciously reflects on strategies to overcome the alienating conditions he encounters daily, particularly through meeting residents in spaces that do not alienate residents nor violate organizational policies – such as coffee shops and other public spaces.

In another neighbourhood, following a different anti-poverty campaign is the narrative of an organizer who focuses on issues facing youth in her community. She highlights an important challenge facing social movement participants – the lack of time to reflect:

It’s that honesty. We live in a crazy world where there’s no time to reflect. You don’t have the time to even be honest with yourself because you have bills to pay, you just have to do it to make ends meet. Because of that we end up losing ourselves. This is why I’m fascinated by going into nature. Because you will always have silence and peace. Listening to your emotions, another thing that has been silenced. We are intuitive and we’re not encouraged to really listen to those. Especially listening to young people, they’re going through thousands of emotions. Even in working with them, though, we’re not aware of how to work with it. Because you’ve got to have a swag and look a certain way. Because as a frontline worker, if you get all emotional, it’s not something that is normal. But when you end up opening up to that level, you’ve connected with that young person in a whole new way. (MTD01, APCOL Case Study)

Several key issues come up in the above quote. First, the notion of ‘losing ourselves’ in a ‘crazy world’ highlights a realization that social conditions are often isolating and estranging us from our basic needs. In the same breath, she offers solutions to overcoming such estrangement, including ‘going into nature’, listening to our emotions and ‘opening up’ so that we may connect to each other (and ourselves) in a whole new way.

As both participants demonstrate, there is an active learning process taking place, mediated by various artefacts and community rules, within the contexts of their campaigns and organizations. The opportunities to reflect and consider the contradictions they encounter on a daily basis can serve as the necessary catalyst for improving upon existing movement activities and begin considerations for strategies for de-alienation.

Conclusion

Amid the various contradictions that exist in our everyday life, it is often through collective activities that we may find the productive activity necessary for securing and maintaining our
basic human needs – and subsequently to change the mode of production to a more humanistic approach to human labour.

Among the various participants of both case studies, there are significant opportunities to learn from the current work of residents, paid staff and volunteers who are similarly struggling to develop strategies to alleviate poverty. Through this exploration of internal and external social movement dynamics, with an emphasis on the learning that takes place among participants, I have proposed a framework that can be useful for future analyses of social movement activity – and more importantly an opportunity for research to facilitate social movement activities that are grounded in social change that explicitly leads towards a *decommodification* of basic human needs by encouraging steps towards de-alienation.

**References**


Abstract: To succeed in the host labour market, immigrants are often expected to learn to minimize differences. This paper is interested in an expansive pedagogy for immigrants. Drawing on a practice-based and space-oriented ontology that emphasizes communities, reflectivity, dialogicality, assemblage and networks, it explores possible pedagogical practices that would not only optimize learning for individual immigrants but also expand existing practices within professions. Core to the pedagogical proposals is to make boundaries and differences dialogical and productive place for change.

Introduction
In the context of diversity and mobility, ironically a negative connotation has been attributed, almost by default, to differences. This phenomenon is manifested the best in the ways in which foreign qualifications are recognized in immigrant destination countries (Schuster, Desideri & Urso, 2013). In Canada, for instance, immigrants’ educational and work experiences, especially those from non-traditional immigrant countries are often automatically devalued (Guo & Shan, 2013a, 2013b). Similarly, immigrants’ cultural habitus has also been found to be holding them back from succeeding in the host labour market (e.g., Bauder, 2005; Esses, Dietz, & Bhardwaj, 2006). To salvage themselves from low-end and low-status jobs, some researchers have proposed that immigrants should minimize differences by acquiring multiple forms of cultural capital and habitus valued in the host society (e.g., Erel, 2010; Friesen, 2011). Due to the explicit and implicit expectations, new immigrants to Canada are often compelled to overcome differences by investing in Canadian training and education (e.g., Adamuti-Trache, Anisef, Sweet and Walters 2011; Banerjee and Verma 2009; Hum and Simpson 2003; Shan, 2009a), as well as learn in other contexts, such as workplaces, on a continuous basis in order to fit in the norms of the host labour market (Shan, 2012a; 2012b).

While immigrants are often positioned as learners by virtue of being different, there is strangely little discussion around the pedagogy that can be used for this particular group of learners, who are endowed with years’ life and professional knowledge and experiences. Presumably, existing curriculums and pedagogies in the host countries can be readily extended to immigrants. Some trainers and educators working within the system however have come to see the problematic nature of imposing western knowledge and practices on newcomers. In the past three years, I’ve received five inquiries regarding how trainers and educators could help immigrants learn what is necessary to integrate, and yet not perpetuate the hegemony of western knowledge and practices? This paper is in part a response to this inquiry. Specifically, it explores pedagogical possibilities for immigrants from a practice-based and space-oriented perspective. The rest of the paper starts with a review of the literature on immigrants’ work and learning experiences as well as the existing pedagogical spaces in which immigrants are implicated. It will then illustrate the practice-based and spatial oriented ontology that conceptually informs this paper. Following that,
I will focus on the metaphor of boundary for practice in particular to make a few pedagogical proposals. I conclude with a brief recap of the paper.

**Work and Learning for Immigrants**

Research has long noted a range of issues affecting immigrants’ opportunities to succeed in the host labour market. Studies have shown that not only is it challenging for immigrants to enter their fields of practice (e.g., Guo, 2010; Maitra & Shan, 2007; Ng & Shan, 2010; Shan, 2009a, 2009b), when they do, it is also difficult for them to fully participate within the work and professional communities (e.g., Hakak et al., 2010; Shan, 2012a) or to make career advancement (e.g., Wong & Wong, 2006). The range of barriers hindering immigrants’ participation within professions include but are not limited to different and sometimes conflicting professional values and role expectations (Xu et al., 2008; Tregunno et al., 2009), cultural and language distinctions (Guo & Shan, 2013; Shan, 2012a), marginalization, and ethnic discrimination associated with work tasks, promotion, and wages (Portes & Rumbaut, 2006; Tibe-Bonifacio, 2005; Wong & Wong, 2006). Against this context, recently studies have started looking at how and what immigrants learn in the host labour market amid all the barriers. Within this literature, many have addressed how immigrants make their transitions into the Canadian labour market (Mirchandani et al., 2010; Ng, Man, Shan, & Liu, 2006; Shan, 2009b; 2012a) and deal with workplace oppression and exploitation (e.g. Fenwick, 2008; Shan, 2012b; Shragge, 2004). These studies have directed attention not only to the particularities and identities and identification of individual migrants, but also to the constitution of work(place) communities and institutional structuring of opportunities and responsibilities.

**Pedagogical Spaces for Immigrant Professionals**

While studies of immigrants work and learning experiences have expanded in the recent years, they have not had any bearing on the training and educational practices for immigrant professionals. Immigrants are often expected to learn within the existing organizational and pedagogical frameworks to find their ways into and about the host labour market. A review of the literature related to immigrant education in Canada shows five major pedagogical sites that shape immigrants’ learning trajectories and experiences: settlement services; professional regulatory institutions, educational/training institutions, workplaces, and communities. Settlement services are provided in Canada to induct immigrants to the host society and host labour market. An important function of settlement services is to provide language and employment related services, especially with respect to job search practices and resources. The success and sustainability of the employment related services are often measured by the number of immigrants who have found jobs after attending the programs. The curriculums that are being used for the training services contracted out by the government however have rarely been examined; the ones that have been subjected to scrutiny are rather diminishing than enriching immigrants’ knowledge, practices and identity (Slade, 2012).

Professional regulatory bodies structurally designate immigrants as learners by requiring immigrants, especially those from countries without mutual recognition agreements with Canada to confirm their educational backgrounds through writing examinations (Shan, forthcoming). Should immigrants pass their examinations, satisfy other registration requirements, and get registered, they typically follow the professional development pathways laid out by regulatory bodies for all registered professionals. Educational/training institutions in Canada, it has to be
mentioned, thrive from the learning “needs” of immigrants. Such needs are in part determined by the highly controversial prior learning assessment practices for immigrants (Anderson & Guo, 2009; Shan forthcoming). They are also influenced by the increasingly prevalent desire by industries and occupational gatekeepers to resort to certification of skills and competency (Shan, 2009a).

Workplaces are another significant site of learning for professional immigrants. Typically, being able to enter a workplace “earns” immigrants a legitimate space of learning on the peripheral (Risma & Stenoien, 2003; Shan, 2009a). Within this space, they negotiate meanings, practices, as well as identities and identifications (Shan, 2012b). They also form their own communities (Fenwick, 2008) to combat systematic oppression and exploitation. The communities that immigrants build may as well expand beyond the workplaces which help sustain them in a culture of contingency, alienation and marginalization (e.g. Shragge, 2004).

A Practice-Based and Spatial-Oriented Ontology

What is presented so far shows that while immigrants with professional experiences have constituted a significant group of learners in Canada, little attention has been paid to the pedagogical approaches that could be used to enhance their learning experiences. Critical multiculturalism (Steinberg, 1997), critical and antiracist pedagogy (e.g., Dei, 2011; Giroux, 1991) could be applied for immigrants. Yet, while the focus of these pedagogical practices is institutional power, and identity politics, they could not account for immigrants’ learning practices as extended practices of community and work in the contexts of mobility, flows and networks. This paper turns to the practice turn and spatial turn in contemporary theory for more pedagogical inspirations.

The practice turn, according to Schatzki observation (2001) is a trend in the last few decades for scholars to endeavor to overcome the dualistic ways in different disciplines to to approach their subject areas. The spatial turn, originated in human geography, is also the result of scholars trying to bridge the objective versus subjective dichotomy that divides the field (Soja, 2010). Space is no longer perceived as a backdrop to social activities. Rather, it is conceived as “relational, both producing and a product of interconnecting social practices” (McGregor, 2003:354). Of note, despite the singular form of “practice turn”, there has not been any consensus over what practice means, or what constitute practices as a unit of analysis. What conjoins the practice approaches is that in any construct of practice, attention has been paid to the “embodied, materially mediated array of human activity centrally organized around shared practical understanding” (Schatzki, 2001: 2). Practices are embodied in that bodies are fashioned and constituted within practices. They are materially mediated as human activities are inevitably interwoven with “ordered constellations of nonhuman entities” (ibid: 2). Shared practical understanding does not mean that practices are homogenous or harmonious phenomenon. Rather, it highlights collective consciousness, or using Leont’ev’s language, “co-knowledge”, that is constitutive of practices.

Informed by the practice turn, Hager et al (2012) proposed five principles to understand professional practices. They argued that professional practices are 1) knowledgeable actions (practices and knowing are mutually constitutive); 2) embodied and materially mediated doings
and sayings; 3) relational; 4) evolved in historical and social contexts and power relations, and 5) emergent (with potential of changes that could not be fully predicated).

The significance of the practice based ontology is that it totally subverts traditional understanding of learning as an individualized endeavour. From the practice perspective, learning may not merely be a linear process through which novices become experts. Learning may not even merely be an entirely human phenomenon (Fenwick et al. 2011). As Hager et al. (2012) point out, “[t]heorizations of practice that attend to instances of practice as assemblages or orchestrations of embodied, material, technological and spatial-temporal phenomena brought together in concerted action construe learning as a distributed endeavor”. This focus on learning as distributed practice radically opens our understanding of learning as a practice interlinked with a multitude of actors, things, communities, processes and practices (Fenwick et al., 2011) that may as well be, consciously, made a pedagogy space for immigrants’ learning.

One critique that may as well arise for the practice ontology is that if individuals and their bodies are perceived to be the site of production and perpetuation for practices, how could we understand agency and change? I argue that the practice ontology does not render irrelevant individual agency. Rather, it highlights the complexity of the space through which individuals are constructed. Within the practice ontology, agency is manifested as a dialogical response of individuals to the assemblage of things and beings in a particular pace as individuals negotiate positionalities, identities, and identifications (See also Wenger, 1998). Yet, the agentic practices of individuals and indeed the biography of individuals always bear imprints of the social, historical and spatial practices in which individuals find themselves (Holland & Lave, 2001). In this view, learners are no longer unified subjects. They are rather “selves” that are “both unitary and multiple, both continuous and discontinuous, and both individual and social” (Akkerman & Meijer, 2011: 132). The importance of resorting to the practice ontology is also that it opens up possibility for change, which may not only come from individuals, but also from the changing assemblage of practices and ecologies of practices (Kemmis et al., 2012).

**From Boundary Practices to Expansive Pedagogical Practices**

Among all kinds of practices, I am most interested in boundary practices, or rather boundary as the image for practice. “All learning involves boundaries” (Akkerman & Bakker, 2011: 132). “A boundary can be seen as socio-cultural difference leading to discontinuity in action or interaction” (ibid, 133). By nature, boundary brings together at least two sites of practices that are historically, spatially and socially related. Boundary spaces are populated with people, as well as things, or boundary objects, that, when activated, can help mediate dialogue and learning. Meanwhile, boundaries are ambiguous in that they divide and yet unite; they disconnect and reconnect; and they signify both here and there, and yet they are neither here nor there (ibid). The metaphor of boundary appeals to me in particular because it is a space of contradiction, and yet it also suggests a space of possibilities and production, where sociocultural differences can come into productive clashes.

Through an extensive literature review of educational studies related to boundary crossing and boundary objects, Akkerman and Bakker (2011) identified four mechanisms of learning at the boundary: identification, coordination, reflection and transformation. Identification is in part about “othering”, or defining in a dialogical manner differences in practices. It is also about identifying the need for legitimating coexistence, which involves politics of personal identities
and membership. Coordination is about the procedures useful to coordinate diverse practices even in the absence of consensus. It requires a communicative connection between diverse practices and perspectives. It may involve boundary objects, or artifacts with congealed knowledge acting as a means of articulation among different practices. It requires an inter-subjective ground while allowing different understandings and practices. It will also involves routinization, although routinized practices are still subjected to situated interpretation.

Another learning mechanism suggested by Akkerman and Bakker (2011) is reflection, which involves perspective making, or making explicit one’s understanding and knowledge on particular issue or subject. Reflection is also about perspective taking, or making sense of another thought world. Perspective making and perspective taking are believed to be dialogical and creative, and enriching in nature, leading to new knowledge. The final learning opportunity offered by the boundary space is called transformation. Transformation may as well start with an event of disruption and confrontation. It will need people to recognize the problem space. To try to bridge the problem space, something hybrid may emerge that may take the shape of new tools and signs, which need to be crystalized and revisited.

While boundary practice helps us reimagine learning, there is one limitation to this conception. That is, like communities of practice (Wenger, 1998), the focus of boundary practice is fairly local. It does not take into account of the larger ecology of practices that determines the sustainability of local practices. Yet, a focus on boundary practices as a learning space provides a springboard for me to imagine an expansive pedagogy to not only enhance learning for immigrants, but also advance practices within professions. In particular, I believe that there are three ways in which trainers, educators as well as institutions and organizations can learn from a practice-based and space-oriented ontology of learning that approaches differences as boundary spaces for change. These are: creating social space for dialogue; enhancing sensitivity to things; and committing leadership to changes.

Creating Social Space for Dialogue
A safe space of dialogue should be established for immigrants to conduct dialogical reflections, as well as for the community to engage in a dialogue with immigrants and within itself. Right now, immigrants are often positioned as a learning receptacle for Canadian ways of doing things. It is up to immigrants to conduct “perspective making”, reconcile differences and make themselves employable and valuable to employers (Shan, 2012a; 2012b). What is not taken into consideration is “perspective taking” that is equally important for immigrants and the existing host communities to understand the diverse thought world, which could lead to innovative changes in practices.

Enhancing Sensitivity to Things
By things, I refer to non-human entities that materially structure a space. These entities could be the setup of a particular place; they could also be documents, symbols, tools and other artifacts that flow around a place. A place is largely bounded and enclosed with non-human things sustaining its stability. These things are often taken for granted and hence invisible to people who routinely activate them to get things done. The incoming of immigrant professionals presents an opportunity to make salient the assemblages of things that structure practices. What is more, they can be turned into points of dialogues, where people can make known their
interpretative scheme and approaches. Through this type of dialogue, a common inter-subjective space should be reached while different viewpoints can still co-exist.

**Committing Leadership to Chaperon Changes.**
Dialogue takes time, which is too precious to spare for employers, as well as educators and trainers working within time and budget limits. Yet, dialogue is perhaps not only a crucial way of learning for individual immigrants navigating the complexity of practices in Canada that have their own histories and economies; but it is also a way to acknowledge legitimate coexistence and make boundaries and differences a productive space of change. Yet, all this takes strong leadership commitment to a pedagogy that is centred on holistic practices, rather than particular content to be imposed on newcomers.

**Conclusion and Limitation**
In this paper, I explore the pedagogical possibilities to enhance the learning experiences of immigrant professionals while expanding professional practices. The pedagogical proposals are rooted in a practice-based and space-oriented ontology that treats learning as the effects of practices. To implement these proposals, it is important to address not only reflectivity on the part of individuals, including immigrants and the existing community members across social sites, but also the assemblage of practices.

**Selected References**


Slade, B. (2012). *From high skill to high school": illustrating the process of deskillings immigrants through reader’s theatre and institutional ethnography. *Qualitative Inquiry, 18*(5): 401-413.
Adult Learning Network: Is it Possible?

Jim Sharpe
Mount Saint Vincent University

Abstract: The paper discusses the question “Is there still an adult education movement?” It reviews the origin and demise of the Canadian Association for Adult Education (CAAE) and other attempts to provide leadership to adult educators and learners in Canada. In particular it discusses the work of the Adult Education Knowledge Centre of the Canadian Council on Learning and a subsequent Adult Learning Network which tried to continue this mandate. The paper discusses barriers to the formation of a national network and work that is being done on the local level to celebrate adult learning.

Introduction
In the “Life and Death of the Canadian Adult Education Movement,” Selman and Selman (2009) describe the death of the idea of adult education as a movement in Canada due to the wide acceptance by adult education practitioners of isolated professional practice. In a response, Tom Nesbit (2011) cites a variety of current practices, from the Canadian Commission on UNESCO’s promotion of Adult Learners Week to the work of social movement organizations across Canada, for building a strong and active civil society. Mark Selman (2011) responds that although there are organizations involved in civil society activities, this does not constitute adult education as a social movement.

The purpose of this paper is not to debate whether adult education is a social movement, but to discuss the recent history of adult education organizations in Canada and the barriers to forming a Canadian adult learning network. My discussion is based on my experience working in university continuing education and in a university faculty of education. I also draw upon my experience working with the Adult Learning Knowledge Centre (AdLKC) of the Canadian Council on Learning (CCL) from 2005 to 2009 and the subsequent attempt to try to create an Adult Learning Network (2009-11) based on the working relationships that had been formed through the AdLKC.

Origin and Demise of the Canadian Association for Adult Education
The idea of adult education as a social movement is linked to the concept of social movement learning and the history of the Canadian Association for Adult Education (CAAE). Formed in 1935 by university and political activists, the CAAE made fundamental contributions to Canadian political society. From the 1930s to the 1960s, the activists in CAAE were involved in the creation of the CBC and NFB, the development of cooperatives through the Antigonish movement, use of information technology through Radio Farm Forum and Citizen’s Forum and the concept of active participatory citizenship which resulted in many federal government programs starting in the 1960s. During the 1960s, the Institut de Cooperation pour l’Éducation des Adultes (ICEA) was formed as a parallel organization in Francophone Canada, working mainly in Quebec with unions, community organizations and the provincial government. In the 1970s the CAAE was instrumental in forming the International Council on Adult Education (ICAE). It is interesting to note that both ICEA and ICAE are still vital organizations, representing the interests of adult learners both in Quebec and around the world.
By the 1980s, CAAE was acting as an advocacy organization for adult learners and had left professional development of adult educators to other associations such as the Canadian Association of University Continuing Education (CAUCE), the Canadian Congress of Learning Opportunities for Women (CCLOW), the Canadian Association for Distance Education (CADE), the Canadian Association of Community Education (CACE), and the Canadian Association for the Study of Adult Education (CASAE). This was the time of development and growth of university adult education programs, which had first been established in the 1960s at the University of British Columbia, University of Toronto (OISE), and Universite de Montreal, and rapidly expanded across Canada.

In 1995, the federal budget of Paul Martin ended the funding for CAAE and as the organization did not have any alternative financial support from its constituencies (labor, community groups, media and governments) it quickly folded. In contrast ICEA has continued to be a vital organization with strong support from all its constituency groups.

Recent History of Adult Learning Organizations

Soon after CAAE’s demise, a group of activists proposed the formation of the Canadian Network for Democratic Learning (CANDLE), as a national organization of educators from social movements, unions, community organizations and government agencies working for social change. The organization existed as a loose network, including holding a conference in Iqaluit in 2000 to celebrate the creation of Nunavut, but was not able to continue as a national network. Although it sponsored involvement at the international level through ICAE, it never was able to find a funding base through government, or constituency organizations (labor, student groups, learning institutions, etc.).

By the year 2000, the Chretien/Martin government was making huge fiscal surpluses and decided to try to “reinvest” funds in education through one time allocation of surplus funds. These investments included the Canadian Millennium Scholarship Fund ($3 billion), the Canada Research Chairs (first allocation $3 billion, further funding of $1 billion a year) and the Canadian Council on Learning (CCL, $85 million to be spent between 2004 and 2009). The CCL set up an innovative structure with five regional knowledge centres: health and learning (BC), aboriginal learning (Prairies), work and learning (Ontario), early childhood learning (Quebec) and adult learning (Atlantic). After a 2005 consultation in Halifax, a proposal from the University of New Brunswick was accepted to set up the Adult Learning Knowledge Centre (AdLKC) in Fredericton (Davis & Flanagan, 2009). The work of the centre included four annual symposia: “Adult Learning in Canada” in Fredericton 2006, “The Right to Learn” in Halifax 2007, “Community Sustainability: Towards a Culture of Adult Learning in Canada” in St. John’s 2008 and “Linking Communities / Overcoming Barriers” in Montreal 2009. With the change in federal government in 2006, the future funding for CCL beyond 2009 was not secure.

With the announcement of the closure of AdLKC in May 2009, the final symposia was focused on how to continue the work that had been started on linking researchers, practitioners and policy makers on adult learning. At the meeting in Montreal, co-sponsored with ICEA, significant support for forming an Adult Learners Network was given from the following associations: ICEA, CASAE, Canadian Association of University Continuing Education (CAUCE), Movement for Canadian Literacy (MCL), Quebec Federation for Lifelong Learning (QFLL), and
the Canadian Association for Prior Learning Assessment (CAPLA). A steering committee was formed to continue the work. Work continued for eighteen months resulting in a meeting in November 2010 in Ottawa to discuss the need for a national networking organization, that would link the work of Francophone, aboriginal and Anglophone adult learning organizations. During this period there was financial support from the governments of New Brunswick and Nova Scotia, but the committee was unable to obtain support of other ministries of education or the Council of Ministers of Education of Canada (CMEC). Although there was an offer of a bridge loan to continue the work of the committee, it was felt that there was not the means to fund a national organization.

**Barriers to a Canadian Organization**

This paper explores three barriers to the formation of a national adult learning network. First is the view of the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada (CMEC) that adult learning is represented by adult literacy programs. Second is the lack of vision of current national organizations to work beyond their narrow mandates to provide leadership to the adult learning practitioner community. And finally is the need to work on multiple agendas, visions and goals, rather than a single national focus. The paper builds upon the literature of social movement learning to show the need for a network of adult learning as a key organization for promoting social justice and social change.

First is the view of the CMEC that adult learning is represented by adult literacy programs. This can be seen in the reports the CMEC has done for the world adult education meetings, first the Canada report for UNESCO Conference on Adult Education CONFITEA VI in 2009 (CMEC, 2008), then the update on progress since CONFITEA VI (CMEC, 2012). Both of these reports focus on what provincial governments are funding (mainly essential skills and literacy programs) and have little information on the broader civil society involvement in adult learning. This is a familiar problem for adult educators, where adult learning is equated to adult basic education, or as our federal government now states: “acquisition of essential skills.” These skills are increasing defined by the needs of the market, as the “Office of Literacy and Essential Skills” website (2013) states, “the skills necessary to get a job and to stay in the job market.” The domination of education by the “system” over the “lifeworld” is the theme of Welton’s (2005) critique, “Designing the Just Learning Society.” This emphasis on employability not only dominates adult basic education but the regular K-12 schools, universities and community colleges. The idea of “vocational education,” which originally emphasized professional identity as a higher calling, is now being replaced with the instrumental goal of “getting and keeping a job.” As Hannah Arendt (1958) argues in *The Human Condition*, modern society has elevated “animal laborans” the lowest labor of existence, over both “homo faber” and “vita activa”, that of creation and action as our definition of existence. Some of this emphasis on wage labor is countered by the call for “entrepreneurship,” where one makes a job through ones creation and action. But a careful examination of the “essential skills” definitions demonstrates that the focus is on “fitting-in,” on following directions rather than creating a new society. As Welton (2005) has written in “Designing a Just Learning Society,” we need to teach skills for participatory democracy, not just for labour.

A second problem with mobilizing an adult learning movement, is the expansive definition of adult learning itself and the lack agreement about the definition of adult learning among national...
organizations. The standard division of formal, informal and non-formal adult learning gives a very broad scope to work from. Formal learning includes all the organized courses (universities, colleges, professional programs, even workplace learning) that have a defined outcome and a means of evaluation. Even for the most technical skill, there are definitions of levels, mastery and learning achievement. The number of teachers and learners in the formal system is very large, by some definitions over 50% of the adult population take workplace and continuing education courses. Beyond the formal are all those institutions such as libraries, museums and cultural associations that support informal learning. The learning is harder to classify and the learners are much more diverse. When you catalogue the tremendous amount of learning activity that takes place in civil society, it involves most adults. The third area, non-formal learning, is defined as incidental learning through media, work, and daily life. This learning can be equated to socialization. It is best shown in social marketing campaigns for us change our daily behavior. From quitting smoking, to healthy eating to voting for the right party, we are bombarded by messages every day. Not all these messages are positive, as the recent book “Salt, Sugar and Fat” (Moss, 2013) shows how the food industry preys on our instincts and basic tastes. How do we mobilize these diverse forms of learning?

The third barrier is agreement on the political need for an adult learning movement. What problem does the movement respond to? This is a classical “problem/needs” understanding of how learning takes place in social movements. Everyman and Jamieson (1991) in Social Movements: A Cognitive Approach uses the case study of the US Civil Rights movement to show how learning non-violence resistance, through civil rights organizations such as Highlander Folk School, the Student Non-violent Coordinating Committee and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, was amplified by the media and created social change. This can be seen in the work of the “Idle No More” movement, who are using social media, teach-ins, and public demonstrations to gain support their four principles of treaty rights, respect for the environment, no more broken promises, and political voice. It can be seen in the work of the Quebec student movement, who created the “erable printemps” (maple spring) through their strike for accessible education. What about the rest of Canada? What are our political issues that require a response? There are issues of racism and exclusion that marginal communities and identity groups are facing. There are issues of gender equality and homophobia faced by women, gays, lesbians and trans-gendered. There are the issues of poverty, concentration of wealth and income and hegemony of the consumer society named by the Occupy Movement. Most fundamental of all is the call for creating a sustainable society by the environmental movement, to replace our mines, tar sand operations, extractive industries and exploitation of nature by a society that works with nature through participatory democracy.

**Taking Local Initiatives**

How then to link these issues in a national adult learning network? We are responding on a provincial level in Nova Scotia, through the organization of Adult Learners’ Week. We are looking at creating opportunities to reach three objectives: building cooperation among adult learning organizations, planning learning festivals which showcase the variety of community learning, and developing and promoting stories of learning that makes a difference through networks, social media and the broadcast media. What is the contribution of the stories? As Giddens (1984) shows in his theory of structuration, the stories that we tell ourselves, form our identity, our behavior and our social contract. By
creating new stories of emancipation, transcendence and redemption, we can create our new narratives. What are the stories for adult learning? Learning to live again, learning to love and respects others, and learning for creation, the social creation of a new society. These stories are critical in the creation of a social imaginary as envisioned by Laclau and Mouffe (1986), that space where our stories speak to our actions.

How then can stories create a sustainable society through the actions of our adult learning network? The Nova Scotia Adult Learners’ Week committee was formed to express learners’ views, to describe learners’ challenges and to document learners’ successes. The website (nsalw.ca) has posted stories of individual learners who are making a difference in their communities. This committee is also planning and promoting celebrations throughout the province to show the diversity, importance, and contribution of learning to creating a better community and society. In Halifax, we are working with the Mayor to create the story of Halifax as a Learning City (see appendix for draft proclamation).

I am inspired by an Australian definition of a “Learning Community” (Beddie 2003) as a society which enables its citizens to develop skills, to grow the knowledge economy, to foster collaboration and to build sustainable communities. By realizing the our tremendous educational, research, and creative resources, we can create a community with both high aspirations and a tremendous quality of life. These resources include the formal education institutions, the early learning centres, elementary and secondary schools, community learning organizations, community colleges and universities; the institutions supporting informal learning, such as libraries, museums, and community organizations; and even those organizations that foster incidental or non-formal learning, the media, visual arts, music, dance and design communities. By celebrating learning, we can become a truly international community; open to new cultures and honoring our diverse peoples.

Learning enables us to be engaged citizens, working together to create a better community. This can be seen in the work of many community organizations throughout the Halifax Regional Municipality. This includes the work of many of the trails and parks committees, such as the Shubenacadie Canal Commission or the Trails Groups, building community resources for learning and healthy living. This can be seen is the tremendous number of new community gardens, including many school gardens and our “Common Roots” Garden which is turning the former high school site next to the Halifax Commons into public space. This can be seen in the “Hope Blooms” children’s initiative of creating a productive garden, healthy food and a growing business. This can be seen in our Farmers Markets, our cultural festivals and in our public spaces, where art, music and good design create great places to be.

**Conclusion: Adult Learning and Social Forums**

How can local action, such as our organizing in Nova Scotia, lead to the growth of a national movement? I am inspired by the work of the Canadian Commission on UNESCO and their promotion of Adult Learners’ Week in Canada. We need to broaden this to wider movements than the literacy organizations, as the work of ICEA has done in Quebec to create cultural festivals. A promising model is that of the World Social Forum, which has regional social forums and constituent assemblies. ICEA is presently involved in the 2013 World Social Forum
in Tunis, Tunsia. Many Canadian activists and educators, such as Maude Barlow, Naomi Klein and David Suzuki, have made substantial contributions to these international meetings. As Ronald Cameron, Directeur-General of ICEA advised CASAE last June, the ICAE will be holding an important meeting in Montreal in 2014 or 2015 to discuss the Post 2015 development goals and the contribution of adult learning. To help host this meeting, ICEA is asking for support from a national coalition of adult learning organizations. Let us work together to build a national network of social forums to support this important work.

References

Appendix: Draft Proclamation
Proclamation
Halifax as a Learning City

WHEREAS the Halifax Regional Municipality has many important and diverse learning institutions: five universities, three campuses of the Nova Scotia Community College, over 120 schools, over 50 early learning centres, over 20 community learning centres, several museums and library branches and many organizations providing learning opportunities as part of their mandate; and

WHEREAS lifelong learning is a critically important activity for enabling all our citizens to participate in our knowledge economy, in our cultural life and in our civic organizations; and

WHEREAS Halifax is a creative city with vibrant visual arts, music, theatre, dance, media and design communities; and

WHEREAS credible and valuable sources of formal and informal learning exist in all aspects of our city life. In Canada individuals and organizations are coming together to honour everyone who is on a learning journey, by hosting events to celebrate and raise awareness of lifelong learning; and

WHEREAS increasing numbers of our citizens are engaging in lifelong learning, joining these celebrations, and seeking information to help them achieve this goal; and

WHEREAS Halifax Regional Municipality supports the goals of UNESCO’s Adult Learners’ Week which encourage participation, inclusion and equity for all global citizens to access all forms of learning. The Halifax Adult Learners’ Week committee is building networks and partnerships to support the celebration of lifelong learning.

THEREFORE I, Mayor of the Halifax Regional Municipality

DO HEREBY PROCLAIM Halifax as a Learning City.

April 10, 2103
Incorporating Digital Technologies in Adult Literacy Settings: Toward an Equity-Driven Conceptual Framework

Suzanne Smythe  
Simon Fraser University

Abstract: Digital technologies are changing what it means to be literate, as well as the organization of literacy education. However, access to digital technologies for learning in adult literacy settings is uneven and there are few formal policy or professional development structures to support educators as they negotiate these new technologies. Drawing upon field scans and key informant interviews, this exploratory research asks how educators incorporate new media into their practice in a landscape of educational inequalities, and what can be learned about these practices for the development of a robust conceptual framework to guide theory and practice in the field.

Introduction

As Kerka (2008) describes, “[S]ocial expectations of an educated person now include: using multiple symbol systems, applying knowledge, thinking strategically, managing information, and learning, thinking, and creating in collaboration with others. Such expectations challenge adult educators as never before” (p. 27). In spite of this challenge, and the potential of digital technologies to support new forms of adult learning, relatively little is known about the practices, challenges and possibilities associated with incorporating digital technologies in adult literacy settings. As Moriarty (2011) observes, “there is a lack of documentation of the real experiences of adult literacy educators working with students in a technological environment” (p. 27). The purposes of the study reported here are to first, to document current practices among adult literacy educators who are incorporating digital technologies in adult literacy settings, and second, to build upon insights gained by this field research to inform a conceptual framework to guide adult literacy instruction and professional learning.

Perspectives and Theoretical Framework

As Hamilton (2011) argues, adult literacy is a complex node of educational practice, characterized by ever-shifting configurations and materials of people, resources, spaces, places, times, policies, discourses, funding formulas and new and old technological tools that mix and remix to produce, and to interrupt, inequalities in access to digital technologies. Attention to these socio-material contexts is important in a study with the objective to understand the experiences of adult literacy educators as they incorporate digital technologies within diverse settings. This socio-material perspective is complemented by a multiliteracies perspective, in which technology and literacy are seen as intertwined (Lankshear, Snyder and Green, 2000). As these authors suggest, it is “practically impossible in some areas to distinguish the boundaries between literacy and technology so that we now talk about ‘technoliteracy’” (p. 4). This point is underscored by Moriarty (2011): “It makes little sense to continue to think and talk about literacy practices and the use of information and communication technologies as if they were separate activities: literacy education is equally and simultaneously digital literacy education” (p. 12). This contrasts with a dominant view in Canadian adult literacy policy that conceptualizes “computer skills” as distinct and separate from other “essential skills” such as reading, writing and thinking (Human Resource and Skills Development Canada, 2011). In this discursive context two related questions guided the research: How do adult literacy educators incorporate digital
technologies into their practice? What might be learned from these practices, to inform a conceptual framework and professional development?

**Research Design**

The research adopted grounded research approaches that are appropriate when exploring a new area of study where relatively little research data is available (Cohen and Manion, 2007; Licqrish and Seibold C, 2011). The inquiry combined an in-depth literature review and document analysis of contemporary policy and practice with respect to digital technologies in adult literacy settings. This was complemented by a web-scan of adult literacy programs in Canada that are using digital technologies to enhance and support their program learning goals. This scan included the collection of online artifacts and accounts of e-learning in adult literacy programs found on websites, blogs, program reports, learner-produced digital stories, video and blogs. Of note, the scan did not include programs that use commercial education software to supplement or replace direct instruction, nor those that use learning management systems associated with online course delivery. Although these digital technologies can promote access to learning opportunities for some adult learners, the research focus was the incorporation of new media and technologies associated with Web 2.0.

The web-scan was followed by fifteen key-informant interviews with educators who were identified by provincial literacy associations as experimenting with digital technologies in their practice, or whose work was featured in the web scan. Importantly, the interviews also included educators whom in the initial contact phase had expressed reticence or resistance to using digital technologies in their practice. The data analytic framework included constant-comparative and thematic analyses that were developed into portrait vignettes (Ely, Vinz, Downing and Anzul, 1997; Blodgett, Schinke, Smith, Peltier and Pheasant, 2011). Portrait vignettes “represent behaviours and experiences based on what was said (e.g interviews)” (Blodgett et al, 2011, p. 525). Informants were sent a list of topics relate to their uses of digital technology in their work, followed by a telephone or face-to-face conversation of between 40 and 50 minutes. I then transcribed the conversation according to its guiding topics and themes, and sent this back to each informant along with follow-up questions and clarifications. The informant then added new ideas, clarified others and corrected any errors of fact in the transcription. In keeping with the ethical protocol guidelines of my research institution, all names used in this study are pseudonyms. The goal of these portrait vignettes was to illustrate and illuminate concepts, issues, strategies, complexities and challenges associated with incorporating digital technologies in actual adult literacy settings, as described by educators doing this work. Indeed, researchers and educators who work in community-based settings characterized by complex social interactions and institutional dynamics have found that the generation and use of portrait vignettes for research and education purposes is effective in crystallizing key issues and ideas within an accessible narrative frame (Miles and Huberman, 1994).

The intention in the present research is that the vignettes, or practice stories presented below stimulate further discussion and reflection among educators and researchers as the adult literacy field negotiates the affordances of new technologies for learning in a landscape of unequal access to digital tools and resources. Two vignettes that emerged from the research are presented in this paper. The first offers a glimpse into how access to digital technologies promote educators to experiment and stretch their practice, just as it invites adults with low print literacy skills to
engage in rich meaning making strategies that can pull along their print literacy skills along with new literacies. The second vignette offers a more cautious perspective of the role of digital technologies in adult learning settings, drawing attention to how tools may contribute to social distancing within learning settings, prompting critical appraisal of how situated contexts for learning shape if, how and which digital tools are most appropriate for which learning goals.

Study Findings: Practice Vignettes

Vignette 1: “Beginning” readers and technology uses at Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Technology and Training.

SIAST (Saskatchewan Institute for Applied Science and Technology) at Kelsey Campus in Saskatoon offers a range of trades, technology and educational upgrading programs for adults. Johanne is the Program Head for the Basic Education program, which offers literacy classes in levels 1-3 leading to an Adult Grade 12 graduation program. The program serves adults 18 – 55 years old, 70% of whom are First Nations adults.

One of the challenges of the SIAST program, and other literacy programs in Saskatchewan, is finding qualified educators who can work well with adults and who can teach reading. The Basic Education program’s location within SIAST affords it with access to digital learning resources not widely available in other literacy education settings. Almost all the classrooms have a Smart Board and a presentation cart, there are desktop computers for student use, and a set of laptops that travels from one classroom to another. The program uses many adaptive technologies helpful for adults with learning difficulties such as Dragonally Speaking, Cursewell (a program that scans and reads a text aloud on the computer), as well as e-book readers and Kindle. Here, students can produce print texts from spoken language, manipulate fonts in print texts, and adjust the speed at which oral texts are read.

One of the challenges and innovations of the literacy and basic education program at SIAST is to incorporate digital technologies to support new adult readers and writers. One policy is that upon entering the program, all students get an email and learn to create and send an email message. This also becomes a mode of communication between the instructors and learners. One common activity early in the learning program is for each student to make their own power point presentation, featuring images and music that tell the story: “Who am I”? Students take turns presenting their work to one another, asking questions and commenting on common themes. Johanne notes that this is a “high content/high engagement/low print” activity that allows people to express themselves regardless of their comfort using print language. Additional activities make use of digital cameras: students check them out and take pictures of things that start with letters of the alphabet, or represent words and ideas they are learning to read.

The SIAST program is well-resourced in comparison with other community-based learning settings nearby. For example, the local food bank struggles to acquire print-based texts for its families to read, let alone access to the Internet or to digital tools. Johanne would like to deepen the work of SIAST’s literacy and basic education centre to address these issues, and plans a project for students to create power points on poverty in the community. The program also plans a project that will systematically explore with students what they want to learn, rather than to settle for incorporating digital technologies into a pre-determined curriculum. They plan to create with students a YouTube video on their learning experiences, rather than submit another print-
Based report. Johanne’s hope is that their work in the program will become more transparent and open to participation and input from the learner themselves. Indeed, Johanne is realizing as they innovate in new ways, the traditional approaches and assumptions that guide Adult Basic Education also need to be examined.

Vignette 2: The complexities of access, use and social distance in digital technology uses in ABE

Jake has spent 4.5 years teaching adults to learn with computers in a variety of community-based programs in and around Vancouver, BC. His experiences offer a lens into the relationships between digital technology and literacy among very marginalized and low-income adults who strive to learn amidst many competing struggles for housing, health, food and safety. From Jake’s perspective, access to computers, and to high speed Internet is important in a democracy that is increasingly moving “online”. Many government forms and applications for subsidies or financial support are now only available online, so Internet and computer access is important to ensure everyone is able to find and apply for these resources.

In the adult learning centre, adults may drop in for help filling in a form or to use the computers; others may choose to attend more regularly, meeting with a tutor to work on a project or build literacy skills for further academic study. Jake introduces adults to computers, keeping in mind that many people are very curious about computers, but also very fearful of making mistakes, or wary that it will be “too hard” and they won’t be able to manage. Sometimes people expect to fail when they learn something new, Jake explains, a result of their negative past learning experiences.

Jake starts his computer tutorials with the question, “What do you want to be able to do?” Almost everyone wants an email or Facebook account and to surf the Internet. In a short time, one man with a new Facebook account found his brother, whom he had not seen in 18 years. Another young man continued to expand his computer-based learning. Jake learned that he had his Grade 10, and he is now completing his secondary school graduation. Jake has also found that sometimes when people say, “I want to learn computers” what they also really want is to improve their reading and writing. For example, when an adult types in a URL or a Facebook message, they will often comment that they need to learn to spell, or write or type better. Here, Jake connects them to other literacy learning opportunities: a tutor, a reading club, perhaps an ABE class.

Jake maintains that linking instruction to the technologies that adults have access to outside of a classroom or tutorial relationship is central to learner-centred practice. In this way, he is wary of taking up the newest digital tools for use in formal learning settings, when students don’t have access to these in their everyday lives. For example, it may be fun to have a class set of iPads so people can play with applications, but how does this support learning when the instructor collects the iPads at the end of the class and the learners go home empty handed? In this way, “first tier” digital tools can support literacy learning in very creative ways in some settings. But they can also widen the social distance between instructors and learners: “I have this and you don’t”, as well as creating relations of dependency.

Similarly, Jake suggests that technologies work best in adult learning when they start from where learners are in their interests and confidence. He suggests a process wherein students master the many different tools embedded in a computer at their own pace: word processing, using a printer, attaching files, finding images and music and so on, building confidence, control and learner
engagement, so that when they come to make digital stories (if they choose to) or other creative content, they are able to participate more actively in the process.

Here, Jake comes full circle in the relationship between digital technologies and literacy: “If we introduce the latest ‘must-have’ digital tools, tools our students will never be able to afford, not only are we being “played” by corporations that make these products, we may also be sending the message that our learners will be never be included in a digital culture. Once they acquire one tool, the next will have arrived and they will be once again on the outside.” Jake concluded the conversation with new questions: “What do people need the tools for? Are digital technologies for learning a means to an end, or an end in themselves?”

Conclusions: Toward a Conceptual Framework for Equity-Driven Digital Technology Integration

Digital technologies alone do not transform learning or address digital divides; rather, the ways in which these tools and technologies are materialized in local settings may lead to empowering experiences for adult learners, or indeed may further widen digital divides (Hayes, 2008). The challenge for literacy educators and learners is to learn when, why and how to use different digital modes for different purposes and audiences; in other words, to deploy strategically different digital literacies. Moreover, the variety in institutional and funding arrangements for adult literacy in Canada broadens the range of digital learning opportunities for some adult learners and restricts them for others; indeed what emerged in this study was a landscape of unequal access to valued digital literacy practices. This suggests that a conceptual framework for incorporating digital technologies in adult literacy settings should attend to not only if adults have access to digital technology in adult literacy programs, but also to the types and repertoires of digital literacy practices to which they have access. Moreover, a robust conceptual framework for incorporating digital technologies in adult literacy education should address not only the issue of how to incorporate technologies, but also how to transform current policy and funding regimes characterized by an emphasis on accountability over instruction, a narrow framing of digital literacy as ‘computer skills’, and uneven access to digital technologies and other learning resources across jurisdictions and institutions.

References


Data and Delusion in National Adult Literacy Surveys

Ralf St.Clair
McGill University
Montréal

Abstract: This discussion reviews a selection of key issues around literacy surveys, in particular the International Adult Literacy Survey (IALS) instruments as they have evolved through the Adult Literacy and Life Skills Survey (ALL) and the Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC). Because these three surveys use essentially the same model of literacy, comments on one apply to the others. The specific survey used to illustrate and ground the analysis is the Scottish Survey of Adult Literacies (SSAL2009)(Scottish Government, 2009) conducted by the author and a team of colleagues.

International surveys are a big idea in education at the current time. The results of school oriented studies such as PISA and TIMSS attract headlines as Shanghai performs better than the United States or Finland comes in at the top (again). A lot of interest is also attracted by studies that are performed periodically on adult literacy skills even though they are less frequent. They feed into the broader discourse about education and work, as well as being used surprisingly often in policy documents. An example of this use can be found in Alberta’s literacy framework, which states that “By 2020, 70% of Albertans will have a minimum of level 3 on international adult literacy measures” (Alberta, 2009, p.9). The international instruments are often used to generate data at the national scale as well, and can be considered as the de facto standard for data generation.

This discussion reviews a selection of key issues around literacy surveys, in particular the International Adult Literacy Survey (IALS) instruments as they have evolved through the Adult Literacy and Life Skills Survey (ALL) and the Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC). Because these three surveys use essentially the same model of literacy, comments on one apply to the others. The specific survey used to illustrate and ground the analysis is the Scottish Survey of Adult Literacies (SSAL2009)(Scottish Government, 2009) conducted by the author and a team of colleagues.

In order to pack a lot of information into a small space, this paper is organised as a series of questions.

1. What do these surveys do?

The surveys set out to measure the actual literacy skills of a population and describe the population in terms of the percentage of people at each level of proficiency. This was done through actual paper and pencil tests. Initially there were five proficiency levels with 1 being low and 5 high, but so few people reached level 5 in the IALS that it was combined with level 4. In practical terms, the population is described as the percentage in each of four levels.
The IALS tried to capture three types of literacy. The first was prose, meaning continuous text like a book or newspaper. The second was document, meaning forms and similar information. The third was quantitative, referring to the ability to use numerical information within text. One very interesting question is whether these three types are really different enough to be measured separately. While the test designers claimed that the three scales allowed literacy to be captured in a more nuanced way (Kirsch et al., 2001), there is very little evidence that this was really the case (Rock, 1998). When reporting the surveys the media very often ignore everything except prose literacy, and sometimes do not make it clear that they are discussing one scale among three.

In summary, then, the surveys set out to provide a snapshot of tested literacy (and related) skills through pen and paper testing of a representative sample of the population.

2. Why do they want to do it?
There are two principal beliefs underpinning these surveys. The first is that literacy and related skills (which can be measured) are a good way to represent human capital (which cannot be measured directly). Human capital is the stock of skills and experience within a society, and is considered a key driver of economic success. Recently there has been some suggestion that human capital can be considered as an individual trait, but the original work is unambiguously focused on the social level (Becker, 1975). If it could be measured it would mean that countries could build educational and human development strategies to directly address needs and gaps in their skills base. It is important to acknowledge, however, that the highly specific skills needed for particular jobs were not tested by the IALS instruments, so the portrait of skills created would always be somewhat general.

The second is the belief that directly measured skill levels provide more useful data than using years of education, qualification level, or another proxy. This assumption is more complex than it appears at first glance. It assumes that the value of education can be captured completely by analysing the application of specific abilities, but ignores the way that qualifications signal certain things about people. For example, a degree in humanities suggests that a person has a certain way of thinking and a certain range of interests that may be very valuable to an employer (for example, an advertising agency). While there may be a link between a person’s occupation and their directly measured skills it remains unclear whether this information has real predictive value regarding employability.

Nonetheless, at a time of increasing unemployment and developing need for productivity in the economy, the idea of having some precision regarding investment in human capital is inevitably deeply attractive.

3. Who pays, and why?
Though the initial development of the surveys was supported by the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, the implementation of the surveys is underwritten by the political jurisdiction in which it takes place. In the case of SSAL2009, the study was commissioned by the Scottish Government for a number of reasons. The last population survey to specifically address literacy capabilities had been conducted in 1996 (the original IALS), so there was a need to update data. With the current policy emphasis on human resource development there was a perceived need for a robust measure. The survey was intended to provide a new and accurate
baseline measure of the literacy skills of people between 16 and 65 living in Scotland. It was also intended to be compatible with the 1996 survey so that longitudinal comparisons could potentially be made. Finally, it was intended to inform policymaking on adult literacy and numeracy education.

It became obvious early in the process that these three goals were not entirely compatible. For example, producing the most robust data might mean making decisions that reduced comparability with the earlier survey, or the information needed to inform policy might run beyond what could be provided in an essentially descriptive approach such as a survey. In the event, these and many other tensions did prove significant.

The government put out a tender for completing the survey. The winning bid came from a network including two universities (Glasgow and Edinburgh), a private data collection agency (Gallup), and a non-profit research group (the National Foundation for Educational Research). The current author was the project leader.

4. What do the surveys refer to when they talk about literacy?

Despite the statistically complex mechanism of the IALS surveys, they are built upon a relatively simple model of literacy ability. One of the key assumptions of this model is that measuring the ability of an individual to locate and integrate information from the text and diagrams provided provides information on their overall literacy (Kirsch & Jungeblut, 1986). No research can include everything, and the IALS surveys have chosen specific forms of interaction with text to act as proxies for literacy. Inevitably, this means that some forms are left out.

One of the most interesting examples of what is not measured is writing. IALS provides no information whatsoever on writing (beyond a few questions asking if people are happy with their own writing), meaning that a very important component of literacy is not considered by the survey. This is the result of a deliberate decision by the original test designers, who adopted a definition of literacy as “using printed and written information to function in society, to achieve one’s goals and to develop one’s knowledge and potential” (Kirsch & Jungeblut, 1986, p.3). Producing printed and written is not mentioned in this definition. The irony of not discussing writing is that the IALS surveys require respondents to write in their answers, making writing ability a central concern of the tests—albeit a silent one.

While the definition of literacy used by the IALS is about reading, that is consumption of text, there are further limits to the types of texts. There is, for example, no poetry to interpret. The texts provided in the test booklets are extremely instrumental and direct in their format. The measure does not extend to literary uses of language. At the same time, a high number of the texts have to do with shopping and being a consumer, with money management, or with employment. The surveys make an assumption regarding the types of text that are most functional for adults in OECD countries that is not based on any data or even discussed at any length in survey documents. None of the texts are critical or political, and respondents are not asked to respond to arguments. The surveys seem to centre on a highly limited set of texts that reflect a selective set of text consumption in a developed society. This limit is not necessarily a problem, but it could be if general arguments were to be based on the data.
5. How do they measure it?
Researchers visit people in their homes with a pen and paper questionnaire and series of test booklets. A random sample of households is selected, and then people between 16 and 65 are randomly selected within those households. In Scotland the aim was to achieve 2500 responses, though in the end 1922 people were surveyed.

The survey instrument consists of three sections. The first is a background questionnaire designed to gather a great deal of information on the respondent, such as work and educational history, language use, children, marital status, age, national background, health conditions, living conditions and so on. There is then a short screening section with six questions. Only if respondents answer two or more of these correctly can they move onto the main literacy survey. Very few people in each national survey have ever been filtered by the screen. The third part of the survey, and the main interest as regards literacy measurement, is what is referred to as the “cognitive” testing. In practice “cognitive” could be replaced with “reading” with no loss of meaning. The questions themselves are very highly protected by copyright and cannot be reproduced here, but Hamilton and Barton (2000) have conducted a insightful and detailed discussion of the nature of the questions included in the survey.

Each respondent has to answer around 40 questions, allocated on a balanced incomplete block design. This means that there are seven different survey booklets, each containing three blocks of around a dozen questions. The blocks rotate through the booklets, so that booklet A has (for example) blocks 1, 2 and 6, booklet B has blocks 2, 3 and 7, and so on. Because the booklets overlap and each block is complete by 43% of the respondents (3/7) this design allows the probable distribution of correct answers to any one block to be deduced from the existing answers, effectively increasing the sample power. The principle is like having two people and giving each two out of three texts to read. If one of the texts is given to both, the researcher can use the performance on the shared text to work out how each would have probably done on the text they did not read. This approach is not very robust for the measurement of the skills of each individual, but it works well for a large number of people. This multiplying up is a useful way to achieve the aim of the IALS surveys to look at the probable pattern of skills across a population if the underlying—and necessary—model of literacy is accepted.

The individual scores are not used directly in generating the survey results, but become part of a probabilistic analysis that indicates what the skills in the population are likely to be.

6. Where do the levels come from?
One aspect of the IALS program that has made it more attractive to policymakers is the division of literacy abilities into five levels, with results that can be communicated easily using this scale. When the levels were introduced there was a cut point for functional literacy provided:

Level 3 is considered a suitable minimum for coping with the demands of everyday life and work in a complex, advanced society. It denotes roughly the skill level required for successful secondary school completion and college entry (OECD, 2009: ¶6)
After a great deal of research (including asking the OECD) the current researcher has been unable to discover the basis for this claim. It has now been removed from the OECD website. Nonetheless, this statement did lead to a number of panicky headlines stating, for example, that half the population of the UK were illiterate because they scored at level 1 or 2 (Channel 4, 2012).

The levels came quite late in the evolution of the tests, and were primarily developed to ease communication about the results. The leveling is overlaid on top of the 500 point scale in a simple arithmetical way, with level 1 representing scores up to 225, level 2 from 225.001 to 275, level 3 from 275.001 to 325, and levels 4 and 5 including all scores over 325.001 (since level 4 and 5 are always reported together the division between them is not relevant). For all three types of literacy, a score of 348 is level 4, and a score of 186 is level 1, etc. It is worth noting that most of the discrimination in the scale has to be between 225.001 and 325 since there are two very important levels (2 and 3) tied to these scores.

The model of measurement used in the surveys expects two-thirds of the population to fall between 200 and 300 points. That is, a perfect population score (if such an idea made sense) would have a mean in the centre of the level two range (250). This is an extremely important point for interpretation of the results, as for the IRT model to make sense 50% of the population should score below 250 points or so. Therefore the model is designed on the premise that at least half the respondents will be below level three. So even if level three were a well-evidenced marker of a desirable literacy level, the instrument intends to produce results where half the respondents do not reach it.

7. What do the findings look like?
The research team, who were strongly committed to the social practices model of literacies and concerned about the narrowness of perspective and measurement in SSAL2009, worked hard to present the survey findings in a way that avoided perpetuation of rhetoric around a “literacy crisis.” We spend many hours negotiating with the Scottish Government about the presentation of the findings, and finally agreed on the following language:

- Three-quarters (73.3%) of the Scottish population have a level of skills that has been recognised internationally as appropriate for a contemporary society
- Around one quarter of the Scottish population (26.7%) may face occasional challenges and constrained opportunities due to their skills but will generally cope with their day-to-day lives
- One person in 28 (3.6%) faces serious challenges in their literacies practices (St.Clair, Maclachlan & Tett, 2010, p.1).

Figure 1 shows what the overall results for each form of literacy by level. The 3.6% referred to above is the proportion of people in the population who would score at level 1 in all three types of literacy, while the 26.7% is the proportion of people who would score at level 1 or 2 across all three types (i.e. no level 3 scores). The language around “challenges” and “constrained opportunities” was an attempt to moderate the expression of the effects of testing at a lower level and avoid making it sound as if this proportion of the population were “unemployable” or “illiterate.
The research team were strongly impressed by the extent to which lower scores aligned with broader indicators of poverty. The composite picture that emerged was that people living in areas of deprivation, in less well paid jobs or out of the workforce, with less schooling, consistently scored lower on these surveys.

8. What does it all mean?
The findings, following the contributions section above, can be considered on two levels. On the explicit level the findings show that the skills of the Scottish population are strong, as might be expected after 140 years of compulsory schooling. Fifty-five per cent of the population would score on the top three levels of the five level scale applied during IALS’ original application, making Scotland one of the countries in the world with strongest skills. The skills follow age, with younger people demonstrating stronger abilities. The strongest of all are 26-35 year olds. For over 55 year olds, men have stronger skills than women, but the reverse is true for younger people. The strongest message to emerge, however, is that the types of literacy abilities tested are distributed in the same way as any other marker of social advantage—people who tend to score higher also tend to make more, be healthier, live in better areas, have higher status jobs and have better overall education. Taking this one step further, it would be reasonable to wonder if the IALS tests are not actually tests of disadvantage as much as human capital, or even if the two are even more deeply embedded than we expect.

On a theoretical level, the reflections of the research team give rise to issues such as the very narrow consideration of literacies, with focus on one type of school related literacy (and that captured in a test!). There are also three main implications for large scale literacy testing.

The first is that the instruments must fit the objects to be examined. In the case of literacy, the theories driving the field have evolved very significantly since the late 1980s, particularly through the work of the New Literacy Studies. So while the IALS based surveys (and indeed IALS reruns like this one) do provide information on a real dimension of literacy, the usefulness of that information is less clearly derived than it might have been. The research team really struggled with questions around what was being measured and what it meant.

The second insight is that complex capabilities are extremely difficult to capture. The power of surveys is capturing univariate factors; when a capability such as literacy is considered, the
multidirectional nature of the constructs is difficult to engage with responsibly and meaningfully. Individuals’ cognitive skills and their ability or willingness to apply them in specific ways are notoriously hard to capture. Large scale surveys do not make these difficulties disappear.

Finally, the link that the survey demonstrates between literacy and disadvantage is sobering and important. Even in an extremely well educated and relatively rich nation, the people who are deprived of so many material and social advantages are also deprived of some of the most fundamental communicative and expressive capabilities.

Overall the research team would urge caution regarding the use of the surveys in the way Alberta has done, as an educational goal and developmental measure. The complexities and contradictions of the process suggest that the aspiration to produce valid and concrete measures of human capital and shape education in their light may be based more on delusion than data.

References
**Higher Degree Studies in Mid to Late Career: Reasons, Reflections, Realities**

Dr Tom Stehlik  
University of South Australia

**Abstract:** Based on the author’s involvement in managing and teaching in higher degree programs and data from a survey of doctoral students at the University of South Australia, this paper addresses the trend for candidates undertaking doctoral studies later in life, posing the questions: What is the value and currency of a doctoral degree? Why do people undertake doctoral studies later in their life and career? How is the learning process understood and experienced? How valid and useful is personal narrative in doctoral research?

**Introduction**

Australian citizens and residents undertaking higher degree studies such as a PhD enjoy exemption from tuition fees under the Commonwealth Government’s Research Training Scheme (RTS). University enrolments therefore continue to grow, and a PhD is increasingly becoming common currency in terms of academic credentials, accessible to a larger and wider range of applicants than ever before. The traditional academic career pathway of a young honours graduate progressing through post-graduate studies to a higher degree is also no longer the norm, as the characteristics and demographics of PhD students change in step with increased accessibility to, and availability of, doctoral programs.

The author’s home institution, the University of South Australia, has over 400 enrolments in doctoral programs offered in the Division of Education, Arts and Social Sciences. The average age of this cohort is 45. In the School of Education where the author teaches, researches and supervises doctoral students, a significant number of higher degree candidates are not early career researchers or recent honours graduates, but mid-to-late-career education practitioners and retirees, the majority of whom are women. At this stage in their careers, these mature-age candidates are undertaking doctoral research not to launch their career, but in most cases to reflect on it, make meaning of it, and to take the opportunity for a deeper and more personal approach to learning than may have been available to them at an earlier age.

With the benefit of career and life experience, hindsight and possibly foresight - and perhaps even wisdom - such mature-age doctoral candidates are more often than not adopting narrative inquiry (Clandinin & Connolly, 2000), auto-ethnographic (Ellis, 2008; 2009) and interpretive approaches to their thesis research, with many discovering and experiencing transformative learning in the process. As research methodologies, it is suggested that such personal reflective approaches are gaining validity through their increased prevalence and relevance to disciplines such as the Humanities and Social Sciences, and in particular, Education. One such approach has been labelled by The University of Vermont’s Robert Nash as **Scholarly Personal Narrative**, or in other words a way of telling life stories that is accepted as valid research methodology (Nash, 2004).

Based on the author’s involvement in managing and teaching in higher degree programs, the literature on narrative research methodologies and data from a survey of doctoral students at the
University of South Australia, this paper addresses the trend for candidates undertaking research training later in life and poses a number of questions, including:
- What is the value and currency of a doctoral degree?
- Why do people undertake doctoral studies later in their life and career?
- How is the learning process understood and experienced?
- How valid and useful is personal narrative in doctoral research?

The study contributes new knowledge and understanding around reasons why doctoral studies are increasingly being undertaken by older learners, in what could be termed the third age of their lives. It further contributes a critique of the highly personal approach to many of these studies using forms of scholarly personal narrative, in order to determine the value and relevance not only to the academic discipline but to society in general - especially if the state is going to be funding and supporting such studies.

The research design includes analysis of qualitative data based on an online survey of a convenience sample of doctoral students of a particular age at one Australian university. While the response rate to the survey was a pleasing 87.5%, the sample itself was less than 20 individuals. Rather than making claims for generalizability, this has been designed as a pilot study which could be replicated on a larger and broader scale, but gives initial findings that illuminate the research questions posed above.

**The Currency of Doctoral Programs**

A doctorate is a research-based higher degree offered by universities and other accredited higher education providers. It is interesting to note that the term doctorate originates from the Latin docere (to teach), and that teaching licences or licentia docendi were originally issued by the church in Medieval Europe (Latin Dictionary, 2010). While a Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) is certainly regarded as necessary academic currency in modern universities, it is increasingly seen as a pathway and training program into the world of research rather than the world of teaching; and the fact that almost every university in Australia requires new academic staff who may already hold a doctoral award to undertake a Graduate Certificate in Tertiary Teaching suggests that it is certainly no longer a program that ‘teaches people how to teach’.

The Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER) has reported that the PhD is one of the fastest growing higher education qualifications in Australia, with the number of graduates almost doubling between 1996 and 2007 (Edwards et al, 2009). However in a review of the ACER report, Moodie has noted that “Almost 10 per cent of doctorate graduates who were not studying full time in the year after their graduation in 2007 were not working, which was higher than for graduates of bachelors and postgraduate coursework degrees” (2010, p.22).

A doctorate therefore does not necessarily lead to vocational or professional outcomes to the extent that other university programs may, suggesting that there are other reasons for, and outcomes from, undertaking higher degree study. While a PhD may be strong in terms of intellectual currency, it is not necessarily of equal value or currency in the job market. Even in universities where a doctorate is highly valued, completing one does not automatically translate into a higher salary and position – one still has to apply for promotion based on other metrics including teaching quality and research output.
The prevailing view of the contribution that higher degrees might make to knowledge is still largely linked to the economy and the world of work:

As the developed world becomes more reliant on knowledge as a vital part of economic growth and development, the importance of highly skilled workers who can create, disseminate and use new knowledge becomes integral. The role of those with the skills and competencies provided through higher research degrees is therefore of increasing importance to the future development of the Australian economy. (Edwards et al, 2009, p.ix)

However, the argument that is sustained and explored in this paper is that the notion of ‘currency’ in this context is more related to current ideas, understandings and meanings around topics of research that are important and relevant not only to the doctoral researchers themselves but to wider society in general, rather than in terms of economic currency.

A federal government discussion paper (DIISR, 2010), discusses inter alia the ageing profile of the research workforce, but also reinforces policy aspirations to significantly increase the number of higher degree by research (HDR) completions in Australia, as critical to the development of a globally competitive research workforce. However, the paper has been critiqued as short on detail:

What is not clear from the evidence presented in the paper is: exactly who is critical to the future research workforce [and] whether industry shares the government’s enthusiasm for expanding R & D and employing research-qualified individuals and is willing to offer competitive employment options and remuneration appropriate to researchers’ knowledge and skills. (Bell, 2010, p. 1)

Furthermore the expectation of competitive salaries for doctoral research graduates and the paucity of government funding to support doctoral candidates during their years of study highlight a contradiction. One of the challenges facing tertiary students in Australia is not only the accrual of debt from funding or deferring through taxation their course fees, but also the need to provide living expenses while studying. For HDR students, this is also a reality, and while a number of scholarship schemes exist, they are highly competitive, disadvantage those who have not come through an honours pathway, and are generally set at a level that for most people would not even pay the rent. 37

This is particularly untenable for attracting mid-career professionals into full-time study from the workforce, where their lifestyle and commitments would rely on a salary of three or four times that amount:

The majority of postgraduate research students are over 30, and are subject to the commitments that typically accompany the middle decades of many peoples' lives …

---

37 The stipend for the Australian Postgraduate Award scholarship (APA) is currently set at $24,650 per annum, which the Council of Australian Postgraduate Associations (CAPA) has noted is ‘below the poverty line’ (House of Representatives Standing Committee on Industry, Science and Innovation, 2008, p. 76).
Postgraduate research students have partners, children, mortgages, debt repayments, employment commitments, and aging parents. (House of Representatives Standing Committee on Industry, Science and Innovation, 2008, p. 91)

Access to HDR study is therefore often determined by economic considerations, such as the limitations for mid-career professionals of forgoing salary for at least 4 years while completing a higher degree. Therefore, those who are able to undertake doctoral studies in Australia appear more likely to be demographically at either end of a career trajectory (ie early career or late career / retired), or undertaking part-time HDR study while trying to juggle a work-life balance.

It would appear therefore that the reasons for doctoral candidates undertaking higher degree studies are not always related to career development, employment opportunities or salary increases; and that the drivers for committing to a lengthy study program at the cost of other lifestyle choices must relate more to motivations for learning and personal development.

**Why Do People Undertake a PhD Later in Their Life and Career?**

A small scale survey addressed this question to sixteen doctoral students in the Division of Education, Arts and Social Sciences at the University of South Australia. In one sense the respondents were a convenience sample as they represented students who were older than 45 and were known to the author through their enrolment at UniSA. In another sense the sample was random as these students are enrolled by choice at the university, some with APA scholarships, through their connection with a research project or via a particular academic or research group in the division. The cohort ranged in age from the early 50s to the late 70s.

A link to an online survey was sent to their student email address with an invitation to participate, noting that the survey was voluntary and anonymous. Fourteen people completed the survey, a response rate of 87.5%, with several respondents sending a separate email indicating interest in the topic and the resulting paper.

Respondents were asked to list one or more reasons why they had undertaken doctoral studies at this stage in their career:
All except one respondent acknowledged that ‘the time was right’, while ‘personal development and interest’ was the next highest reason chosen by ten respondents. Of interest to the theme of this paper is that only 50% considered ‘career advancement’ as a reason.

When asked to expand on their responses to this question, a number of salient comments are particularly noted:

_I felt that it was an opportunity to draw a number of threads in my life experience together, my experience in many walks of life, that could when integrated form a satisfying account of my life learning in relation to my area of interest._

As I approached the end of my active career path I decided to devote time to examine what was the most valuable lesson I learnt about a special professional activity. There was an urgent desire to find the how and why of a vocational life in the form of a thesis.

My children were at Uni themselves so I no longer had school fees to pay, so the time was right. When I was offered a scholarship, the time was really right! Also I have been a lifelong writer and reader, so doctoral studies allows me to follow these passions

As someone from a background (gender, ethnicity, class) who had not seen university as an option when I was younger, this was a way of developing myself and feeling as though I could make a valid contribution to society at the same time.

All of the reasons were elements of my thinking. My work challenged me in new ways and at the same time I felt the need to make sense of what should/could be done. It had a lot of practitioner practical concern about the inquiry. Personally I saw the doctoral studies as providing some legitimacy in my explorations.
From having worked in education settings my entire career I wanted to gain a theoretical understanding of my practice. Why did certain beliefs underpin my practice no matter what setting I was working in?

Perhaps the most standout comment in relation to reasons for undertaking higher degree studies was: Learning for me is like a disease which doesn’t go away. The underlying driver for many candidates like this one is a lifelong engagement with learning in its various forms, and doctoral study appears to allow them the space to really explore aspects of learning in depth, for example as others claimed to gain a theoretical understanding of my practice, as a vehicle for a new vocation, or to allow me to follow the passions of being a lifelong writer and reader.

**How is the Learning Process Understood and Experienced?**

Respondents were asked to consider the extent to which their doctoral studies had contributed to their learning and development, both personally and professionally. Their responses revealed a mixed range of experiences, with personal development often benefitting at the expense of professional progress.

On the plus side, it was noted that:

*My capacity to engage in critical thinking has certainly developed as have my problem solving abilities.*

And:

*It has been one of the most valuable professional experiences I have ever undertaken. It is intellectually stimulating and it is hard to quantify just how much I believe I have learnt – but it is a great deal!*

And furthermore:

*Doctoral studies is a wonderful gift that keeps on giving. I never expected it to be so rewarding and the personal growth and development are beyond my wildest dreams. I have discovered sides of myself that I never knew or suspected and I have developed a deeper understanding of my life and of other people. It has given me a sense of completeness and wholeness. I’m a much better person than I was when I started.*

However, the ‘down side’ was also expressed:

*In some ways it has been very frustrating….Doctoral studies are very lonely…*

And one respondent qualified the benefits with the consequences:

*I have achieved more than I ever thought possible, met some amazing people and participated in events that a few short years ago I would have considered off limits to me. At the same time, it can complicate the different events/factors in my daily life, particularly when new ways of*
thinking and seeing the world clash with my previous thinking and with those around me who are not in any way interested in academic life.

The ‘complications’ mentioned are consistent with the type of disorienting dilemma that Mezirow discussed in his development of transformative learning theory (2009), and for these mature age learners a transformation in world view or meaning making was characterised as:

A hard slog…challenging my own long believed, hard earnt beliefs / attitudes

And the view that:

Through doctoral studies a new world opened and every step I take leads me to new learning challenges, new people and opportunities that make me question why I should be there...

Challenging long held beliefs and views can often translate into major upheavals in the personal lives of mature age students. These profound changes also lead to the question of what comes next in a mature age person’s life after completion of doctoral studies, which may have taken eight years of their life, many highs and lows, and in some cases personal struggle and sacrifice. There is a feeling amongst some candidates that completing and graduating leaves a gap previously filled by the all-consuming PhD, and also breaks the link with the academic community that has been formed through enrolment at a university.

One respondent to the survey sees herself as unemployable because I am too old to be a ‘graduate’ yet have no experience within the new ‘profession’ so I am really concerned on what to do...There is a moral question for universities then, in taking on late career or retired PhD candidates who might become ‘all trained up with nowhere to go’; over-qualified and over-educated with no opportunity to apply or further develop their higher learning.

Finally respondents to the survey were asked about the likelihood of being able to complete doctoral studies earlier in their life and career. Responses centred around three issues:

1. Family/ work commitments, isolation and /or opportunity mitigated against the reality of undertaking doctoral studies earlier in life
2. The confidence to feel able to achieve studies at a higher degree level was not there until later in life
3. As a younger person without significant life experience and practice to reflect on, a doctorate would have been very different, and probably even in a different field

I started Honours when I was in my 20s and found myself feeling quite intimidated and not quite ready intellectually or emotionally. It was as if I didn’t have the life experience yet to ground it. Having said this I believe it may be different in more quantitative or scientific studies which may not draw on life experience as much. My thesis really reflects a culmination of my life’s work up to a certain point and I would not have been able write a thesis at that level as a young person

I often wonder about this question and would I have wanted to or achieved this level of study earlier and I doubt it. I’ve come to the conclusion that my priority was a family and I consciously
chose not to return to work until they were independent. There were fewer opportunities or role models for young women in the 1960s. Until distance education became available it was not an option where I lived.

If I had pursued doctoral studies after my honours degree it would have been in science. Life would have been very different...Then online external studies became available and I could manage a family, partner a primary production business, work full-time in a school AND study part-time. My part-time study opened up the possibility of pursuing doctoral studies. In one way I wish I had pursued them in the 1970s but I did not have the information I needed. Marriage and family life are important, and I could not have coped with doctoral studies when the children were younger.

This has been the right time to complete my studies for me. I am practice rich and so playing with the theory has been a joy. I could put a practical context to the theory.

Conclusion
Particularly where candidates are pursuing a methodology based on a narrative or life history approach (Ellis & Flaherty, 1992; Ellis, 2009; Nash, 2004), doctoral studies really do encourage deep self-reflection, personal growth and transformative learning (Mezirow, 2009), or as one respondent put it providing some legitimacy in my explorations of what could be seen by others as individual, esoteric or even irrelevant.

From the survey findings the reasons for mature age learners embarking on doctoral studies can be summarised as:
- Reflecting on and theorising practical / career experience
- Drawing together various threads of personal and professional life experience
- Taking the opportunity presented by circumstances
- Making a valid contribution to knowledge and society
- Providing academic legitimacy to lifelong learning and interests

The implications for adult education theory and practice are numerous. They include recognising that older learners bring a different perspective to doctoral studies and will have a different experience than younger learners who may not have the depth of life experience to draw from in reflecting on or theorising their practice. Older learners therefore require a more flexible approach to supervision and negotiation around methodologies; for example the traditional ‘master / apprentice’ supervision relationship may not apply. The validation of personal narrative approaches to doctoral research also contributes to theory development in this area, and suggests the need for a blurring of boundaries between our understanding of formal institutional-based learning and informal learning from life, which may be less theorised but more powerful and enduring. Finally, acknowledging lifelong learning as a continuum that goes beyond linear notions of knowledge construction to involve a more holistic, integrated world view and process of meaning making and understanding in a particular discipline such as education gives validity to the notion of ‘the getting of wisdom’.

References
Bell, S. (2010), Fewer gates and more revolving doors? Campus Review, August 2, p. 1-2,

Department of Innovation, Industry, Science and Research, (2010), *Meeting Australia’s research workforce needs: A consultation paper to inform the development of the Australian Government’s research workforce strategy*, Commonwealth of Australia

Edwards, D., Radloff, A., and Coates, H. (2009), *Supply, demand and characteristics of the higher degree by research population in Australia*, ACER


Moodie, G. (2010), Old academics don’t retire, they just go into research, *The Australian Higher Education Supplement*, June 6

Food for Thought and Action?
Social Movement Learning and Food Movements

Jennifer Sumner
Adult Education and Community Development Program
OISE/University of Toronto

Abstract: Although people must eat to live, few adult educators have dealt directly with the question of food (Sumner, 2013). And yet, people learn about food throughout their lives, not only from such sources as the family and the media, but also from food movements – the Slow Food Movement, the local food movement, the food justice movement, the fair trade movement and the organic farming movement. Learning from food movements is a form of social movement learning, which, as Hall and Clover (2005) remind us, can occur both within and outside social movements.

Introduction
People learn every day, whether formally, through the “curricula of institutions providing educational activities or programs sanctioned by some kind of formal or official recognition,” non-formally, through the “semi-structured learning that occurs in workshops, seminars and training events” or informally, through the “acquisition of new knowledge, understanding, skills or attitudes, which people do on their own and which has not been planned or organized in formal settings such as schools, colleges and universities” (Hrimech, 2005, p. 310).

Our understanding of adult learning has evolved over the last hundred years, from the first simple formulations of “problem solving, memory and information processing” (Merriam, 2005, p. 47) to more complex conceptualizations that include andragogy, self-directed learning and transformative learning, as well as spiritual learning and learning through the critical lens, which includes:

consideration of the larger sociocultural and political context in which it takes place, and how the context itself both shapes and is an integral part of the learning transaction (Merriam 2005, p. 47).

This complexity helps us to understand that “there is no one definition, model, or theory that explains how adults learn, why adults learn, or how best to facilitate the process” (Merriam, 2005, p. 42).

Crosscutting this complexity is the fact that people also need to eat on a regular basis and this act of consumption is built on prior learning, for example, what is safe to eat, what tastes sweet, what is needed for a balanced diet, what happens if there is nothing to eat. People learn about food from such institutions as families, peers, communities, schools, religious organizations and the mass media. And they also learn from social movements – in particular, food movements.

This exploratory paper will open up inquiry into the confluence of learning, food and social movements. It will begin by looking at social movements and social movement learning, before focusing on the learning associated with food movements. Learning is vital to critiquing our current global corporate food system (while has resulted in malnutrition on an massive scale,
with over a billion going hungry while the same number are obese) and building alternatives to it. For this reason, it behooves us to understand the kinds of learning associated with food movements in order to encourage, facilitate and learn our way in to a more sustainable world.

**Social Movements**

A social movement can be understood as “a network of informal interactions between a plurality of individuals, groups and/or organizations, engaged in political or cultural conflict on the basis of a shared collective identity” (Diani, 1992, p. 13). Social movements are generally divided into two types – the Old Social Movements, composed of organized labour, and the New Social Movements, such as the environmental movement, the peace movement and women’s movements. While the Old Social Movements are class based, practice recognized strategies such as strikes and working to rule, and get involved in organized politics, the New Social Movements (NSMs) are more issue-specific, cut across class lines, employ a wide variety of unconventional tactics, and operate more outside the realm of organized politics (McCarthy, 2000).

NSMs emerge from the near-dissolution of traditional politics. They contain the double prospect of autonomy and consolidation, but also the possibility of descent into sectarianism and political impotence. Should they take root locally and develop strong cords of political connectedness, they may turn out to be the one force capable of cracking the mould of corporate globalization (Ratner, 1997, pp. 275-6).

Some of the most recent arrivals to the New Social Movements are food movements – social movements associated with food. The Slow Food Movement, the local food movement, the food justice movement, the fair trade movement and the organic farming movement are all examples of social movements that have coalesced around food. Like other New Social Movements, these food movements focus on particular issues, such as heritage foods, local food systems, food security and/or sovereignty, fair wages for farmers and environmentally sustainable farming. They also aim to cut across class lines – some more than others – and encourage a wide range of people to address the growing corporate control of the food system. They employ a wide variety of tactics. The Slow Food Movement stands up to the homogenizing tendencies of fast food by sitting down and eating heritage foods with pleasure (Mair et al., 2008). The local food movement engages in boycotts, defined by Roberts (2008, p. 19) as “a deliberate favoring of one product, rather than the more negative boycott, a refusal to buy certain products.” The food justice movement serves food to hungry people on sidewalks in affluent business areas (Mair, 2005). The fair trade movement operates both “in, as well as against, the market” (Raynolds, 2002, p. 419). And the organic farming movement will decertify any farmer who uses genetically modified organisms. None of these food movements allies itself with political parties, preferring instead to directly engage with society in other venues – slow food dinners, farmers’ markets, soup kitchens, coffee shops and health-food stores.

Food movements carry enormous potential, not only because they are taking root locally, exhibiting global reach and developing alliances among themselves (e.g., fair trade, organic coffee), but also because they provide peerless opportunities for learning.
Social Movement Learning

As adult educators well know, social movements are vital sites of learning. For Miles (1996), the ideal context for the motivation to learn and for adult education for social change is social movement:

When people are engaged in a collective struggle that they define themselves they also decide what and why they need to learn. Participants in the struggle learn together and from each other as well as calling on other educational resources at their own discretion and on their own terms. In these contexts the question for progressive adult educators is not so much how to provide the ‘basis for people being motivated to learn’ as how to be relevant to people’s desire to learn and how to support their efforts (p. 278).

The learning associated with social movements, not surprisingly, has been labeled social movement learning. According to Hall and Clover (2005, p. 584),

social movement learning is both (a) learning by persons who are part of any social movement; and (b) learning by persons outside of a social movement as a result of the actions taken or simply by the existence of social movements.

Although learning within social movements has been documented by adult educators (see, for example, Clover and Hall 2000; Miles 1996; Sumner 2005), learning outside of social movements is less understood. And yet, as Hall and Clover (2005) argue: “Perhaps the most significant form of social movement learning is that learning which takes place by persons who are not directly participating as members of a given social movement.” To illustrate their argument, they provide two examples. In the first, they contend that many men have learned a great deal about the gendered dimensions of power and perceptions from the women’s movement, even though they have not been members. In the second, they maintain that much of what we first learned about the impact of greed on the rest of nature came from the actions of the environmental movement.

Following the work of Hall and Clover (2005), what kind of learning is associated with food movements? What have those of us both inside and outside these movements learned about food? And what have we learned about the wider world through these food movements? Have we gained the knowledge to mount an informed critique of and build viable alternatives to the current global corporate food system?

Food Movement Learning

When considering the kinds of learning associated with food movements, we can look to Merriam’s (2005) categorization of the major distinguishing aspects of adult learning: andragogy, self-directed, transformative, critical and spiritual. While these categories overlap, they can help us to understand the kind of learning that occurs.

In terms of Merriam’s (2005) categorization, we can posit that andragogy will include university courses like The Pedagogy of Food, a weekend chef school or trading recipes at a cocktail party. Self-directed learning would include an independent reading and research course at a university on an issue such as food sovereignty, a weekend set aside to read up about and try baking bread,
or knowledge acquisition from watching a film such as *Food Inc*. Transformative learning would include a university course on gender and food security, a workshop on community gardens or a visit to an organic farm. Critical learning would include a university course on the pedagogy of food, a seminar on guerrilla gardening or a discussion at the farmers’ market about the merits of free-range eggs. And spiritual learning would include a course on the role of food and religion, an event focused on mindful eating at a yoga retreat or an epiphany when eating a plateful of food you have helped to grow.

To concretize these speculations, this session will be devoted to eliciting responses from participants regarding what they have learned from food movements. These responses will be combined with other sets of responses to help form a clearer picture of the kinds of social movement learning associated with food and its potential to develop informed critique of and viable alternatives to the global corporate food system.

**Conclusion**

The term social movement is used to describe “a wide variety of collective attempts to bring about a change in social institutions or to create a new social order” (Morris 2005, 589). Do food movements achieve these ends? Can they, as Ratner (1997) proposes, crack the mould of corporate globalization through the learning associated with the New Social Movements or do they squander this opportunity through gustatory vacuity or “defensive localism” (DuPuis and Goodman, 2005)?

The answers to these questions will have constructive implications for the development of adult education theory and practice. First, they will contribute to the theory of social movement learning by including food movements in this field of inquiry. Second, they will inform the fledgling field of food pedagogy (see Sumner 2008; Flowers and Swan 2012; Flowers and Swan forthcoming). Third, they will bridge the subfields of environmental adult education and adult education for sustainability. And fourth, they will help to develop the emerging branch of adult literacy called food literacy.

**References**


Exploring Fairy Tales in a College Women's Media Group: Stereotypes, Changing Representations of Snow White, and Happy Endings

Nancy Taber
Vera Woloshyn
Caitlin Munn
Laura Lane
Brock University

Abstract: This paper details a case study of a media discussion group for female college students who experience learning difficulties. We discuss literature as relates to struggling learners, discussion groups, gender, and fairy tales; detail our case study methodology; and, explain the participants' views of gender in their daily lives, fairy tales, the character of Snow White, the movie Snow White and the Huntsman, and the concept of happy endings. We conclude that, although the participants could, to some extent, critique gender representations, they were still influenced by stereotypical norms.

Introduction
Girls and women often are disadvantaged in postsecondary institutions (hooks, 1994, 2003, 2010; Wagner, Acker, & Mayuzumi, 2008), particularly with the contemporary focus on corporatization, consumerism, commercialization, and profit (Luxton & Mossman, 2012) as well as meritocracy, individualism, and commodification (hooks, 2010). These gendered challenges have an additional layer of complexity for students with learning difficulties (Lindstrom, Benz, & Doren, 2004; Roets, Reinaart, Adams, & van Hove, 2008).

This paper details a case study of a media discussion group for female college students with learning difficulties. The group was designed to promote critical thinking strategies through interacting with various forms of media featuring strong female protagonists in plots that address sociocultural issues. In this paper, we focus on the group's engagement with fairy tales in general and Snow White in particular. We discuss literature as relates to students with learning disabilities, discussion groups, gender, and fairy tales. We detail our case study methodology and explain our findings as relates to the participants' views of gender in their daily lives, fairy tales, representations of Snow White, the movie Snow White and the Huntsman, and the concept of happy endings. We conclude that, although the participants could, to some extent, critique gender representations, they were still influenced by stereotypical norms.

Struggling Learners, Discussion Groups, and Fairy Tales
Young adults with learning disabilities represent an increasingly growing student population within postsecondary environments (Cawthorn, & Cole, 2010). These individuals often experience difficulties succeeding in postsecondary environments, even when academic accommodations and supports are available (Lightner, Kipps-Vaughan, Schulte, & Trice, 2012; Weir, 2004). Overall, students with learning disabilities are less likely to complete their postsecondary programs relative to their peers without exceptionalities or do so with lower GPAs (Anctil, Ishikawa, & Scott, 2008). They are also more likely to experience social, emotional and mental health difficulties as well as underemployment or unemployment (Madaus, 2005). These challenges are especially pertinent for female students with learning disabilities who are
underrepresented in postsecondary environments (Weir, 2004) and who may experience multiple oppressions in terms of gender and ability (Lindstrom, Benz, & Doren, 2004; Roets, Reinaart, Adams, & Hove, 2008).

Discussion groups which engage members in specific learning strategies, critical thinking, and dialogue activities are one way in which people of various ages can learn to read and interact with a range of texts (Casey, 2008; Tyler, 2010) and participate in a societal critique (Taber, Woloshyn, & Lane, in press; Forrest, 2011; Polleck, 2010). There is a growing body of research exploring popular culture and learning, framing media as a "public pedagogy" (Giroux, 2004), which has been taken up by adult educators (i.e., Tisdell, 2007). However, there is relatively little literature on critical media discussion groups engaging young women with learning disabilities in post-secondary settings.

Fairy tales are an example of a popular culture genre that is pervasive in western culture, communicated in multiple inter-textually linked ways (Preston, 2004). As such, they are prime material for discussion, as they build on childhood understandings that connect to adulthood. While certain versions of fairy tales can be argued to represent gender in complex ways (Haase, 2004), those that have persisted over time are those which portray passive, good, beautiful young women who are rescued from evil, ugly, old women by active, handsome, heroic men (Baker-Sperry & Grauerholz, 2003; Zipes, 1997). Happily-ever-after endings result in a marriage of a prince and princess and return to the castle (Baker-Sperry, 2007; Zipes, 1997). Innovative versions have approached these stereotypes in more complex ways allowing for some problematizing of gender (Marshall, 2004; Preston, 2004; Zipes, 1979/2002). However, binaries of good versus evil and masculinized protectors saving the feminized protected persist (Taber, in press).

Research Design
This research used case-study methodology (Merriam, 2002) to explore the experiences of several female college students with learning difficulties who participated in a media club intended to promote the use of critical thinking skills, self-empowerment, and gender critique. The participants were recruited through a college's student success program. The research discussed here consisted of individual interviews with each participant focusing on their perceptions of themselves as learners, their identities as women, and their viewing preferences as well as two media discussion sessions using critical and feminist pedagogies (Freire, 2000; hooks, 1994, 2003, 2010). In the sessions, we discussed common characteristics of fairy tales, representations of Snow White, and the movie Snow White and the Huntsman (2012). Analysis of the data was conducted using Merriam’s (1998) case study application of Glaser and Strauss’s constant comparative method. Researchers individually coded the data for themes, then met for collaborative analysis sessions, agreeing on the final themes.

Findings

Gender in Daily Life
The participants expressed varied responses when asked to reflect on gender in terms of their daily lives as college students and women. Emma acknowledged that it was challenging to be a woman and that women needed to be concerned about their physical appearance, domestic capabilities, and unwanted pregnancy. Anastaisia explained that gender was not an important factor in her academic life, especially as she was not concerned about her physical appearance. “I
don’t think it’s [school day] really any different than a boy’s. I don’t wear make-up … so it's not a big difference in my day.” Jenna and Christina also reported that men and women experienced college similarly: “I think it is even” (Christina); “I don’t see why it would [be different]… I have no idea” (Jenna).

The participants carried many of the same notions forward when asked about the portrayal of women in popular media. For instance, Christina acknowledged that women were often sexualized in movies, while Emma expressed outrage over television shows where young girls were subjected to participate in the feminine beauty ideal such as *Toddler and Tiaras*. Anastaisia noted the strength and convictions of many female characters in texts, qualifying that these attributes were dependent on engagement in heteronormative relationships.

Most of the books that I read… the girls... hang back and...they’re not as strong... . But then once they get going and usually once they meet the boy, they kind of bring their power up and they’re very strong characters and fight for what they want and portrayed as a real strong woman.

Finally, Jenna maintained that men and women were portrayed as equals in media and text, stating, “I find that they are treated equally with what I read and what I watch.”

Overall, participants had difficulties problematizing gender as part of their daily lives and in media viewing. However, activating these beliefs provided an important starting point for discussions about fairy tales as a genre and Snow White as a female protagonist, allowing the participants to explore their beliefs more fully and returning to notions connected to daily life.

**Stereotypical Representations of Fairy Tales and Snow White**

When the participants were asked to brainstorm what they knew about fairy tales, Emma and Christina differentiated the traditional versions and the “stereotypical” Disney ones which they "sugar coat." They agreed that a key feature of these fairy tales is that a male must save the heroine. Emma stated, “Disney ones just actually go, ‘Oh, pretty, you can't get dirty. You have to wait for the prince to come save you.’” Both Christina and Emma expressed concern over this storyline. Christina worried about the impact of the fairy tales on children, explaining, “kids are young, they learn from what they see or they hear, right?”

The participants described barriers that restricted females in fairy tales. Emma felt “some people do believe that women shouldn’t be working. They believe that women should be at home with the kids.” Christina added “most of the time in fairy tales, it’s the girl that [is] always ...doing the cleaning or feeding the kids or doing all the dirty work.” The participants described how Snow White was a weak character, with “a pretty face” who "was mostly cleaning up after the seven dwarves" (Emma). Christina agreed, stating that "Snow’s kinda lazy... It’s kind of cowardly because you’re just laying there, waiting for a prince to come and save you and sweep you off your feet, give me your love." Anastaisia explained: "Snow White, to me, was always the dark hair, the white skin, bright red lips, ... quiet, innocent, ... always kinda the little kid. I don’t know if she ever really grew up."
The participants viewed a series of historical images of Snow White, ranging from Grimm fairy tale illustrations to the current *Snow White and the Huntsmen* film. When the participants viewed an image of Snow White wandering through the woods, surrounded by wild animals, Anastaisia stated “She’s too curious. No, she just looks like she’s looking for something.” Anastaisia did not feel this image fit Snow White.

Despite challenging or raising concerns about the stereotypical fairy tale image or storyline of Snow White, the participants seemed unwilling to adopt alternatives. However, they began to do so somewhat upon viewing *Snow White and the Huntsman*.

**An Alternative Representation: Snow White and the Huntsman**

When asked what their expectations were for *Snow White and the Huntsman*, the girls predicted that it would be “more realistic” because of its portrayal of a “non-typical Snow White [with] a new spin on things that you would never see in a Disney version” (Emma). Echoing this, Christina states, “I don't like... 'Oh, prince, save me, save me.' I'm just, like, 'Come on.' You wonder why there are stereotypes on women.” Similarly, Jenna felt that this Snow White would be “different, really different,” suspecting that the film would “not really have that happy ending... where cartoons, they have the happy ending.”

Upon viewing the film, the participants were surprised that Snow White took control over her own escape from her imprisonment at the beginning, particularly as the means she took to do so entailed jumping into a sewer. The girls saw Snow White as “courageous” (Christina), “independent” (Anastaisia), and “dirty” (Emma). Noting the deviation from typical representations of women, Anastaisia states, “there's no way that [the original] Snow White would have done that” with Emma adding that “I like the idea of the fact that she just jumped into a sewer full of crap because no other princess or woman would ever have thought of doing that.” Christina further explains, “You'd expect a guy to do that more than a girl.”

However, the participants were critical of the huntsman, viewing him as less manly, with Christina stating “Like, she's getting more dirty than him.... Get dirty, man, honestly. Act like a huntsman.” In contrast, the girls stated the prince “looked dirty and... scruffy and not a prince. He didn't really have the appeal or the stature or the whole effect of a prince. He just looked like a common person” (Anastaisia).

Despite the girls’ recognition of alternative gender representations in *Snow White and the Huntsman*, they were uncomfortable with certain representations and dissatisfied with the ending. The girls hoped for more romance, stating that “the kissing scene was too brief” (Anastaisia), and had hoped to see a more emotional princess in a happily-ever-after ending.

**Happily-Ever-Afters?**

The ways in which the participants viewed happy endings was complex and somewhat contradictory. When asked about characteristics of fairy tales, Jenna stated "they usually have a happy ending" which occur when "they get married" (Emma). Although in some cases, there is no actual wedding, "it's pretty obvious that they did get married" (Emma). Regardless, "they end up being happy. Usually, it's a guy and a girl getting together in the end" (Christina). Anastaisia commented that "they need a gay movie," with Christina adding that "it's showing kids that it's
not right to do that [have a same sex partner]...subliminal messages saying... a guy and a girl have to get together...[but] it doesn't have to be."

Generally, it is a girl from an "impoverished lifestyle" (Emma) who marries "the typical perfect guy" (Christina) who is "royalty" (Anastaisia). Interestingly, although the girls at times explained that fairy tale heroines do not necessarily want to get married, "Belle wants to be able to read and...think for herself....She wants more intellect" and "Mulan...wants to go out to the war" (Anastaisia), ultimately they still "wanted true love" (Emma), "really, all the girls do" (Anastaisia).

With respect to *Snow White and the Huntsman*, "happily-ever-after" was less clear because "the princess can't be with the huntsman technically....You have to be with the prince if you're a princess" (Anastaisia). Christina asked, even though Snow White and the huntsman are "in true love," "with Snow White being pure, if she marries someone that's not pure or of royalty, what's gonna happen to her image?" The participants then tried to figure out a way to make a happily-ever-after fit into the movie. "There would have had to be a wedding," Anastaisia explained, with Snow White "continu[ing] the line." Thus, a happy ending in the movie would require (heterosexual) true love and nobility, with Snow White "officially knight[ing] the huntsman" (Christina). Additionally, they did not believe Snow White could rule by herself, needing "her advisors and William and Duke and everyone helping her" (Emma).

When asked to relate the ending to their own lives, Emma stated that "I'm kind of glad that, as much as I didn't like that ending,... that they didn't have the typical get married, have a baby kind of thing because it's not realistic." Emma has:

- a feeling that my first marriage isn't gonna work out, maybe not my second... I kind of play on both sides of the team, so my family...that's gonna shock them ..., and then my mom wants me to have kids. Well, if I marry a girl, then that's not really gonna happen anyway.

Happily-ever-after to Christina means "just being generally happy. You don't have to be in love to be happy. You've got to be happy with yourself before you're happy with someone else." Anastaisia stated that, "I think, in terms of my life, I don't have to be married to someone....But...in order to have a happy ending kind of thing, I think children would be involved." Jenna said her happy ending was "to be just what I want to do in life, like, what my dream job would be. So I don't want to get married...and I don't want kids."

So while the participants recognized and critiqued characteristic happy endings in fairy tales and real life, they still criticized *Snow White and the Huntsman* for not having a typical ending. This contradiction connects to the ways in which they saw Snow White as being a strong character yet still needing support from men, and the huntsman as not being strong enough.

**Implications for Adult Education**

These participants started these conversations with different considerations about gender. For some, this was seemingly the first time that they engaged in a such dialogue (i.e., Jenna stated "I have no idea" when asked about differences between men and women). For others, it was an opportunity to expand on their beginning understandings of gender in society. To some extent,
the participants could critique the prevalence of beauty, domesticity, female passivity, and heteronormativity in fairy tales (Baker-Sperry & Grauerholz, 2003; Zipes, 1997). In particular, they identified how the Disney model effects how fairy tales are represented and viewed (Zipes, 1979/2002). With respect to happily-ever-after endings, the participants critiqued them, recognizing they were not realistic (Baker-Sperry, 2007; Zipes, 1997), but nonetheless wanted, sought, and expected one in Snow White and the Huntsman. Indeed, they were quite creative in trying to make a gendered and classed happily-ever-after fit the movie. Interestingly, although they wanted alternative endings in their own lives, and were worried they would not be accepted, they did not accept an alternative happy ending in the film.

Our research confirms that structured discussions can be a useful means for critiquing gender, media, and life. These discussions may be especially important for women with learning disabilities in the college context, who may not have opportunities (or feel able to take advantage of them) to engage in a societal critique. On a daily basis, they interact with gendered representations prevalent in schooling and society that privilege ableist masculinized norms and representations (Roets et al., 2008). It is important that adult educators provide a space for such women to engage in discussions to understand and critique the ways in which language, discourse, and power are present in popular culture (Taber, Woloshyn, & Lane, in press). This research demonstrates the need for ongoing, continued facilitated critical discussion across a variety of texts.

References
Cawthorn, S. W., & Cole, E. V. (2010). Postsecondary students who have a learning disability: Student perspectives on accommodations access and obstacles. Journal of Postsecondary Education and Disability, 23, 112-128.
Lightner, K.L., Kipps-Vaughan, D., Schulte, T., & Trice, A.D. (2012). Reasons university students with a learning disability wait to seek disability services. Journal of
Postsecondary Education & Disability, 25(2), 145-159.
What Does Lifelong Learning Mean for Canadian Workers and Adult Learners Acquiring Literacy and Essential Skills?

Maurice Taylor  
David Trumpower  
Ivana Pavic  
Faculty of Education  
University of Ottawa

Abstract: The purpose of this mixed methods study was to investigate aspects of formal, non-formal and informal learning for workers and adult high school learners seeking literacy and essential skills. Three key themes emerged from the qualitative data sources: motivations for participation in various forms of learning; seeking out informal learning activities and pedagogical practices in the teaching and learning interactions of workers and adult learners. Findings from the quantitative analysis seemed to indicate that workers and adult learners acquiring literacy and essential skills tend to possess both the resources and readiness to continue their lifelong learning in informal settings.

Introduction

The Canadian Council on Learning (2011) reports that employees with higher educational attainment are participating in adult learning and training activities to a greater degree than workers with low skills. These participation rates in lifelong learning pose a significant challenge given that millions of Canadian adults do not have the literacy and essential skills needed to keep pace with the escalating demands of our economy and society. From a training perspective, this issue is now receiving national attention as it relates to labour market shortages, targeted workplace learning and the importance of lifelong learning for workers and other adult learners. However, Taylor and Evans (2010) suggest that there is a large gap in wrestling down the nebulous areas of formal, non-formal and informal learning for employees with low educational attainment as well as for adult learners seeking entry into the labour market. One specific research area and adult population that has not been investigated in a systematic way is the relatedness of formal, non-formal and informal learning for workers and adult learners seeking literacy and essential skills. Two research objectives guided the study: (1) Can lifelong learning be viewed on a continuum of formal, non-formal and informal learning for workers and adult learners seeking literacy and essential skills? (2) What are some of the main characteristics associated with workers and adult learners seeking literacy and essential skills in formal, non-formal, and informal learning settings?

Focused Literature Review and Orientating Theoretical Framework

Researchers such as Hager (2011) have described these three various types of learning. Formal learning is any clearly identified learning activity that takes place in an organized, structured setting and leads to certification. Non-formal learning refers to learning that takes place alongside the mainstream system of education and training that does not typically lead to formalized certification. The third type, informal learning, is referred to as experiential learning and results from daily life activities related to work, family and leisure. As Eaton (2012) implies, formal learning is the most studied of the different types of adult learning. However, she suggests that developing a better understanding of non-formal and informal learning is essential.
to recognizing learning that takes place outside of a formal setting. In an attempt to generate theoretical discussion, Sawchuck (2011) reviewed three leading models of informal learning related to work. Although each model views informal learning in a distinctive way, when taken together, they provide an overview of informal learning dynamics and associations with the more formal and non-formal settings. The Social/conflict model (Livingstone, 2001) emphasizes how learning opportunities may be unequally distributed depending on power relations; however the cognitive and emotive factors associated with informal learning are not explicitly addressed. The Situated/cognitive model, on the other hand, brings to the foreground “information processing” and goal-directed problem-solving (Eraut, 2011) but does not make explicit, the connections between the situational and more global concerns and pressures that also characterize informal learning. The third model referred to as the Learning in working life model by Illeris (2011) proposes that informal learning is mediated by technical-organizational, social-cultural and individual factors. Although, the models have been formulated based on data from employees with higher educational attainment only, they can provide insights into the nature of formal, non-formal and formal learning among workers and other adult learners seeking literacy and essential skills.

Also related to lifelong learning for workers and adults with low skills is the growing body of research on the relationship between learning, human capital and social capital (Field & Spence, 2000). Of particular interest to this study are the works of Falk and Kilpatrick (2000) and their model of building social capital. As opposed to explaining the broad social nature and impacts of social capital, the focus of this model “is on the micro processes involved in the production of social capital. It suggests that social and human capital co-evolve” (Balatti & Falk, 2002, p. 284). The model consists of three key elements: knowledge resources such as networks, knowledge and skills (human capital); identity resources such as cognitive and affective attributes (social capital) and the learning that occurs between the knowledge and identity resources. As Balatti and Falk (2002) explain, learning occurs when social capital is built, or in other words, when the set of interactions calls on existing knowledge and identity resources adds to them. What may be important to unravel here is whether or not social capital can be viewed as an outcome or as a resource and whether it is an individual characteristic that varies at given times of work and schooling life. The implications of this on the learning process have yet to be determined. As much as there is a recent growing interest in exploring the relationship between social capital and adult learning there is a dearth of research in the area of adult literacy and no existing empirical investigations with workers with low skills or other adult learners who are preparing for labour market entry.

Methodology

For this study, a mixed methods research design was used. Qualitative data were obtained through semi-structured interviews with instructors and trainees/learners The interview schedule was developed from the literature on the three different types of adult learning. The quantitative data was collected through the administration of the self-scoring, Social Capital Inventory (SCI) developed and piloted at the University of Ottawa, Ontario, Canada (Taylor, Trumpower & Pavic, 2012). This tool is comprised of 24 items which are divided into four 6-item subscales. The first subscale - Network Qualities (NQ) included sub-concepts of trust levels, efficacy and diversity. The second sub-scale - Network Structure (NS) measured sub-concepts of network size and communication mode while the third subscale - Network Transactions (NTr) focused on sub-concepts of sharing support and sharing knowledge. The final sub-scale integrated sub-concepts
of bonding, bridging and linking and was referred to as Network Types (NTy). As well, the Self-Directed Learning Readiness Scale (SDLRS) was employed. The SDLRS is a self-administered questionnaire that was designed to measure “the complex attitudes, skills, and characteristics that comprise an individual’s current level of readiness to manage his or her own learning” (Guglielmino & Associates, 2012, p. 1). For the purpose of this study, the SDLRS-S – The Learning Preference Assessment, a 58-item, self-scoring version was implemented, so that the learners could view their results immediately upon completion. Biographical information, including age, gender, marital status, and participation in clubs was also obtained as part of the data collection.

A total of seven sites were used for data collection: one in Ontario, four in Manitoba and two in Nova Scotia. The Ontario site was an Eastern Ontario Adult High School which delivers credit and non-credit educational and training programs for adults who are returning to high school and seeking re-entry into the workforce. The data collected in Manitoba and Nova Scotia was facilitated through the Workplace Education Manitoba and the Association of Workplace Educators of Nova Scotia. A total of 32 workers and 63 adult learners completed the SCI and SDLRS-S. Of this group, 39 participated in face-to-face interviews with 10 instructors completing interviews as well, to provide a more complete representation of the learners and learning process.

Results
In this section the results of the qualitative analysis are presented first followed by the quantitative findings. Three key themes emerged from the qualitative data sources: motivations for participation in various forms of learning; seeking out informal learning activities and pedagogical practices in the teaching and learning interactions of workers and adult learners. Findings from the quantitative analysis seemed to indicate that workers and adult learners acquiring literacy and essential skills tend to possess both the resources and readiness to continue their lifelong learning in informal settings.

Motivations and benefits for participating in the continuum of adult learning
For the most part, worker motivations for non-formal learning were related to improving their work performance on the job or self-improvement while adult learners were driven by the identification of short term and long term job and career goals. Learners seeking entry into the labour market opted for the shorter non-formal programs while learners interested in the longer career objectives chose the more formal credit programs. Workers participating in the non-formal programs offered at the work site were very motivated to learn new skills to enhance performance in their current jobs or hold onto their jobs given the threat of unemployment. Some workers were also motivated to participate in the non-formal programs as a means for preparing to write the General Education Development (GED). Meanwhile, adult learners in the formal programs offering credit courses for a grade 12 certificate were often motivated by a long-term employment goal. As well, learners in the formal credit program were motivated to learn skills that would be put to use once employment was found. Adult learners participating in the non-formal job readiness programs were motivated to get off of social assistance and find work that would put them back into the mainstream.
Seeking out informal learning opportunities
Common to both workers and adult learners was their interest in seeking out informal learning opportunities as a result of participating in some kind of structured education and training activity beforehand. Workers who had just completed a non-formal program often sought out internal workplace infrastructures as their venue for continued learning. Health and Safety committees and brown bag lunch meetings held with co-workers were often mentioned as activities where informal learning occurred. Adult learners who were enrolled in the non-formal programs sought out advice from co-workers or supervisors. These types of job readiness programs which offered a work placement component such as custodial training acted like an apprenticeship. Through trial and error, trainees could learn a new skill such as measuring the exact amounts of chemicals needed for cleaning solutions. Using manuals to understand company policies was also a type of informal learning activity. Finally, using search and research skills on the Internet was cited as one of the main informal learning activities for both workers and adult learners.

Pedagogical Practices Teaching Workers and Learners
Instructors teaching in the formal and non-formal programs had similar approaches with both the workers and learners. They focused on active participation, sharing expertise with learners in the group and developing individual learning plans as tools for success during the course or workshop. There were also several common practices used with these instructors such as making sure there was time during the course to talk about their goals and their families as a way of getting people connected with each other. This often spilled over into developing classroom peer assistance. In interviewing the workers, learners and instructors about their interactions in both the formal and non-formal programs, a common pattern that emerged was the transferability of skills to their informal learning experiences. Adult learners who worked independently in the credit course with minimal instruction believed that they developed a sense of self-directedness in learning outside of the classroom. These learners had no difficulty forming learning objectives and identifying the resources to match their objectives.

Results From the Quantitative Analysis
Overall, the mean score on the SDLRS-S was 219.66 (SD=26.50). According to norms provided by Guglielmino & Associates (2012), a majority of learners’ scores (77%) indicated average to above average self-directed learning readiness. For the SCI, the total scale score was determined by summing responses to each of the 24 items for a potential range of 24-120. Subscale scores were likewise determined by summing the responses for the six subscale items for a potential range of 6-30 each. Higher scores indicate higher levels of social capital. Overall, subscale scores were roughly normally distributed with very few individuals scoring below 18 on any of the subscales, indicating moderate to strong agreement with most items on the scales. Thus, participants tended to agree that they had access to supportive social networks and services (NS), that there is trust, respect, and openness within their social networks (NQ), that there is reciprocal sharing within these networks (NTr), and that they have the confidence and ability to make links with individuals/services that have different perspectives than their own (NTy). Given the distribution of total scale scores on the SCI, cut-off values of 89.5 and 99.5 were used to divide participants into three roughly equal-sized groups, which were labelled as: below average (0-89), average (90-99), and above average (100-120) social capital.
Chi-square analyses revealed that social capital varied systematically with some of the biographical variables. In particular, a marginally disproportionately higher percentage of females than males had average or above average scores on the SCI, $\chi^2(1) = 2.80, p = .094$. More specifically, this gender difference was more pronounced for learners who reported not belonging to any clubs, $\chi^2(1) = 4.26, p = .039$. No gender difference was found for learners who reported belonging to one or more clubs, $\chi^2(1) = 0.02, p = .896$. Scores on the SCI were not found to be statistically significantly related to age, marital status, or worker and adult learner group. In addition, scores on the SDLRS-S were not found to be statistically significantly related to any of the biographical variables.

**Implications for Adult Education Theory and Practice**

Drawing from the andragogy in practice model espoused by Knowles, Holton and Swanson (2011) may shed some light on understanding the commonalities around the three types of learning. Results from this study seem to indicate that a driving force for engagement in any one of these three types of learning are the goals and purposes of the specific education and training activity, whether it was for organizational, individual or societal growth. As well, we see from the findings that there are differences between workers and learners that impact the type of learning and act as filters that shape the event. These differences were related to the subject matter that was chosen for the job related learning, and the real life situational circumstances such as multiple roles of family and work and individual characteristics. The core adult learning principles, especially motivation to learn, the orientation to learning, and the readiness to learn, were all very prevalent in both workers and learners of the study. Evidence from this investigation seems to suggest that the andragogy practice model could be useful in understanding formal, non-formal and informal learning as it recognizes the lack of homogeneity among learners and learning situations and illustrates the learning transaction as a multifaceted activity. The framework could be viewed as a contextual analysis step in developing adult programs or individual trainee plans.

Based on the findings from this study some additional insights can now be made on the situated/cognitive model developed by Eraut (2011) that relates to adults with low skills. What we find in this study are very similar types of work processes reported not only by the employees but also by the adult learners. For example, when describing their experiences with informal learning, both groups reported the importance of participation in group processes, working alongside others, consultation, tackling challenging tasks and roles, trying things out and consolidating and extending skills. Therefore, it would appear that for both adults with higher and lower educational attainment most of the informal learning reported occurred as a by-product of the normal working processes. This further reinforces the idea that for adult learners still in a training situation, the structure of that situation has much to offer as a practical work environment for the development of lifelong learning skills.

There also seems to be some evidence from the qualitative data sources to support the idea that human and social capital co-evolves as suggested by Balatti and Falk (2002). This appears to be apparent for both workers and adult learners that were enrolled in the formal and non-formal programs. As the job related knowledge, competencies and essential skills were acquired by the participants there was also various types of social capital that was realized at the same time. This type of social capital was marked by the awareness and existence of networks and the levels of
trust in the work and classroom clusters which helped to promote collective action among members of that particular social grouping. In the custodial training non-formal program, for example, which offered a social capital workshop both trainees and instructors strongly advocated for this type of activity to be integrated into the regular curriculum. This type of approach also builds on the work of Balatti, Black and Falk (2007) that used the interactions between networks within and outside literacy classrooms to foster social capital outcomes.

The quantitative results of this study indicate that workers and adult learners acquiring literacy and essential skills, in general, possess both a readiness to continue learning in a self-directed fashion in non-formal settings and the social capital to help make this happen. Participants in the study had scores on a standardized measure of self-directed learning readiness that were predominantly in the average to above average range. Although norms for the SCI are not yet available as this instrument was newly developed as part of the present study, participant scores appeared to indicate a generally high level of social capital, as well. Thus, the quantitative results support and extend some of the qualitative findings – not only are workers and adult learners interested in continuing their lifelong learning in non-formal settings, many appear to have the readiness and resources with which to do so successfully.

Given the design of this study, however, it is not clear if workers and adult learners already possessed self-directed learning readiness and social capital before enrolling in their current workplace, job readiness and academic programs, or if they acquired the skills and social resources that have prepared them for informal, self-directed learning during these programs. It is possible that participants enrol in these types of programs precisely because they were already self-directed and prepared to learn. Alternatively, they may not have been quite ready to undertake new learning on their own, so enrolled in a more structured program in which they could acquire the necessary skills and resources to later apply in informal learning settings. Based on the qualitative findings, we believe it is, at least partially, the latter. Nevertheless, this is an area that requires additional research using ethnographic or narrative inquiries.

Selected References (full references are available upon request)


Falling into the Lacuna: Theorizing Intergenerational Political Learning

Misty L. Underwood
Donna M. Chovanec
University of Alberta

Abstract: In our search for a framework to analyze the “living activism” revealed in a study of intergenerational political learning, we experienced a sensation like falling into a theoretical lacuna. In this paper, we examine and critique the conceptual limitations of the major theories that vaguely inform our study and conclude by opening a dialogue based on Indigenous movement learning as way out of this lacuna.

Introduction

What do we do now? Where do we go from here?

This is the unfortunate point we, the authors, have reached in attempting to analyze the empirical data from a study on intergenerational political learning. While we have identified practice implications based on the theme of “living activism,” we have not so confidently forayed into theorizing our findings. In casting around for useful frameworks to guide our analysis, we experienced a sensation like falling into a theoretical lacuna – meaning that we encountered a void or a gap in our theoretical knowledge. Why? First, while there is a growing body of (largely descriptive) literature on social movement learning spanning three decades, there is almost a complete absence of attention to learning across generations. Second, available theories that might contribute to an understanding of intergenerational political learning have weaknesses on various dimensions.

We believe that the study of social movement learning requires a theoretical breakthrough to move us beyond simply describing our findings or borrowing theoretical frameworks from outside the discipline (Holst, 2011). In this paper, we examine and critique the conceptual limitations of the major theories that vaguely inform our study of intergenerational political learning, juxtaposed against the findings from our study. We conclude by suggesting that a way out of this lacuna is to turn to studies of Indigenous movements – which have been marginalized in the academic discourse – for ways of understanding and theorizing intergenerational political learning.

We begin by introducing the empirical study and our findings, then review and critique the major theories, and conclude by opening a dialogue about where we could go from here.

Empirical Findings: Intergenerational Learning in Activist Families

For some time now, we have been interested in the political learning processes that occur across generations. The surge in youth activism across the globe in 2011 (e.g., Arab Spring, Occupy, Quebec student protests) belies the common assumption that young adults are not politically engaged. In Canada, while “young adults do not vote as often as people in older age groups, … they help make up for it by engaging in other politically-related activities” (Statistics Canada, 2005). According to Blais and Lowen (2011), “the most crucial determinants are interest in politics and information about politics” (p. 3). For adult educators, this prompts questions about political learning: What are the learning and “teaching” processes that are mobilized in becoming
politically “interested” and “informed”? What is the role of parents, activists, or teachers in encouraging young adults to become politically engaged?

To address these questions, we are conducting an ethnographic study asking: What are the intergenerational learning processes that contribute to participation in social movements/activism, and how can these be cultivated in families, community organizations, and political parties?

To date, we have conducted a literature review and a pilot study with families who attended a summer retreat for activists in Edmonton, Alberta. The annual summer retreat is a reflective, community-building, educational opportunity for local activists organized by the Centre for Community Organizing and Popular Education (CCOPE). A key component of the summer retreat is the intentional inclusion of spaces for intergenerational learning. For the research project, we completed interviews with four families, observed and facilitated intergenerational learning at the retreat and held a post-retreat event with the families. Our theme-based analysis indicates that “living activism” is stimulated through active examples, dialogue and non-indoctrination, against outside influences.

**Active Examples**
In the interviewed families, being involved is a way of life and part of the familial culture. Parents, grandparents and other adults take children along to demonstrations, meetings, and other political events where they observe and/or actively participate. During a family interview, one youth said, “When we go to events and rallies with you guys, we’re like inspired and we’re interested in becoming activists.” In some families, children had initiated civic/political action and the parents assumed supportive and facilitative roles. One parent reported: “I was writing various types of letters about [Bill 44] to different ministers… [My son] asked me,… “How do I find out where they are and how do I send it to them?” So I showed [him] the Legislatures’ list… [and] how to go through the drop down menus to find who you need. [My son] actually sourced everyone’s name that he needed and everyone’s address. He’s just in grade 3.”

**Dialogue**
In each family, dialogue is a salient element in making political action a lifestyle. Deliberate or incidental discussions about social justice, oppression, and inequity are commonplace. According to one parent, “We talk about… why there’s poverty and who’s poor, and why are they poor and why are other people not poor… [and] about privilege.” Both parents and children/youth actively participate. As one youth described, “When I was little, I would hear my parents talking about like politics and just issues and stuff that I didn’t understand. After I got older, when I hear them talking about like a government in some foreign country or some issue, I’ll ask them about it and I’ll get them to explain it to me so I can take part in the conversation.” Sometimes youth bring up new viewpoints or differing opinions, which contribute to the dialogic exchange.

**Non indoctrinating**
Parents are adamant that they do not intend to indoctrinate their children into particular ways of thinking, instead it is the *process* of thinking critically that they wish to instill in their children. As one parent said, “I try to bring up [my son] as a critical thinker… I haven’t tried to make him think the way that I think… I want him to think critically and reflexively.” Children and youth
concurred. One child said, “It was not ‘this is the way it is.’ It was, ‘here are the facts; you choose how you want to think about it. Here’s my opinion. Use those facts and my opinion to think about it.’”

Outside Influences
Families recognize how difficult it is to teach values that are contrary to mainstream society. There are external pressures from school, friends, and sometimes extended family members. For youth, living a lifestyle with public action and political consciousness is difficult to maintain across all spheres of their lives. One parent observed, “There’s endless conversations around election time... So much so that their friends mock us.” Nonetheless, youth do act on the values learned at home. In this example, two brothers talked about confronting bullying at their school, “Yeah he was experiencing some bullying and we just like, let him know, you’re not alone, like you have a support system… We also walked him with another friend to the train.”

Living Activism
These four themes contribute to an overall experience of “living activism.” The political and social involvement of family members is brought into the home and becomes an important aspect of how these families live their daily lives. Through discussing what is happening around them, taking action in the public sphere (such as attending protests, school board meetings, and political party campaigns), and developing personal relationships with other activists, participation and involvement are a way of life and part of the family culture. Thus, young activists are socialized through non-indoctrinating familial and community processes involving example and dialogue, despite numerous outside influences and external pressures that are contrary to the living activism experienced in the home.

Based on this understanding, we are working on a critical parenting curriculum and experimenting with methods of facilitating intergenerational political learning within activist spaces that are often overly adult-centric.

The Theoretical Lacuna
However, in our attempts to delve into a deeper theoretical analysis of the data, we were stuck. We started by reviewing related literatures, through which we found four general themes and three primary theory groups that we review below, but we were still left feeling that something was missing from the dominant theoretical landscape.

We conceptualize intergenerational political learning to represent the knowledge, values, beliefs and actions about, in, and on the world that are shared across generations, particularly within families and communities. In the literature, four themes relevant to this definition resonated somewhat with our findings. These themes include: the social context of intergenerational political learning within communities and/or families (Beck & Jennings, 1991); the development of critical consciousness as a catalyst to political activism (Chovanec, 2009; Tedin, 1974); the bi-directionality of intergenerational political learning (Ho, 2010); and, intergenerational learning as an abeyance structure contributing to the sustainability of social movements across time (Polletta & Jasper, 2001).
Nonetheless, the concept is not theoretically well-developed in social movement theory, political socialization theory, or adult education (Chovanec, Chubb, McClean, & Piquette (2009). Although Hall (2006) reviews a number of models of “social movement learning,” they are primarily descriptive and under-theorized and none of these explicitly addresses an intergenerational dimension.

In the remainder of this section, we review the three major theory groups that consistently appear in the literature (i.e., social learning theory, social constructivism, and neo-Marxist theories), and we analyze the gaps and shortcomings of each.

**Social Learning Theory**
The theoretical conceptualization of this intergenerational political learning overwhelmingly tends to the psychological, with Albert Bandura’s social learning theory (SLT) leading the discussion. Typical elements of SLT such as role modeling, observation and self-efficacy are often used to explain specific actions occurring within families that contribute to the transmission of political beliefs, behaviours, attitudes and values from adults to children (Beck & Jennings, 2009). These elements certainly could account for specific behaviours happening within families related to political socialization, and some aspects of our empirical themes seem to resonate with such elements.

However, these social learning processes are often also linked to the development of critical consciousness but we question whether such processes alone could account for the complexity involved in its development. For example, can one “model” critical consciousness? The theory doesn’t address how family members develop the in-depth analysis and critique of the social structures in which they are embedded. Other limitations of Bandura’s theory are that it focuses on individual explanations of unilateral transmission from adults to children and, while the theory considers individual factors within a social context, it largely excludes the broader sociocultural and historical contexts within which intergenerational political learning occurs.

**Social Constructivism**
Social constructivism, which places greater attention on the social context, also informs an understanding of intergenerational political learning (Mitra, 2008). Vygotsky illuminated the relationship between the individual and society in the development of consciousness. He postulated that not only is knowledge and meaning constructed in the child’s social milieu but that the constructed meaning gives rise to consciousness. Thus, “consciousness is derived from the prevalent meaning systems in one’s social environment” (Liu & Matthews, 2005, p. 395). An especially important theoretical contribution is Vygostky’s zone of proximal development (ZPD). Some use the concept to illustrate the bi-directional relationship of intergenerational learning in which any generation can take on the role of expert scaffolding the other generation’s learning and creation of knowledge (Mitra, 2008), and others use ZPD to demonstrate the “interplay of individuals” in the collective learning of critical consciousness (Wells cited in Kilgore, 1999).

Emerging from sociology but heavily influenced by psychology, social constructivist theory becomes a bridge, at once seeing the individual and yet contextualizing the social, cultural, historic and structural in relation to society. Thus far, this theory only skims the surface. A more
extensive analysis is needed to fully grasp the promises and limitations that this theoretical lens may hold for intergenerational political learning.

**Neo-Marxist Theories**

Also found within the literature are neo-Marxist theories, notably through Gramsci, Freire, and Allman. Although multiple studies have utilized a Freirian understanding of critical consciousness, Biazar (2009) and Chovanec (2009; Chovanec et al., 2009) have most explicitly taken up an understanding of critical consciousness as “actively produced within our historically specific experience of our social, material, and natural existence” (Allman cited in Biazar, 2009, p. 74). In their review of political socialization theories, Chovanec et al. (2009) conclude, “Theories that conceptualize human development as a dialectical relationship between ideas and social circumstances are important in understanding how a revolutionary praxis can emerge from particular biographical and social backgrounds” (p. 23).

However, the neo-Marxist theoretical lens is also not without criticism or gaps. The typical emphasis on class-based analysis often leaves little room for “the complex interplay of gender, race, sexuality and other power-based social constructions” (Chovanec et al., 2009, p. 25). Additionally, originating in subaltern studies, Marxist analyses of social movements in the global south have been criticized for dismissing the types of actions mobilized in subaltern movements (Choudry, 2007; Kapoor, 2009; Langdon, 2009).

In general, each theory group contributes something to our study of intergenerational political learning. For example, parents may “model” some activist behaviours, youth and parents scaffold each others’ activist learning, and the social environment works both for and against the construction of critical consciousness. However, for us, none of these theories adequately explains the complexity of the highly relational aspect of living activism in these families. Thus, there remains an unfilled gap, or theoretical lacuna, about which we now hope to open a dialogue in order to expand the possibilities for ongoing theoretical analyses.

**Moving out of the Lacuna and into the Spiral**

In attempting to theorize our research findings based on the available research and literature, it became clear that insufficient theoretical tools are available to us. Choudry and Kapoor (2010) note, “Thus far relatively few attempts have been made to theorize informal learning and knowledge production through involvement in social action” (p. 4). Indeed much of our theorizing has been based in an OSM/NSM debate, which Holst (2011) notes is fundamentally flawed and has been “criticized by anti-racist, Indigenous, and feminist perspectives” (p. 119). Due to the gap within adult education to adequately address social movement learning theory, and particularly intergenerational political learning, we knew that we needed to move beyond our current theoretical understandings. But, at first, we didn’t know where to turn.

In a flash of insight, Misty eventually initiated our exploration by turning to her own *Mestiza* roots.

In 2005 the State of Texas pursued a transportation development project called the Trans Texas Corridor (TTC). Together with my family, community, environmental activists, and Indigenous activists, we worked to stop this 4000-mile, 1200-foot wide environmental catastrophe and save the land inherited by my *Mestiza* family following
the displacement of our Indigenous ancestors. We worked to raise awareness around the issues of Indigenous and environmental concerns through demonstrations, petitions, and town hall meetings. In 2010, the project was finally abandoned due to the controversy surrounding it. The Trans Texas Corridor was just one example of my family’s and community’s resistance to the continued seizure of our Mestiza homelands and the ongoing colonization of Indigenous peoples in North America.

Misty’s reflection on those experiences and her immersion in this research project brought her to the understanding that Indigenous learning is by its very nature intergenerational – and political. As her family and community engage with these struggles, they invoke the knowledge of ancestors who resisted displacement and loss of traditional lands. This realization stimulated our thinking in new directions guided by Indigenous perspectives on learning that involve transmission of knowledges through history, culture, language, land, and interconnectedness to all living beings, and within which the culture of resistance is born and nurtured over centuries of colonial struggle spanning multiple generations (Smith, 2012). “Indigenous peoples have always been peoples of resistance (Grande, 2004, p. 29), so much so that, “To be born Indian is to be born political” (Alfred cited in Smith, 2012, p. 114).

Intergenerational political learning in Indigenous communities purposefully attends to the interconnectedness of multiple generations (Cajete, 2000) through traditional pedagogies such as “talking or sharing circles and dialogues, participant observations, experiential learning, modeling, meditation, prayer, ceremonies, or story telling as ways of knowing and learning” (Battiste, 2002, p. 18), reaching both young and old alike. These pedagogies are grounded in an onto-epistemology and axiology of relationality and relational accountability that build and honour relationships between the generations, peoples, land, nature, cosmos, and spiritual realm (Wilson, 2008). This embedded and embodied knowledge of struggle is, in the deepest sense, living activism.

This brings to mind the great spiral, a powerful symbol in Misty’s home community.

The spiral represents a journey and is part of our creation story. To me, the spiral represents living activism, integral to which is intergenerational learning. Our journey is organic and dynamic but rooted to 500 years of resistance and survival.

We want to be clear that Indigenous knowledge and pedagogy belongs to Indigenous peoples alone (Battiste, 2002). We are not recommending their exportation or appropriation; we condemn such actions. There is simply something going on in our data that defies explanation through our available Eurocentric theoretical understandings. We agree with Choudry (2007) who states, “To overlook, or underestimate the value of [Indigenous peoples’] analysis and strategies of resistance is to seriously constrain analysis and action” (p. 103). For our research, such an analysis might open up our understanding of the spiral of living activism including its deeply relational quality, the spiritual dimension of love, and the wisdom from generations past.

So, we wish to open a dialogue, to start a conversation: Where do we go from here? How can we climb out of the lacuna and into the spiral?
References


The Influence of Self-Efficacy Beliefs for Student Parents Attending University

Tricia M. van Rhijn
Donna S. Lero
University of Guelph

Abstract: Student parents (i.e., students who have their own dependent children) are a specific sub-population of adult learners. This study investigated the impact of self-efficacy beliefs on perceived capacity to manage multiple roles and satisfaction with family, school, and life for student parents. Latent variable structural equation modeling was utilized to analyze survey data collected from 398 student parents enrolled at four Ontario universities. Self-efficacy beliefs are found to influence perceptions of satisfaction. Furthermore, preliminary evidence is provided of unique subgroups within the student parent population based on children’s ages, partner status, and enrolment status (i.e., full/part-time studies).

Introduction
For adult learners returning to formal education, self-efficacy beliefs may be a key factor influencing academic success. Previous research supports the relationship between self-efficacy beliefs and positive outcomes (e.g., satisfaction with life and quality of family functioning) for individuals (Bandura, Caprara, Barbaranelli, Regalia, & Scabini, 2011; Quimby & O’Brien, 2006). Scholars have also recognized the link between self-efficacy beliefs and academic success for mature students. Schlossberg and colleagues (1989) suggested that self-efficacy beliefs could be an important consideration when studying the success of adult learners based on the unique challenges that mature students face. Zajacova, Lynch and Espenshade (2005) found academic self-efficacy to be a strong predictor of academic success for non-traditional post-secondary students. Academic self-efficacy and academic success for mature students may be connected by perceptions of satisfaction. For mature students, perceived satisfaction may be domain specific (e.g., at school or in the family) or broader (e.g., general life satisfaction). Bandura and colleagues (2011) have demonstrated that perceived parenting efficacy predicts the quality of both child and marital relationships and, in addition, that collective family efficacy mediates the relationship between parenting and dyadic (i.e., marital or partner) efficacy and family satisfaction. The relationship between self-efficacy beliefs and academic success has been demonstrated for both mature students (Zajacova et al., 2005) and traditional students (Bandura, Barbaranelli, Caprara, & Pastorelli, 1996). No research has been located comparing mature and traditional students with regards to academic self-efficacy; however, mature students may have less confidence in their ability to succeed academically based on their absence from formal education (as opposed to traditional students who are more likely to have moved from high school directly to post-secondary study).

Mature students and student parents (i.e., those with dependent children) are more likely to withdraw from study than traditional-aged and circumstanced students (Holmes, 2005; MacFadgen, 2008; Scott, Burns, & Cooney, 1996). Mature student attrition from study may be related not only to academic self-efficacy beliefs but also to their belief in their ability to succeed in their other important roles as well: for student parents, the ability to be a good parent to their child(ren) is key (van Rhijn, 2012). The current study focused on student parents attending
university and investigated how students’ self-efficacy beliefs affect their satisfaction and capacity to manage multiple roles. As such, it makes a unique contribution to the literature. The purpose of this study was to investigate the relationship between self-efficacy beliefs and school, family and life satisfaction, as well as school-family balance to determine the influence of self-efficacy beliefs on student parents’ experiences while attending university.

Theoretical Framework
Social Cognitive Theory (Bandura, 1986) proposes that a triadic perspective is required to understand human functioning: that behaviour, personal factors (cognitive and other internal psychological factors), and environmental events operate in a dynamic fashion affecting a variety of outcomes. Bandura referred to this triadic interaction as ‘reciprocal determinism’. Humans are seen to be agentic in that they are able to exercise control over their feelings, thoughts, and actions. Individuals’ beliefs in their capability to achieve their goals and accomplish specific tasks, termed self-efficacy, are the foundation of human agency; in other words, people will choose, expend energy, and persist in tasks that they believe they can achieve. The reciprocal ways in which personal factors, environmental events, and behaviours impact one another are of particular interest for understanding student parents, especially when considering them through a multiple roles perspective. We suggest that appreciating the impact of self-efficacy beliefs on students’ experiences and sense of agency is useful, not only in the academic role (i.e., a role where self-efficacy may be lower due to time away from the academic environment), but also in the family setting (i.e., self-efficacy beliefs with regards to the parental role that may be affected by experiences of conflict and challenge dealing with the additional role demands associated with being a student).

Grzywacz and Carlson (2007) define work-family balance as the “accomplishment of role-related expectations that are negotiated and shared between an individual and his/her role-related partners in the work and family domains” (p. 458). Work-family balance relates to both work and family-related outcomes such as job satisfaction, organizational commitment, family satisfaction, and family functioning (Carlson, Grzywacz, & Zivnuska, 2009). Adapting the work-family balance definition to school-family balance, we suggest that school-family balance relates to school and family outcomes such as school satisfaction and family satisfaction.

Research Questions
A conceptual model was created including the latent variables in this study: academic self-efficacy, parental self-efficacy, school-family balance, family satisfaction, school satisfaction, and general life satisfaction. The model was built based on the following previously documented relationships:
1. Academic self-efficacy as a direct predictor of school satisfaction and parental self-efficacy as a direct predictor of family satisfaction (Bandura et al., 1996; Bandura et al., 2011), and
2. Family satisfaction and school satisfaction as direct predictors of life satisfaction (Carlson et al., 2009).

In addition, school-family balance was added to the model as a mediator between academic self-efficacy and school satisfaction and between parental self-efficacy and family satisfaction. Although there was no previous work to guide the placement of this construct in the model, this placement was hypothesized based on school-family balance being a form of self-efficacy in managing role demands in and across two domains.
Analysis was conducted to investigate the conceptual model and was guided by the following research questions. First, in what ways do domain-specific self-efficacy beliefs influence experiences of school, family, and life satisfaction? We hypothesized a positive relationship between academic self-efficacy and school satisfaction (H1) and between parental self-efficacy and family satisfaction (H2). We also hypothesized a positive relationship between school satisfaction and general life satisfaction (H3) and between family satisfaction and general life satisfaction (H4).

Second, how is school-family balance related to domain-specific self-efficacy and satisfaction? We hypothesized a positive relationship between academic self-efficacy and school-family balance (H5) and between parental self-efficacy and school-family balance (H6). We also hypothesized a positive relationship between school-family balance and school satisfaction (H7) and between school-family balance and family satisfaction (H8). Third, do unique subgroups exist with regards to self-efficacy beliefs and perceptions of satisfaction within the student parent population based on gender, partner status, enrolment status, and age of youngest child? This was an exploratory analysis based on previous work providing initial evidence of subgroup differences based on the life circumstances of subpopulations among student parents (van Rhijn, Smit Quosai, & Lero, 2011).

**Methodology**

Data were collected during the fall 2011 phase of a three-year study of mature students, the Mature Student Experience Survey (MSES). With assistance from Registrars’ offices at four universities in southern Ontario, mature students (undergraduate students aged 25+) were invited to participate in this research. Recruitment occurred via email and data were collected using an online survey instrument with a mix of open- and closed-ended questions. A sample of 398 mature student parents with one or more dependent children under the age of 18 (25.3% of the 1,571 mature student respondents) was obtained for the current study.

**Measures**

In addition to demographic variables, six measures were utilized for this study: Academic Self-Efficacy Scale (Zajacova et al., 2005); Parental Self-Efficacy Scale (Caprara, Regalia, Scabini, Barbaranelli, & Bandura, 2004); School, family, and general life satisfaction subscales of the Extended Satisfaction with Life Scale (Alfonso, Allison, Rader, & Gorman, 1996); and the Work-Family Balance Scale (Carlson et al., 2009) adapted to assess school-family balance.

**Analytic Strategy**

The research questions were investigated using latent variable structural equation modelling analyses. Previous work demonstrated the adequacy of the fit of the data to each of the measurement constructs (van Rhijn, 2012). Significant Kolmogorov-Smirnov test results for all of the items indicated that these data were not normally distributed and a majority of the items were skewed and/or kurtotic. Consequently, the latent variable analysis was conducted using maximum likelihood estimation with robust standard errors (MLR using Mplus Version 6.11; Muthén & Muthén, 1998-2011).

Multiple goodness-of-fit indices were reviewed to assess model fit including chi-square (\(\chi^2\); Bollen, 1989), the root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA; Steiger, 1990), and the
comparative fit index (CFI; Bentler, 1990). Although good fitting models have non-significant \( p < .05 \) chi-square values, models with large sample sizes are almost always statistically significant (Kline, 2005); therefore, the other measures of model fit were also used including RMSEA values of .06 or less and CFI values greater than .95 (Hu & Bentler, 1999).

Results

The sample consisted of 398 student parents. Participants were primarily women (75.8%), partnered (79.4%), with an average age of 38.2 years. Participants had an average of 1.8 children (range: 1-6) and the mean age of their youngest child was 7.1 years (range: 0-18). Table 1 presents a breakdown of the sample characteristics by gender and tests for differences between the groups. Men and women student parents were not significantly different in terms of their enrolment or employment status; however, compared to women, men were significantly older, more likely to be partnered, their youngest child was younger, and they were less likely to be born in Canada. In addition, among student parents who were employed, men reported working significantly more hours per week.

Table 1. Sample Characteristics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Total (N = 398)</th>
<th>Men (n = 96)</th>
<th>Women (n = 302)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mean/</td>
<td>Mean/</td>
<td>Mean/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>SD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enrolment status</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full-time(^a)</td>
<td>175</td>
<td>44.0</td>
<td>36 37.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part-time</td>
<td>223</td>
<td>56.0</td>
<td>60 62.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>38.2</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>39.8 7.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partner status</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>20.6</td>
<td>2 2.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partnered</td>
<td>312</td>
<td>79.4</td>
<td>94 97.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age of youngest child</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>5.8 5.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of children</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>1.8 0.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Born in Canada</td>
<td>210</td>
<td>61.8</td>
<td>40 48.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment status</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employed</td>
<td>263</td>
<td>67.8</td>
<td>66 71.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not employed</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>32.2</td>
<td>27 29.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work hours/week</td>
<td>33.6</td>
<td>13.2</td>
<td>38.7 11.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^{a}\) Full-time status defined according to Canada Student Loans Program requirements of 60% or greater of a full course load.

Means, standard deviations, and Cronbach alpha reliability estimates for the measures are presented in Table 2. Examination of the bivariate correlations revealed significant correlations \( p < .01 \) among all six study variables.
Table 2. Mean, Standard Deviation, and Cronbach Alpha Reliability Estimates for Study Scales

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scale</th>
<th>Number of items</th>
<th>Response Range</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Cronbach α</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School-family balance</td>
<td>398</td>
<td>1 – 5</td>
<td>3.80</td>
<td>0.79</td>
<td>.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic self-efficacy</td>
<td>398</td>
<td>1 – 11</td>
<td>8.18</td>
<td>1.94</td>
<td>.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parental self-efficacy</td>
<td>398</td>
<td>2 – 7</td>
<td>5.95</td>
<td>0.81</td>
<td>.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family satisfaction</td>
<td>398</td>
<td>1 – 7</td>
<td>5.21</td>
<td>1.52</td>
<td>.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School satisfaction</td>
<td>398</td>
<td>2 – 7</td>
<td>5.62</td>
<td>0.98</td>
<td>.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General life satisfaction</td>
<td>398</td>
<td>1 – 7</td>
<td>5.06</td>
<td>1.50</td>
<td>.96</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Analyses provided evidence of the influence of self-efficacy beliefs on student parents’ experiences in university study. Overall, the structural model demonstrated adequate fit to these data based on the following fit indices: S-Bχ² (df) = 1015.22 (606), p < .001; RMSEA = 0.04, CFI = 0.96. The model accounted for the following amounts of variance in the endogenous variables: 40% of school-family balance, 30% of family satisfaction, 16% of school satisfaction, and 75% of life satisfaction (all significant at the p < .001 level). In addition, the eight specific hypotheses regarding the structural relationships in the model were all supported based on significant and positive path estimates (Table 3).

Table 3. Hypothesis Testing of the Structural Path Relationships

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hypothesized structural path relationship</th>
<th>Estimate</th>
<th>t</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>H1 Academic self-efficacy → School satisfaction</td>
<td>.23**</td>
<td>3.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H2 Parental self-efficacy → Family satisfaction</td>
<td>.27***</td>
<td>4.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H3 School satisfaction → General life satisfaction</td>
<td>.10**</td>
<td>2.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H4 Family satisfaction → General life satisfaction</td>
<td>.84***</td>
<td>31.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H5 Academic self-efficacy → School-family balance</td>
<td>.56***</td>
<td>11.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H6 Parental self-efficacy → School-family balance</td>
<td>.20***</td>
<td>3.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H7 School-family balance → School satisfaction</td>
<td>.22**</td>
<td>2.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H8 School-family balance → Family satisfaction</td>
<td>.39***</td>
<td>7.32</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p < .05. **p < .01. ***p < .001.

The analysis also provided some preliminary evidence of unique subgroups within the student parent population based on gender, partner status, enrolment status, and age of youngest child. The four covariates (gender, partner status, enrolment status, age of youngest child) were added to the structural model in order to test whether they were significantly associated with the six study variables. None of the covariates were found to be significantly related to academic self-efficacy, school-family balance, or life satisfaction. Being partnered was found to be positively associated with school satisfaction (.11, t = 2.33, p = .02). Both partner status (.14, t = 3.36, p = .001) and enrolment status (.13, t = 3.01, p = .003) were positively associated with family satisfaction. Finally, age of youngest child was inversely associated with parental self-efficacy (-.13, t = -2.64, p = .008).

Discussion

This study focused on student parents attending university and investigated the influence of self-efficacy beliefs on family, school, and life satisfaction, as well as the capacity to manage multiple roles. The structural model tested demonstrated that self-efficacy beliefs influence
domain-specific satisfaction (e.g., academic self-efficacy and school satisfaction; parental self-efficacy and family satisfaction). Student parents with higher self-efficacy beliefs regarding their academic skills and performance reported feeling more satisfied with school. Based on previous work connecting academic self-efficacy beliefs and academic success (Zajacova et al., 2005), this finding may help to explain why student parents and mature students have higher attrition rates than traditional students. Beginning post-secondary study after an extended period of absence from the formal school environment may negatively impact student parents’ self-efficacy beliefs with regards to their capacity to do well in school. If that is true, student parents might benefit from institutional support in upgrading their skills and navigating the post-secondary environment in order to reduce attrition. Similarly, student parents with higher self-efficacy beliefs regarding their ability to parent reported feeling more satisfied with their family.

The model testing also demonstrated that school-family balance, a form of self-efficacy in managing multiple roles, was found to be predicted by both academic self-efficacy and parental self-efficacy. In turn, school-family balance was also found to predict both school and family satisfaction.

Finally, this study provides preliminary evidence of unique subgroups within the student parent population with regards to self-efficacy beliefs and perceptions of satisfaction. Partner status was positively related to both school satisfaction and family satisfaction. It is likely that partnered student parents receive more emotional social support (e.g., encouragement) and instrumental support (e.g., help with parenting and household duties). Enrolment status was also positively related to family satisfaction. Student parents who were enrolled on a part-time basis had higher family satisfaction scores, potentially indicating that the choice to reduce or limit school-related demands (despite other costs) leads to a more satisfactory allocation of time and energy across school and family roles. In addition, student parents with younger children had higher parental self-efficacy scores, which may indicate that parents of older children, who are more autonomous, experience more challenges as a parent. Interestingly, gender was not significantly related to any of the self-efficacy or satisfaction variables; however, this may not be indicative of a lack of influence related to gender; rather it could be related to the uneven sample sizes with less than one-quarter of the sample being men.

Future research is required to continue investigating the influence of self-efficacy beliefs for student parents. Further investigation is recommended to explore subgroup differences, in particular those related to gender. Invariance testing of the measurement models and structural model also is recommended to determine whether the conceptual model we have proposed works similarly for the different subgroups. In addition, further investigation is required to better understand attrition in this population. This research was conducted with student parents who are still studying. Research is recommended that follows student parents who withdraw from their studies in order to explicitly investigate predictors of, and reasons for attrition.

**Implications for Adult Education Theory & Practice**

In general, student parents are not identified as a unique population of post-secondary students. Instead, they are typically subsumed within the larger population of adult (i.e., mature or non-traditional) learners. This occurs both at the institutional level and within research on adult learners. Yet, current statistics suggest that student parents account for 13% of post-secondary
Given the unique circumstances and challenges faced by student parents, even when compared to the broader adult learner population, examination of the experiences of student parents is vital in order to understand their success in their roles both as students and as parents. Previous work has demonstrated the impact of academic self-efficacy beliefs on academic success. Exploration of the influence of other forms of self-efficacy on experiences in both academic and family roles for student parents is a unique contribution of this work.

References


Experiential and Transformative Learning in Community-based Ecotourism

Pierre Walter
University of British Columbia

Abstract: This paper examines the informal ‘curriculum’ of community-based ecotourism and explores the possibilities for experiential and transformative learning among ecotourism visitors. Drawing on three interpretive case studies of ecotourism in Cambodia, Vietnam and Thailand, respectively, the paper proposes an ecotourist curriculum comprised of three areas: Nature, Adventure and Culture. Running across these curricular areas are learning streams of Livelihood, Conservation and Activism. The paper then speculates on how experiential and transformative learning might take place by ecotourists. Directions for research and recommendations to enhance ecotourism curriculum and learning processes are offered in the conclusion.

Introduction
Community-based Ecotourism (CBE) is a rich site of environmental, cultural, emotional and physical learning for adults. Briefly, CBE programs aim at once to promote environmental conservation, community livelihood, and cultural preservation through locally designed and managed ecotourism experiences (Honey, 2008; Walter, 2011). CBE projects may take place internationally, in, for example, local communities in the Costa Rican rainforest, the mountains of Nepal or the wildlife sanctuaries of eastern Africa; or closer to home, in indigenous communities of North America. Centred around some charismatic environmental attraction (rainforest, remote mountains, coral reefs, charismatic mega fauna and flora), these projects generally bring tourists in for relatively long stays (several days or even weeks) to live in close contact with local people, often in family homestay accommodations, with community members acting as ecotourism guides. Visitors engage in many of the activities characteristic of outdoor and adventure education (wilderness hiking, mountain biking, ocean kayaking, snorkeling, camping, rock climbing and so on) as well as cross-cultural activities centered around living with a local family, sharing meals and exchanging language and cultural customs. In most cases, visitors are also invited to participate in local livelihood activities (farming, preparing of meals, fishing, harvesting forest products, making handicrafts, raising houses and crafting tools). They may further participate in environmental conservation activities (planting trees, clearing invasive species, organizing outreach and political campaigns) and in community cultural activities (weddings, dance and music performance, storytelling, religious and spiritual rituals).

This paper explores the possibilities for experiential and transformative learning by visitors who participate in CBE projects. It seems apparent that such learning might be enhanced through a more purposefully designed ‘ecotourism curriculum’ (Walter, 2009; Walter & Reimer, 2011), and by more consciously adopting theories and educational practices of experiential outdoor education (Kolb, 1984) and transformative learning (Mezirow, 2000; Mezirow & Taylor, 2009). Theories of experiential learning have long been applied to good effect in outdoor adventure education (McKenzie 2000, 2003; Brown, 2009), but, to date, not in similar wilderness contexts and outdoor adventure activities commonly found in CBE (Walter, 2013). Theories of
transformative learning have likewise recently found their way into the literature of experiential outdoor education (D’Amato & Krasny, 2011) and volunteer tourism (Coghlan & Gooch, 2011), but have not yet been considered in ecotourism. Drawing on the findings of a related research project on adult learning and education in Community-based Ecotourism, this paper examines: (a) what might comprise the informal community ecotourism curriculum; (b) how visitor learning might be conceptualized as experiential and transformative learning; and (c) how learning might be enhanced in the ecotourism curriculum and learning processes of educational programming for visitors.

Methodology
Data from the study comes from three interpretive case studies (Stake, 1995; Buckley, 2003) of community-based ecotourism conducted in Southeast Asia from 2009-2012 (for details see Reimer & Walter, 2012; Tran & Walter, n.d.; Walter, 2009; Walter and Reimer 2011). At all research sites, researchers stayed with local families in homestay accommodations, conducted interviews with tourism guides, host families and visitors, and participated in a wide range of ecotourism activities. However, because the case studies focused for the most part on local peoples’ perspectives on ecotourism, and not on visitors’ perspectives on learning, most of what is reported in this paper is based on the researchers’ participant observation in each of the ecotourism projects as well as mostly anecdotal evidence about learning from ecotourism visitors. As such, the aim of this paper is to identify potential ways of framing informal adult learning in CBE for further research, with reference to two promising theories of adult learning; namely, experiential learning (Kolb, 1984) and transformative learning (Mezirow, 2000).

The first case study is a Community-based Ecotourism project in the Muslim Thai Malay island community of Koh Yao Noi located among the karst mountains and coral reefs of southern Thailand's Andaman Sea in Phang Nga Bay National Park. Ecotourism activities included hiking, snorkeling, kayaking, boating, fishing, batiking, cooking, rice planting, rubber tapping, and homestays. The second CBE project is located in Cambodia, in Chiphat, a remote rainforest village formerly populated by Khmer Rouge soldiers. Visitor activities here include hiking, swimming, biking, visiting cave and archeological site, bird watching and animal tracking, camping, farm and orchard tours and homestays. The final site is a CBE project in Giao Xuan community in Vietnam's Xuan Thuy National Park, part of the UNESCO Red River Biosphere Reserve, and home to the Vietnam's first recognized Ramsar wetlands site (i.e. wetlands designated as internationally important under the Convention on Wetlands). Ecotourism activities include biking, bird watching, boating in the mangroves, local homestays in traditional Vietnamese houses, rice farming, shellfish harvest, visits to local churches, pagodas and a marketplace, trips to local churches, pagodas, fish sauce, rice wine and jellyfish processing factories, and performances of traditional opera.

The Informal Ecotourism Curriculum
Based on these three site studies, the informal curriculum of visitor learning in Community-based Ecotourism can be seen to have three key areas: wilderness experiences (Nature), outdoor ‘adventure’ activities (Adventure), and immersion in local culture (Culture) (Figure1). Cutting across these three areas are participation in livelihood activities, and for some visitors, engagement in environmental conservation and political action.
For ecotourists, experience in *Nature* can be seen as a part of a spiritual and therapeutic curriculum which opens adults up to learning. As John Muir put it over a century ago, ‘everybody needs beauty as well as bread, places to play in and pray in, where nature may heal and give strength to body and soul’ (*The Yosemite*, 1912: 256). Richard Louv (2012), in his recent book, *The Nature Principle*, calls this exposure to nature ‘Vitamin N’; it is a vitally needed ‘mind/body/nature connection’ which ‘will enhance physical and mental health’ (p. 5). In scholarship in Adult Education, engagement with nature is seen to be psychologically liberating and emotionally and physically restorative, and as such, can facilitate learning for adults (Bersch & Lund, 2002; Grill, 2003; Lange, 2009). Wilderness *Nature* experiences in the three ecotourism sites did in fact venture on the spiritually sublime in many instances: floating in warm Mediterranean blue ocean waters over reefs of multicoloured tropical fish and coral, coming suddenly upon a cascading tropical waterfall in the rainforest, watching wild Asian elephants casually feeding on lush jungle vegetation, spying endangered black-faced spoonbills scooping up brackish water on the mudflats of coastal mangrove wetlands.

Beyond simple exposure to wild nature, outdoor *Adventure* activities offered ecotourists a guided personal challenge, both physical and mental, in beautiful natural surroundings. This experience has strong parallels to the experiential learning curriculum of educational programs like Outward Bound and the National Outdoor Leadership School (McKenzie 2003, Walter 2012). In the three study sites, these activities included difficult rainforest treks, caving, mountain biking, sea kayaking and wilderness camping.

The curriculum area of *Culture* in community-based ecotourism was a particularly rich site of adult learning. A homestay with a local family was a core component of all of the ecotourism projects, as were local ecotourism guides, interactions with elders and local people, and participation in livelihood activities and community events. Living with a local family meant learning about their various customs of sleeping, eating, etiquette and hygiene, as well as spiritual and religious beliefs, kinship, gender roles and relations, language and local history. In Thailand, this curriculum area included Muslim Malay religious and cultural beliefs, family and community geneology and kinship arrangements; in Vietnam, it included many of these areas as well as discussions of indigenous medicine, Catholicism, local churches and community history; in Cambodia, Buddhism and local Buddhist temples, the history of the Khmer Rouge in the area, and impressions of Westerners, their languages and cultures.

In all cases, learning about local *Livelihood, Conservation* and *Activism* cut across all three curricular areas (Figure 1), since these were intertwined within local knowledge, lifeways and community. Local, indigenous knowledge of rainforest trees, fruit, mushrooms, medicinal plants, building materials, large and small mammals, birds, reptiles and insects; marine species fish wetlands, land and marine wildlife was centered on *Nature*; that is, the natural environment. For
adventure activities, trail guiding, identification, harvest, storage and preparation of edible foods, camping, preparation of meals, river and ocean navigation, fishing techniques, harvest of clams, crabs and other marine species were key Livelihood skills in wilderness adventure. This same set of knowledge and skills was intimately connected to Culture, in the demonstration and teaching of spiritual beliefs and rituals placing human beings as one environmentally-dependent animal among other life in the natural environment. Thus, knowledge and teaching about environmental Conservation was also found across all three curricular areas. Finally, political Activism meant participating in activities to learning the functional uses and cultural values of natural resources, and participating in activities to help protect them from outsiders bent on depleting or destroying them. In Cambodia, this involved community organizing, with the help of the ecotourism project and visitors, against a proposed titanium mine which would have destroyed large swaths of wild rainforest and animal habitat; in Thailand, with funding and publicity from ecotourists, it meant local villagers patrolling traditional fishing waters and coral against encroaching ‘factory’ ships; in Vietnam, it meant developing economic alternatives, including ecotourism, to over-harvest of clams, oysters and crabs, over-fishing and clearing of mangroves for aquaculture.

Visitor Learning, Experiential and Transformative?
The cases studies show a rich and varied range of experiential learning for ecotourism visitors in participating in wilderness and adventure ecotourism activities in the natural environment, in hands-on apprenticeships in livelihood activities, and cross-cultural experiences in family homestays and other cultural activities. The experiential ecotourism curriculum includes numerous outdoor and wilderness activities similar to those found in adventure education, but also a host of hands-on learning experiences when visitors participate in livelihood and cultural activities, often centered around a homestay with local families. Evidence from the case studies suggests that many visitor learning experiences in CBE might have strong parallels with experiential approaches to learning in outdoor and adventure education. Moreover, certain ecotourism experiences described as “Concrete Experiences” in Kolb’s (1984) Experiential Learning Cycle may function as catalytic “disorienting dilemmas” (the first of 10 stages) in Mezirow’s (2000) theory of transformative learning.

The four components of Kolb’s (1984) experiential learning cycle in community-based ecotourism (Concrete Experience, Reflective Observation, Abstract Conceptualization, Active Experimentation) can appear in the curriculum area of Nature, come more directly in the learning of outdoor Adventure skills, and are evident most clearly in the learning of Culture, especially in Livelihood activities (Figure 2). A Concrete Experience may come in the sighting of a wild elephant or massive, vibrantly beautiful orchid blooms (Nature), conquering a steep, muddy, leach-infested jungle trail (Adventure), fording of river rapids (Adventure), braving ocean swells on a small boat (Adventure), learning how to cook and eat strange foods (Culture), tapping a rubber tree or transplanting rice seedlings (Culture) or learning local language, songs and dances or religious rituals (Culture). Family members and other local experts, calling on long traditions of apprenticeship learning, may gradually guide visitors to develop mastery through demonstration, observation and practice of skills. This hands-on learning may encompass Reflective Observation (reflection with others on the success or failure of their attempts to learn the skills as well as attempts of other ecotourists in the group), Abstract Conceptualization (generalizing from their individual experiences and others in the group to come up with effective
mastery strategies), Active Experimentation (testing out these strategies, learning from additional successes and failures, and back to Concrete Experiences (moving on to new challenges).

Figure 2. Concrete Experience: Learning Livelihood Activities
Picture a text box with the following activities listed inside it:
- Casting a fish net
- Tapping a rubber tree
- Planting rice
- Learning to batik
- Making rice wine
- Harvesting, processing, preparing, serving and eating local foods

The disorienting dilemmas of transformative learning potentially appear in all three curriculum areas of Nature (awe), Adventure (challenge) and Culture (shock). Exposure to the sublime beauty of the wilderness and to wildlife (megafauna) may comprise a disorienting dilemma for some adults, and promote transformative learning, especially when this is juxtaposed with the experience of environmental degradation (Walter, 2013). In the Cambodia ecotourism project, a disorienting dilemma may come for visitors after seeing a spectacular waterfall or viewing feeding elephants, or when they see former sites of land mines and a reforestation project, hear stories of the Khmer Rouge genocide or join in the political battle to fight off a proposed mega titanium mine in the local area. In the Vietnam project, urban educated Vietnamese and Western ecotourists may experience a cultural disjuncture in family homestays as they experience different and foreign beliefs, values and practices, in livelihood activities, food, sanitation, or at times in Confucian, patriarchal gender relations, social etiquette and so forth. In ecotourism homestays in all three projects, visitors may experience ‘cultural disequilibrium’ which ‘challenges participants’ meaning perspectives, pushing them to learn new ways to bring balance back into their lives’ (Taylor, 1994: 169). In the ecotourism project in southern Thailand, visitors may experience a cognitive dissonance between mainstream tourism industry portrayals of the islands and local indigenous spatial representation. Living with a Muslim Malay Thai family in their home, they may puzzle at the mainstream media portrayal of southern Malay Thais as Islamic Insurgents. They may experience a disorienting dilemma between their experience of pristine tropical waters, abundant marinelife and colourful local lifeways when they learn about, and perhaps join in, local efforts to prevent shrimp aquafarming, industrial fishing, and real estate and tourism developers from destroying local mangroves, reefs and shorelines.

Researching and Enhancing Ecotourism Curriculum and Learning Processes
The three study sites provide a preliminary framework for an informal ecotourism curriculum and numerous examples of experiential learning which may or may not lead to disorienting dilemmas and transformative learning. Further research examining visitors’ narratives of their learning experiences would allow both the elaboration of a curriculum grounded in wider empirical data and documentation of the learning processes by which visitors come to understand and learn this curriculum, and to what personal effect. In the educational practice of community-based ecotourism, if an ecotourism curriculum and visitor learning processes were to be more explicitly conceptualized, programs might be much improved (added value, in management terms). In this, CBE program developers and managers might benefit from an understanding of educational processes and outcomes described by scholars such as McKenzie (2000, 2003) for
adventure education programs, and Brown’s (2009) argument for socio-cultural and situated perspectives on experiential learning in adventure education. They might also better design ecotourism activities to promote transformative learning for visitors, along the lines suggested by D’Amato & Krasny (2011) for outdoor education and Coghlan & Gooch (2011) for volunteer tourism, thereby enhancing both visitor learning and sustainability objectives of Community-based ecotourism.

References


Tran, L.T & Walter, P. (n.d.). Ecotourism, gender and development: A case study of community-


Socio-Historical Constructivism in Adult Learning: Understanding Contemporary Research in Terms of Vygotskian Theory

S. Bruce Wilbee
University of New Brunswick

Abstract: Merriam et al (2007) categorize both Piaget and Vigotsky as being foundational in developing the constructivist orientation to learning. While their development models are similar, Piaget suggests a cognitive model where development must precede learning. Vygotsky on the other hand proposes a socio-historical model where development and learning occur synergetically within the context of an individuals’ social interactions. While very little research has been done to apply Vygotsky’s principles in the field of adult development, many of them provide profound insight and valid explanations for many of the criticisms of adult development theorists such as Knowles and Mezirow.

Introduction

One of the debates within the field of adult education is a defense of the idea that it is a unique stage of human development. Piaget proposed four stages of development that ended with the formal operational stage coinciding with early adulthood. This is based on his premise that development was complete at that point. Neo-piagetian theorists have expanded his stages of development to include a fifth stage, post-formal development, which extends into later adulthood. Others have continued to broaden this taxonomy by identifying characteristics which further define unique stages or identifiable characteristics of adult development and learning in later adulthood (Feldman, 2004). Knowles and Mezirow are probably the best known theorists to work in this area.

From an academic standpoint, a Piagetian stages of development approach provides a solid framework to develop theory. It works particularly well as a descriptive tool to explain consistent homogenous characteristics which can be identified in the population being studied. However, when there is diversity within the population, such as impeded development, other prescriptive ideas must be employed to explain the variances. The intention of this paper is to explore six concepts Vygotsky (1978) proposed that provide a prescriptive understanding that is more effective in explaining adult development than the stages models usually proposed.

Vygotsky – A Foundational Theory

Lev Semyonovich Vygotsky (1896 –1934) was a Russian theorist whose ideas have recently begun to have significant influence in the field of human psychology and development in Western Europe and North America. Miller (2011) recognizes that “…Vygostky has acquired the status of a grand master…It is not uncommon nowadays for [him] to be ranked alongside Freud, Piaget and others…” (p.1). While a significant amount of the work that Vygotsky did focused on early development, his theories can be applied across the lifetime.

One of the key concepts that Vygotsky (1978) proposed was the relationship between learning and development. He builds his ideas from Koffka (as cited in Vygotsky 1978) who held that maturation and learning processes are separate, with learning being dependent on the individual having achieved the level of maturation necessary to support the learning, but also holding that
Learning “stimulates and pushes forward the maturation process” (p.81). Vygotsky (1978) continues to explain that;

Learning awakens a variety of internal developmental processes that are able to operate only when the child is interacting with people in his environment and with his peers. Learning is not development; however, properly organized learning results in mental development and sets in motion a variety of developmental processes that would be impossible apart from learning. Thus learning is a necessary and universal aspect of the process of developing culturally organized, specifically human, psychological functions (p.90).

To explain how learning and development occur at different rates, Vygotsky (1978) proposed an idea which he called the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD). Essentially he held that a student is often learning above their level of development through the assistance of others who are more capable. It is through this social interaction that the student undergoes a process assimilating the learning until they are able to function independently. The difference between what the student can do with assistance and what the student can do independently is the ZPD. This becomes more complex in the context that he also proposed development in one area of capability did not transfer development to another domain of development. “Consciousness is the development of a set of particular, independent capabilities or of a particular set of habits…[which] can affect the development of another only to the extent that there are elements common to both functions”. In effect, a student is learning and developing across various domains at different times and may have many zones of proximal development based on the specific domains of learning and development. This is in contrast with Piagetian cognitive development model which suggests that development is a prerequisite for learning and it is a linear, evolutionary process that is consistent across all plains of operations (Egan, 2002). It is important to understand that Vygotsky’s ideas are also in contrast to the behavioral theorists’ position that learning and development occur simultaneously. Vygotsky holds they are synergistic and building on each other, not simultaneous.

A key application of Vygotsky’s zone of proximal development is the internalization of higher mental processes such as critical reflection. Application of this principle suggests that through a series of social interactions, interpersonal processes are transformed into intrapersonal ones. “Every function in the child’s cultural development appears twice: first, on the social level, and later, on the individual level; first, between people (interpsychological), and then inside the child (intrapsychological)” (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 57). To substantiate this, he used research that showed children before the age of 6 or 7 use external social speech as a method of problem solving not as a method of collaboration. When there is no one to engage, the child still uses egocentric speech; that is talking to themselves as a means of facilitating problem solving. Over a period of time, children internalize their external egocentric speech which then becomes internalized thought processes. “[U]pon conversion to internal speech, does it come to organize the child’s thought, that is, become an internal mental function” (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 89). As Miller (2011) also describes the process, “by means of inner speech people are able to communicate with them-selves and in this way internalizes social relations that were previously external” (p. 232).
Vygotsky (1978) describes the internalization of external prompts as the use of technical tools and signs (psychological tools).

Examples of psychological tools and their complex systems [include]: language; various systems for counting; mnemonic techniques; algebraic symbol systems; works of art; writing; schemes, diagrams, maps, and mechanical drawings; all sorts of conventional signs; and so on (p.137).

These tools and signs are developed socially and are the result of cultural history. One of the criticisms of Vygotsky is that his view was Eurocentric in that he looked at various cultures on an evolutionary scale of development with the scientific mindset being the most developed. In some of the research that he conducted in central Asia, he concluded that the development of individuals from illiterate cultures was behind that of European culture. In the context of current research it would have been more appropriate for him to evaluate development within that society and understand it in context of the functions that needed to be performed and how the ability necessary to accomplish those functions was developed. This would have been more consistent with his research into the significance of the social interaction in the development of these tools.

Culture creates special forms of behavior, changes the functioning of mind, constructs new stories in the developing system of human behavior...In the course of cognitive development, social humans change the ways and means of their behavior, transform their natural premises and functions, elaborate and create new, specifically cultural forms of behavior. (Vygotsky, 1983a, pp.29-30)

It is with these understandings of Vygotsky’s ideas that we can look at current theory in adult development through a new lens and use this to develop ideas that can assist practitioners in their work with adults.

**Knowles vs. Socio-Historical Development**

As discussed earlier, one of the key facets of adult development theory is identifying characteristics that classify it as a unique field of study. Malcolm Knowles was one of the early adult development theorists who proposed there are distinct characteristics about adult learners which distinguish them from other stages of development (Merriam, 2001). His ideas are viewed by many practitioners as fundamental to understanding the nature of adult learners. In his theory of andragogy he advanced six assumptions which he proposes describe adult development. These assumptions include:

1. The adult is maturing from a dependent to a self-directed individual.
2. The adult has a wealth of experience which enhances their learning.
3. The willingness of an adult to learn is related to the relevance of the material to their social role.
4. That as adults mature they become more problem oriented and are more interested in learning that is immediately applicable.
5. That adults become more intrinsically motivated.
6. That understanding the context of learning is very important (Merriam, 2001).

One of the criticisms of Knowles’ theory is that he has identified developmental characteristics which he suggested were unique to adults but does not explain the development of these
characteristics (Merriam, 2001). There is substantial evidence to support his idea that adults are in the process of becoming self-directed, more specific in their training requirements and more intrinsically motivated. However, he fails to consider a few fundamental questions. Does every person over the age of 19 develop these characteristics and to the same degree? For that matter how does he explain why some younger learners under the age of 19 also have some of these characteristics and why do some individuals develop these characteristics while others do not? It is questions like this which could explain a shift in Knowles’ thinking during the late 1970’s. He had first proposed that andragogy was a separate theory, but in later writing proposed that adult development is a continuum from pedagogy. This shift better explains the context for his theory; however, it remains descriptive and does not explain the diversity of how development of these characteristics occurs or does not occur in adults.

Knowles comes from a humanistic ideology and “presents the individual learner as one who is autonomous, free, and growth-oriented” (Merriam, 2001, p. 7). Many of his foundational ideas are consistent with Piaget who held that all individuals have common cognitive structures which are utilized differently by each individual in their own context (Piaget, 1970). This perspective has resulted in criticism that he, like Piaget, ignores social aspects of development. I would suggest that social development provides a powerful explanation for differentiated levels of development. In particular, the individuals who are self directed or intrinsically motivated are ones which have; through a process of social interaction with other individuals, internalized these capacities. Much in the same way that Vygotsky proposed that children develop internal speech through a process of socialization.

**Mezirow vs. Socio-Historical Development**

Since the late 1970’s, Jack Mezirow’s transformative learning theory has also had a significant impact on adult development and learning theory. Mezirow (2000) proposed that there are three types of knowledge; instrumental, communicative, and emancipatory. The first two are the most common dealing with technical and practical knowledge. Emancipatory knowledge, the focus of his theory, provides the capacity for personal development which provides the means of significant personal growth. The idea he presents is that transformative learning occurs when one of our beliefs, attitudes or perspective becomes more integrated with reality so that it changes our behaviors in a positive way. He outlines four required elements for transformational learning:

1. A significant disorienting dilemma.
2. Critical reflection of beliefs or assumptions which affect behavior.
3. Critical discourse to validate the insight that was developed through critical reflection.
4. Resulting action from the change in beliefs.

In this theory, learning begins by an experience which Mezirow described as a disorienting dilemma which cannot be resolved with existing schemes of understanding. This is the first of a 10 step process which an individual experiences on the path to reaching the last step which is the point of reintegration of new understanding in their actions (Merriam, 2004).

There are three criticisms of Mezirow’s theory of transformation learning which are similar to those of Knowles (Taylor, 2007). First is the criticism that his theory is based on a rational thought process where the individual recognizes incorrect beliefs and in changing these beliefs
effects behavioral changes. There is a school of thought that views this as a descriptive process in that it puts too much faith in a rational process and is not a prescriptive method. The second criticism follows from the first and questions the appropriateness of assuming adults are exclusively capable of critical reflection. Merriam (2004) takes the position that, “mature cognitive development is foundational to engaging in critical reflection and rational discourse necessary for transformative learning” (p. 65). She further argues that very few individuals develop the capacity for reflective thought. With that in mind it is hard to explain how people still go through transformation other than to accept that there must be other factors in effect. Taylor (2007) also suggests that there is further work needed in Mezirow’s reflective learning to evaluate “the role of context, the varying nature of the catalysts of transformative learning, the increased role of other ways of knowing, the importance of relationships and an overall broadening of the definitional outcome of a perspective transformation” (p.174). There are those that propose that transformation has to come from a deeper level of our psyche such as our sub-conscience (Boyd & Myers, 1988) or spirituality (Dirkx, 1997).

Boyd & Myers (1988) in proposing their theory of transformative education put transformation in a different context by looking at it as an expansion of consciousness. Where Mezirow suggests that critical reflection and changed perspective result in transformation, Boyd & Myers suggest that discernment based on awareness provides a better understanding. Their theory is that as the ego, or conscious self, becomes aware of subconscious ideas, the individual becomes more self-actualized. “[C]ertain socialization patterns, emanating from the personal unconscious, control behavior until the ego gains control of them” (p.264). This idea expands on Mezirow’s by incorporating the idea of the subconscious with the rational process which he suggested. It is also more consistent with Vygotsky who suggests that consciousness is the result of social interaction that has been internalized. It may go even further by explaining how socialization which has been internalized within the subconscious also influences the conscious.

In seeking to understand the process of developing the capacity for critical reflection, Vygotsky’s ZPD provides an interesting framework for understanding. To reiterate, the ZPD is the difference between what an individual can accomplish independently (their level of development) and what they are capable of with assistance (what they are learning). From Knowles theory we have identified that as adult learners mature, they are developing in areas such as; becoming self directed, increasing intrinsic motivation and acquiring the capability for reflective thought. Using the latter as an example, it would be intuitive to say that adults who cannot reflect intra-personally are able to process their thinking with someone else, in other words they are capable of critical discourse with assistance of capable peers. In context, this expresses the idea of the ZPD in that the adult is capable of critical reflection through a socially supported means. However, they have not developed to the point that they have internalized that capability. This parallels nicely with Vygotsky’s proposal that development occurs, “first, between people (interpsychological), and then inside the child (intrapsychological)” (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 57, italics in original). In this case the role of the adult educator then will be to deliberately facilitate critical discourse (interpsychological) which over time would be internalized and become critical reflection (intrapsychological). Examples of the way this can be facilitated would be the use of small group dialogue, critical questioning and reflective journaling.
When we look at the idea of adult development from Vygotsky’s viewpoint, we need to focus on the idea of consciousness that is developed not just as the result of critical reflection, but also the context of social interaction. Miller (2011) used a case study to provide an illustration of the effect of different socialization on children. It was conducted in an area of South America where many adults had little or no schooling. The researchers compared how unschooled adults acted differently from educated teachers when they were given a complex task to complete with 6 year old children. The observations revealed that educated adults put more emphasis on encouraging the children to accomplish the task as compared to the uneducated adults who did most of the task with the children assisting only as necessary. Miller’s observations focused on the effect the social interaction had on the children’s development. It is also interesting to look at it from an adult development standpoint as well. That is, the level of education which is a form of socialization, clearly affects the social development and behaviour on adults. Further research into what it is during the educational process that leads to the different interaction would be beneficial. I would suggest though that the transformation that resulted in these different interactions is the result of many social interactions that were internalized over a period of time.

Conclusion
Lev Vygotsky’s socio-historical psychology provides a different perspective on adult development that is focused on the social implications of a persons psyche as compared to the more common individual centered focus that is prevalent in North American. Most of the application of this theory has focused on childhood development and there is very little research that applies this perspective in adult education. Much of the work that has been done is superficial without an in-depth understanding of his theories. The purpose of this paper was to provide an understanding of Vygotsky’s theory and use that understanding to explore two common areas of adult development and then to give an example of this view applied on its own. I would expect that as Vygotsky’s work becomes more understood in the west, the ideas it presents will permeate adult development theory as well.

References
http://dx.doi.org/doi:10.1016/j.newideapsych.2004.11.005
http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/0260137980170203


How Can a Story Change a Life?

Kristine Wolski
University of Calgary

Abstract: This paper explores the transformative learning experiences of nine generous volunteers whose experience was catalyzed by fiction. Using narrative methodology (Clandinin and Connelly, 2000) results were analyzed in a three dimensional inquiry space based on temporality (past, present and future), sociality (relationship) and place. Trends included the readers’ love of fiction, the type of fiction, informal learning experienced, evidence of change, and the role passage of time played in the experience. Links are made to adult development, complex catalysts, the roles of emotion and motivation, our storied pasts, neuroplasticity, sustaining change and motivation for change.

Impetus for Research
As a young girl I read a book that I will never forget called The Finding of Jasper Holt (1916). It influenced me in a career choice years later in a way I never considered until undertaking this research. The Open Library (2010) outlines the book as follows:

Jasper Holt began his earthly sojourn under somewhat inauspicious conditions, given that his parents were indifferent to him, to them he didn't really exist. His anger at this cruel fate found various modes of expression, including the development of a ferocious independence whereby he did what he needed to do in accord with his personal integrity, not worrying if someone happened to misinterpret his behaviors or motivations... Until, that is, he met Jean Grayson... he was so touched by her very existence that he vowed to change, not only to allow the world to know what he was really like, but to make a strong and conscious effort to make them realize it (para.1).

With the accuracy of hindsight, I realize now that I believed that someone could choose a new direction for life, like Jasper Holt did. Not in the romantic sense that Hill’s story explored, but by positive, enthusiastic belief in the potential of the influence of one person over another. Stories helped me learn, choose direction in my life, and be a better person. Some stories were real, but more often the stories were composites of plausible situations, characters and events that deeply influenced me and the direction of my development. It is that power and wonder of a well told story that my thesis explored. I wanted to know, how can a story transform a life? Delving into the reading of fiction as a means of catalyzing transformation bears exploration. Fiction by nature includes imagination and emotion—two components the literature would suggest are critical to transformation. Better understanding the role of fiction in a transformative experience reveals more insight into the process itself, but also the possibilities of creating or recreating the circumstances necessary to induce/assist such transformation. Studying the impact of fiction on readers by investigating the stories they generate from the experience seemed a natural fit. As identified by Merriam, “[s]tories are how we make sense of our experience, how we communicate with others, and through which we understand the world around us” (2009, p. 32). I explored the possibilities of transformation catalyzed by fiction using narrative methodology considering both the personal and social aspects of the event as supported
by Clandinin and Connelly’s (2000) three dimensional inquiry space based on temporality (past, present and future), sociality (relationship) and place.

**Methodology**

My online survey based on the Learning Activities Survey (LAS) by King (2009) assisted in the identification of adults who experienced such a change and of the 31 who completed the survey, 9 volunteered to be interviewed at a distance responding to a series of questions based upon my thesis’ core question: How can the reading of fiction catalyze a transformational experience?

**Findings**

*Love of Fiction*

Evident in the interviews was the importance of reading. Not only was it an enjoyable activity for each reader, a majority of the interviewees actively reflected back on what they read suggesting a key element of transformative learning, critical reflection, is ingrained as part of their reading experience.

*Type of Fiction*

Though a factor, it was the reader’s interaction with the subject of the story rather than the type of fiction (romance, mystery etc.) that was important to the change experience. There was not one clear type of fiction identified as life-changing by those interviewed. Rather what seems important to choice of story in addition to being able to respect the central character was the ability to personally connect with the story being told and incorporating what was read into meaningful learning.

*Informal Learning*

The three types of informal learning (Schugurensky, 2000) were evident in the stories of those interviewed. The learning experienced by two readers in childhood was not intended nor realized at the time—*socialization*. These readers began forming a system of personal values, beliefs and attitudes that were foundational to their adult lives. One reader was *self-directed* in that she intentionally sought and was aware of what she was learning. The rest learned *incidentally*; they were aware of learning though it was not intended as the goal of reading. For example, two read recommendations from their book club simply to indulge in reading good stories. That one learnt about racism from the perspective for a struggling doctor and the other the horrors of totalitarianism was a fortunate circumstance. Both incorporated that learning into their lives.

*Evidence of Change*

While aspects of the 10 stages of perspective transformation presented by Mezirow were represented across the survey responses (King, 2009), inclusion of all 10 stages in each transformative learning event was not seen. This does not support Mezirow’s statements that they “often follow some variation” of the 10 stages (Mezirow, 2012, p. 98). What is clear is that each of these people experienced a change unique to them as influenced by their personal situations and contexts (Cranton & Taylor, 2012) wrought by a similar catalyst—a work of fiction.
Temporality of Change
I grouped change experiences into four different categories that appear directly influenced by time. The time of life in which each change took place is a factor, but so too is the time taken to change or time when a reference frame was drawn upon. The first category of change experience I termed formative because the frame of reference transformation took place in childhood and appeared foundational to what became a general approach to life.

The second change, I labeled incremental, coinciding with the descriptor used by Mezirow (2000) because the change for these interviewees involved an insight into life experiences developed over time into a new direction in thinking and approach to living. For me it was separate from foundational change, the initial building block of a child as it was integrated into the reader’s developing frameworks as a young adult.

The next series of changes I identified as influential. These readers did not undertake a complete revamping of a frame of reference, but felt that their reading experiences did evoke new insight and understanding the result of which they termed life changing.

For the final type of change I noted, I used Mezirow’s (2012) original term of epochal to describe the experience of three readers that had with new ideas and ways of perceiving life that occurred in a sudden or dramatic fashion. This change took place, I noted, in middle adulthood as part of a restructuring of frames of reference stemming from intense emotional situations.

Erikson’s (1968) stages of adult development appear to correlate to the type of transformative changes experienced. Erickson’s (1968) work focuses on the psychosocial development involving both inner instinctive dispositions and the external cultural and social demands faced by a person. “Each stage revolves around a key psychosocial task or dilemma that requires a choice between opposites, one positive and one negative and individuals advance to the next stage only when they resolve the task positively” (Clark, Merriam, & Sandlin, 2011, p. 20). The four temporalities of change above correspond to adolescent (identity vs. role confusion), young adult (intimacy vs. isolation), midlife (generativity vs. stagnation) and late adult stages (integrity vs. despair) of development.

Catalytic Event
Erikson’s (1968) theory noted a choice between positive and negative—a dilemma ultimately moving an individual in a direction of growth if successfully, positively navigated. However, in my research, the initiating event or catalytic realization was not limited to a negative or positive choice.

I returned to Mezirow’s definition of the disorienting dilemma, “a real-life crisis or more moderate growing of dissatisfaction with one’s old meaning structure” (Mäkki, 2012). It does not encompass Tisdell’s (2008) catalyst arising from pleasant experiences. To move from negativity toward inclusion of all moments of questioning, I suggest that terms build on the term orient “guide (someone) in a specified direction” (Oxford Dictionaries Online, 2010). The changes shared here demonstrate orienting events (a new idea that begins a frame of reference) reorienting event (further understanding) and disorienting event (situations epochal in nature that
do at first confuse a person, but eventually assist a person in fully changing course in a new direction).

**Complex Catalyst**

Broadening the event considered catalytic embraces Pasquariello’s (2009) idea that rather than a particular moment acting as a catalyst, it is self-awareness arising from reflection on the cognitive and affective elements of the contextually based experience that together direct the resulting change. An example of the cumulative-composite nature of the triggering event is shown in part by further examining the thoughts and insights readers shared about the central character of their chosen book. It is the context of the story that helps develop a complex, life-like character with whom the reader relates (cognitive). But it is also affect for that character that enhances catalytic qualities of the fiction. Summary words used by my readers regarding their books (cruelty, inspirational, grounding, unveiling, classic, wonder, resignation) share emotive qualities supporting the affective nature of a transformative fictional catalyst.

**Emotion-Motivation Repertoire**

Staats (2012) states that the human animal is evolutionarily wired toward recognition of the emotions of pleasure or displeasure at birth, but that humans are also gifted with the ability to learn emotions which Staats contends arises via language—an “emotion-learning machine” (p. 186). This learning is often accomplished indirectly without physical contact due to association with emotionally positive or negative words already present in a person’s vocabulary. Through life experiences, each person develops a repertoire of such responses unique to them, but centered on the idea of attraction to the positive and avoidance of the negative—the emotion-motivation repertoire. Staats (2012) makes the case that through association emotion can be linked to words. This sets the stage for fiction—things that are not actually experienced—as a mechanism by which we learn and change. Fiction is a multi-dimensional catalyst for change as discussed by Pasquariello (2009) and supported by Staats (2012). But Haven’s (2007) reference to story as a means of structuring meaning begins the move of fiction beyond mere catalyst to study of story as that which organizes our thoughts, ideas, and experiences into humanness.

**We Are Stories**

Haven’s (2007) summary of research in brain development in children outlined the progression by which stories become the central means by which humans interpret the world around them. The predisposition toward story sets the stage, but the continued focus on story as an organizational and learning tool reinforces reliance on story. By the age of puberty, neural networks reflect this concentration on story. Our very humanness can be considered the result of thinking and communicating via stories (Baldwin, 2005; Cozolino & Sprokay, 2006; Hall, 2007; Haven, 2007).

Staats (2012) called for cumulative learning—the ability of humans to “build upon their learning...allow[ing] them to learn new repertoires that provide the basis for learning still newer repertoires and on and on in an accelerating acquisition” (p.166) in a virtually unlimited manner. For this to occur, changes in the brain itself need to accommodate cumulative learning.
Neuroplasticity
Cozolino and Sprokay (2006) emphasized the ability of the brain to continuously modify its chemistry and architecture or its neuroplasticity. That constant adaptation must be integrated somehow to prevent chaos. Cozolino and Sprokay (2006) linked this continuous need of adaptation to the brain’s predisposition toward stories as an organizational method. “[Story] provides a nexus of neural network integration among left and right; top and bottom; and sensory, somatic, motor, affective, and cognitive processes in all parts of the brain” (p. 16).

I believe that a network could, using this understanding of plasticity, be based solely on cognitive based neural activity theoretically. However, as identified by Cozolino and Sprokay (2006), the integration of neural events of all types (somatic, sensory, affective and cognitive) that aid in creation and storing of memory makes it more likely that complex integral experiences affect change. This would also suggest that the more complex and integral, the more likely the change is sustained.

Impetus to Change
The question remained for me, however, what brought my readers to the decision to embark on change? Frijda (2010a) includes “cognitive motivation, manifest in wonder, interest, curiosity, exploration, and fascination, which are elicited by unpleasant as well as pleasant events” (p. 574) as sources of motivation all of which can operate concurrently or independently. The motive state or the state of action readiness is emotion. Frijda and Parrot (2011) identify a series of basic emotions or what is termed ur-emotions or the “source, and thus the most fundamental component, of multicomponental emotion responses” (p. 411).

In particular, it is Frijda and Parrot’s (2011) description of helplessness, an ur-emotion occurring in many multicomponental emotions is apt for transformative learning. Frijda and Parrot (2011) define helplessness as desiring to act but not knowing how. Such a state would paralyze a learner until provision of an example such as from real life or fiction provided a model of a possible solution. In the case of those interviewed, perhaps a component of successful change was the introduction of an applicable model via the fiction they read then could then reflect upon.

Questioning begins the look at personal feelings, motivations and actions. By doing so, Frijda (2011b) claimed a person was given detachment from the immediate allowing the possibility of creating a future. “[Imagination] represents detachment from the here and now and from the real world...one faces space and calm and personal warmth and spiritual guidance. One enters a world that includes the impossible” (p. 72) that encourages searching for any and all options.

Our Highest Achievement
“Indeed, the highest conceptions of justice, dignity, and worth all require highly developed notions of a general order of existence that in some fundamental way lies ‘beyond’ the observed parts of life” (Fuller, 2008, p. 70). But, as previously discussed, we have the tendency to avoid new information rather choosing to hold onto ideas that strengthen the current image we have constructed of ourselves and laid down in our neural networks (Pelowski and Akiba, 2011; Staats, 2012). Overcoming this tendency, according to Fuller (2006, 2008) relies on being open to wonder—that bridge between cognition and emotion allowing for suitable mixture of “flexible,
sophisticated and creative” (Immordino-Yang & Damasio, 2007, p. 7) responses needed to attain the pinnacle of humanness.

**Openness to Wonder May Lead to Inspiration and Wisdom**

Wonder takes a human beyond the ordinariness of life enabling “consideration of the more-than-ordinary horizons of life that might reveal to us the meaning or purpose of existence” (Fuller, 2008, p. 69) by providing glimpses of the sacred not necessarily accessible to those without openness to this kind of emotional response. We move beyond self to interest in others and the world (Swartz, 2011).

While wonder primes us, when inspired, we want to act on the wonder. Thrash et al. (2010) and Thrash & Elliot (2004) stated that to be inspired involved transcendance (awareness of better possibilities or wonder), evocation (the source of inspiration was external) and what was termed approach motivation or being driven to act on the new idea or vision.

Swartz (2011) questioned, “What if wonder is the beginning of wisdom?” (p. 22) indicating that Aristotle labeled “wonder as the beginning of natural wisdom and the ultimate goal of human inquiry.” (Swartz & Tisdell, 2012 p. 323)

Goldberg (2006) noted that as humans age, the brain, though physically shrinking, becomes more integrated in function. While cognitive functioning is slower and focus is harder to achieve, the aging brain becomes more effective at seeing the big picture and solving complex problems of living. Age-related changes manifest as improved comprehension of meaning and the tendency toward storytelling making older adults better at teaching than learning...evolutionary selection to assist the transmission of cultural wisdom and advance the ongoing shaping of culture. (Swartz, 2011, p. 20)

Yet again in acme of the journey of humanness, the attainment of wisdom, we encounter not only the power but the necessity of storytelling and learning from a sage.

**Summary**

While Mezirow’s (2000) ten phases may describe a learning event, Bassett’s (2011) model integrates a series of learning events into a life-time of development culminating in wisdom. It is a journey that is evident across the experiences shared with me by those I interviewed as they began and moved along the wisdom continuum ultimately sharing their experiences with and for the benefit of others.

**References**


Problematicizing Canadian Breastfeeding Educational Programs: Taking the Standpoint of New Chinese Immigrant Mother

Yidan Zhu
Ontario Institute for Studies in Education
University of Toronto

Abstract: My paper discusses how breastfeeding as an ideology shapes the organizing of current breastfeeding educational programs and everyday practice of new Chinese immigrant mothers in Canada. I examine a breastfeeding educational program in Toronto under the theoretical framework of institutional ethnography and lifelong learning. Based on an analysis of a text from the program and narratives from six new Chinese immigrant mothers, I argue that breastfeeding as an ideology involves a social and cultural imperialism and race, gender and class inequalities under globalization.

Introduction
Previous studies on breastfeeding education have focused on how to train nurses or educators to improve their attitude and knowledge concerning breastfeeding (Tajeu, 1983) and how new mothers experienced breastfeeding through education (Brann-Barrett, 2004). Yet, there is scant discussion about how breastfeeding knowledge, as an ideology, shapes the organizing of current breastfeeding educational programs in Canada and the everyday life of new immigrant mothers. In addition, studies have devoted little attention to new Chinese immigrant mothers’ transnational breastfeeding experiences in Canada from a social justice perspective. Therefore, it becomes necessary to examine the power relations and interactions between breastfeeding educational programs, its diverse participants, the governments and the state under the context of globalization and new economy.

As a new Chinese immigrant mother and a patient who participated in a hospital-based breastfeeding educational program in Ontario, I realized that there is a gap between my knowledge of breastfeeding and the knowledge conceptualized in the program’s texts, such as the policies and teaching materials of breastfeeding education. I found that the notion of breastfeeding is socially constructed, and the experience, knowledge and feelings from new immigrant mothers are largely excluded from the organizing of these breastfeeding programs. As a result, I use a textual analysis and narratives as inquiries to examine the breastfeeding educational program in Toronto.

Based on fieldworks including interviews with new Chinese immigrants and observations in the breastfeeding clinic in Toronto, I explore three research questions. First, I examine how the knowledge of breastfeeding has been conceptualized and manipulated in the educational programs and how breastfeeding becoming an ideology shapes the way of organizing programs. Second, I investigate new Chinese immigrant mothers’ breastfeeding experience and learning practice in the institution and question how the knowledge of breastfeeding has been constructed associating with race, gender and class inequalities. Finally, I reflect on Canadian breastfeeding education from a cross-cultural, transnational and global perspective. I discuss how the organizing of breastfeeding educational programs interact with globalization and new economy that impact on new immigrants’ everyday life and actual practice of learning. I conclude that the
development of current breastfeeding education in Canada needs to pay more attention to social justice for improving the current inequality and social problems.

**Study Background**

I participated in this program since last summer after I gave the birth to my son. This program named *Mother and Baby Follow-up Clinic* is a hospital-based breastfeeding clinic in Toronto. It provides follow-up cares for new mothers who give the birth to her baby in this hospital. One of the main purposes of this program is to assist new mothers with breastfeeding their baby. They offer nurses to teach mothers with knowledge and strategies for breastfeeding.

In 1989, due to a decrease in the breastfeeding rate all over the world, the *World Health Organization* (WHO) and UNICF announced a joint statement for “supporting the initiation and continuation of breastfeeding” with a suggestion of “ten steps to successful breastfeeding” (The Canadian Paediatric Society, 2012, p. 1). In 1990, over 40 countries produced *the Innocenti Declaration*, which called on governments to “undertake programs to protect, promote and support breastfeeding” (p. 1). The declaration concluded that “as a global goal for optimal maternal and child health and nutrition, all women should be enabled to practice exclusive breastfeeding and all infants should be fed exclusively on breast milk from birth to four to six months of age” (p. 1). In Canada, about 90 per cent of new mothers start breastfeeding when their children are born, but by the time their babies are three months old, only half of them are still exclusively breastfeeding, while about two-thirds combine breast and bottle feeding (Weeks, 2012).

Based on the global goal for breastfeeding, the multi-levels of Canadian governments launched a variety of breastfeeding education and services for helping to increase the national breastfeeding rate. A report from the *Ministry of Health in British Columbia* showed three main strategies for national breastfeeding practice and programs. First, they believe that the key strategy of improving service and support for breastfeeding women is to build strong policies “in support of the WHO’s Baby-Friendly Initiative (BFI)” (BCMH, 2012, p. i). Second, they stated that breastfeeding is considered as “a major population health issue that requires a focused public awareness campaign to inform the public about benefits and importance and encourage attitudinal shifts in support of breastfeeding” (p. i). Finally, they highlighted the Best Practice Guideline (BPG) for breastfeeding, which includes “provincial leadership and coordination for implementing the BFI,” “to increase training for public health care providers,” “to launch a prenatal education including education for mothers, fathers and family members,” and “special initiatives to support rural women and women from diverse cultures” (p. i).

By looking at the practice from the provincial level, one will find that the province launched breastfeeding education in local clinics based on the national and international idea of BFI and BPG. A survey from *Ontario Ministry of Health Promotion* about breastfeeding support and service in Ontario indicated that “six percent (2) of all 36 health units [in Ontario] reported receiving a BFI designation, 64% (23) reported working towards designation, 19% (7) reported considering BFI and 11% (4) reported no plan for BFI designation” (p. 7) They further pointed out that “nineteen (53%) of all 36 health units have implemented BPG, eleven (30%) are planning to implement them, one (3%) has no plan” (ONHP, 2009, p. 8). They also found barriers to support breastfeeding in Ontario, such as “lack of resources, financial, as well as
staffing” and “the hospitals in the community have down-sized or completely stopped their breastfeeding clinics and services, but no replacement” (p. 10). These studies and statistics show how breastfeeding service in Canada has been organized and developed under the global and national instructions. However, not only the researchers but also program organizers largely ignored how breastfeeding as an ideological hegemony interacts with nation-building, globalization, neoliberal restructuring in a local level. In this study, I attempt to address the tension between the globalized neo-restructuring and the localized practice within current breastfeeding programs in Canada.

Theoretical Framework and Methodology
This empirical study adopts two theoretical frameworks and methodology. First, it introduces Dorothy E. Smith’s approach of institutional ethnography (IE), which is understood as a method of inquiry to question everyday practice and means of organizing within institutions. Smith (2005) believes that the actualities of our everyday world are socially organized. She has developed this method of inquiry in order to challenge people's held beliefs towards the social organizations from a "bottom-up" perspective. She observes how the foundation of institutional relations is textual and believes that texts coordinate “institutional courses of action” (p. 180). In addition, Ng (2006) explores the globalized regime of ruling from the standpoint of immigrant women, and further elaborates on the use of "standpoint" to understand globalized restructuring. For her, “standpoint” entails a starting point from outside of the institutions from which one can challenge conventional scientific approaches and previous “logic of discovery” within the institution (p. 179). By harnessing the framework of institutional ethnography, this paper explores the tensions between the ideology of breastfeeding and the institutional practice from the new Chinese immigrants’ standpoint.

Second, this study constructs dialogues with theories of migration and lifelong learning. Scholars in adult education have launched heated debates on the conceptualization of lifelong learning in immigrants' settlement and integration into local society. Grace (2002) argues that the knowledge in a techo-scientized information society has been commodified and reproduced without any challenges or criticisms under globalization and the new economy (p. 129). Guo (2010) criticizes how the use of lifelong learning has assimilated immigrants into the dominant norm and the presence of a void in scholarship regarding how migrant workers or immigrants bring diverse culture and social values to the host society (p. 149). Mojab (2009) uses a Marxist-feminist approach to examine the relation between ways of work and lifelong learning and argues that the theory of lifelong learning should place equal attention to relations of production under capitalism (p. 4). Appropriating these theories, I explore how new Chinese immigrants produce/reproduce knowledge on breastfeeding, and construct their hybrid identities through the learning practice in Canadian breastfeeding educational programs.

Research Design and Data Sources
The Text
Smith (2005) observes how the foundation of institutional relations is textualized. This paper conducts a textual analysis based on a document called Recommendations for a provincial breastfeeding strategy for Ontario (2009), which was developed through a collaboration of stakeholders in Ontario. The stakeholders include all kinds of breastfeeding-related institutions, such as INFANT Canada, Newman Breastfeeding Clinic and Institute and Ontario Breastfeeding
Committee and so on. This document shows the data of breastfeeding duration and exclusivity rates in Ontario, and suggests four key components of a provincial breastfeeding strategy including “leadership and policy development”, “service delivery”, “surveillance, research and evaluation” and “capacity building” (p. 3-7). The document first states the definition of “breastfeeding,” it says: “Breastfeeding is the norm for infant and young-child feeding and the foundation for a healthy life…. The international, national and provincial standard for feeding of infants and young children is exclusive breastfeeding for the first six months, the addition of iron-rich complementary foods at about 6 months, with continued breastfeeding to two years and beyond, as recommended by the WHO/UNICEF Global Strategy for Infant and Young Child Feeding” (p. 3).

It further points out three strategies for leadership and policy making, which include: “1. Provincial Breastfeeding Policy - The policy will provide leadership for the protection, promotion and support of breastfeeding, improve the health status of mothers and babies by increasing breastfeeding initiation & duration in Ontario and support the implementation of the BFI. 2. Provincial Coordinator – Designate a coordinator at the provincial level to develop and co-ordinate the strategy through the establishment of a provincial committee with participation from key stakeholders. 3. Baby-Friendly Initiative – Determine the process to ensure the implementation of the WHO/UNICEF BFI in Ontario. Set requirements for hospitals, public health units, and other community health services to begin the process towards BFI designation.” (p. 6).

The Narrative
In addition, this paper uses narratives for exploring new Chinese immigrant mothers’ identity construction and learning practices while they experienced breastfeeding within the institution. Clandinin & Connelly (2000) see narrative as “the ways humans experience the world” (p. 2). Taber (2010) brings narrative and institutional ethnography together. She points out that “autoethnography is appropriate for use in IE, as ‘autoethnography is defined as a form of self-narrative that places the self within a social context’, and IE explores the social from the point of view of the self’s every day... The narrative must be explored in relation to institutional practices” (p. 15). In this paper, I explore the role of new immigrants participating in Canadian breastfeeding educational programs under the social change process. I use narratives from my personal experience and five other new Chinese immigrant mothers who participated in the breastfeeding clinic. I select some of them as follows: “I am a new mom and a Chinese immigrant with a two-month old baby. Two month ago, while I finished the painful birth process, I was sent to the breastfeeding follow-up clinic right away. It was a miserable experience while I was taught to breastfeed my baby. The breastfeeding expert in that program did not allow me to use any kinds of formula or bottle. She believed that the breastfeeding is the best and the only way for feeding my baby. It makes me even more nervous for thinking about myself as my baby’s only food. In addition, she did not allow me to sleep over two hours, because she believe that breastfeeding needs to be done by every two hours and each feeding need to last for one-hour long. A lack of good rest increased my blood pressure and caused some health problem at that time. She also questioned my Chinese traditional ways of breastfeeding. She believed that what I learned from my father, who was a previous doctor in obstetrics and gynecology in China, was incorrect.”
“Before I went to the program, I had some difficulties for producing my breast milk. My mom found me a breastfeeding specialist in traditional Chinese medicine. I received acupuncture and other training from the specialist. It was really helpful for my breastfeeding process. After that, I went to the clinic. The nurses there thought my skills are wrong. They corrected my positions, and they thought I should visit them first and receive the correct training.”

Findings

I analyzed the text and narratives on two levels. The purpose of the first level was to understand the conceptualization of breastfeeding from the standpoint of immigrant mother. The text above, which is produced by all kinds of “authentic person”, introduces breastfeeding as “a norm for infant and young-child feeding and the foundation for a healthy life” (Stakeholders in Ontario, 2009, p. 6). I find that the knowledge of breastfeeding has been constructed entirely on medical conceptions, which is far alienated from my understanding of breastfeeding from my everyday experience as a new Chinese immigrant mother. Here, breastfeeding is constructed as a path to healthy life that leads to a promotion of breastfeeding from international, national and local levels. I argue that breastfeeding is ideological, and some beliefs about breastfeeding, such as “breastfeeding is good for health,” become a “common sense” that has been recognized not only by doctors, but also by ordinary people without any challenges (Gramci, 1971; Ng, 1993). I find that the metaphors of breastfeeding are socially and culturally constructed. For example, women’s breasts are treated as “containers.” Mothers who breastfeed their babies are considered as “good mothers.” The breast milk has been constructed as a “product,” which contains nutrition and is good for baby’s health. These metaphors ignore mothers as human beings and individuals have diverse culture backgrounds, socio-economic status, body conditions, emotions, feelings, breastfeeding experience and various knowledge. Gramci (1971) defined the notion of “ideology” and “hegemony.” He investigated “the origin of ideas,” and believed that “the origin of ideas” passed from meaning “science of ideas” to meaning specific “systems of ideas” (p. 376). He called it “ideology.” In his works, he also examined how western power has been experienced not just through the political state, but everywhere. He treated it as “hegemony.” Based on these notions, Gramci (1971) proposed the concept of “common sense,” he understood it through an exploration of the relationship between “ideology”, “concepts of the world” and “the philosophies” (p. 323-324). In my study, I utilized “common sense” for challenging the ideology of breastfeeding without any consideration of immigrant mothers. I suggest that it is necessary to deconstruct the notion of breastfeeding and to be mindful that this notion is associated with race, gender and class inequalities.

The purpose of the second level was to understand breastfeeding from global to local. According to the text about the strategies, I argue that breastfeeding as an ideology involves a social and cultural imperialism under the trends of globalization. Pyle & Ward (2003) points out that globalization involve several trends that “capitalist process and ideologies spread throughout the world” (p. 463). These major trends include promotion of market determination of economic outcomes from international financial institutions and most nations (p. 463), the use of “liberalization” and “free market” as the language for global restructuring (p. 464) and the involvement of institutions and organizations empowering sustainable human development (p. 464). Under the trends of globalization, the WHO/UNICEF as international organizations, provide “global strategies” for breastfeeding for their members, such as the BFI and BPG, which largely affect the process of policy-making and the practice of breastfeeding in a national and
local level. The standard for breastfeeding and the global strategies of breastfeeding were developed by these international organizations containing messages of imperialism in social and cultural aspects. By taking the standpoint of new Chinese immigrant women, I find that many of them have transnational experience of breastfeeding. When they gave the birth to their kids in Canada, these mothers as lifelong learners need to relearn the knowledge of breastfeeding based on the Western medical philosophy and the “logic” from the local breastfeeding educational programs. In addition, I argue that the provincial and local practice of breastfeeding only build dialogue with nation building, but fail to consider individual needs from the bottom, especially the needs of mothers from social marginalized groups. While the policy makers developed provincial strategies for breastfeeding by using the global ones, they cooperated with the social and medical organizations from the local for reaching the national goal of increasing the breastfeeding rate. Breastfeeding as an ideology has been utilized for a purpose of nation-building. On a local level, the breastfeeding educational programs faced a lack of resources, funding, space and staffing, while they also attempted to reach the national goal. As a participant in the local program, I find that my identities, transnational experience, knowledge and practice are largely excluded from the organizing of breastfeeding educational programs. Therefore, I find that there is a gap between the imperialist ideology of breastfeeding and my knowledge of breastfeeding. The inequality of knowledge production shapes the ways of organizing under globalization. I suggest that the breastfeeding education in Canada needs to reflect a social justice perspective for social change.

Implications for Adult Education Theory and Practice
This paper poses two implications for adult education theory and practice. First, this paper builds dialogues between the theory of lifelong learning and identity construction. I believe that the theory of lifelong learning should pay greater attention to the interactions between learners’ hybrid identities, knowledge, and their learning practice. Second, I explore a Toronto breastfeeding educational program within the framework of IE. I provide the standpoint from new Chinese immigrants in order to understand the organizing of knowledge and social service and educational programs from “bottom-up,” transnational and global perspectives. I hope to break new grounds in the understanding of not only the practice of breastfeeding education in Canada, but also the transnational learning experience of new Chinese immigrants.

Reference


Textual Visibility in the ‘Work of Work-Related Learning’

Cheryl Zurawski
University of Regina

Abstract: This paper draws upon an institutional ethnography (IE) that explicates the organizing power of texts to align what employees think and do with employer expectations about their participation in work-related learning as a job requirement. The texts of empirical interest were analyzed to reveal what is made visible when employees do what is necessary in order for their employer to recognize and reward them for their performance as work-related learners. The paper reports selected findings on how this work is done, what it makes textually visible and what is accomplished by the doing of it.

Introduction
The part that texts play in shaping work-related learning is a promising and developing area of research (Fenwick, 2008). This paper draws on a study that advances this area of research using IE as method of inquiry. The study’s problematic arose out of the everyday experiences of employees as they do the ‘work of work-related learning’ associated with texts integral to the administration of employee development planning as a work process embedded in a widely used type of performance management system known as the balanced scorecard.

The first part of the paper provides background information on the study upon which I draw and introduces readers to the work process of employee development planning and the balanced scorecard type of performance management system in which it is embedded. The second part outlines understandings about texts that are foundational to IE research practice. The third through fifth parts present selected study findings about the ‘work of work-related learning’ that employees do when they participate in the work process on their own and/or in conjunction with their managers. The sixth and final part of the paper offers concluding comments about the significance of the selected findings as presented.

Background
Employers today frequently embrace ‘human resource development’ (HRD) as a business strategy to enlist and monitor their employees’ participation in work-related learning as means to the competitive ends of ‘human capital’ generation and regeneration. Prominent among the systems in operation to advance HRD as a business strategy is ‘performance management’. Performance management became fashionable in HRD in the 1990s. Since then, systems of performance management have become commonplace in all sectors of industry and commerce (Bititci, Garengo, Dorfler & Nudurupati, 2011). One particularly popular type of performance management system among employers in Canada, elsewhere in North America and the world (Kaplan, 2009) is the balanced scorecard. Part of the popularity of balanced scorecards is attributable to the opportunity they provide employers to single out the knowledge and skills that employees bring to bear in their on-the-job performance is ‘intangible assets’ to ‘exploit’ (Kaplan & Norton, 1996).

A balanced scorecard system of performance management is used at the organization where informants in my study work. Embedded in the balanced scorecard system at ABC Company (a
pseudonym) is a work process known as employee development planning. This work process provides the administrative apparatus within which employees’ work-related learning is planned, implemented, reviewed and rewarded each year. Later on, I share selected findings about the ‘work of work-related learning’ employees do with the texts upon which the administration of the work process depends. Next, I outline understandings about texts that are foundational to IE research practice.

**Texts in IE Research Practice**

Of particular interest to many IE researchers are work processes coordinated by texts (DeVault, 2006). Texts figure prominently in IE because they figure prominently in peoples’ lives. Indeed, it is hard to imagine a day when employees at work, for example, do not participate in activities that involve texts – printed, electronic or otherwise replicable. A replicable text is one that is stored, transferred, copied, produced and distributed in bulk, allowing people at different times and in different places to see, hear or watch them (DeVault & McCoy, 2002) and yet they appear as the same text at each moment that people interact with them. In an organizational setting, memos, letters, procedure manuals, emails, instant messages, computer screens and files, audio-visual material such as training videos, forms and operational guidelines are all examples of texts.

IE researchers recognize texts as “actual presences in people’s activities and in how activities are coordinated” (Smith, D.E., 2005, p. 104). Accordingly, they do not analyze them “as sources of evidence and as receptacles of inert content” (Prior, 2008, p. 821) like many other social scientists typically do. Instead, they analyze them as “phenomena in their own right” (Smith, D.E., 1990a, p. 120).

Texts are ubiquitous phenomena in on-the-job activities. They characteristically have the capacity to shape what people think and do whenever and wherever they engage with them. The claim I am making here stems from Dorothy E. Smith’s empirical observations that technologies of social control are increasingly and pervasively text-mediated (DeVault, 2006). IE researchers view texts as operative at the intersection between the local actualities of peoples’ lives and the relations of ruling that organize, coordinate and regulate those local actualities (Smith, D.E., 1987, 1990a, 1999). The relations of ruling are essentially text-mediated forms of organizing everyday life and people’s knowledge of it that have emerged and become dominant over the last 200 years (Smith, D.E., 1987, 1999, 2005). In contemporary society, for example, “what the business world calls management” (Smith, D.E., 1990a, p. 14) depends on relations of ruling mediated by texts. Within these relations, to rule is to rely on knowledge constructed in and through various textual forms of reporting, accounting for, recording and/or otherwise taking note of particular aspects of peoples’ lives (Smith, D.E., 1990b) for management purposes.

To access the relations of ruling mediated by texts that I gathered for my study, I undertook to learn: (a) what informants needed to know to use the texts; (b) what informants do with, for and

---

38 It is important to note texts do not automatically produce particular patterns of thought and activity. They do, however, open up for inquiry the sequences of activities people engage in when their work is tied into texts and texts are tied in to their work (Smith, D.E., 2005).

39 Dorothy E. Smith is a Canadian sociologist and pioneer of IE.

40 This is an ‘empty term’ that refers IE researchers “to a world of things, activity and experiences that includes but is not coterminous with texts” (McCoy, 2008, p. 705).
on account of the texts; (c) how the texts intersect with and depend on other texts as sources of information, generators of frames and authorizers of the doing of the ‘work of work-related learning’ in particular ways (i.e. ways expected by ABC Company); and/or (d) the conceptual framework that organizes the texts and the competent reading of them (DeVault & McCoy, 2002).

Changing the Pattern of Visibility of Work-Related Learning
The board of directors of ABC Company first communicated expectations about employees’ participation in work-related learning as a job requirement on its 2005 balanced scorecard41. It did so by setting a strategic objective to employ skilled and knowledgeable people. This strategic objective was to be met by:
• adding employees’ participation in work-related learning into the performance management system,
• requiring employees to prepare and implement a development plan, and
• specifying a target number of hours of work-related learning for employees to put in during the year.

These leadership moves marked a change in the “pattern of visibility” (McCoy, 1998, p. 397) of work-related learning at ABC Company, signalling to all employees the importance the board of directors attaches to their work-related learning as a factor in the generation and regeneration of human capital deemed critical to business success. To further support this intent, and to incent employees to meet the board of directors’ expectations, the HR department adjusted ABC Company’s pay administration system to make 10 per cent of what employees earn as salary increases and their bonus payments contingent on their performance as work-related learners.

Employees Observe the Boundaries of the Work Process
Employees who do not wish to forfeit ‘pay for performance’ become skilled at observing the procedural and curricular boundaries of the work process. Employees demonstrate their skill when they follow inscriptive practices (or the practices of working with, working from and/or working to produce various texts) associated with the preparation and implementation steps of the work process.

Observing Boundaries in the Preparation Step
Employees are to set themselves up to perform under the auspices of an employee development plan that they are to prepare with two common elements. The first is a learning and development objective and the second is an accompanying action plan. I make a few empirical points about each of these elements in turn.

The proper way to inscribe a learning and development objective is the “SMART” way. SMART, is a mnemonic, or device for remembering, the criteria that a proper instance of a learning and development objective is to meet. A learning and development objective must be specific, measurable, attainable, relevant and time-based. The SMART mnemonic appears prominently at the top of the employee development planning form. This prominence makes it difficult for employees not to see that they should formulate a learning and development

---

41 It has continued to do so in subsequent years.
objective that precisely expresses what they wish to accomplish through their work-related learning.

The SMART mnemonic further serves as a standard to which the learning and development objective employees enter into the blank reserved for it on the employee development plan form is to measure up. To meet the standard means to mind the assembly instructions (Smith, D.E., 1990b) that the mnemonic makes visible to them. In minding the assembly instructions, employees assess the propriety of their learning and development objectives against criteria that are not of their own making. The mnemonic does not permit them to judge for themselves and with reference only to their own aspirations what work-related learning it would be worthwhile to set out to do. Rather, it imposes a standard judged by the company to be worthwhile for them to attend to when they formulate their learning and development objective.

With respect to the action plan, the proper way to put one together is by heeding a set of HR department guidelines that make visible to all employees what types of work-related learning ABC Company recognizes as appropriate for employee development planning purposes and will, therefore, reward with credit hours towards employees’ balanced scorecard performance target. These guidelines, which constitute ABC Company’s work-related learning curriculum, were promulgated by the HR department as a follow-up to the change in the pattern of visibility of work-related learning that the board of directors made on the 2005 balanced scorecard. The purpose of the guidelines, according to a company email, is to assist employees with integrating work-related learning into their on-the-job performance.

Overall, employees regard the HR department guidelines as employee-friendly, serving to make the balanced scorecard performance target easier to meet because they have flexibility to choose from among various types of work-related learning when they put together their action plan. An important empirical discovery stems from my analysis of the positive way in which employees speak about the HR department’s guidelines as an aid to preparing their employee development plans. Employees’ knowledge that there are several types of work-related learning they can do in order to later receive credit helps them see how to prepare an employee development plan that falls within the curricular boundaries established by the HR department’s guidelines. The interest of ABC Company to spell out what types of work-related learning it is best for employees to pursue appears to align with employees’ own interest to have the flexibility to do various types of work-related learning that are assured to earn them credit hours towards the balanced scorecard performance target. This alignment of interests reinforces the curricular boundaries established by the HR department’s guidelines at the same time as it is encourages employees to observe them.

**Observing Boundaries in the Implementation Step**

In the implementation step of the work process, employees participate in three main activities. The first is filling in a “course request form” in order to secure two levels of approval to do work-related learning for which there is a cost to the company such as tuition or registration fee. The second is keeping track of work-related learning that they have done so they can more easily

42Examples include a university course, product and technical skills training offered onsite at ABC Company and involvement in a professional association.
respond to the eventual call to produce a textual record for their managers to evaluate. The third is seeking or accepting help from managers who have responsibility to coach employees when it appears there is something impeding progress in implementing their employee development plans (e.g., a project with immutable completion dates that leave little or no time for participation in work-related learning or commitments to family or community outside of the work day).

Each of these three activities, mediated directly or indirectly by texts, facilitates employees’ observance of the procedural and curricular boundaries of the work process. Course request forms accomplish a two-way coordination, moving employees forward with implementing their plans while at the same time subjecting moves forward to two levels of scrutiny. By keeping track of their work-related learning they have done, employees coordinate the work they do to build up a textual record of their work-related learning with the evaluation work their managers will later do. Finally, coaching coordinates the remedial work that can help employees who are not chalking up enough credit hours towards their performance target get back on the right track.

**Employees Set Managers Up to See What They Need to See**

I now turn to the set of inscriptive practices that employees become skilled at following in the reviewing and rewarding steps of the work process. In these steps, employees set themselves up for managerial evaluation of the results they have achieved in implementing their employee development plans. This managerial evaluation triggers subsequent determinations of pay for performance.

*Making “Results Achieved” Textually Visible for the Reviewing Step*

Employees set themselves up for evaluation by making their “results achieved” textually visible to their managers. The “results achieved” blank on the employee development plan form asks employees to make textually visible for the purposes of managerial evaluation a view of their work-related learning that is limited to “results achieved”. By listing all the courses, training sessions and the like in which they participated, employees set their managers up to follow established procedures for performance rating and scoring. Two texts support these procedures.

The first text is the same one that employees observe in the implementation step of the work process in order to remain within curricular boundaries established by the HR department’s guidelines. In the reviewing step, managers also observe these boundaries in two sequences of action. In the first, managers associate employees’ “results achieved” with a type of work-related learning sanctioned by the HR department’s guidelines. In the second, managers allocate a predetermined number of credit hours specified for each type of work-related learning to each “result achieved”\(^{43}\). After a corresponding number of credit hours is allocated to each “result achieved”, managers add up the total number of credit hours of work-related learning that the employee has earned towards their balanced scorecard performance target.

Once the total number of credit hours has been added up, a second text, referred to as a performance rating key, comes into play as a coordinator of a third sequence of managerial actions. The performance rating key provides the interpretive schema (Smith, D.E., 1990a) or means of providing coherence to the array of accounts of work-related learning that employees offer up for managerial evaluation. Using the performance rating key, managers equate the total

\(^{43}\) A university course is worth 30 credit hours, for example.
number of credit hours their employees have to a rating on an ascending scale of 1 to 4. The textually-mediated sequence of actions by which managers arrive at a performance rating paves the way for interim and annual performance review meetings.

Triggering ‘Pay for Performance’ in the Rewarding Step
Interim and annual performance reviews mark two occasions during the year when employees formally check in with their managers on how well they are performing in implementing their employee development plans. During performance reviews (the point in the work process when the reviewing step converges with the rewarding step) two additional text-mediated sequences lead managers to produce performance scores.

The single-digit performance rating that managers gave their employees in the reviewing step becomes a factor in an equation used to calculate individual performance scores at performance review meetings. Performance scores then go to the HR department so that due and payable salary increases for individual employees who have seen their way to perform in line with the board of directors’ expectations can be reflected in ABC Company’s payroll.

To determine bonuses, the HR department relies on evidence that the collective workforce has met the board of directors’ expectations of their performance as work-related learners. The HR department constructs this evidence from completed and signed-off employee development plan forms that managers submit around the end of the year. With forms in hand, the HR department calculates a corporate performance score by averaging the total number of credit hours of work-related learning that ABC Company employees put in during the year.

Whether on an individual or corporate basis, performance scores make textually visible the extent to which employees are warranted to have performed in line with the board of directors’ expectations.

Significance of the Findings
As the work process of employee development planning unfolds, certain forms of textual visibility are produced. The production of these forms of textual visibility supports the operation of the work process in the manner intended by the employer, organizing and mobilizing employees’ participation in work-related learning on terms they did not establish but with which it is necessary for them to comply.

Critiques of work processes like the one I studied are mainly concerned with problems of employer control over employees and the contributions of performance management towards ensuring employees conduct themselves in line with their employers’ objectives (Bach, 2005). I share these concerns. However, what I have illuminated by drawing attention to the organizing power of texts to bring employees’ under their jurisdiction is an ostensibly softer and gentler form of control. Under this form of control, employees are drawn into relations of ruling that they are motivated to sustain because of the apparent alignment of their employers’ interest to enlist and monitor their participation in work-related learning with their own interest to do what is necessary to receive pay for their performance as work-related learners (Grace, Zurawski, & Sinding, forthcoming).

References
Blackwell Publishing.


Roundtables/Panels
The Impact of Previous Assessments on Adult Learners

David E. Allen
Murray State University

Abstract: This research study was designed to provide a starting point for the investigation into the long-term impact of stressful assessment experiences on learning in adults. The primary goals of this study were to identify and categorize the types of assessment adults found stressful and generate baseline data about how the stressful assessment experience impacted their love of learning and their college and career goals.

Introduction
A class assignment asked students to describe a stressful assessment experience. This exercise was to instill in the students who are future teachers, a need to make their classroom assessments as low-stress as possible and to ensure fair and valid assessments are used as a positive force for shaping their students as lifelong learners. As they shared their experiences, it became apparent that these assessments shaped how these adult students perceive education and educational assessment.

The literature review indicated that testing anxiety has been well researched (Huberty, 2009; von der Embse & Hasson, 2012). However, little exists about how stressful assessment events affect the students years later. For example, one search for “high-stakes testing” and “lifelong learning” produced only one result. This article stated “even as teachers try to teach students creative, meaningful ways and help them develop a desire for lifelong learning, high-stakes testing is acting in opposition to…these efforts” (Hurren, Rutledge, & Garvin, 2006, p. 444-445). This statement was made in the introduction of the article and was not supported with any data.

This research was designed to begin the exploration of how stressful assessment events (including high-stakes assessments, classroom tests and assignments, college entrance exams, etc.) impact adult learners.

Sampling
The convenience sample (n=95) was selected from student volunteers in a western Kentucky college of education. The sample was comprised of 83.2% females and 16.8% males. Broken down by age groups, the sample had 82.1% age 18-22 years, 10.5% 23-27 years, and 7.4% over the age of 27 years. Ethnicity was not reported to ensure participant confidentiality due to the low number of ethnic minority participants.

Instrumentation
Five open response questions were asked to allow participants to have free range in selecting what was most stressful to them and to allow for assessment categories as diverse as their experiences. The participants were directed to "Think of a time you had a particularly stressful educational assessment experience." The investigative questions were:
1. What was the event?
2. Why was it stressful?
3. What was the impact, if any, of the assessment at the time?
4. What impact, if any, did the assessment have on your love for learning?
5. What impact, if any, did the assessment have on your college and career goals?

**Analysis**
The data were tabulated in a spreadsheet and grouped by category of assessment and subdivided by grade-level groupings for when they took the assessment (college, high school, or pre-high school). Descriptive statistics were calculated to determine the impacts of the stressful assessment experience.

**Results**
The data were grouped into categories of assessment type that developed naturally from the participant responses. The largest category, with 41.1% of participants, was large-scale assessments designed for college admission or certification purposes. Classroom summative tests accounted for 21.1% of the responses, state-level large scale assessments gathered 13.7% of the participant responses, advanced placement exams received 9.5% of the responses, and classroom assignments were 8.4% of the responses. “Other” accounted for 4.2% of responses and 2.1% indicated that they had not experienced any particularly stressful assessment.

Overall, 6.7% of participants stated that the stressful assessment experience increased their love of learning, 47.2% indicated that the assessment had a negative impact on their love for learning and 34.8% indicated that the assessment had no impact on their love of learning. The remaining 11.3% either did not answer the question or the response was inappropriate for the intent of the question.

Regarding college and career goals, 26.7% of participants indicated that the assessment positively influenced their goals, 23.3% stated a negative impact on their goals, and 25.6% were neutral on any impact to their goals. The remaining 24.4% either did not answer the question or the response was inappropriate for the intent of the question.

**Discussion**
The small percentage of participants that had an increase in their love of learning mostly viewed the assessment event as a motivator to succeed. However, nearly half of the participants indicated that the assessment events made learning less fun, at least temporarily, and some dreaded any learning evaluated with an assessment.

The data for the impact on college and career goals were most likely skewed due to the convenience sample used. The assessment event was viewed as positive if the student obtained admission to their school of choice or received a financial result. Similarly, a negative view resulted when lower scores resulted in either personal failure or not gaining admission to their program of choice.

Through the use of open-ended questioning, a full and open range of stressful assessment events was developed, allowing for categorization of the stressful assessment types, and some baseline perspectives expressed. Given the percentage of responses that were inappropriate for the intent of questions 4 and 5, clarifying refinements are required.
Future considerations for a full study include analysis by ethnicity, age, gender, level of education, and socio-economic status. The planned sampling method includes surveys completed by adult learners at various levels of education including General Educational Development (GED) seeking adults, high school graduates, adults with some college or a completed degree, and those that did not attempt post-secondary education.

References
Comic Books, Curricula, and Conversations:  
Internationalizing A Canadian University, One Day at a Time

Adrienne Burk  
Simon Fraser University

Abstract: This roundtable focuses on innovations within a mid-size Canadian university changing its orientation regarding internationalization. These interventions, undertaken over the course of an academic year, ranged from the informal to the scholarly. Questions explored include: How are norms established within classrooms in which few common pedagogical expectations are shared? What kind of educational practices are implied, possible, or prohibited in profoundly diverse classrooms? In these settings, do instructors work towards more, or less, authority-challenging treatments of their course content? What are the implications for emancipatory adult education practices in these classrooms?

In the push for both contemporary relevance and financial survival, many Canadian universities are actively, and increasingly, recruiting non-North American students (AUCC, 2007; Slowey & Schuetze, 2012). Although the consequences of this in terms of educational practices and institutional fortunes are still unfolding, in this roundtable I will explore and discuss contemporary developments in one mid-sized Canadian comprehensive university committed to internationalization. The discussion will focus on an analysis of a number of administrative and pedagogic initiatives – from the informal to the scholarly – introduced during one academic year and designed to address challenges brought about by large numbers of non-North American students.

Although the data for this roundtable will be based on one specific institution, the discussion will be framed to also include broader, cross-institutional themes and examples. First, after characterizing some demographic details (of students, faculty, and staff) of the university, I will highlight a few features of its recruitment approaches and procedures to detail their apparently intended effect. Next, I will describe an unusual constellation of circumstances and personnel that, in 2012, briefly permitted an opportunity for a series of innovative interventions that went beyond (and even productively contradicted) these intended effects. After mapping the actors caught up these processes in terms of their various institutional locations and roles, I will show how they worked to (re) align students’ academic expectations, alter instructors’ pedagogical practices, create popular networks for informal discussions, and create supports for on-going critical reflective practices. I will sketch a number of these in some detail to illustrate the range and breadth of the interventions.

For example, in the traditional teaching cultures of this institution, tutorial and seminar formats have long been regarded as key pedagogical venues. Thus faculty members’ more established practices for developing and displaying critical thinking, coaching novices to enter content-rich debates, and challenging them to undertake ‘risky’ assignments have had to be examined for cultural assumptions about course content and classroom management, as well as effective formative and summative assessment strategies. Similarly, recruiters, counseling staff, and advisors (who have long presumed a primary institutional function should be supporting the social integration of international students) have come to realize previous consulting models
have been premised on some erroneous assumptions about how international students actually make use of university environments. Furthermore, with the attention paid to academic success, non-international students’ needs have also come to into view in a different light, with the subsequent realization that purpose-built support services and courses have often been resourced in ways inappropriate to demand and/or student accessing strategies.

It is my intention to sketch these interventions so as to invite complementary examples from others’ institutions. In particular, I anticipate the roundtable will explore a number of questions relevant for all adult and postsecondary education practitioners and researchers but especially those interested in diversity and pedagogy: How are norms established within classrooms in which few common pedagogical expectations are shared? What kind of educational practices are implied, possible, or prohibited in profoundly diverse classrooms? In these settings, do instructors work towards more, or less, authority-challenging treatments of their course content? What are the implications for emancipatory adult education practices in these classrooms?

References
The Horizons of Criticality

Sara Carpenter
Shahrzad Mojab
OISE/University of Toronto

Abstract: This roundtable is designed to provoke discussion around an important questions related to our historical moment of imperialism, austerity, and militarism: what is critical about critical adult education? This roundtable will be shaped through our contribution to the forthcoming Building on Critical Traditions.

In this paper, we propose a different approach to the field of critical adult education, which is rather than ‘describing it’ we aim to interrogate it. We intend not to repeat what has been done elsewhere (Rikowksi, 1996, 1997), which is to provide extensive literature review, historical summation, ‘mapping’ of the field, and summary of the debates and trends. Instead, we propose a debate around a universal question that is applicable to critical adult educators of diverse theoretical and political persuasions what does it means to be ‘critical’ in our historical moment? The title of this paper reflects this basic, but under explored problematic at the center of adult education theorization and practice, which has been the subject of an ongoing debate within educational theory (Brookfield, 2003; McLaren & Jaramillo, 2010).

As educators and scholars, we feel compelled to go deeper into the notion of ‘being critical.’ There are many useful tools in this exploration, particularly the extension of dialectical analysis into the fields of feminism, anti-racism, social change and resistance, education and learning, and the construction of knowledge. But there are also bodies of theory that provide a partial analysis or, at best, make ‘unobservable’ contradictions observable. Specifically, we have noticed particular trends in our classrooms. First, we often see a resistance to critical theorization based on the problematic legacy of mechanical/deterministic Marxism. Second, the horizons of innovative forms of resistance appear wrapped up in either social democratic romanticizations of participation or leaderless mobilizations that celebrate their lack of organization. Third, we also work against a nihilistic humanism that draws adult learners into a survivalist mentality that prioritizes the self over the social and emphasizes critical introspection. Finally, we have a body of feminist, anti-racist, and post-colonial literature that is profoundly important to critical scholarship, but predominantly locked in frames of culture, lacking a strong grounding in the materiality of social relations (Bulter, 2006).

We identify ourselves intellectually and politically as Marxists and anti-racist feminists and have often written under the category ‘Marxist-feminism.’ We have been engaged, for many years, in the cultivation of a Marxist-feminist framework for the field of adult education (Carpenter & Mojab, 2011). While there are many combinations of ‘Marxism’ and ‘feminism,’ for us this refers to an intellectual and political position that aims to cultivate feminist and anti-racist dialectical historical materialist analysis and revolutionary praxis. We identify as educators who believe scholarship and teaching to be forms of activism. Thus, the litmus test for theoretical positions are the dictates of their political imaginations and the analytical tools they offer to address the real, contradictory social relations of exploitation and violence that are present in
everyday life. What kind of theory helps us to explain the world around us? What kinds of explanations do they offer? What kind of world do they help us to imagine?

Building from these positions, this roundtable will begin with a brief presentation of the theoretical tools we have used to unpack and examine the notion of ‘being critical.’ We then hope to facilitate an open and reflection conversation concerning the present state and future horizons of critical adult education in Canada. We will also propose what we have identified as three tendencies or ‘slippages’ through within critical adult education research and practice. These are: 1) a focus on ‘class’ instead of social and material relations; 2) a pre-occupation with neo-liberalism; 3) theorizing and researching neo-liberalism without an associated analysis of imperialism.

References


Locating Adult Education within a Faculty of Education Context: Opportunities, Obstacles and Challenges

Janet Groen, University of Calgary
Colleen Kawalilak, University of Calgary
Budd Hall, University of Victoria
Nancy Taber, Brock University
Erin Graham, University of British Columbia
Andre Grace, University of Alberta

Abstract: At the close at the Commission of Adult Education Professors meeting during our CASAE 2012 Conference at Wilfred Laurier University in Waterloo, Colleen and Janet noted that many of us are at an interesting crossroads as more adult education departments / specializations are becoming part of their respective faculties of education and/or are beginning to engage in their undergraduate teacher preparation program. The recent shifts we had been experiencing within our own Faculty of Education at the University of Calgary were not unique, but seemed to be something that we all shared, albeit with some unease. We wanted to know more about this emerging phenomenon and believed it was important to systematically delve into what this means for the field of adult education in Canada. Members of this panel will explore this emerging phenomenon from their own experiences, as adult educators, in stepping out of margins and into teaching, research and/or service within their respective Faculties of Education.
Facilitating English Language Teaching (ELT) through Drama

Denise Haugh
University of British Columbia

Abstract: The theatre workshops and acting I did when I taught English as a Foreign Language (EFL) in Japan, inspired me to investigate ways to actively engage my students. I discovered that my own experiences in theatre workshops and on stage correlated to what I saw my students undergo during their speaking activities and presentations. As I was able to transform my “stage fright” into a “playful confidence”, I explored how my students could experience the same transformation through drama. My collaborating, presenting, and writing efforts, allowed me to reflect on and refine the drama activities I employed, hence connecting whatever I taught to my students to my own experiences in the classroom.

Teaching English in Japan
The drama activities I explored with my students when I taught English in Japan for 16 years originated from my desire to connect the studying of English with using the language in “real life’. What I mean by “real life” is how and why we communicate and interact in the day-to-day world. The theatre workshops and acting I took part in inspired me to work creatively with the body and the voice. These workshops provided a link to my own learning process as an English language instructor – a process grounded in “real life” learning. I investigated how to actively involve English language students in their oral communication studies and chose drama activities that had the potential to engage students kinesthetically, emotionally, and cognitively – activities that could facilitate them when interacting in English.

During my years of teaching in Japan, I developed a “playful confidence”. The training I received from the theatre workshops and being on stage helped me to transform a number of unpleasant feelings and sensations like tension, resistance, embarrassment, and shyness into positive ones such as ease and confidence. The unpleasant emotional and physical reactions I had experienced correlated to what I saw my students undergo during their speaking activities and presentations. I believed that lots of good practice in a “safe” environment was essential for their language development. Through the repetition and pacing of drama activities, I learned how to gauge the comfort level of my students as they became more acquainted with the extroverted side of language learning.

Throughout my years of using drama in my English as Foreign Language (EFL) classrooms, I had to work with challenges particular to Japanese culture, a culture embedded with Confucian values. Values such as propriety, saving face, and group harmony affected the face-to-face dynamics between my students and I, as well as between the students themselves. I underwent periods of uncertainty when my students had difficulty speaking to one another and in front of their classmates. I believed their extreme shyness, silence, and nervousness were attributed entirely to the same kind of anxiety I had once experienced when performing or speaking in front of people. My grand scheme of assisting my students in their oral communication studies
through drama was quickly fading. I was completely unaware of how my Western or North American cultural perspectives imposed an expected “behaviour” onto my students.

**Collaborating with Fellow EFL Instructors**

Fortunately through my collaborations with other EFL instructors, I received advice and support. I was encouraged to carry on with my explorations of using drama to facilitate oral communication, to present at conferences, and to write about the aspects of teaching I was most passionate about. When I became involved in the Japanese Association of Language Teachers (JALT), it allowed me to partake in poster sessions and presentations and to publish short articles and a chapter called, “Fostering Learner Autonomy through Dramatized Role-plays”. My collaborating, presenting, and writing efforts made it possible for me to critically reflect on the value of incorporating drama activities into the classroom, hence connecting whatever I had taught to my own experiences. By incorporating Kolb’s learning cycle (1984) into my own learning experiences, I became less concerned with questioning the viability of drama activities and more focused on reinforcing their positive aspects. I learned to re-examine my strategies for developing good communication skills by noting the interpersonal changes taking place between the students themselves through gesture, body language, and vocal expression. For example, once my students felt comfortable and safe in their learning environment, I would ask them to notice their breathing patterns and body sensations as they interacted with each other. I was curious to find out if the students who cultivated a greater awareness of their bodies were still as shy or nervous as they first had been in my class. Could developing such awareness help my students switch into a Western way of interacting when speaking English? I came to believe that fostering good communication skills required active reflection on the behalf of both my students and me. Collaborating with other EFL instructors and conducting research motivated me to continue exploring drama and how it facilitated the teaching of oral communication.

**Conclusion**

Reflecting back to those years of teaching EFL, I am aware of how little reading on educational philosophies and learning theories I did as I developed my teaching skills. Like the advocates of progressive education, I placed “more value in knowledge derived from observation and experience than from tradition and authority” (Merriam & Brockett, 1997, p. 35). Experiential, embodied, and self-directed learning played significant roles in my development as an EFL instructor as I directed myself through a myriad of teaching and learning experiences. These informal learning modalities provided me with a much more comprehensive sense of awareness that will guide me in my future explorations of teaching oral communication and designing professional development workshops for English as Second Language (ESL) instructors in Canada.

**References**


Experiential Learners or Learners with Experience? Contrasting Coady International Institute and St FX’s Development Studies Program Approaches to Building Social Change Learning Contexts

Jonathan Langdon
Behrang Foroughi
St. Francis Xavier University

Abstract: The facilitators of this roundtable work in two different contexts at St. Francis Xavier University. One works with the Coady International Institute, an adult education institution with a long history of community leadership and community development education in an international context, while the other works in a small but growing interdisciplinary program focused on social change and development. We both bring to this roundtable our adult education philosophy and practice, how what we do supports the becoming of community development/social change leaders we envision, and how learners view their own development as a result of participating in an adult education learning environment (whether embedded in leadership learning or experiential learning approaches).

Introduction
The facilitators of this roundtable work in two different contexts at St. Francis Xavier University. One works with the Coady International Institute, an adult education institution with a long history of community leadership and community development education in an international context, while the other works in a small but growing interdisciplinary program focused on social change and development. To contrast these two programs simplistically, one brings learners together in a room to build mutual leadership (of the Preskill and Brokfield, 2009, variety) for social change, while the other uses layered experiential learning (inflected with Mezirow’s transformational learning) engagements to teach young and relatively inexperienced learners about the complexity of social change processes.

We both bring to this roundtable our adult education philosophy and practice, how what we do supports the becoming of community development/social change leaders we envision, and how learners view their own development as a result of participating in an adult education learning environment (whether embedded in leadership learning or experiential learning approaches). Concretely put, the contrasting programs include a) a five-month Diploma in Development Leadership for community development leaders from the global south, and b) a three year undergraduate program in Development Studies that includes optional and required local service learning experiences, and a required local or international internship in a social change collective (movement, organization, institution, etc.).

Discussion
What interests us in this comparison of programs at Coady/St. FX is how we constitute learners, and how we envision the becoming, a deepened sense of self, vis-à-vis the social context in which one is engaged, that further enhances one’s confidence while nurturing hope and imagination for a possibility of change. We will share emergent results from research on a) Coady’s program in which experienced participants from the global south share and reflect on their development practice, and analyze the frames through which they have been engaged with
social change efforts. This includes developing and applying a variety of analytical lenses (e.g., gender, power, sustainability, wellbeing, etc.) to examine and make sense of their past and current work with communities around the world; b) development studies students engaging in multiple, and cumulative experiential learning engagements to explore the link between this vision of becoming change agents and their own understanding of their learning; this research is drawn from 6 focus groups: 2 at the introductory level, where experiential learning engagements are optional; 3 at the Third-year level, where students undertake a required local experiential learning engagement and parallel transformative learning course; and 2 at the Fourth-year level, where honours students in Development Studies are required to undertake an intensive 3 to 4 month placement in a social change context/organization often critical of global and local power relations (c.f. Langdon & Agyeyomah, 2013). These focus group sessions used a form of the most significant change process (Davis & Dart, 2005) to not only generate a participatory sense of the experience of layering different experiential learning engagements, but to also provide participants with an opportunity to underscore what is most significant of this layering, as well as most significant of experiential learning itself. From an experiential and transformative learning perspective, as well as a more general adult education perspective, the results of these focus groups are interesting, not only for the way they became part of the process of becoming (i.e. pedagogic in their own rite), but also for the way they revealing a growing appreciation for the complexity the experience reveals, rather than the clarity. The impact and importance of experiential learning is more clearly understood and articulated at the Second and Third year, whereas the Senior Development Studies students show a growing capacity to contend with ambiguity and distinctions in their understanding of issues of social change – a process that leads them to deeply embedded reflective practice into their approaches to any social change context.

After elaborating upon this research and the interesting way in which layering experiential learning leads to less self-assured, but more self-reflexive students, we will discuss, in a conversation-based way, the way in which this research both echoes and contrasts descriptions of learning from Coady participants, and the vision behind this learning.

In presenting these two comparable, yet contrasting approaches to building social change leadership, we aim to highlight the links between pedagogic intention and learning, as well as destabilize this link by illustrating learner agency. This should provide rich food for discussion, as we will ask participants to reflect on the inherent tension in educational processes between intentionality and learner-centeredness.

References
Davies, R., & Dart, J. (2005) The “Most Significant Change” (MSC) Technique. This document is freely available in pdf format from [www.mande.co.uk/docs/MSCGuide.htm](http://www.mande.co.uk/docs/MSCGuide.htm)


Langdon, J., & Agyeyomah, C. (2013). Critical hyper-reflexivity and challenging power: pushing past the dichotomy of employability and good global citizenship in
Development Studies experiential learning contexts. In R. Tiessen & B. Huish (Eds.), *When the World is Your Classroom*. Toronto: U of T Press.


Entertaining New Approaches in Mathematics Education.

Deborah MacLean

Abstract: Labour market shortages in skilled trades and professions that require mathematics may be traced to reluctance on part of learners to get the prerequisites for further training and study (Gould, 2011; Keitel, 2008; Wedege, 2006). These trends have profound implications both for individuals’ earnings and for the economic potential of society. This round table explores the idea of alternatives in mathematics education, increasing success and participation.

This roundtable discussion and my work are based on practice, as an instructor of adult learners, nearly all of whom displayed signs of the panic described by Buxton, the resistance as described by Wegede (2002) and the avoidance as described by Benn (1994). Many learners showed the benefits of a different approach to learning mathematics.

One of the major weaknesses of adult learners is that they do not know how to study or review the course material. When this is coupled with math anxiety, often the result is avoidance (Wedege, 2002). This can result in low performance, despite knowing the material (Tobias, 1991). Also adult learners may consider collaborative work a kind of cheating, based on their previous experience in educational institutions (Treisman, 1992). The traditional mathematics instruction often has left learners with the idea that mastery must occur in isolated and performance driven ways.

Several principles of adult learning are applied in a board game for review of algebra, used in a case study (MacLean, 2012). The game is designed as a study tool for the review of beginning and intermediate algebra. These are essential courses for adult learners because they are gatekeeper courses. If a person does not succeed in mastering these levels, the upper level courses and programs are closed. Also these are often the entry-level courses for adult learners and therefore the ones in which they come face-to-face with their own emotional barriers in the domain of mathematics. When learners can succeed at these entry-level courses with a sense of authenticity and ownership, they have had what Dewey envisioned: an educational experience that leaves them wanting to continue their studies. This is key for adult learners in mathematics. Also this is key to continuing their education in trades, career training or professions demanding a strong mathematics background.

The strengths of the adult learner can be incorporated into the study of mathematics with some innovation and openness. From the field of adult education, we know that adult learners bring certain strengths, such as self-direction and self-motivation to their learning. Also adult learners use reflection to increase their own awareness and that of colleagues; this can be very useful in collaborative learning, which many adults use successfully. Further, the social aspects of learning in a community can be used to increase learning success for adult learners (Hunter, 2009; Hutt, 2007; Lantieri, 2009).

Colleagues, who witnessed the adult learners using the board game, applied some of these strengths and preferences for other courses. An innovative applications was the collaborative assessment model, in which learners worked in pairs or groups for some tests. Other researchers have also based their explorations of alternative approaches for adults learning mathematics on the preferences of adult learners; Miller Reilly (2008) explored the efficacy of connected
learning and Hunter (2009) created a discourse community in the mathematics classroom. The use of alternative approaches to help learners overcome their own inhibitions can run into resistance from the domain of mathematics education.

This round table discussion challenges adherence to the traditional practices and assumptions in the domain of mathematics education, releasing student and instructor to have a little more entertainment in the educational process (Hussey, 2012) and more positive outcomes for the learners.

References


From Theory to Practice: Exploring Experiential Learning using Outdoor Education

Catherine Mallet
Timothy Straka
The University of British Columbia

Abstract: The purpose of this roundtable discussion is to offer participants space to collectively consider the relationship between adult experiential learning theory and practice. The roundtable discussion will take place outdoors and it will offer participants a forum in which they can explore set questions and find questions that matter to them. Participants will first engage in, then debrief, a series of outdoor experiential activities in quick succession as an entry-point into a broader discussion of experiential learning.

Have you ever been sitting at a conference, listening to a presentation on the latest adult learning theory? Imagine yourself listening and wondering how you can/will apply this theory to your own practice… Is it relevant? Now, visualize yourself back in your community and trying to apply this theory. Does it work? Why? Why not?

Experiential learning theory posits learning is a process of meaning-making that takes place through direct experiences (Itin, 1999). This adult learning theory was popularized through the work of David A. Kolb and has since been applied to other educational populations in society (e.g., youth). According to Kolb (1984), experiential learning theory has its intellectual roots in the writings of Dewey, Lewin, and Piaget. Kolb defines learning as “the process whereby knowledge is created through the transformation of experience. Knowledge results from the combination of grasping and transforming experience” (1984, p. 41). With an emphasis on the practical (as opposed to the theoretical), experiential learning invites students to learn heuristically rather than by rote or didactic learning.

In 1975, Kolb and Fry published a chapter entitled *Toward an applied theory of experiential learning*. Their experiential learning model (ELM) is a cyclical learning model composed of four elements: 1. concrete experience, 2. observation of and reflection on that experience, 3. formation of abstract concepts based upon the reflection, and 4. testing the new concepts. Kolb and Fry theorized learners could enter into the ELM cycle through any one of the four elements, though they asserted most typically began their experiential learning process through a concrete experience.

Transformative learning theory, like experiential learning theory, is normally situated in adult education. Mezirow and Associates (2000) define transformative learning as “the process by which we transform our taken-for-granted frames of reference to make them more inclusive, discriminating, open, emotionally capable of change, and reflective so that they may generate beliefs and opinions that will prove more true or justified to guide action” (p. 8). Mezirow’s conception of transformative learning regards transformation as an irreversible shift in one’s meaning perspective (1978). Mezirow (1978) and Mezirow and Associates (2000) suggest this perspective change is achieved through: 1. disorienting dilemmas, 2. critical reflection, 3. rational dialogue, and 4. action. The concept of a disorienting dilemma may be helpful for
session participants to unpack as facilitators argue disrupting habits can precipitate change in sustainability behaviours and practices.

Edmund O’Sullivan has also made important contributions to transformative learning theory. In 2000, he described transformative learning as “experiencing a deep, structural shift in the basic premises of thought, feeling, and actions. It is a shift of consciousness that dramatically alters our ways of being in the world” (p. 29). Drawing from O’Sullivan, Vokey (2008) opines “this desire for transformative learning very often reflects a belief that, individually and collectively, we need a radical change of heart and mind to respond adequately to the social, political, economic, environmental, moral, and/or spiritual crises that (depending upon location/perspective) are seen to be either looming on the horizon or already unravelling the fabric of life” (p. 288).

So, how can we support each other to develop the knowledge, skills, perspectives, and practices that will help us to innovate in our spheres of influence as adult educators? It is clear that there are significant challenges facing us regardless of foci or location. We suggest integrating experiential learning theory with the experiential dimensions of transformative learning theory as an approach to help our learners make meaning from their educational experiences.

This roundtable discussion will take place outdoors (rain or shine). It will offer participants a forum in which they can explore set questions and find questions that matter to them. It will serve as a platform to share the theory and practice of adult experiential learning and invite participants to explore contemporary conceptions of experiential learning theories as they relate to practice in adult education. Participants will first engage in, then debrief, a series of outdoor experiential activities in quick succession as an entry-point into a broader discussion of experiential learning.

Facilitators will initially draw from personal and professional experiences in holistic outdoor experiential education to frame the discussion and offer an approach to experiential education that can be applied by participants to their own practice. They will ground the activities and discussion in the work of adult experiential education theorists including Kolb, Mezirow, and others. Participants will be invited to share personal experiences from their practice as adult educators along with their visions for future practice.

Some preliminary questions for participants to consider include:

- How do I understand experiential learning, experiential education, and/or outdoor education?
- How do I integrate experiential learning, experiential education, and/or outdoor education in my practice?
- Can/should I embrace experiential learning, experiential education, and/or outdoor education in my practice? What changes can/should I make? How will I make them?
- What are my own pressing questions related to experiential learning, experiential education, outdoor education, and/or my overall educational practice?
References


Immigrant Teachers, Canadian Multiculturalism and Conceptions of the “Good Teacher”: The Case of Teacher Recertification Programs in the Greater Vancouver Region

Lilach Marom
University of British Columbia

Abstract: I will examine the recertification process of internationally educated teachers (IETs) in the contradictory space of Canadian multiculturalism. Multicultural policies were incorporated to the educational field whose student body is becoming increasingly diverse (VSB, 2012). But, cultural diversity among teachers remains much more muted, with 80% of the teaching force consisting of white women (Antonelli, Pollock, & Ryan, 2009). The recertification process is a major barrier in IETs’ way to employment in Canada. The purpose of this study is to gain insight into the ideas of the “good teacher” that inform two IETs recertification programs in the Greater Vancouver area.

Context
Factors such as high life expectancy and low birth rates fuel Canada’s constant demand for immigrants. Immigration policies, intended to sustain the Canadian economy, are also supported by discourse about the social and cultural benefits of a diverse society. However, critics have argued that, as currently practiced, multiculturalism assumes that immigrants will adopt “mainstream” Canadian culture and minimize their cultural difference in order to assimilate (Chassels, 2010; Cho, 2011; Joshee, 2004; McCaskell, 2010). There seems to be a political and practical contradiction between Canada’s need for immigrants and the practice of rejecting and deskilling them; this is marked by many immigrants who end up in jobs far below their level of education (Adamuti-Trache, 2011; Mojab, 1999). In British Columbia (BC) 70% of immigrants arrive from Asia and match rates are below the national average (Zietsma, 2010). Although sharing many similarities, immigrants are not a homogeneous group and face different levels of discrimination based on their origin and ethnicity (Guo, 2007). The Canadian point system does not allow systematic discrimination in accepting immigrants; however, discrimination may occur through other mechanisms such as the recertification process that is required in order to enter the Canadian job market.

The contradiction between immigrant deskilling (an economic reality) and multiculturalism (an ideological policy stance) is also apparent in the school system. The Canadian school system was created as a tool for social cohesiveness and is rooted in middle class, white values (McDonald, 1978; S. Walsh & S. Brigham, 2007).

Moreover, critics point out that teacher education programs have not been flexible enough to face the challenge of the integration of IETs (Phillion, 2003; S. C. Walsh & S. M. Brigham, 2007). In a survey conducted in 2007 (S. Walsh & S. Brigham) only seven teacher education programs across Canada identified themselves as having special programs or mechanisms designated to IETs; in BC only two teacher education program are offering a track for IETs.

The recertification process is a major barrier in IETs’ way to employment as teachers in Canada; this is a yearlong full-time training process, following a procedure of assessment of foreign
credentials. This process strengthens the recruitment of teachers from dominant groups, while marginalizing the presence of IETs (Beynon, Ilieva, & Dichupa, 2004; Chassels, 2010), since as Guo (2007) claims, “the devaluation and denigration of immigrants' knowledge and experience become the new head tax to keep 'undesirables' out…the new strategy to maintain the subordination of immigrants and to reinforce the extant power relations in Canada” (p.37). Unlike other professional groups, IETs need to fit into the Canadian conception of the “good teacher” (Cho, 2011) in order to be seen as suitable enough to be accepted into the core mechanism for creating social cohesiveness in Canada (Giroux, 1981). Understanding the recertification process of IET as Canadian teachers opens up questions on the meaning of being “good teachers” in the Canadian context.

**Purpose and Method**

The purpose of this study is to gain insight into the ideas of the “good teacher” that inform two teacher recertification programs in the Greater Vancouver area. My main research questions are: What notion of the “good teacher” is evident in the UBC and SFU recertification programs and how does this open up or close down spaces for IETs to bring their experiences and voices to bear on reconstructing their professional identity in Canada? My theoretical framework is drawn from critical multiculturalism as a prism to unpack the wider construct of “Canadianess”(May & Sleeter, 2010; Nieto, 1999). I am interested to see if and how the recertification programs deal with multiculturalism and social justice as academic venues and on the practical level. Having a gap between theory and practice is typical for teacher educational programs in general (Taylor, 2000); the concept of the hidden curriculum (Eisner, 1994; Giroux, 1981; Margolis, 2001) as well as “null curriculum” (Milner, 2009) are useful in unpacking what is explicit, what is implicit and what does not exist in the recertification programs.

The conceptual framework of habitus and cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1990), would help me to look more deeply into the structure of the recertification programs. In the same way schools serve as socializing organizations for kids (Apple, 2004; Eisner, 2005; Sarason, 1996), recertification programs serve as initiation to Canadianess for IETs. Hence, they are a good platform for unraveling the rooted assumptions underpinning the notion of the “good teacher” in the Canadian context. My goal is to expose the habitus and explore the hidden ontological and epistemic assumptions in the Canadian educational system as it mediated through the notion of the “good teacher” in the case of recertification programs.

The recertification process involves many players (varying by province) and includes credential assessment, course work and practicum (Beynon, Ilieva & Dichupa, 2004). As part of what Yin(2009) has called a “multiple case study” (p. 46), I plan to undertake an in-depth examination of the lived experiences of IETs enrolled in these two recertification programs. Both are in the Greater Vancouver area: one at the University of British Columbia and one at Simon Fraser University. Each program uses a different model of training IETs: UBC as an integral part of the Teacher Updating Program (for students who need to update or complete their diploma for various reasons); SFU in a distinctive separate program (Professional Qualification Program: PQP).

Investigating the notion of the “good teacher” is timely in the face of the new “BC Educational
Plan” (BCEducationalPlan, 2012). The plan uses progressive language that emphasizes the need for a personalized and flexible schooling system in which learning is based on individual interest and passions. What seems to be missing in this plan is a direct reference to diversity both in the student body and in the teaching force. I intend to look at the notion of the “good teacher” in the recertification programs as it intersects, and reflects broader questions of policy and pedagogy in the BC context.

References
BCEducationalPlan. (2012). The world has changed the way we educate our children should too. from http://www.bcedplan.ca/
Critical Perspectives on Learning and Social Movements: Recent Global Scholarship

Marjorie Mayo, Emeritus Professor of Community Development, Goldsmith’s College, University of London, England
Catherine Etmanski, School of Leadership Studies, Royal Roads University, Victoria, BC., Canada
Aziz Choudry, Department of Integrated Studies in Education, McGill University, Montreal, Quebec
Darlene Clover, Leadership Studies in School and Community, Faculty of Education, University of Victoria, Victoria, BC, Canada
Budd L Hall, Community Development, School of Public Administration, University of Victoria, Victoria, BC, Canada
Ronald Cameron, Institut de coopération pour l’éducation aux adultes, Montreal, Quebec

Abstract: This round table is led by six of the authors of the recently published Learning and Education for a Better World: The Role of Social Movements and offers participants an opportunity to share insights and experiences on the relationships, theories and practices of learning within and because of social movements. Social movements have been responding to the outrageous excesses of global capitalism in a variety of forms. They are extraordinarily rich sites of learning for transformation, for deep democratic change.

Dark Times Indeed

We are experiencing deep ruptures and profound grief generated by the crisis neo-liberal politics and policies are creating as they move beyond the poorest and most marginalised persons to encompass the middle class of academics, professionals and social sector workers. These are dark times indeed, for many more than just a few. Our roundtable provides an opportunity for an exchange of ideas stimulated by the publication of a number of new collections and studies on social movement learning from around the world.

Some of the recent theorizing problematizes Northern or Western approaches to social movement learning drawing instead on the traditions of subaltern intellectuals from the Global South. We wonder how to deepen our understanding of the rich interaction of education, learning, teaching and action; a world of social movement learning that builds on the ideas of all the movements and intellectuals who have gone before us in the pursuit of an engaged and democratic life? This collection of studies and reflections recognises yet goes beyond a sense of hopelessness and emotional inertia we encountered, to give world are resisting, organising and learning to overcome a world that we do not like but have no recipe to change.

The initial presenters in our round table have been associated with the recent publication of Learning and Education for a Better World: The Role of Social Movements. (Hall et all, 2012) Themes developed by our round table authors include the impact of neo liberalism on adult education, learning through cultural struggle, the challenges of building counter-power from the ground up, learning from local organic farming, the pedagogy of the Occupy movement and experiences and reflections on learning and social movements from a Quebec lens.
Our book is about shack dwellers in South Africa, about the struggle for an educational system that has meaning in Austria, about the political ecology of environmental movements in India and Scotland, about the Raymond Williams and Antonio Gramsci as resources of hope, about the lessons of 30 years of popular education in Latin America, about the role of the arts in social movements, about feeding the imagination for a new world in south Africa, about the use of film in building capacity within movements, about social media in the Egyptian revolution and the Occupy Wall Street movements, about privileging knowledge from grass roots movements over professional civil society networks in Asia and about how learning by one person in one organic farm is connected to a new vision of the relationship of humans to the rest of nature. We welcome a conversation about how the theory and practice of social movement learning is developing. We see that one powerful contribution to social movement learning is the rendering visible of the extraordinary scope, diversity, range of actors, breadth of means and methods and indefatigable energy of those who are engaged in the educational work, the teaching and learning, the formal and informal sharing and knowledge-making that is the world of social movement learning.

Learning Journeys for the Green Economy

Juliet Merrifield
Department of Adult Education, St Francis Xavier University

Abstract: The challenges of climate change demand transformations in our lives, involving social, cultural and economic shifts. Adult education has a long history in transformative learning for social change. However, since the days of the Antigonish movement, the practice of adult education has focused more on individual and community development than on the economy. This research-in-progress is mapping elements of the green economy in Nova Scotia and analysing the spaces and processes of learning among people already working on greening aspects of the economy.

What is the “Green Economy”?
This research follows the United Nations Environment Programme in seeing the green economy as:
- “low carbon” – reducing carbon emissions by switching to alternative technologies, increasing efficiency and cutting energy use by changes in lifestyles, buildings, industries and transport;
- “sustainable” -- eliminating wastefulness by making more efficient use of resources, local production to meet local needs, and responsibility to the needs of future generations;
- “just” – aiming for a more just and equitable distribution of wealth, and ensuring a better balance between material wealth, the environment and social well-being. (UNEP 2011)

A green economy is a new economic paradigm, which does not fully exist anywhere, although growing in importance. Creating a green economy works on twin tracks:
- “greening” the mainstream economy (through greater resource efficiency, lower carbon, reduced environmental impact, new methods of production and distribution)
- creating “green industries” that use new technology, products and services to offer low-carbon, low impact solutions (like solar and wind energy).

In Nova Scotia there are “green sprouts” in most economic sectors, especially natural resources. In food production, there is a growing 'local food' movement, farmers markets and community-supported-agriculture. The first community-supported-fishery has started, creating a market for local, sustainably caught fish. In forestry there is interest in high-value-added timber products and sustainable forest management, rather than pulpwood for paper mills. Nova Scotia's renewable energy targets are among the highest in the world, using new technologies for wind, solar and tidal energy. NS already has a strong track record in waste reduction and recycling.

Learning Journeys
Any moment of profound social change involves learning. This research is investigating the kinds of learning involved in creating a green economy. Where are the learning spaces? Who is involved and what are the processes of learning to make this transition? We expect instrumental learning, task-oriented problem solving, as people learn to work in new ways, implementing new technologies and processes (Mezirow 1997:6). But communicative learning, new understanding of meanings, values, beliefs and judgements, is also a crucial aspect of transformation not just of the economy but of social and cultural life as well. Transformative learning “is the process of effecting change in a frame of reference”, the structures of assumptions through which we
understand our experiences (Mezirow 1997: 5). The green economy requires a paradigm shift in how we think about work, about resources, relationships between producers and consumers and between the natural world and humans.

One example of transformative learning is in the creation of sustainable local fisheries. Instrumental learning sits in the details of fishing practices. To create a differentiated market for sustainably caught, local fish, Nova Scotian fishermen must pay attention to how they handle the fish once caught. Fish must be put on ice immediately, not left on deck in the sun; offloaded for processing quickly and on the road to consumers in the city. Trap-caught shrimp fishermen experiment with how to pack shrimp on ice so they arrive alive, even as far as Montreal, and attract the interest (and premium price) of chefs.

But instrumental learning also entails shifts in attitudes and meanings. Independent fishermen tend to see rules as set up by outsiders to constrain them. Adopting new practices in a serious way means adopting new rules, but these have a purpose behind them, and are part of coming to see themselves as fishermen in a new way, with a different relationship to consumers. Among food consumers there is also instrumental learning: how to tackle a whole fish, cooking with seasonal food, preserving surpluses when available. But underpinning these are deeper shifts in the relationships between people and food. To 'eat local' challenges assumptions that the same foods are available year-round at the supermarket. Seasons and weather are part of food buying, but the global food system has meant they became invisible. A green economy will rely more on locally-produced food, so consumer attitudes need to shift. Some have already: people who shop at farmers' markets already see food as part of a social relationship with food producers, know what's in season, and have gone to some effort to shop sustainably.

Food is an important area for the burgeoning green economy because it is the sector through which everyone experiences the economy. We may see a wind turbine and know it is generating power, but few people have experience of wind energy. For local food supporters, food is an area of praxis, where reflection and action come together. It provides one of the few social spaces within which people can learn about the green economy, in transient learning spaces in farmers' markets and in the network of small community groups working on local food (distributing veg boxes, organising events, creating community gardens).

Ongoing social learning spaces around the green economy exist within community organizations working for sustainability, community-owned wind turbines and community-supported agriculture. There are trade groups in solar energy, woodlot owners, self-governing fishing associations that provide spaces for collective learning. But public space for explicit discourse about the green economy is still limited in Nova Scotia, and adult education has not yet moved to create such space.

References

Promoting Social Presence in Online Learning Communities

Kim Tomiak
Kwantlen Polytechnic University

Abstract: This roundtable discussion focuses on the pedagogical concerns of designing instruction for promoting social presence in online learning communities. The challenges of this important social dimension of teaching and learning are explored. To further the discussion, a community of inquiry model provides an example of a framework to help identify indicators of social presence in online learning environments.

Background and Context
The rapid advancement of online courses challenges adult educators to identify the quality of online instruction. Ouzts (2006) argues that learners “who rated courses as being low in sense of community described their online courses as miserable experiences” (p. 292). Rovai (2002) explains that computer-mediated communications can be regarded as less personal than a face-to-face classroom and “it is course design and pedagogy that matter the most” (p. 6). Learning in an online environment can lead to students disengaging from the learning community. Many variables contribute to building a sense of community at a distance, yet social presence is one of the most significant factors (Aragon, 2003). The challenge is to understand the importance of the social function of online teaching and learning in the context of online courses or programs for adults in higher education.

Social Presence
The concept of social presence can be traced back to communications theory where concerns surfaced that computer-mediated communication might prevent learners from developing a sense of belonging with other learners and the instructor (Aragon, 2003). The definition evolved to “the degree to which a person is perceived as “real” in mediated communication” (Gunawardena & Zittle, 1997, p. 8). The perception of both learners and the instructor are essential for a meaningful learning experience.

Social presence and course design. Many adult educators support the argument that online courses that result in a sense of isolation fosters concerns about instructional design (Aragon, 2003; Garrison, 2011; Stodel, Thompson, & MacDonald, 2006; Tu & McIsaac, 2002). Early generations of distance education emphasized individualized learning, yet new generations of online learning value collaborative inquiry. The focus of online learning then moves from instructor-led to a more student-centred model of teaching. This presents challenges to provide a trusting and respectful space that fosters collaboration with an emphasis on social learning.

Social presence and adult learning. Learning in an asynchronous online environment where communication and activities take place outside of real time often leads to feelings of loneliness and separation for adult learners. Garrison (2011) emphasizes the use of collaborative-constructivist learning activities to promote interaction and facilitate connectedness among learners. Stodel et al. (2006) recommend five ways to improve the online learning experience: “robustness of online dialogue, spontaneity and improvisation, perceiving and being perceived by the other, getting to know others, and learning to be an online learner” (p. 5). Palloff and Pratt
(2007) concur that these strategies help build a community online and form a sense of belonging among learners.

**Social presence and a community of inquiry framework.** Garrison, Anderson, and Archer’s (2000) community of inquiry model of online learning for adults in higher education is built on a collaborative-constructivist framework with three overlapping elements—social presence, cognitive presence, and teaching presence. Using this framework as an example, I will focus on how the social presence construct informs a sense of community through three categories: emotional expression, open communication, and group cohesion.

**Discussion**

This roundtable contributes to the ongoing discussion of building a sense of community in online courses or programs and asks questions around designing online learning communities to promote social presence. It is an invitation to consider whether the growth of online courses raise concerns with the quality of teaching and learning. I ask whether designing online environments with social presence fosters the development and maintenance of supportive collaborative learning relationships among adult learners. Some of the questions I open up in the discussion are:

1. In light of the disconnect that learners feel because of the separation from each other and from the instructor, what are the present challenges for designing online environments to build community? Does social presence provide awareness into what learners miss about face-to-face contact when learning online?
2. To what extent can the development of social presence foster an interactive online learning community? How do the social expectations of an online learning community impact the learning experiences of the learners?
3. Garrison et al. (2000) suggest categories that inform a sense of community. I wonder about the indicators of social presence. What affective, communicative, and cohesive indicators contribute to a successful online educational experience? What facilitation styles inform the social dimension of online learning?

**References**


Rovai, A. P. (2002). Building sense of community at a distance. *International Review of Research in Open and Distance Learning, 3*(1), 1-16.


Transforming Higher Education:
A Case Study of the Professionals in Rural Practice Course

Meagan Troop
Queen’s University

Abstract: This study examines an interdisciplinary course at an Ontario university designed by professionals from Medicine, Rehabilitation Therapy, Nursing, Law, Theology, and Education, on the topic of professional practice in rural communities. Data gathered from observations, interviews, and artifacts provide a detailed portrait of the unique nature of this interdisciplinary course for the eight instructors and eleven students involved. The thoughtfully designed learning environment created a space for experiential and collaborative interactions, all of which served as enablers for building creative capacities and for transforming perspectives. Significant themes highlight the following pedagogical conditions as enablers for both creativity and transformation: a) the storied self, b) multiple ways of knowing, and c) adult conversation.

Rationale
This research aims to draw attention to course design and implementation in higher education and to highlight the importance of creating a flexible approach to learning if it is to invite experiential moments of creativity and transformation into the classroom. Moving the pedagogical site away from traditional methods of lectures and labs towards more project-based learning employing collaborative teams, reflective journals, informal learning contexts, and problem-based learning provided students with platforms to discover and construct their own meaning in engaging ways. With a careful examination of the interactions enabled through learning activities, an understanding of the nature and quality of the participant experience within this course context was enhanced.

Method
Detailed descriptions and interpretations were developed in the act of classroom observation. Field notes, student work, instructors’ lesson plans, and assignments were used as data. Additionally, semi-structured interview protocol was used to conduct interviews with six graduate student participants and eight instructors. Data analysis involved a process of open coding through both inductive and deductive analysis in order to generate data-driven and theory-driven (a priori) codes. This hybrid approach to thematic analysis used words in various semiotic segments to facilitate an organizational structure for “contrast[ing], compar[ing], analyz[ing], and bestow[ing] patterns upon them” (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p.7).

Results
The Storied Self
There was a great degree of value placed on storytelling in the course. The storied self initiated an awareness of context, which was creative and transformative for students and teachers. As Clark (2010) writes, “we make sense of all experience by narrating it” (p. 3). Building narrative networks enabled an engagement with others storied perspectives as a part of a sense-making act (Clark, 2010). Instructors shared stories of a personal and professional nature with the intent of presenting rural topics in a rich, situated context (this meant that there was consideration made for social, cultural, political, ethical, and moral dimensions) and as a result, students followed suit. As one instructor stated, “They
have something to offer just from themselves.” These dynamic and fluid stories were strategic, intentional, and purposeful in the course context and drew links between ideas and experience in a way that honoured personally meaningful knowledge.

**Multiple Ways of Knowing**

On the two-day immersion retreat to Prince Edward County in Ontario, students experienced a mix of the lived realities of rural and the “rural nirvana.” In the process of being immersed in this setting, students challenged their notion of what it was to be rural and questioned assumptions that they had made previously about the inherent challenges and dynamics of being part of a small community. The opportunity to participate in a series of panel discussions, hands-on activities, informal conversations over meals, all amidst a rural backdrop enhanced the teaching and learning experience for teachers and students alike. The retreat serves as a case for multiple ways of knowing. Throughout this immersion experience, students explored their rational, intuitive, physical, relational, and emotional selves.

**Adult Conversation**

According to one of the instructors: “For adults, the best education is intelligent conversation.” Adult conversation provided students and teachers with an outlet for voicing their concerns, for solving dilemmas or problems, and for synthesizing their ideas. In many cases, students and instructors attributed both informal and formal conversation as a contributing factor to seeing things differently, often in a more broadened or sensitized way. The tone of teaching offered an open, inviting, and safe space within which intelligent adult conversation consistently occurred. Critical dialogue was centered on the premise that every person possesses a unique perspective that contributes to the interest and diversity of the collective. Key aspects of the dialogue included compassionate and active listening, a developing ability to look at issues from multiple perspectives and to consider alternative solutions, and a valued sensitivity for problems and questions posed by students.

**Implications**

The “Professionals in Rural Practice” course embodied a positive and richly situated context for teaching and learning in an interdisciplin ary fashion and modeled a reverent regard for the diverse contributions of each member within the collective. Students and teachers regarded this experience as unlike any other they’d had before in terms of the impact that it had on personal and professional levels. A process of discovering of new and personally, meaningful knowledge that was shared and developed through collaborative inquiry contributed to transformative learning experiences for the students and teachers. Results indicate that students and teachers deemed the positive nature and high quality of these inter-professional interactions as valuable, necessary, and potentially life-altering in their preparation for the realities and demands of professional careers. At the heart of these curricular experiences were opportunities to engage in creative ways. Thus, the significance of this research rests not only in the course as a microcosm for rural community itself, but also in the illumination of teaching and learning moments that offered dynamic components worthy of transfer and replication in future post-secondary curricula.

**References**


Promoting Organizational Learning and Change through Participatory Action Research

Ericka Turley
National Louis University

Abstract: This roundtable presents the preliminary findings of a participatory action research project that took place over the course of a year by members of an equity and social justice committee located within a large county government. The co-researchers met weekly to investigate, understand and create strategies that would address workplace inequities and promote racial justice. Concerned with the ability of an organization to promote equity and social justice without acknowledging the inherent inequities that exists within it, the project sought to document and challenge the contradictions that exist between a person’s and organization’s stated beliefs and their actions.

Introduction
This roundtable presents the preliminary findings of a participatory action research (PAR) project that took place over the course of a year by members of an equity and social justice committee located within a large county government. Concerned with the ability of an organization to promote equity and social justice without acknowledging the inherent inequities that exists within it, this project sought to document and challenge the contradictions that exist between a person’s and organization’s stated beliefs and their actions. Specifically, the primary purpose of the project was to identify a shared problem relating to equity and social justice in the workplace and then act to address the problem.

Organizational Context
Based on King County’s 2012 Equity and Social Justice Report, children living in poorer areas of the county are more than twice as likely to drop out of high school as children in more affluent areas; an African American youth is eight times more likely than a white youth to spend time in a state or county correctional facility; and thirty-eight percent of Latinos report that they run out of food sometimes or often compared to 7 percent of whites. To its credit, King County is making significant efforts to remedy these inequities and to ensure access to the determinants of equity for all citizens (see www.kingcounty/equity). However, by simply walking around the offices of King County, one is unlikely to see an employee wearing a hijab, a unisex bathroom, a silent meditation room that could be used for prayer, or a person who speaks English as a second language in a position of power. Instead, you will see displays of dominant ideology with offices filled with Christmas trees, family photos giving tribute to marriage between a man and woman, meeting rooms and entire buildings that are accessible but inconvenient for people with mobility issues, and a disparate number of support positions being filled by people of color compared to the number in leadership positions. So while there is much work being done to improve services and outcomes for citizens, there is great amount of work to be done within its own walls.

Theoretical Framework
Critical theory provides an explanatory framework for how organizations work to legitimize their actions, why they fail to notice the contradictions in their practice, and why so many people
actively go along with organizational practice without regard to the implications. Because this project examined how an organization that strives to create a more equitable workplace can simultaneously support ideology that works to counteract or impede its very implementation, the application and use of a critical theory lens was instrumental in all aspects of the project from design to analysis.

Methodology
Using PAR, a group of primarily non-supervisory staff met weekly to investigate, understand and create strategies that would address workplace inequities and promote racial justice. Each meeting included activities and discussion to develop shared meanings and decision making. There were five distinct action and reflection cycles: 1) developing a shared history and vision for the future; 2) deciding on what we wanted to learn and do; 3) expanding knowledge about organizational change; 4) expanding knowledge of racism and our own internalization of racism and 5) building a plan for the future.

The PAR project was initiated as a doctoral research project. Upon completion of the PAR project, a critical analysis was conducted by this researcher and serves as the basis for this roundtable. Data sources used in this analysis include in-depth interviews with each co-researcher, meeting notes, individual co-researcher reflections, and the various materials that were created and produced by the group. Using a critical theory lens, each data source was analyzed for explicit and implicit values, beliefs, and assumptions and for the ways in which it either challenged or supported the status quo.

Findings
Preliminary findings suggest that, in order for the organization to promote equity and social justice, they must do things differently. Promoting equity and social justice cannot be solved with a day-long training as has been tried in the past; it must be sustainable and become embedded into a worker’s day-to-day practice. Guiding principles from the workgroup’s plan recommend that strategies explicitly address racism at the individual, departmental and systemic levels. However, the findings also suggest that even workers who strive to embed equity and social justice into daily practice often act to support the status quo as much as they act to challenge or change it. Filtered through their personal experiences of internalized oppression and internalized domination, the co-researcher’s activities served to support the status quo in three ways: 1) by externalizing the problem, thereby minimizing their own complicity in it, 2) by confusing the repressive tolerance of their activities for management blessing, and 3) by not sufficiently or effectively dealing with feelings that arose throughout the process.

Implications for Adult Education
This project attempted to promote emancipatory learning and action as a way to create organizational change. By documenting the contradictions that existed between beliefs and actions, it opened up a space to create significant change. However, as the findings show, the project supported the status quo as well as challenged it. Because these finding are not unique to this project, they present similar implications for any adult educator who wishes to dismantle the systems of oppression.
Symposia
From Critical Consciousness to Praxis for Revolutionary Social Transformation: Putting Paula Allman to Work in Adult Education

Helen Colley
University of Huddersfield, UK

Sara Carpenter
University of Toronto, Canada

Thomas Saczkowski
University of Toronto, Canada

Shahrzad Mojab
University of Toronto, Canada

Rosalea Thompson
University of Toronto, Canada

Abstract: An outstanding contributor to the current surge in Marxist studies of education, Paula Allman’s books (1999, 2007, 2010) have opened up new spaces to rethink ways of being, learning and relating in capitalist social relations. Her historical materialist approach urges us to look closely at globalisation, the state, institutional contexts of work and learning, and the processes that unite our awareness with our daily, material experiences. Allman draws out from Marx's analysis of capitalism, alongside those of Gramsci and Freire, an explicit theorisation of consciousness which is crucial for educational work within social movements and other adult education contexts, including the academy. This symposium seeks to apply her unique contribution to the on-going struggle for revolutionary praxis.

Confronting the ‘New Normal’: The Pedagogical Imperative of Paula Allman

Sara Carpenter

One of Paula Allman’s major contributions to Marxist theory, beyond the limits of education as a discipline, is her articulations of external, internal, and inner relations. Her articulation of the importance of relational thinking and her conceptualization of external and internal relations is a fundamental advancement in the ways in which we think, teach, and learn about dialectics and thus, the way we conceptualize ‘critical’ adult education. In this paper, I want to discuss how it is that inner-relations as a point of departure immediately changes the course of inquiry and of pedagogical thinking.

In the context of my work with young adults, particularly as I look at conditions of insecurity and precariousness, I repeatedly run into the concept of the ‘New Normal’. It is a popular phrase, showing up in many areas of public life from medicine to the economy to media. The new normal refers to not just cultural shifts such as changes in the family or technology, but to a political economy of deprivation and social risk. It speaks to a context of heightened security and increasing insecurity. A common theme of the discourse of ‘the new normal’ is that we are all meant to understand what this phrase means in an intrinsic, commonsense kind of way. We must
know this ‘new normal’ because it is what we live in every day. Paula was very fond of saying that there is nothing ‘normal’ about life under capitalism; in fact she often talked about the purpose of critical work as the unsettling of ‘normalcy,’ the denaturalizing what is natural. This is of course, about moving beyond the ideological forms and appearances of daily life.

Beginning an analysis of ‘the new normal’ requires historicizing the phenomenon in important ways and challenging assumptions about the standpoint from which the ‘newness’ of this normality has been constructed. For example, if we take the observed phenomenon of the increasing militarization of everyday life as an example of our ‘new normal,’ we will need to push deeper. These dynamics of state violence have been present in communities of color in the advanced capitalist world for some time now. The extension of violence to communities previously thought exempt or the concentration of it in more profound ways is an important dynamic of the inner logic of capitalism and its relation to the state, which will have profound effects of the lives of learners of all ages.

In the most immediate way, an emphasis on illuminating inner relations pushes our points of inquiry past their appearance and into their essential relations. It directs our scholarship away from description as an end goal and towards explanation as a necessary endeavor. Paula’s analysis also guides our attention to asking important questions about our proposals for social change. Take for example, Paula’s extremely important distinction between reproductive and revolutionary praxis. The contours of the ‘new normal’ that I have named thus, and this is hardly all of them, suggest a social organization of human relations and labor. We work and interact and organize our social reproduction in different ways. For example, the new normal of schools is increased surveillance of teachers (conceived of as criminals) and teachers (understood as ‘lazy’ workers). Working in such an environment with vastly reduced resources under the threat of your own redundancy through inadequate performance has to have effect on how people teach and thus, how students learn and importantly, how they learn to interact with public institutions.

Illuminating inner relations and their connection to forms of reproductive praxis is an essential theoretical tool to unpacking ‘the new normal’ and to demonstrating why this ‘unpacking’ is an important, but ultimately insufficient activity. It brings us around to the question that, as Marxist educators, we always struggle with: how will we respond to our historical moment? How will we engage young people occupying, resisting, protesting? How will we embrace and transform a potentially revolutionary situation?

The Odds are Against Us: Neo-Conservatism, Hunger Games, and Youth Unemployment in Canada

Thomas Saczkowski
University of Toronto, Canada

The rise of youth unemployment in Euro-Western countries is a growing contemporary social crisis. Critical research and in-depth studies on the consequences, causes, and maintenance of youth unemployment is essential for revolutionary social transformation. This paper is part of a larger project applying the ideas of the social scientist and Marxist-feminist Paula Allman. Allman’s analysis of consciousness, capital, and social praxis, allows us to see that maintaining a capitalist state demands having a divided working class to stifle resistance. According to Henri
Giroux (2009), rising youth unemployment levels in Western countries is a reflection of an unstable political and economic system. Britain, Canada, Greece, and other states have instituted federal employment strategies to address rising youth unemployment. The introduction of the paper will provide a detailed description of the current state of youth employment in Canada. To explain the present conditions of youth unemployment in Canada I will be using Marxist-feminist theoretical practice to advance a theory of class and racial antagonism among youth. Marxist-feminist theory will assist in identifying how political economic system ideologies have consequences for people’s material conditions and livelihoods. This will contribute to theorization and empirical research in adult education by bringing into discussion the current state of youth in Canada, pedagogical approaches for revolutionary education practises, and neo-conservative consciousness.

The second section of the paper will provide a description of the material conditions for white youth in Canada that experience insecurity from unemployment. By insecurity, I mean the physical and mental state that people experience while struggling economically and lack the means for a stable livelihood. How a young person responds to their conditions of unemployment is connected to their comprehension of social relations within society, which emanates from their lived experiences and norms in society. Social relations are structures and human processes (like gender, work, education, language) and their interaction with one another create and define a society. Some white youth adopt neoliberal values and divisive understandings of race, class, and gender in society, meaning that white youth develop neo-conservative views as a response to secure positions of power and fulfil personal neoliberal interests. White youths’ adoption of neoconservative values results in a reinforcement of the interests of the ruling class, and reaffirming relations of patriarchy, racism, xenophobia, and other relations that have come to define a neoliberal society.

Narratives of young people, along with reference to the popular Hollywood film The Hunger Games, allows us to clarify how the imbuing of neoliberal values by white youth is essential for the continuation of capitalism and the current state of affairs in Canada. In The Hunger Games, the relationship between youth in the somewhat more privileged districts is fundamental to the maintenance of the oppressive Capital and the silencing of the more oppressed revolting districts. The Hunger Games details different mediums that are used by the Capital to discipline youth in the wealthier districts to compete and discipline the oppressed districts rather than to join in solidarity against the Capital. The film repeatedly represents some young people’s devotion to the values of the Capital by their lack of self-reflection, fear of losing power and status, and the threat of further exploitation.

Adult education and community development researchers, educators and practitioners need to be aware of the current conditions of some youth in Canada. We need to continue the long discussion of the role of the white working class causing disunity among the working class broadly speaking. In addition, the paper concludes by identifying the areas that community development initiatives need to focus on when working with white working class youth.
Youth Support Work in a Time of Austerity: Understanding Its Essence and Appearance through Paula Allman's Work

Helen Colley
University of Huddersfield, UK

Young people have become ‘disposable’ for late capitalism, discarded waste products in its crisis of over-production. Despite record levels of youth unemployment in the global north, worse still in the global south, discourses of ‘employability’ continue to promote individualised solutions focused on ‘fixing’ young people.

This constructs the problem as an individualised one of each young person's attitudes, values, behaviours and beliefs, and one of the main strategies to implement it has been through the use of adult mentors for marginalised young people. Like Haymitch in the hit movie The Hunger Games, mentors are supposed to groom young people to be attractive and appealing to employers in order to win sponsorship; to comply with the rules of the game as employers dictate it; and to accept that they alone must be responsible for overcoming any adversity thrown in their way. Like Haymitch, their job is to teach young people how to compete against each other, but never to question the basis of the competition itself.

Yet there is a wealth of literature on mentoring which purports to reveal its essence - as a warm and trusting human relationship which aims to help those being mentored to achieve their full potential. This is the appearance that mentoring is given, if you read most of that literature or - indeed - any website or leaflet promoting mentoring.

Drawing closely and carefully on the work of Marx, Allman explains that we need to look beneath the surface appearances of social phenomena. Those surface appearances, she argues, fragment, obscure and mythologise the underlying reality or essence - that is to say, they are ideological in the negative sense of that word that Marx gave it. To understand this, we need to look not only for some of the dialectical contradictions and inner connections between some categories which cannot exist one without the other - such between wage labor and capital, or between expert teacher and passive learner in Freire's 'banking model' of education. We also need to consider that there can be dialectical contradictions within a particular phenomenon, that is to say, between its essence and its appearance.

A recent study of professional mentors in England (Colley, 2012 Chadderton & Colley, 2012), shows that the modern appearance of mentoring may be one of kindly and maternal nurture – but under conditions of austerity which thwart the intentions and values of practitioners, the essence of disciplinary control and alienation dominates it harshly, for both young people and mentors themselves.

References
Paula Allman’s last short but theoretically dense book, *On Marx: An Introduction to the Revolutionary Intellect of Karl Marx*, succinctly introduces us to the ideas of Marx on consciousness and praxis. She states: “Marx’s theory of consciousness was actually a theory of praxis, i.e., a theory of the inseparable unity of thought and practice rather than a sequential theory of praxis” (2007, 33-34). Allman suggests that Marx’s theory of consciousness and capitalism enables us to critically question the existing social relations and the transformation of these relations into two different and opposing forms: “critical/revolutionary praxis” or “uncritical/reproductive praxis” (Ibid. 34). She postulates that Marx’s dialectical-historical-materialism philosophy formulates a theory of consciousness which is not based on dichotomy or binary separation between consciousness and reality. In fact, “…reality is conceptualized dynamically, as the sensuous, active experience of human beings in the material world. Therefore, at any one moment in time, consciousness is comprised of thoughts that arise from each human being’s sensuous activity,” and “the consciousness of any human being will also include thoughts that have arisen external to the individual’s own sensuous activity, i.e., from other people’s sensuous activity both historically and contemporaneously” (Ibid. 32).

In reading Paula Allman’s work numerously and contemplating on her insights, I think I have finally been able to identify the additional work that we, as revolutionary educators, need to do in order to fully grasp the depth of Marx’s theory of consciousness. Before explicating this claim further, let me make an observation which I think will make the task of elaborating the point I just made easier. With the rise of social movements globally, from “Arab Uprising” to “Occupy Movement” to Québec student movement and most recently “Idle No More” movement in the context of social unrest in Canada, the questions we have not asked are: What contradictions these movements are identifying? How do they envision tackling these contradictions? Finally, what methods would they use to resolve contradictions? I am intentionally highlighting the notion of contradictions in order to emphasize the fact that we have failed to assess the practice of these movements within the framework Allman calls “critical/revolutionary praxis” or “uncritical/reproductive praxis.” In other words, our criticism, often and at best, has been limited to labeling their practice and consciousness as ‘centrist,’ ‘reformist’ or ‘liberal.’ The argument is not that the naming is not correct; rather the naming does not delineate the wrongs of non-dialectical modes of analysis of consciousness and praxis. Therefore, returning to my earlier point, I intend to expand Allman’s insights on Marx’s theory of consciousness and praxis by introducing Mao’s dialectical and materialist analysis of ‘contradictions’ and ‘practice’.

Allman writes, “[A]s always, with Marx, his conceptualization of ontology and epistemology is relational. His relational conceptualization of ontology leads to a theory of social ‘being’ and ‘becoming’, which is based on the internal relation between our individuality and our collectivity, rather than one that focuses solely on individuals. In addition, Marx’s conceptualization of epistemology pertains not just to the relational origin, constitution and nature of knowledges but also to our relation with knowledge” (Ibid. 52). Mao contends that knowledge begins with experience (ontology/subjectivity) and there is a dialectical and materialist relationship between knowledge and knowability (epistemology/objectivity). While
praxis is, for Allman, “a theory of the inseparable unity of thought and practice,” for Mao, the relationship between thought and practice, as well as thinking and social being, is one of the “unity and struggle of opposites,” a relationship in which one always divides into two, and consciousness transforms into matter and matter into consciousness. I contend that Mao’s dialectical approach deepens our understanding of the theory of practice and activism. Mao argues that the dialectical materialist approach to the study of any social phenomenon should begin with the understanding of the law of contradiction in things, that is, “the law of the unity of opposites” which “…is the fundamental law of nature and of society and therefore also the fundamental law of thought.” He states (1973, 101),

According to dialectical materialism, contradiction is present in all processes of objectively existing things and of subjective thought and permeates all these processes from beginning to end; this is the universality and absoluteness of contradiction. Each contradiction and each of its aspects have their respective characteristics; this is the particularity and relativity of contradiction. In given conditions, opposites possess identity, and consequently can coexist in a single entity and can transform themselves into each other; this again is the particularity and relativity of contradiction. But the struggle of opposites is ceaseless, it goes on both when the opposites are coexisting and when they are transforming themselves into each other, and becomes especially conspicuous when they are transforming themselves into one another; this again is the universality and absoluteness of contradiction.

I can imagine a dialogical moment with the organizers and participants of the above mentioned movements where we can debate the contradictions that their movement is trying to resolve. It would be a leap forward if we can collectively map out what are the ‘universality’ of the contradictions; what are the ‘particularity’ of the contradictions; which are the ‘principal’ contradictions; which form the ‘identity and struggle of the aspects of contradictions’; and where is the ‘place of antagonism in contradiction’ (Ibid. 67). I consider it a leap forward because it is a dialectical materialist approach to knowledge and social practice, to the ontological character of reality and the epistemological realm of reality, that is, how the social is constructed, how it is ordered, and how we should know this. This analysis reflects Mao’s fundamental assumption about ‘knowability’ (kerenshixing) of matter by consciousness, and argues that the theory of reflection of dialectical materialism has positively resolved the problem of ‘knowability’, and is thus the ‘soul’ of Marxist epistemology (Knight 2005, 175). He continues (1937, 65),

[D]iscover the truth through practice, and again through practice verify and develop the truth. Stat from perceptual knowledge and actively develop it into rational knowledge; then start from rational knowledge and actively guide revolutionary practice to change both the subjective and the objective world. Practice, knowledge, again practice, and again knowledge. This form repeats itself in endless cycles, and with each cycle the content of practice and knowledge rises to a higher level. Such is the whole of the dialectical-materialist theory of knowledge, and such is the dialectical-materialist theory of the unity of knowing and doing.

Returning to Allman where she concludes, “[T]herefore, Marx’s theory of consciousness involves not only the dialectical, or internal relations between consciousness and material practice but also, by logical extension, an internal relations between human objectivity and
subtivity” (Allman, 2007, 33). In the critique of the social movements, I am arguing that their main limitation is their non-dialectical mode of thinking, specially, their failure to see contradictions, internal relations, as the force for social change and the unity and struggle of opposites as the only law of dialectics.

References

**Learning/Exploring Dialectics: A Journey in the Company of Paula Allman**
Rosalea Thompson
University of Toronto, Canada

My paper is largely inspired by Paula Allman's writing about dialectical conceptualization in her books *Critical Education against Global Capitalism* and *On Marx: an Introduction to the Revolutionary Intellect of Karl Marx*. She writes, “...it is clear that revolutionary social praxis must depend on our ability to use concepts critically. However, if our concepts and consciousness, in general, arise from our active experience within definite social relations and other material conditions, and if under capitalism these are limited so that we think of things as separate and unrelated, how can we break through these distortions in our psychological processes and think more critically” (2001, p. 28)? As an attempt to try to begin to answer this question, I will present a mixed media art piece that I created. The piece is an animation of the progression and regression of a painting, accompanied by a soundtrack. In it, I explore my personal journey of integrating dialectical ways of thinking into my own consciousness, and how this has helped me to understand the relation between myself and my actions and the larger systems within which I move and create.

In the few years before I began my studies in Adult Education at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, I spent time moving from place to place, mainly throughout North America. I wrote a lot, in a very disorganized way. In more recent and less transient times, I have pored over these notebooks and pieces of paper and attempted to bring together some stories in a format which can be shared. The piece I will show is grounded in some of the experiences I wrote about during this time, particularly that of riding trains and hitch-hiking to get from place to place. As I read through my accounts of entering into places where my presence was unexpected, forbidden, or seen as reckless and unsafe, I thought about the contradictions which a dialectical conceptualization of reality can reveal.

Relations of capital structure the ways that we move through the world in ways which are simultaneously psychological and material. The teachings of fragmentation surround and underpin us, enter into our bodies and minds, and keep us functioning in ways that do not disrupt the naturalized trajectory of development. We line up, we pay our bills, we go to separate spaces for eating, learning, working, and making love. We are taught to understand things as discrete
objects, practices, and ideas. A dialectical conceptualization, however, shows that when we understand the things that happen not as isolated “things” but as ongoing processes with histories and futures, we can see the dialectical, or co-constitutive, relationships shared by many diverse social phenomena. Understanding the invisible filaments which connect ideas and actions can happen when the veneer of ideological convention is chipped away, but this process must be intentional and strategic. Wrapping our heads around dialectical relations yields a steady, if always-shaking foundation from which to strategize revolutionary praxis; to disrupt oppressive processes and construct better ways of being with ourselves and with each other. This is an attempt to tell a story about processes rather than things. That is, the social phenomena that inspired this piece and which I describe through words and images are depicted in their connection to one another, and not as static, closed, or isolated ideas. Preconditions as well as future possibilities are brought together by the moments I have tried to illustrate.

Reading Paula Allman's interpretation of Marx's dialectics has been instrumental to my own development of ways to articulate the complex social relations that structure lives. Art is a way to physicalize the thought/emotional/instinctual processes that we go through, to literally draw the connection between our consciousness and the real world. It is also a form of communication that has the potential to reach beyond words which can, as Paula Allman pointed out, serve to extinguish the relational origins of concepts. It is also an important part of breaking out of the fragmented structure of the academy, where “social” sciences are barred from contaminating “pure” sciences and where we do such nonsensical things as educating against capitalism while paying thousands of dollars to a racist, patriarchal capitalist institution. In the current historical moment, human beings are deeply embedded and implicated in the social relations of capital. Yet, comprehensive accounts of these relations, ones which can inspire the imagination to conceive of alternatives, are lacking. Paula Allman is insistent that it is the role of adult educators to “help people to understand the dialectical nature of capital's contradictions and thus to grasp the positive potential that has also been created within these relations but that lies dormant and thwarted so long as the relations prevail” (2001, p. 130). With my presentation, I hope to spark dialogue not only about the relations between the contradictions that we are socially embedded in, but also regarding art as a way to instigate and support social transformation.

Reference
Abstract: As the globalization of migration intensifies, Canada has joined an international competition for the most talented, skillful, and resourceful workers. As a result of growing transnational migration, Canada is becoming increasingly ethno-culturally diverse. Profound demographic, social, and cultural changes brought about through migration have created new opportunities for development as well as new challenges for adult and lifelong learning. This symposium explores the emerging trends and challenges in transnational migration and lifelong learning with a focus on Canadian issues and perspectives.

Introduction
As the globalization of migration intensifies, Canada has joined an international competition for the most talented, skillful, and resourceful workers. As a result of growing transnational migration, Canada is becoming increasingly ethno-culturally diverse. When immigrant learners and their families move to Canada, they bring their values, language, culture, and educational backgrounds to the host society, adding to and enriching these new educational environments. Without a doubt, profound demographic, social, and cultural changes brought about through migration have created new opportunities for development as well as new challenges for adult and lifelong learning. Adult and lifelong educators are constantly grappling with the following questions: What is the impact of transnational migration on lifelong learning? What are the challenges and opportunities for lifelong learning? How can lifelong learning best facilitate migrants’ adaptation in a new society? How are transnational communities and lifelong learning networks being formed through the process of migration and adaptation? How should states and communities work together to develop more coordinated lifelong learning policies and practices in assisting migrants with their adaptation? What is the relationship between migration, identity and lifelong learning? How do notions of gender shape the learning experiences of migrants?

It is therefore the purpose of this symposium to explore the emerging trends and challenges in transnational migration and lifelong learning with a focus on Canadian issues and perspectives. In this symposium which consists of four papers, the panelists will report on their research and
provide forum for a larger debate about the relationship between transnational migration and lifelong learning. Collectively, we will be examining the above questions that concern adult and lifelong educators.

“Lifelong Learning” as an Ideological Code: Professional Chinese Immigrant Women’s Class Based Strategy in Canada (Hongxia Shan)

Statistical studies have shown that immigrants tend to invest in re-schooling and re-education in Canada to improve their occupational opportunities (Adamuti-Trache, Anisef, Sweet & Walters, 2011; Banerjee & Verma, 2009). The post migration experiences of the 21 Chinese immigrant women in two of our studies largely corroborate this picture. In this paper, we ask why the women chose to go back to schools and attend training programs, and how come they embarked on the kind of training trajectory that they did. The studies this paper draws on a mix of life history interviews and institutional ethnographic analysis.

All the women except for one tried to improve their occupational status after immigration. Some women attended job search workshops for immigrants. Seventeen out of the 21 respondents also attended other informal and formal training and education programs in Canada – all except for one woman did so with the specific goal of getting a Canadian degree or certificate. The strategy of re-schooling is however not an individualized response of the women. It speaks of the women’s social disposition as middle-class women in China, where a culture of meritocracy, perpetuated through the highly selective education system in China means that accessing and excelling in school system can probably bring about changing life opportunity for the women. For example, Dan was a computer network engineer in China and for a while in Canada. To improve her salary potentials, she wrote tests and obtained certificates of different levels in C++, Cisco network, Novell network etc. She was so “good at writing exams” that she was even hired by the private institute where she received her IT training. Things however took a dramatic turn as she decided to give up on an IT career as she had to take care of her kids while her husband worked full time. She then made herself into a seasonal tax return specialist, again through excelling in relevant exams set up by a tax return company.

Despite the women’s aspirations, it is argued that credentialism, the material conditions facing the women, gender, race, as well as age and gendered familial relations work in concert to channel women into a labour market segmented along gender, ethnic and racial lines. Dan’s experiences for instance illustrate the confluence of gender, language, age as well as financial condition on her choice of a training program. A chief engineer in China, Dan worked in two manufacturing factories. After she was injured on the job, she looked for a new career direction and here is how she came to her choice of a daycare assistant training program.

I decided to study and become a daycare assistant. … My English is not good. Fellow immigrants who are younger and who speak better English than me are having problem landing professional jobs… I decided to change to something that was suitable for me. I am a patient person. I love children. I am a mom… I thought… I would remain younger if I stay with children all the time (laugh). My English was not great. I did not have the courage to study for an ECE diploma in college… (the training in the community centre) costs $500. It was cheap, and good for me… I paid it myself. If you go to college, it would be $5,000.
The women’s experiences pinpoint the irony of the lifelong learning discourse: while increasingly individuals are responsibilized to learn and to manage their working life, their personal and professional opportunities are largely produced as part of the hierarchical social cultural and economic order to the disadvantage of the minority. While a few of the women have managed to enter the occupations they targeted, majority of them only stayed afloat in the host labour market. Majority of the women, including nine women who were trained and worked in traditionally male dominated professions such as engineers, and lawyers before immigration, ended up in sectors traditionally associated with women and their assumed role as caregivers, such as early childhood education and immigrant settlement services.

Immigrant Services Organizations: Advocates for Redistribution, Recognition, and Representation (Tara Gibb and Evelyn Hamdon)

Immigrant professionals come to Canada seeking employment opportunities, but during the employment integration process, they encounter a lack of recognition for their education and professional credentials (Guo, 2009; Gibb & Hamdon, 2010), resulting in economic hardships (Statistics Canada, 2005). Immigrant service organizations (ISOs) provide new immigrants with educational services, assisting them in navigating the borders that surround Canada’s professional licensing bodies and labour market. In providing these services, however, ISOs find themselves in a paradoxical state; their economic survival as organizations is often dependent on subscribing to policies that sustain systems of non-recognition. ISOs attempt to support these new citizens/workers in navigating the Canadian workforce and yet, become complicit in the very systems that exclude their clients.

In earlier work, we posited that Nancy Fraser’s (1995) concept of recognitional justice is helpful for reframing issues relating to the exclusion of highly educated immigrant women from the professional workforce (Gibb & Hamdon, 2010). We concluded that Canadian practices requiring re-credentialing constitute a problematic and unjust form of lifelong learning, which paradoxically has given rise to an educational industry that profits from systems of lifelong learning and reproduces systems of privilege, precluding rather than redressing this fundamental injustice. It is this form of injustice that will be most helped by Fraser’s (2009) latest work, in which she adds a third dimension to her theorizing of justice, representation. In The scales of justice: Reimagining political space in a globalizing world she argues that a two-dimensional account of justice (i.e. redistribution and recognition) is no longer sufficient for theorizing injustice. Redressing material and symbolic injustice also requires remedying political injustice.

According to Fraser (2009) the mapping of political space has been determined by Westphalian principles that protect sharply defined national borders and identities. However state sovereignty has been challenged through the emergence of trans and supranational players that have already begun erode these boundaries. She says:

Now that the mapping of political space is an object of struggle, those interested in justice today cannot fail to ask: given the clash of rival views of the bounds of justice, how should we decide whose interests ought to count? (p. 5)

Without representational justice “social belonging” (p. 17) eludes, in this case immigrants, resulting in “the exclusion from the community of those entitled to make justice claims on one another” (p. 17).
In our earlier paper we point out that ISOs and the women they work with struggle to both comply with and resist “current approaches to educational programs for women”. By this we mean that they (both the ISOs and the immigrants) engage in critiques of the system, understanding it to be unfair (or unjust). At the same time ISOs are forced to present themselves and their clients for reassessment, re-credentialing. The women we interviewed reported that they frequently found themselves working in fields and in positions for which they were unsuited and overqualified. ISOs in particular have been silenced due to funding laws that prevent them from engaging in advocacy work, once an important function. Clearly, within the current framework for mapping the political, the voices of immigrants and those who run ISOs are not represented in the decision making processes at either the federal or provincial levels. They are not, in Fraser’s (2009) terms, included in the determination of what constitutes justice (or an injustice). The resultant “political death” gives rise to those excluded being deprived of “authoring first order claims”.

Returning to our original recommendations based on Fraser’s two dimensional theory of justice we consider what other recommendations might have been made by those we interviewed were we to add this third dimension.

Recalling a conversation with one executive director of an ISO, following a meeting with representatives of the federal government we are reminded that those who run ISOs are acutely aware that they are shut out of the process. In this particular case the executive director of a longstanding ISO expressed frustration with consultation processes in which feedback is ostensibly sought, carefully provided but rarely considered. According to Fraser this exemplifies one way in which the most affected are the least considered, constituting a clear injustice if a three-dimensional model were being used to guide political decision-making and the development of political processes.

Without a model such as Fraser’s three-dimensional model of justice, “patterns of advantage and disadvantage” become sedimented. The possibility for those always already excluded to effect significant change to engender a more just approach to, in this case the recognition of credentials and the full acceptance of immigrants into Canadian society, is seriously curtailed, if not impossible. Without a sea change in our understandings and performance of justice the inclusion of the “most affected” in redrawing the boundaries and considerations of justices seems a far off dream.

**Recognizing and Legitimizing Immigrant Parent Knowledge in Education (Yan Guo)**

Portuguese sociologist Boaventura de Souza Santos (2007) uses the metaphor of “the abyssal line” to critique epistemological dominance in Eurocentric cultures. This means on this side of the line, Europe and America have knowledge; as seen from this side of the line, on the other side such as in Asia and Africa, there is no real knowledge. Earlier immigrants coming to Canada were mostly Europeans. Today’s immigrants are mostly from Asia, Africa, the Middle East, Central and South America, and the Caribbean (Statistics Canada, 2007). Eurocentric knowledge is perceived as global and universal whereas immigrant parent knowledge as deficient and lacking.
The knowledge that immigrants hold about their children is often unrecognized by teachers and school administrators (Jones, 2003; Ramirez, 2003). These forms of non-recognition of immigrant parents can be attributed to misconceptions of difference, and lack of knowledge about different cultures (Guo, 2009; Honneth, 1995). A deficit model of difference leads to the belief that difference is equal to deficiency, that the knowledge of others, particularly those from developing countries, is incompatible, inferior, and hence, invalid (Abdi, 2007; Dei, 1996; Guo, 2009). If school staff members hold these attitudes, even tacitly, they may fail to recognize and make use of the knowledge of immigrant parents.

The extent to which parent knowledge is gained and used may be modelled as “transcultural knowledge construction,” whereby individuals in immigrant societies of the new world change themselves by integrating diverse cultural life-ways into dynamic new ones. The resulting blended forms lead either to, opposition and discrimination, or to cultural creativity and the integration of new knowledge within academic and societal positionings (Hoerder, Hébert & Schmitt, 2006).

Knowledge is power; knowledge is socially constructed, culturally mediated, and historically situated (McLaren, 2003). At the heart of the nature of knowledge as social relations is a notion of culture as a dynamic entity, as a way of using social, cultural, physical, spiritual, economic, and symbolic resources to make one’s way in the world. In addition to socially mediated forms of knowledge, immigrant parents’ personal knowledge can play an important role in school relations. Personal knowledge refers to wisdom that comes with embodied meaning (Polanyi, 1958). Parent knowledge includes that drawn from their own educational backgrounds, their professional and personal experiences of interacting with schools in their countries of origin as well as their current understanding of the host country’s education system, their own struggles as immigrant parents, and their future aspirations for their children (Pushor, 2008).

Data for this study were collected through in-depth interviews with thirty-eight immigrant parents from fifteen countries. Results of the study show, from a recognitive justice perspective (Fraser, 2009), that it is important to understand the significant knowledge possessed by many parents in the study, including their understanding of ESL learners’ cultural, linguistic and religious backgrounds, life experiences of living with many cultures, and community issues. The results of the study, however, demonstrate parental value and knowledge were often misunderstood by the members of the dominant society. For example, Tyrone reported an incidence that happened to a Sudanese family in Calgary:

One day, a 6-year-old child opened the fridge, got some food out, and played with the food. He went back to the fridge several times and got more food out and played with the food. His mother was tired of this and told the kid and his two siblings, if you guys go again to the fridge, there is a lion there. Her purpose was not to let the kids touch the fridge… It came out in a classroom conversation. The 6-year old told his teacher he could not get food from the fridge because there was a lion there. So automatically, the teacher reported this incidence to social services. Social services took it seriously and they took the kids away. A legal battle dragged the parents to the courts (Tyrone, Sudan).

For the Sudanese parent, saying “there is a lion in the refrigerator” is a scare tactic used by parents in many cultures to discipline children. The teacher took the story literally and assumed
the child was not being fed or in fear. Beyond cultural differences, it seems by the story that the Sudanese family is being singled out, that their culture is being seen as far more suspect than any particular actions being taken by individual families (Este & Tachble, 2009).

This and other examples about parent first language and religious knowledge illustrate that it is important for teachers and school administrators to recognize and value immigrant parent knowledge. Mobilizing such knowledge systematically in the classroom by teachers and administrators would promote insightful connections between curricular goals and immigrant students’ experiences in countries of origin, in transition, and in residence in the local community, in turn making sense of transcultural flows and attachments to locality (Appadurai, 1996; Hannerz, 1992).

**Toward Transnational Lifelong Learning for Recognitive Justice and Inclusive Citizenship (Shibao Guo)**

It seems evident from the above discussion that lifelong learning is at a crossroads. Rather than responding positively to the challenges and opportunities as a result of transnational migration, lifelong learning has failed to integrate cultural difference and diversity into educational environment. By denying the opportunities for immigrants to learn and by treating difference as deficit and deficiency, lifelong learning has become a serious barrier and a gatekeeper. To build an inclusive and socially just lifelong education and one that immigrants feel they belong, Guo (2010) proposes the framework of *transnational lifelong learning for recognitive justice and inclusive citizenship* (transnational lifelong learning for short) that offers a promising alternative to distributive and retributive approaches to lifelong learning. Before proceeding to elaborate on this new framework, it is necessary to revisit the concept of social justice.

Social justice can be classified into three categories: *distributive, retributive* and *recognitive* (Gale & Densmore, 2000). *Distributive justice* is best known to us through the liberal-democratic principles of individual freedom and the equal distribution of material and social goods. On this view, social justice is about who gets how much of the social good. For Rawls (1971), fairness is justice, which advocates a culturally neutral state, where citizens deal fairly with each other and the state deals equally with all, regardless of how we conceive our ends. One manifestation of distributive social justice in lifelong learning is the “sameness” approach which assumes that lifelong learners are all the same with the same learning needs, and therefore, treating them as the same will erase issues of inequity and injustice (Guo, 2009). This approach seemingly values all individuals equally. In fact, it negates the histories, backgrounds, and experiences of diverse cultural groups, and, thus, sustains the status of privileged groups and perpetuates oppression and inequality (Young, 1995). *Retributive justice* favours market-individualism and is based on the claim that individuals deserve and are entitled to differential rewards in accordance with their differential contributions to productive and competitive processes (Gale & Densmore, 2000). A fatal flaw of this approach lies in the logic of markets which dictates the competition process and perpetuates economic subordination. In this view, lifelong learning has been co-opted by the market state to serve its interests in preparing a more educated and flexible workforce to enhance global competitiveness (Crowther, 2004). The fairness dreamed of under this meritocracy, however, is never delivered because *retributive justice* privileges those from advantaged social and economic status who also represent dominant cultural norms.
**Recognitive** or **recognitional justice** represents a promising alternative to distributive and retributive approaches. It provides an expanded understanding of justice that insists that we must rethink not only what we mean by social justice, but also to acknowledge the place of social and cultural groups within this (Gale & Densmore, 2000). It is a radical response to the restrictive conceptions of justice grounded in a narrow focus on material and economic goods. **Recognitive justice** seeks to increase the potency of social justice by extending its scope to include social goods (e.g., opportunity, position, and power) as well as institutional inequities. It is this notion of **recognitive justice** that informs the notion of **transnational lifelong learning for recognitive justice and pluralist citizenship** put forward by Guo (2010). Guo believes that lifelong learning reconceptualized in this way offers the broadened perspective on migration that recognizes its transnational flows and concomitant diasporic allegiances and affiliations. It seeks to balance freedom of mobility with protection, recognition and membership. Following Young (2008), this framework emphasizes that granting equal rights to disempowered migrants is insufficient to ensure equal status because the ideal of a culturally neutral state cannot be achieved. Instead, it advocates minority group rights such as language assistance and other subsidies to help migrants overcome obstacles to integrating into the host society. Furthermore, it questions the claim that a universality of citizenship transcends particularity and difference. Consistent with “differentiated citizenship” (Young, 1995) and “multicultural citizenship” (Kymlicka, 2008), this framework proposes “pluralist citizenship” as an alternative form of citizenship that recognizes migrants’ multiple attachments to specific traditions, values, languages, and other cultural practices and that, furthermore, fosters plural ways of belonging. **Transnational lifelong learning** rejects the deficit model of lifelong learning that seeks to assimilate migrants to the dominant social, cultural and educational norms of the host society. Alternatively, it proposes to build an inclusive education that acknowledges and affirms cultural difference and diversity as positive and desirable assets. These assets are seen as a means of ensuring the participation of individuals from socially and culturally differentiated groups in social, political, and educational institutions. Since migrants represent a bivalent collectivity who suffer both socioeconomic maldistribution and cultural misrecognition, an ideal remedy requires both redistribution and recognition (Fraser, 2008).

**References**


Facilitating Adult Learning @ The Edge: Exploring Threats and Contributions of New Communication Technologies, Engagement in the Arts & Media, and Creating Poetry Together

Geraldine (Jody) Macdonald
University of Toronto

Rose A. Dyson
Canadians Concerned About Violence in Entertainment

William McQueen
Fireweed Media Productions Inc.

Abstract: This symposium paper explores how adult educators engage with new communication technologies, the arts & media, and poetry to facilitate learning in spaces and places where adults gather together. Key concerns to be explored include (1) the role of adult educators in critiquing the free use of communication technologies that fuel media violence and negatively impact our youth; (2) the value of the arts and storytelling to promote social inclusion for people with disabilities; and (3) the contribution of adults creating poetry together to promote the construction of meaning and deep learning within a higher education context.

Exploring the Learning Challenges in Local and Virtual Communities: Missing Discourse in the Search for Solutions to Bullying

Rose A. Dyson Ed

Each new teen suicide resulting from bullying typically spawns an avalanche of media coverage in the search for solutions. Developmental psychologists and teachers, often themselves, either bullies or victims in their youth along with students weigh in on the discussion. Government debates occasionally yield results such as the new anti-bullying legislation introduced in the province of Ontario in 2012. Remarkably absent, however, is any recognition or acknowledgment of the impact of role models which glorify violence, power differentials and abuse of women and girls in popular culture as students increasingly immerse themselves in a hyper real world of digital communications and entertainment. Often they use more than one medium at a time, and are further seduced into hours of engagement in cyberspace, now also increasingly fraught with the dangers of cyber bullying tendencies. Other perils present themselves on the issue of teenaged “sexting”, commonly defined as the production and exchange of nude or semi-nude images or videos via mobile phone. How do these differ from child pornography? What are the dangers to the potential loss of control of personal information and associated damage to one’s reputation?

We have known for decades, on the basis of countless studies on the harmful effects of media violence and sexual exploitation as entertainment, that a growing culture of violence is predictable from steady heavy diets. But criticisms of such production and distribution are always countered by industry-backed studies demonstrating that evidence of harmful effects is inconclusive. The problem is further exacerbated by media reporting tendencies committed to “balance” that frame any scientific debate, be it on the effects of media violence or climate...
change, in ways that reinforce the notion of conflicting evidence. This phenomena coddles the myth of reasonable doubt, allowing for business as usual.

Both the perils and rewards of modern life have been heightened because of and in spite of new communications technologies. The search for solutions must include examination of the powerful teaching and socializing impact of cultural symbols and messages. But more vigilance which is being demanded from parents and the teaching community is only one component in addressing the problem.

Bill 14, passed by the Ontario Government in 2012, is designed to increase awareness of bullying in schools by setting aside one week each November for that purpose and to provide for bullying prevention curricula, policies and administrative accountability in schools. In his legal update on the subject at the annual Summit on Emergency and Disaster Planning in Colleges, Universities and K-12 Schools in Toronto on October 2, 2012, legal expert, Eric Roher referred to several victims in the province those deaths in the preceding year, alone, were the result of bullying. He quoted statistics indicating that a 2009 survey of grade 7-12 students by the Ontario Centre for Addiction and Mental Health found that almost 1 in 3 students had been bullied in schools. He outlined how the new anti-bullying legislation could impact on schools involving issues such as civil liability for educators and how an expanded definition of bullying now includes behaviour using physical, verbal, electronic, written and other means. He cited cases involving schools where charges have been laid under the Criminal Code and where death threats have resulted in review boards finding negligence on the part of schools involved.

When she first introduced the bill on November 30, 2011, Ontario Education Minister Laurel Broten described bullying as an underestimated and pervasive problem in schools and communities. Now, school boards in Ontario not only must provide professional learning programs for staff about bullying prevention and intervention and safe learning environments but be aware of the potential need for student suspension due to bullying, and activities motivated by bias, prejudices, hate, causation of harm, fear of it, or distress to another individual either physical, psychological, academic or involving another individual’s reputation, property or safety.

The new definition for cyberbullying includes creating a web page or blog in which the creator assumes the identity of another person, impersonates another person as the author of content or messages posted and communicates it electronically to more than one individual or where it may be accessed by more than one individual. Clearly this is a very thorough and proactive set of requirements set out for students, parents and teachers with a high bar set for exemplary behaviour.

Remarkably absent, however, in Bill 14, Roher’s assessment of it or either his or Broten’s emphasis on “the Whole-School Approach” is any reference to the need for responsibility and accountability on the part of facilitators and promoters of digital habits among youth. Said Broten, “We all have a role to play in making our schools safe. We need parents, teachers, principals, community organizations and students to be part of the solution” <ontla.on.ca/bill13/acceptingschoolsactandanti-bullying>. But, these expectations do not apply
to industries responsible for information and communications technologies or for the content they carry.

This state of affairs reduces Bill 14 and its mushrooming clones across the country to little more than band-aid measures. As Christopher Parsons explains, social media surveillance is a growing threat to our sense of community. “Lurking throughout the web are social networking spaces designed to encourage surveillance, harassment, and denigration of individuals. Many of these sites are crafted so their web designers and those who communicate on them assume limited (or no) liability for their actions. Because most major social media websites are developed and operated out of the United States, American law is often key in encouraging and protecting such sites” (Greenberg, p.175). Section 230 of the Communications Decency Act in the U.S. now absolves providers from any responsibility for the content they carry. While users are liable for their speech acts, authorities cannot identify users from records on the sites. Thus, these not only protect but often encourage harmful speech, such as that which Bill 14 attempts to address. Speech which includes bullying, harassing, or hateful communications is now given equal status with political speech. These venues of harmful expression are weakening real-world community bonds. Instead, shaming, vigilantism, and social environments fraught with criminalizing tendencies are being encouraged and heightened to unprecedented levels.

Effective education policy must integrate cultural and economic policy as well. One key strategy that has long been advocated internationally and in many jurisdictions, such as the province of Quebec, adopted 25 years ago, is a ban on advertisements directed to children 13 years and under on the basis of research showing harmful effects. Adult educators are encouraged to advocate for such a ban. A second involves fiscal policy. Millions of dollars in tax subsidies, credits and shelters are now provided for ‘electronic arts’, with no questions asked about the nature of the content. Such generosity for corporate digital activity and profit on the basis of commercial exploitation of children requires more political backbone than has yet been demonstrated anywhere in Canada, apart from the province of Quebec. Are adult educators prepared to respond, to critique relations of power and to advocate for our children?

References
Parsons, C. Ibid. “We are Big Brother: Sex, Lies, and Digital memory: How Social Surviellance Threatens Communities.
Roher, E. (2012). How Will Ontario’s Anti-Bullying Law Help Increase Prevention and Intervention? 9th Annual Summit on EMERGENCY & DISASTER PLANNING for Colleges, Universities and k-12 Schools <customercare@strategyinstitute.com>
Building Community Learning Opportunities & Promoting Social Inclusion Through Engagement in the Arts and the Media: The Experience of The Disability Network
William McQueen, MEd

During the 1990s, almost 200 episodes of an original broadcast television series was created for and aired on CBC-TV. The Disability Network (DNET) told stories about the real lives, interests, challenges, and achievements of people with disabilities, both nationally and internationally. DNET facilitated people with disabilities to tell their own stories through its “first person storytelling” approach. All of these stories in the series were produced by people with disabilities. It was also the first programme at the CBC to provide closed-captioning to include deaf and hard-of-hearing people and to train captioners. The series reflected a shifting perspective on how to educate the public about people with disabilities and who would produce the work. In this series the producers were themselves people with disabilities, and they focused on stories of real people struggling to live their day to day lives.

Arguably decades ahead of its time, The Disability Network became a critical window on and a voice for people with disabilities in Canada outlining themes/issues such as: accessibility, public and personal attitudes, universal design standards and applications, success stories, legislation, inclusion (access to society), accommodation, media, housing, immigration, schooling, several episodes of First Nations stories and generally, human rights developments.

This multi-faceted collection of stories provided a unique perspective on the contributions, lives and history of Canadian people with disabilities in our country: from the years of institutionalization, incarceration and marginalization through the progressive steps of acquiring insight and status, to the current day’s achievements and continuing challenges. As Sandra Carpenter stated:

The work began with a concept of a disability-focussed programme that could truly represent the voice of people with disabilities. The vision behind this concept was threefold in those early days. First, we aimed to have a program aired on a regular basis on a television network. CBC was the first to express an interest in forming a partnership with Centre for Independent Living in Toronto. Secondly, we wanted people with disabilities to be trained and employed in the mainstream media industry. Thirdly, the long-term vision was to see the creation of an independent production company run by people with disabilities. (Carpenter, 2001, p.36)

Among the 200 episodes of over 100 hours of stories, one story stands out: The Becky Till Story. “It’s the story of a mother who adopted a child with a disability out of a nursing home. And her struggle to give her all the benefits available to able-bodied children. No one knows better than Linda Till how difficult that fight can be. Linda adopted Becky in 1984 and started a controversial ten year battle.” (The Becky Till Story, 1994).

The Tills would not give up a fight for Becky's inclusion into a regular school programme.
A school district representative said: “A regular class is not designed to handle students with handicaps as severe as Becky has. With her inability to communicate; with her inability to walk or move about and with her inability to be toilet trained at this stage.” (The Becky Till Story, 1994)

Becky’s mother said:

I presume it doesn't have anything to do with looking at the child. What he is doing is he is describing to you the kind of child in general that is typically labelled multi-handicapped. He is not talking about Becky. Finally we agreed upon a compromise. The compromise was that she would attend a special class in a regular school in the next community. It was not what we had sought at all but we had reached a point which was well over a year of struggle at that point. We had reached a point where we figured that was clear we were not going to talk them into this. Maybe, if we get her in there we can get them working with us and we can move her to more and more inclusion into regular classes. So we tried it. It didn't work. We continued to make our points there. We continued to be blocked every time around and finally in 1988 we filed our complaint with the Human Rights Commission alleging discrimination on the basis of disability. And we being somewhat naive thought that the Human Rights Commission would act fairly quickly and recognize that here is an ongoing abuse of a right. (The Becky Till Story, 1994)

This story of the attempts to include Becky Till in the regular classroom represents only one of hundreds of stories of people with disabilities seeking access to society produced by television producers with disabilities for The Disability Network. Examples of stories from other episodes of a struggle for community inclusion of people with disabilities will be also be screened.

In print journalism, organizations such as the Canadian Abilities Foundation, publisher of Abilities magazine, have also provided experience in journalism to people with disabilities. Employment programmes for placement in the communications field for people with disabilities continue to be needed, while Fireweed Media Productions, run exclusively by people with disabilities, was created in 1998.

In the Arts, the Laser Eagles Art Guild has been a community place where inclusion is valued: All individuals have contributions to make - acts that nurture the individual and the community. Yet, people with limited use of their bodies, those considered to be physically or mentally disabled by some, often lack the resources, opportunities and relationships necessary to fully express themselves to make their contributions to society. Laser Eagles Art Guild is an organization that offers individuals the opportunity for self expression through art. (http://www.lasereagles.com/mission-vision)

Another example is The Visual Storytelling Club which is an extra-curricular activity for students enrolled in Humber's Community Integration through Cooperative Education program. It gives
adults with intellectual disabilities a college experience (http://www.humber.ca/events/chapter-one-visual-storytelling-club-art-show).

The Abilities Arts Festival, founded in 2002, focuses on showcasing and promoting artists with disabilities from visual, performing, media arts, film and integrated art forms; engaging and inspiring young people with disabilities to explore and embrace their own creative talent; Fostering partnerships and collaborations that enhance opportunities for artists with disabilities to practice and share their work with a wider public; providing accessible professional development and networking opportunities; and building an inclusive arts and culture sector so that everyone can appreciate the abundance of art our society has to offer (http://abilitiesartsfestival.org).

Such inspiring examples create a path for adult educators to pursue. Advocating for adults with disabilities requires more than individual interventions. It requires advocating for public policies that support freedoms, for funding for programs that promote opportunities to develop positive self-identities, and advocating for an inclusive arts culture sector.

References

Creating Poetry Together: Facilitating Complex Learning in Higher Education
Geraldine (Jody) Macdonald EdD

Higher education faculty members are challenged to foster student engagement and facilitate cognitive development in their learners. The revised Bloom’s taxonomy (Anderson & Krathwohl, 2001; Krathwohl, 2002) clarifies that creating is the most complex dimension of cognitive process development. Nouns have been replaced with verbs, and the complexity of each dimension increases from remembering, understanding, applying, analyzing, evaluating, and finally to the new dimension, creating (Anderson & Krathwohl, 2001; Krathwohl, 2002). Creating includes generating, requiring divergent thinking; planning, which focuses on convergence; and producing, which leads to a new creation. As Krathwohl states, “Create - Putting elements together to form a novel, coherent whole or make an original product. 6.1 Generating 6.2 Planning 6.3 Producing” (Krathwohl, 2002, p. 215).

Creating is the most complex dimension, one where meaning is created through the energies of developing an original production. Adult educators in higher education are encouraged to work towards creating when facilitating learning. Creating poetry is an example of the most complex cognitive dimension. This paper invites participants to explore the potential of creating two specific forms of poetry in the classroom, found poetry and haiku poetry. The presenter will share her positive experience with these forms of poetry teaching undergraduate, graduate and continuing education learners.
Both of these forms of poetry provide students with clear guidelines. This focuses the students on the production of the poetry which this author has found supports and energizes the students. Creating poetry together encourages learners to engage collaboratively (Berry, 2011), to transform experiential learning into an art form and to construct meaning (Weimer, 2002). It is a learner centred teaching approach that draws upon social constructivism pedagogy (Weimer, 2002; Blumberg, 2008). It is also an arts based approach to facilitating learning, one that moves learners from surface to deep learning (Macdonald, & MacDonnell, 2008; MacDonnell, & Macdonald, 2011). Creating poetry draws upon the collective wisdom of the learners, requires minimal educational resources, and is accessible to all learners. It is also fun, energizing, and engaging.

Introducing poetry into the adult education/higher education classroom requires careful facilitation and works best when: materials are provided, specifically flip chart size post-it paper and coloured markers; the teacher provides an example of the poetry form at the beginning of the class; only one poetry form is introduced in one class; clear instructions are provided related to the specific form of poetry students are being asked to produce; the poetry topic integrates learning from the class and transforms it into a creative form; learners work in small groups and produce the poetry together; and a carefully considered time frame is allocated for the activity. Once the groups have created their poetry, it is important to have time to share with peers. Celebrating the creativity of the learners is encouraged both in the classroom and later by posting the poetry on the on-line course support system such as blackboard.

**Found Poems**

When teaching a class in my Primary Health Care class, I ask students to create a found poem. The instructions I give them are that found poems are a recognized form of poetry (http://www.readwritethink.org/classroom-resources/lesson-plans/found-poems-parallel-poems-33.html), that facilitate learning about poetry as the students have the original text to work from. Students can use a previous poem and reorganize the words in the text, but in my classes I invite students to create a poem using text from one of the class readings. If I have three class readings, I divide the class into three groups, and assign each group a different reading as the base text for their new poem. This exercise requires time to review the reading, talk about shared meanings, and then create a twenty line poem, using only words, phrases or sentences from the reading, and share it with the class. So I might give about 25 minutes for the students to work on the poem development, record it, and post it on the wall. Then we need about ten more minutes to review the three class poems. I show the students a found poem that I created, based upon a document we reviewed in the class written by the World Health Organization: Primary Health Care: Now More Than Ever (2008) (http://www.who.int/whr/2008/whr08_en.pdf). The is a large document, but I feel my found poem captures the essence of the document:

**PHC**

PHC, why more than ever?
Member states, globilization
People are increasingly impatient
Respond better-and-faster
PHC can do that
Alma Alta: social justice: health for all
Health systems that
Put people at the centre of health care
Changing world first
Progress in health – deeply unequal
Growing health inequalities within countries
Second, nature of health problems changing
Ageing, ill managed urbanization – globilization
Third – information age transformed relations between citizens
Four sets of PHC reform
Universal coverage reforms to improve health equity
Make health systems people centered
Leadership reforms to promote and protect the
Health of Communities

**Haiku Poems**

A Haiku is a Japanese poetry form, usually written about nature and feelings, typically not including metaphors, that have a total of 17 syllables, the first line 5, the second line 7, and the third line 5 (MacDonnell, & Macdonald, 2011). I most often ask student to create a Haiku poem at the end of a class/workshop as an integrative/summary exercise. Typically I give five minutes for this activity and ten minutes for sharing with the class. It is a high energy exercise that students tend to complete with amazing speed & exuberance. Here are four examples of Jody’s and students’ (with permission) Haiku poems developed at the end of an interdisciplinary diversity workshop we led at a conference and published in our article (MacDonnell, & Macdonald, 2011, p. 215):

**Haiku Poems**

Easing forward
Opening my heart
Self and Soul Blending Together (Jody)

Building on my strengths
Searching for new ways
Synthesizing then & now (Participant1 )

Feeling for my thoughts
Like salmon jumping ladders
They quickly slip away. (Participant 2)

Unstable seasons
Summer & winter in flux
Like my ideas. (Participant 2)

Diversity abounds
How do we accept
Much work and love does best. (Participant 3)
(MacDonnell, & Macdonald, 2011, p. 215)
Both Found Poetry and Haiku Poetry offer arts-based, collaborative, learner centered, meaning making, deep learning experiences for learners. Adult educators are encouraged to experiment with these when facilitating adults learning.

References

Symposium Conclusion
Rose Dyson argues that new communication technologies have been introduced by the entertainment industry, creating new virtual spaces where teens gather, exposing themselves to new threats of bullying and ‘sexting’. Attempts by adult educators to critique the culture of violence that has emerged have met with resistance and neoliberal arguments, including media reporting tendencies committed to “balance” that reinforce the notion of conflicting evidence. Adult educators are challenged to advocate for less media violence. Bill McQueen speaks of stills and media clips used to critically examine informal and formal learning of people with disabilities as they seek to achieve social inclusion through the arts and storytelling. He challenges adult educators to consider incorporating first-person storytelling in their practice. Jody Macdonald explores her use of Found and Haiku poems in the academy. Adult educators are invited to integrate found poems and haiku poems into their adult education practices.

Collectively we focus on facilitating adult education @ the edge. The edge is formed when adult educators and learners engage in thoughtful, empowering practices. Facilitating adult education @ the edge is a thoughtful, creative, and evolving practice.
Adult Education Journals in Metric Time: Editors’ Perspectives

Tom Nesbit (Simon Fraser University), Edward W. Taylor (Penn State University-Harrisburg), Donovan Plumb (Mount St. Vincent University), John Holford (University of Nottingham), Patricia Gouthro (Mount St. Vincent University), Stephen Roche (UNESCO), Michael Osborne (University of Glasgow), Jim Crowther (University of Edinburgh), & John Dirkx (Michigan State University)

Abstract: In this symposium, former and current editors of seven international adult education journals discuss the challenges and implications of the journal metric system (involving impact factors and assurance measures) for the study of adult education.

Introduction

As key vehicles for creating, communicating and legitimating knowledge, scholarly journals play a pivotal role in the life of any academic field. Much can be learned through how they disseminate theory, research, policy orientations, and reflections on practice. Academic journals not only represent the knowledge base of a given discipline, but also reflect its history, trends, research norms and social structure of communication between scholars and others with professional expertise (McGinty, 1999). However, one voice that is rarely heard (at least publicly) in such discussions is that of the journal editor—the human face behind the metaphorical gate—who play a crucial role in any process of legitimization and control (Wellington & Nixon, 2005).

A recently held international symposium brought together several adult education journal editors (Nesbit et al., 2009) to focus on the tensions and contradictions inherent in their work, and how they viewed the nature, purposes, epistemological emphases, and academic norms of their journals in relation to the field of adult education. Although the symposium made significant headway in documenting the various editors’ perspectives, other issues emerged during the discussion. Of particular concern was the increasing demands of commercial publishers and the role of editors in ensuring an independent intellectual space in a time of increasing journal metrics, impact factors, cost/benefit analyses and quality assurance measures. For example, only certain journals of various disciplines are included in publishers’ journal citation reports (e.g., metrics, impact factors) prompting some academic institutions to count only publications in these journals towards tenure and promotion. “If the journal is not indexed by Thomson Reuters, there is no impact factor available” (Pendlebury, 2009, p. 4). Among adult education journals, only Adult Education Quarterly is indexed by Thomas Reuters. Additionally, “the lack of coverage of books, the modest coverage of conference proceedings, non-English language and regional journals, the logic of assignment of journals to subject categories and subcategories, the omission of serials of international importance, [and] the inclusion of journals with questionable importance” (Jacso, 2009, p. 604) is leading to a situation where academic “life becomes geared to chasing publications in elite journals with the highest impact factor” (Corbyn, 2009, p. 1). Finally, in other academic fields, impact factors have moved from being a measure of a journal’s citation influence in the broader literature to a surrogate that appears to assess the scholarly value of work published in that journal. More worryingly, such metrics are now also being used to assess individual researchers, institutions, and departments (McVeigh & Mann, 2009).
In response to this concern, former and current editors of seven leading international adult education journals (*Adult Education Quarterly, Canadian Journal for the Study of Adult Education, International Journal of Lifelong Education, International Review of Education, Journal of Adult and Continuing Education, The Journal of Transformative Education and Studies in the Education of Adults*) will provide their varying perspectives on the challenges and responses to the journal metric system. The symposium will also explore the effects of corporate publishers and impact factors and how they, as editors, balance the often-competing needs and demands of their readers, the authors they publish, and the requirements of academic societies, scholarly publishers, and other owners and sponsors.

**Adult Education Quarterly**
Edward Taylor, former Co-Editor

The *Adult Education Quarterly* (*AEQ*) is one of the leading international journals in the field of adult education yet the only one “ranked” in the *JCR*. This affords greater privilege over other journals and potentially inordinate power over shaping the research in the field. Most significant has been the considerable increase in manuscript submissions, particularly international manuscripts because of some universities particularly those in Asia, Europe and the United Kingdom are giving greater credit towards tenure for publications in ranked journals. The *JCR* as a measure pressures scholars to publish in the *AEQ*, explaining to some degree the increase in submissions. Furthermore, the editors are often pressured by the publishers where “interest has turned to using publishing and editorial practices to influence, alter, and even manipulate the impact factor” (McVeigh & Mann, 2009, p. 1107), through the publication of certain types of manuscripts (e.g., literature reviews, conference abstracts, letters to the editors) and encouraging authors to self-cite and cite references from the journal of submission (Brown, 2011). As the only AE journal to be indexed there is little space for AE faculty to publish in a ranked journal, forcing scholars to look for ranked journals outside the field limiting their publication exposure to their academic peers. Recognizing the related consequences of the *JCR*, how best are the editors of *AEQ* to respond? Should its owners—the American Association of Adult and Continuing Education—withdraw the journal in protest? If this was even possible, since Reuters has access to most on-line publications, it is likely that another journal would simply take its place. Also, some would argue that it could negatively impact the publication activity of the journal. However, I think impact would be minimal because of the journal’s reputation among the academy and its overall subscription size. At least the major journals of field might include a shared statement in their masthead reflecting a unified statement of dissent against the use of the metric system. Another approach would involve exploring alternative measures of the journal impact factor (e.g. citation download, social impact model, Google Scholar Citations) among interested editors in a collaborative effort (e.g., Bollen, Van de Sompel, Smith, & Luce, 2005; Cynical Geographers Collective, 2011; Pendlebury, 2009). Although it is important to note that each of these measures have their own limitations and further support the ideology of the metric system. Regardless of the approach, as editors we need to continually educate others about the application and misuse of journal metrics, hopefully preventing it from becoming a part of the unquestioned norm of academic development among faculty, and be alert to the intentions of publishers in influencing the journal in response to the impact factor.
To help promote adult education as a field of study, the main academic association of Canadian adult educators (CASAE/ACÉÉA) owns and publishes a biannual printed peer-reviewed academic journal (CJSAE) that contains research-based and theoretical articles, literature reviews, reflections on practice and current issues, and book reviews. With only a relatively small readership, CJSAE has yet to pique the interest of commercial publishers or be included in the annual Journal Citation Index. In this, it is not alone amongst Canadian journals. More specifically, no Canadian journals are included among the list of 170 education journals. So, while university rankings and the assessment of scholarly achievement and productivity feature as large in Canadian academic life as elsewhere, Canadian practices still resist the allure of quantification and tend to rely more upon peer judgment and review rather than external metrics. Additionally, the research assessment exercises used as a basis for allocating public funding that have so bedeviled universities and academic colleagues in other countries have yet to be established in Canada. Consequently, the pressures to measure scholarly productivity (whether by individual researchers, academic institutions or scholarly journals) have not been felt so strongly. Maintaining journal autonomy is crucial. Although it publishes manuscripts on any relevant topic and from anywhere in the world, CJSAE’s editorial approach focuses on the emergent issues affecting Canadian adult education by locating them in a broad yet critical perspective. Interpretive approaches are valued along with multi-vocality and a concern to offer space to under-privileged voices and perspectives. Defining and maintaining such an attitude is aided by the Association’s retention of overall fiscal and administrative control; a stance that it shows no signs of yielding, especially as the fields of Canadian adult and higher education and the arena of scholarly publication all seem to be increasingly affected by increased competition and the discourses of consumerism, and market discipline. Of course, such autonomy comes at a price. CJSAE’s pro-Canadian approach inevitably reduces the number of manuscript submissions from outside Canada: in the past three years, less than 20% (12/62) of manuscripts were submitted from abroad. And, not surprisingly, the Journal has comparatively low international visibility being neither as well-known nor as accessible as it might be. So, despite the presence of several internationally-regarded Canadian adult educators on its board of consulting editors, CJSAE is caught in a vicious circle: low visibility induces relatively low manuscript submission rates that attract comparatively little attention and fewer subscriptions. However, recognizing that the electronic availability of manuscripts attracts more readers and citations, CJSAE (with the added impetus of a new editorial team) has now moved to online publication and open access. Yet it still faces the challenges of how to improve its visibility, access and impact while also maintaining scholarly independence, promoting diverse, marginalised and non-hegemonic perspectives and, crucially, continuing to be financially viable.

As adult education is foremost a field of practice, a key element of its scholarship is improving teaching and learning. Yet the field also has a strong ethical dimension. In the words of the British Ministry of Reconstruction report, “adult education is a permanent national necessity, an
inseparable aspect of citizenship, and therefore should be both universal and lifelong” (1919). Such understandings are central in scholarship and academic journals have remained relevant to its practice. How far are these values challenged by recently intensifying trends towards judging journals, and the worth of scholarly output, by “metrics” and “impact factors”? From the perspective of a journal editor, “metrics” are both troubling and seductive. We know that institutions – university administrators and research funders – are increasingly obsessed by journal rankings. Higher factors, broadly speaking, are good for the status for the journal and for those who publish in it. Publishers regularly provide “data” to editors on their positioning in “the citation index.” Yet these indices are not objective constructs. They are profoundly influenced by commercial considerations. The percentage of education journals included by Thomson-Reuters in the Web of Science is markedly smaller than many other disciplines. Inclusions often appear in response to market or political concerns than to criteria of “quality” alone. Smeyers & Burbules (2011) note that the Web of Science is being used increasingly within academe to assess which publications will be valued around decisions pertaining to tenure, promotion, hiring, and research funding; decisions that profoundly affect academic careers. Publications outside of this narrow spectrum are not given the same value, so researchers seek to publish in high ranking journals, which places pressures on journal editors to develop strategies to improve the ranking of their journals. There are also concerns in focusing too extensively on quantified assessments of citations of journal publications (Lang & Canning, 2010). Just because an article is cited, does not mean it is of exemplary quality. Sometimes articles are being critiqued, sometimes they are part of a secondary citation, and sometimes they are used in a perfunctory fashion. Journals in the Web of Science are predominantly in English, so researchers from non-English speaking countries may be less likely to research about localized or national concerns (Smeyers & Burbules, 2011). While ILJE publishes in English, it has traditionally welcomed an international scope of publications. Editors, however, are given charts from publishers indicating the popularity of particular articles. Less visible scholars focusing on unique cultural or geographical locations often receive lower levels of citations. The challenge, then, is how to create a higher ranking journal whilst still retaining a social justice focus that provides opportunities for scholars from a wide range of cultural contexts.

International Review of Education
Stephen Roche, Executive Editor

Discussions at the International Review of Education’s annual Editorial Board meetings often turn to the thorny issue of accreditation in citation indices. The pros and cons are familiar to all who work in academic publishing. On the one hand, such accreditation promises to raise the profile, reach and readership of our journal; in the rather crude argot of the business, our ‘impact factor’. On the other hand, it involves belonging to an exclusive club, with its own circular logic of self-promotion; we encourage authors submitting articles to our journal to cite the right kinds of articles in the right kinds of journals (i.e., those who are already included in such indicators). If we do this often enough, we increase our own score and, therefore, our reputation as a journal worth publishing in. While inclusion in citation indices is not, of course, a guarantor of a journal’s quality, it is becoming an imperative in academic publishing. As many universities no longer recognize publication in non-refereed journals, younger academics see no advantage in publishing outside the ‘club’. How do citation indices affect editorial selection policy? Do articles submitted in languages other than English have less chance of being cited and therefore
contributing to a journal’s overall impact factor? These questions become problematic if, like us at IRE, part of your mandate is to encourage scholarship from the global South. They also, inevitably, lead towards an even more vexed question: do bibliometrics favour Western forms of knowledge at the expense of other understandings?

The Journal of Adult and Continuing Education
Michael Osborne, Editor

The Journal of Adult and Continuing Education, published by Manchester University Press, provides a forum for rigorous theoretical and practical work in lifelong learning and adult, community and continuing education. There are challenges to journals such as JACE, occupying a niche market in adult education, such as the decline in the academic community of adult education; a foci on metrics and impact factors of journals; and the emergence of non-commercial on-line only journals. With the demise of many well-established adult education departments, particularly in the UK, there simply is not that local group of academics providing material. Further the Research Excellence Framework (REF) (see http://www.hefce.ac.uk/research/ref/) in the UK (previously Research Assessment Exercise (RAE)) rewards the quality of research and this is linked to significant government funding. In principal it is quality of output that matters: in reality most academics do not believe that, and will direct their work to journals that rank highly where the most successful departments submitted work in the 2008 RAE. That includes those academics remaining in our field, who tend to orientate their work to the safe generic journals in education rather than adult education. A similar situation pertained within the Australian Research Quality Framework (RQF), which focused on quality and impact of research (Donovan 2008), and in its successor the Excellence in Research Australia (ERA) initiative in 2010 (see http://www.arc.gov.au/era/), managed by the Australian Research Council (ARC). In this process journals were ranked A*/A/B/C. This clearly influenced submissions since the ranking of the journal was an important metric in determining quality and in the case of Australia, government funding. Details of the rankings for journals in our area, and alternative rankings from the Australian Vocational Education and Training Research Association (AVETRA) make interesting reading (see http://avetra.org.au/avetra-initiatives/avetra-journal-rankings). Methodologically one must dispute such rankings simply on the basis that it was achieved by viewing just one edition of each journal. The ARC decided in 2011 not to use ranking in the second round of ERA in 2012, but rather a list of eligible journals. It will be interesting to observe whether behaviour of Australian academics will change as a result. Whilst in our field there hasn’t been a challenge from commercial publishers, the emergence of journals run through societies in pure e-form certainly provides a credible alternative (e.g., European Journal for Research on the Education and Learning of Adults, http://www.rela.ep.liu.se/). There are challenges for conventional journals, and some flexibility does need to be introduced. However, there are still arguments to suggest that the traditional journal has a place if it incorporates flexibility (e.g., accepted articles are available electronically as soon as possible) and is backed by a reputable publisher.
Studies in the Education of Adults
Jim Crowther, Editor

*Studies in the Education of Adults* is an international, peer reviewed journal, which is not included in the Thomson Social Science index. High quality publications in the journal are, therefore, unlikely to be recognised in citation indexes for ‘measuring’ academic value. Although article submissions to the journal are steady the situation may change because of the pressure on authors to publish in “high quality” journals, which the metric system of evaluation is supposed to measure. The use of personal citation rankings of academic “outputs” as a criterion for promotion and reward is a potentially powerful disciplinary tool. A key issue to address, therefore, is the politics of measurement and how appropriate techniques of academic value can be recognised and inappropriate ones negotiated and, if necessary, resisted. Working outside the metric zone is one that the editor and editorial boards of journals have to address. On the one hand, utilitarian measures of research and scholarship are alien to the tradition of adult education as a field of practice and study. On the other, this movement seems irresistible and being “outside” the metrics of measurement is likely to marginalise AE journals even further. In a context where AE is already on the margins of the Academy it is important to ensure that academic publishing in this area are recognised and valued. The proposed symposium comes at a timely moment and the response of editors to the dilemmas of metric techniques of measurement needs debating.

The Journal of Transformative Education
John Dirkx, Editor

The *Journal of Transformative Education (JTED)* was founded to advance the theory, research, and practice of transformative education and transformative learning. An expressed aim of *JTED* is to span the rhetorical gap that often separates research and theory from practice in the field. The journal reflects an interdisciplinary focus, publishing articles from diverse fields such as social work, teacher education, and the health professions, as well as adult education. It represents a traditional outlet for scholars that is clearly intended to speak to and influence practitioners in the field as well as researchers in the academy. Because we are relatively new, our primary goal has been to “grow the journal.” Discussions with the publisher have focused primarily on specific strategies to make the journal more prominent among academics and practitioners. We have, however, also discussed how *JTED* may become ranked by JCR. First and foremost, Thomson requires that journals publish on a regular schedule to be accepted into the JCR. This issue has represented the most significant challenge for the current editorship of *JTED*. Prior to this editorship, the journal had fallen significantly behind and our priority has been to return the journal to a regular publication cycle. As we approach this goal, we are now able to systematically consider the problem of metrics and the JCR. We have focused mostly on increasing citation activity by developing awareness of the journal through the use of promotion flyers; marketing the journal and specific issues around articles that will receive citation activity; issuing calls for papers on listservs; encouraging presenters at scholarly conferences to publish in *JTED*; planning thematic issues; and maintaining a presence at regional, national, and international educational research conferences. As a commercial publisher, Sage provides a substantial benefit to our efforts to increase citation activity. Having said all this, pursuing acceptance by JCR presents significant challenges for journals the likes of *JTED*. For most of us, editing journals in adult education is a very part-time affair and adopting such strategies requires
a considerable time commitment that may be difficult to honor. The nature of JTED itself also poses serious issues for being accepted by JCR. We are, by comparison, a relatively small journal in the field of adult education. Our mission includes a significant commitment to the scholarly study of practice in transformative education. Finally, our interdisciplinary nature requires a focus on multiple disciplines and areas of study that are traditionally considered outside the realm of adult education. These issues challenge us to work for more inclusive indicators of journal quality that more accurately reflect particular missions and audiences.

**Conclusion**

It’s clear that the adult education journals are affected by the recent growth in measures of journal impact and the uses to which they are put. Especially in the inter-disciplinary yet already marginalised field of adult education, its journal editors feel that such measures as journal rankings and impact factors are unnecessarily limiting and detrimental to academic innovation. In a system that appears to favour narrow and standardized approaches to assessing scholarly quality, the need to be able to publish diverse views or on original or unconventional topics is crucial. The alternative is to endorse academic homogeneity based upon those of the already privileged, normalized and assumed universal relevance and legitimacy. Further, these editors seem to want to retain a high degree of control over the publication activity of the journal and believe a reliance on commercial publishers’ citation data is not the best judge either of scholarly quality or the rich variety of adult education research.

**References**


---

ii Global South refers to the Low-Income Countries in Latin America, Asia, and Africa (UNDP, 2004, p. 2).

iii AONTAS is a membership organization representing 600 member groups, organizations and individuals with some overseas members. It promotes the importance of adult and community education as a key part of lifelong learning. It influences the development of policy and lobbies on behalf of the sector. It facilitates networking among members and supports their work. This paper is a brief summary of a large, national evaluation, the report for which can be found at www.aontas.com.

iv The two dimensions not included are: resources - poverty relief and the difference principle, and working and learning - occupational and educational equal opportunity.

v I would like to thank AlphaPlus in Toronto, Ontario for its support of this research by way of a Digital Technologies in Adult Learning small grant.