Power and Possibility

Research on the Education and Learning of Adults

VOLUME 7

Power and Possibility

Adult Education in a Diverse and Complex World

Edited by

Fergal Finnegan and Bernie Grummell

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THE EUROPEAN SOCIETY FOR RESEARCH ON THE EDUCATION OF ADULTS (ESREA)

ESREA is a European scientific society. It was established in 1991 to provide a European-wide forum for all researchers engaged in research on adult education and learning and to promote and disseminate theoretical and empirical research in the field. Since 1991 the landscape of adult education and learning has changed to include more diverse learning contexts at formal and informal levels. At the same time, there has been a policy push by the European Union, OECD, UNESCO and national governments to promote a policy of lifelong learning. ESREA provides an important space for these changes and (re)definition of adult education and learning in relation to research, theory, policy and practice to be reflected upon and discussed. This takes place at the triennial conference, network conferences and through the publication of books and a journal.

ESREA RESEARCH NETWORKS

The major priority of ESREA is the encouragement of co-operation between active researchers in the form of thematic research networks which encourage interdisciplinary research drawing on a broad range of the social sciences. These research networks hold annual/biennial seminars and conferences for the exchange of research results and to encourage publications.

The current active ESREA networks are:

- Access, Learning Careers and Identities
- Active Democratic Citizenship and Adult Learning
- Adult Educators, Trainers and their Professional Development
- Between Global and Local: Adult Learning and Development
- Education and Learning of Older Adults
- Gender and Adult Learning
- History of Adult Education and Training in Europe
- Interrogating Transformative Processes in Learning: An International Exchange
- Life-history and Biographical Research
- Migration, Ethnicity, Racism and Xenophobia
- Policy Studies in Adult Education
- Working Life and Learning

ESREA TRIENNIAL EUROPEAN RESEARCH CONFERENCE

In order to encourage the widest possible forum for the exchange of ongoing research activities ESREA holds a triennial European Research Conference. The conferences

have been held in Strobl (1995), Bruxelles (1998), Lisbon (2001), Wroclaw (2004), Seville (2007), Linköping (2010), Berlin (2013) and Maynooth (2016).

ESREA JOURNAL

ESREA publishes a scientific open access journal entitled *The European Journal for Research on the Education and Learning of Adults* (RELA). All issues of the journal can be read at www.rela.ep.liu.se. You can also find more information about call for papers and submission procedures on this website.

ESREA BOOKS

ESREA's research networks and conferences have led to the publication of over forty books. A full list, giving details of the various publishers, and the books' availability, is on the ESREA website. ESREA's current book series is published in co-operation with Brill Sense.

Further information on ESREA is available at www.esrea.org

Emilio Lucio-Villegas
Barbara Merrill
Marcella Milana
Henning Salling Olesen

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NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

Michel Alhadeff-Jones is Adjunct Associate Professor in Adult Learning and Leadership at Teachers College, Columbia University (USA), and the Executive Director of the Sunkhronos Institute (Switzerland). His research interests include: transformative learning, rhythmanalysis, and biographical coaching. He recently published *Time and the Rhythms of Emancipatory Education* (Routledge, 2017).

Rosanna Barros is presently a Member of the Board of the new Centre for Research in Adult Education and Community Intervention (CEAD) of the University of Algarve, Portugal. She is associate convenor of the Research Network on Policy Studies in Adult Education of ESREA. Her main background is in adult education, public policy and social pedagogy.

Pascal Debruyne holds a doctorate in political science, a master's degree in conflict and development, a master's degree in moral sciences and a bachelor's degree in social work. He works at the Knowledge Centre for Family Sciences of the Odisee University College in Brussels and his current research is on family reunion of recognized refugees and subsidiary protected persons.

Karen Dunwoodie is currently a Research Fellow at the Deakin University, Centre for Refugee, Employment, Advocacy, Training and Education (CREATE), Australia. Her research interests include progressing the field of refugee resettlement, principally focusing on career development and the impact access to tertiary education may have on the lives of refugees and people seeking asylum.

Maren Elfert is a Lecturer in Education and Society in the School of Education, Communication and Society at King's College London, and a 2018 National Academy of Education/Spencer Postdoctoral Fellow. Her research focuses on global governance of education and the influence of international organizations on educational ideas and policies.

Leona M. English is Professor of Adult Education at St. Francis Xavier University, Nova Scotia, Canada. She writes on critical pedagogy, with particular attention to feminism in adult education.

Fergal Finnegan is an Assistant Professor at the Department of Adult and Community Education, Maynooth University where he is a co-director of the doctoral programmes. His background is in community education and his research interests include transformative learning, biographical research, social class, equality and

higher education. He is co-convenor of the ESREA Active Democratic Citizenship and Adult Learning Network.

Marta Gregorčič (PhD) is a sociologist and Assistant Professor of Adult Education at the Department of Educational Sciences, Faculty of Arts at the University of Ljubljana, Slovenia. She has been working with counter-hegemonic movements and autonomous self-determining communities of the Global South for the last 20 years.

Bernie Grummell is a Senior Lecturer in the Departments of Education and Adult and Community Education, Maynooth University. She previously worked with the School of Sociology and the Equality Studies Centre, University College Dublin. She is a co-director of the Doctoral programmes in Higher and Adult Education. Research interests include equality and inclusion issues in education.

Mary Hamilton is Professor Emerita of Adult Learning and Literacy in the Department of Educational Research at Lancaster University. She has longstanding interest in informal, vernacular learning and how communicative resources are built across the lifespan and her current research is on literacy policy, governance, socio-material theory, academic literacies, digital technologies and change.

Kerry Harman is Programme Director of Higher Education Introductory Studies, an access programme at Birkbeck, University of London for mature, low-income students. Kerry is interested in academic practices which take marginalized individuals and groups seriously as producers of knowledge. Her current research examines the relationship between sensory ways of knowing and the provision of good care in a homecare context.

Bernd Käpplinger is Full Professor for Continuing Education at Justus-Liebig-University Giessen in Germany. He is chair of the section Adult Education which has approximately 500 researchers within the German Society for Educational Science and member of the presidium of ESREA. His main research subjects are program planning and enterprise-provided continuing training.

Jenalee Kluttz is a PhD student in the Department of Educational Studies at the University of British Columbia, Canada. She researches adult education and learning within social movements. Her current projects explore learning that occurs in solidarity work between climate change, environmental justice, and Indigenous rights movements in opposition to the fossil fuel industry.

Brigitte Kukovetz is a University Assistant at the University of Graz, Austria (Department of Educational Sciences/Adult Education). Her research interests include adult education in migration societies, solidarity and learning processes of

volunteers, (institutional) racism and civil society. In 2015 she completed her doctoral thesis on unauthorized migration and deportations.

Marcella Milana is Associate Professor at the University of Verona and Honorary Professor of Adult Education at the University of Nottingham. She researches the politics, policy and governance of adult education and learning, from comparative and global perspectives, and is joint editor of the *International Journal of Lifelong Education*.

Henning Salling Olesen, Professor, former Pro-/Rector Roskilde University. Honorary Doctor Tampere University has engaged in collaborative research with trade unions from 1970s. He is the founder of interdisciplinary doctoral school for lifelong learning and education research and was chair of the European Society for Research in the Education of Adults 1998–2013. He is a founding member of the International Research Group for Psycho-societal Research. He is Advisory Professor for doctoral studies at East China Normal University, Shanghai.

Thomas J. (Tom) Sork is Professor of Adult Learning and Education at the University of British Columbia in Canada and holds an appointment as Distinguished Professor at the International Institute of Adult and Lifelong Education, New Delhi, India. His research and writing focus on program planning, professional ethics, and international collaboration.

Annette Sprung is Associate Professor at the University of Graz, Austria (Department of Educational Sciences/Adult Education). Her research and publications focus on adult education in migration societies, racisms, diversity, social inequality, solidarity, citizenship and learning for democracy. She also operates as a co-convenor of the Network on Migration, Transnationalism and Racisms of ESREA.

Lyn Tett is Professor of Community Education at Huddersfield University. Her research focuses on the factors that exclude adults from post-compulsory education and the action that can promote social inclusion. Her latest book, edited with Mary Hamilton, is *Resisting Neoliberalism in Education: Local, National and Transnational Perspectives* (Policy Press, 2019).

Joke Vandenabeele is an Associate Professor at the Laboratory for Education and Society (University of Leuven). She has developed her educational research in relation to the issue of solidarity and the issue of sustainability. In her research, she scrutinizes, both empirically and theoretically, how community education emerges from what people actually do together and how the materiality of a particular practice is part of this educational process.

Pierre Walter is a professor in the Adult Learning and Education (ALE) program at the University of British Columbia, Canada. He teaches adult learning theory, environmental education, and comparative education. His research focuses on adult learning in the climate justice movement, community-based ecotourism, and decolonizing learning in living history museums.

Susan Webb is currently a Professor of Education at Monash University, Australia. Her research interests include developing the field and practice of lifelong learning and widening participation. Particularly, the policy effects and practices related to access and participation of students in the field of further and higher education, including the experiences of migrants and refugees.

Linden West works at Canterbury Christ Church University. He jointly coordinates the ESREA Life History Network and has written widely on adult education. His new book, with Laura Formenti, *Transforming Perspectives in Lifelong Learning and Adult Education, A Dialogue* won the Cyril O. Houle 2019 prize for outstanding literature in adult education.

Jane Wilkinson is Associate Dean, Graduate Research, Monash University. Her research interests lie in educational leadership for social justice employing feminist, Bourdieusian and practice architectures lenses. She has conducted extensive research with refugee background students in schools and universities. Her latest book is *Navigating Complex Spaces: Refugee Background Students Transitioning into Higher Education*.

FERGAL FINNEGAN AND BERNIE GRUMMELL

1. POWER AND POSSIBILITY IN ADULT EDUCATION

Reflecting on Old Themes in New Times

INTRODUCTION

In the era of lifelong learning, adult education has acquired a new prominence (Field, 2006). Across the world the amount of time adults spend in education has steadily increased and new policy imperatives, linked to notions such as the 'knowledge economy' have made adult education and adult learning major topics of research. Within the body of research which has emerged from the highly diverse field of adult education – which includes, for example, studies on basic education, literacy, popular and community education, continuing education, lifelong learning and higher education as well as learning in workplaces, social movements and civil society – there is a very marked interest in questions of power.

This is not a new phenomenon; in fact, power has been defining and constitutive theme of adult education scholarship for over a century and is a central concern of many of the most famous and influential thinkers in the field (e.g., Brookfield, 2005; Freire, 1998; Lindemann, 1926; Mezirow, 1991, etc.). It is also noteworthy that when adult education researchers turn to other disciplines for ideas and inspiration, they frequently chose to draw upon thinkers such as Bourdieu and Foucault who also foreground issues of power (Käpplinger, 2015; Nylander, Österlund, & Fejes, 2018).

As one might expect given this longstanding interest within a broadly defined field of research power has been approached in varied ways. Nonetheless, there are certain recurrent themes, concerns and characteristics which are pertinent to framing the content and purpose of this collection. The genesis and formation of adult education as a field of practice, strongly orientated to democratic and egalitarian values, and the subsequent way adult education has developed within the academy, as an 'applied' social science (Rubenson, 2011; Nylander & Fejes, 2019) means that positivistic claims of neutrality and exercises in 'grand theory' are rare in adult education research. There is also relatively little melancholy rumination on the impossibility of action or change and the desire to produce research that contributes to progressive change and is relevant to communities, movements and practitioners remains the norm. As a result documenting inequality and injustice and/or theorizing social reproduction, 'power over', is complemented with a keen interest in 'power to' that is to explore what is, or might be, possible through adult education.

Possibility on a macro level has been mainly understood in terms of fostering active democratic participation (Rubenson, 2011) and advancing emancipatory politics (Holst, 2011). Adult education from this perspective is linked to wider democratizing tendencies in society (Williams, 1961). Critical pedagogy and feminism have been the most influential lines of research and inquiry in this regard (Freire, 1972; Hall et al., 2012; hooks, 1994; Mayo, 1999; Newman, 2007; Tett, 2002) but liberal as well as radical forms of popular education (Langinder, Nordvall, & Crowther, 2013) and a good deal of work using transformative learning theory also works within this paradigm (Mezirow & Assoc, 2000).

Interest in democracy from 'below' and political possibility on a macro level is complemented with a concern with the transformative potential of adult education on the meso and micro levels. This reflects the generally humanistic orientation of adult education research. Humanism has been articulated in a range of political and philosophical registers, including ones which are not especially interested in power and possibility in political terms, and there is a very widely shared interest in tapping into the 'hidden' potential located with human experience, informal learning and everyday knowledge (e.g. Alheit & Dausien, 2002; Bélanger, 2016; hooks, 1994; Illeris, 2009; Knowles, 1970; Jarvis, 2009; Pineau, 1986; Tett, 2002; Torres, 1990; Tough, 1979 etc.). This is typically paired with the argument that much educational provision fails to recognize this potential or even actively blocks its development. A recurrent trope of adult education research is the proposition that only by developing more open and responsive forms of education through innovation in institutions, program planning, and pedagogy (e.g. Horton, 2003; Tett, 2002 etc.) and ultimately devising new modes of producing and exchanging knowledge in society can we realize human potential. We want to suggest this way of construing power and possibility has been one of the things that has created a common sense of identity and purpose across a very wide and disparate scientific field. With some qualifications, this can also be discerned in some of the extensive and steadily growing body of research on workplace learning (e.g. Livingstone & Sawchuk, 2004).

Adult education is now a 'mature' scientific field and there is a clear need to interrogate and empirically explore on an ongoing basis what Malcolm Tight (1999, p. 1) once called the "mythologies" of adult education, the "powerful and revered ways of knowing aspects of our world" including these paradigmatic assumptions about power and possibility. This is what this books seeks to do.

Reflecting on power and possibility has acquired a new urgency and relevance in recent years, a period of change and crisis characterized by social acceleration (Rosa, 2013; see also Alhadeff-Jones, 2017), deepening inequalities (Sayer, 2015), seismic changes in politics and governance, a rise in racism and xenophobia (Fekete, 2018) and grave ecological threats (Latour, 2017). Alongside these socio-political shifts, adult education as a field of practice and scientific inquiry has witnessed significant changes in funding, policy and provision as well. Furthermore, several commentators (Nylander & Fejes, 2019; Rubenson, 2011) suggest there has been a fragmentation and weakening of the field of adult education at the very point when

many commentators argue reflexive forms of adult education are essential (Bowl, 2017; Walters & Watters, 2017).

How can, and should, adult education respond to these changes in the research field and more widely? Is it time to abandon old paradigms and themes? What sort of research is being done that illuminates power and possibility in a complex, diverse and interdependent world? This collection brings together leading researchers in the field of adult education to explore these vital questions theoretically, politically and practically from multiple perspectives and in relation to varied areas of interest within contemporary adult education. Specifically, the collection discusses continuities and changes in adult education research and program development and what was, and is now shaping and driving policy and the effects this is having on practice. In particular, it looks at how metrics and the language of competences, standards and outcomes, which have become ubiquitous, is currently affecting conceptions of research, learning and literacy. It asks how can we, in the light of rapid change in economics, politics, the labour market, migration and culture, leading to heightened social complexity, effectively research and theorize power and imagine democratic change. By exploring these questions in a critical and open way the authors featured in the book offer an analysis of adult education which is timely, rich and substantive.

THE ORIGIN OF THE BOOK

This collection of essays emerged from the debates and discussions that took place at the 2016 European Society for Research on the Education of Adults (ESREA) Triennial conference. Established in 1991 and consisting of twelve different research networks, ESREA has become one of the best-known organisations concerned with academic research on adult education and learning (Slowey, 2016). Its twelve networks meet annually or bi-annually in different parts of Europe. The Triennial conferences offer space for the various networks to come together, meet and share ideas and it has become an important event for adult education researchers globally (for a review of the major themes at the Triennial conferences up to 2014 see Kapplinger, 2015).

The 2016 Triennial was the eighth such conference and took place in Maynooth University in Ireland and was hosted by the Department of Adult and Community Education. The theme of the conference was *Imagining diverse futures for adult education: Questions of power and resources of creativity.* The double focus on power and future possibilities was chosen through dialogue between colleagues in ESREA and was designed to respond to concerns about changes in the field which were being voiced at adult education events internationally and in various ESREA networks as a result of the medium-term socio-political changes mentioned above as well as the effect of the global economic crisis on adult education in many European countries.

It was a remarkably vibrant event with approximately 200 presentations and papers by researchers from 27 countries. These researchers were mainly from Europe

but also came Asia, Australia and North America. The predominance of participants from the global north and the fact that it was an Anglophone event is worth bearing in mind not least because one of the themes of this book is the need to think about adult education in global terms.

Researchers responded to the conference themes in multiple and unexpected ways and we cannot in this book, nor intend to, capture the full range of what was covered in papers, roundtables, performances and workshops. Interestingly, relatively few papers 'imagined diverse futures', the emphasis was more on the reconfiguration of the field. The papers which dealt with 'power to' contextualized these hopes in terms of a complex realities and challenges in the here and now. Questions of power 'over' loomed large in terms of policy change and neoliberal managerialism alongside a strong interest in power in relation to gender, workplace learning and migration. In other words, the interest in possibility, that is to say in small and large-scale empowerment through adult education, was strong but participants wanted above all to pause and to look carefully at the forces and tendencies at work in the field, especially in terms of policy. As editors we have taken the main 'generative themes' of the event – power and possibility in complex and diverse times – and then sought contributions to this collection on these themes.

Below we elaborate and offer some further framing remarks in four parts which follow the structure of the book and reflect on the main ways invited contributors have taken up the themes of the book. The first part consists of pieces that help contextualize recent changes in adult education by looking back in time and across contexts. Part 2 looks at dominant trends in policy and the concepts, practices, categories and modes of research that are currently shaping practice. In the third part the challenge of theorizing power and possibility in relation to democracy, equality and emancipation in complex times is taken up. The fourth part looks at power and possibility in relation to some of the key themes of the conference – transnational migration and diversity in workplaces, formal education and civil society settings. The final part reflects on settings and practices which suggest how adult education can renew a sense of possibility in personal and social transformation.

TAKING THE LONG VIEW OF CONTINUITIES AND CHANGES IN ADULT EDUCATION

The first part of this book takes up the theme of continuities and changes in power and invites the reader to think about how we arrived at current conjuncture: it explores what is shifting, what persists and how we might respond as researchers. The chapters in the part have been chosen because of their wide scope and deal with three major concerns of adult education: policy, program planning and the evolution of research. Read together these three chapters illuminate the distance that has been travelled in adult education policy and program planning in recent years as well as what endures and situates this in relation to contemporary trends and tendencies in politics, economics and research. They also introduce two themes explored later in

the book – the temporal and spatial dimensions of adult education research – and offers examples of how we might think of the field diachronically as well as how we make sense of adult education as an international and global enterprise. In a collection such as this that is necessarily partial, the book offers signposts rather than a map; the aim is to offer new and suggestive angles of vision rather than a comprehensive account of the state of adult education which is ably outlined elsewhere (e.g. Milana et al., 2018; Nylander & Fejes, 2019; see also the various international and national handbooks of adult education).

In Chapter 2 Maren Elfert explores one of the most widely debated and significant ideas in adult education – lifelong learning. She traces the way this idea was conceptualized and articulated in two flagship reports published by UNESCO, the Faure report in 1972, and the Delors report in 1996. The chapter situates the broadly humanistic, and perhaps within current circumstances, even utopian, conception of lifelong learning as part of wider effort to address inequalities through international cooperation and the reform and development of the welfare state. As is well known with the neoliberalization of policy and politics, the OECD and World Bank emerged as the most influential international organization concerned with education. The philosophical and democratic ethos of UNESCO's reports are out of kilter with what became the dominant ideas of the age. Elfert contends that this cannot be seen as a complete and finished process and argues although this ambitious conception of lifelong learning has not been enacted on a policy level, they remain highly influential for practitioners and researchers as a resource of hope and is what she terms an "unfailure".

This is followed by Marcella Milana who in Chapter 3 offers an overview of patterns in comparative research on international adult education policy and their interactions with national and local policy developments. Milana analyzes the collective effort by adult education policy researchers to examine the changing power dynamics between international organizations, national governments and local communities. Milana identifies research patterns that reveal the pervasiveness of the dominant neoliberal discourse and its effects on adult education, but also on its cracks as well as different forms of 'resistance' (see also Tett & Hamilton, 2019). Crucially, she suggests a reflexive awareness of these patterns will enhance the capacity to do meaningful research in the future. Further she argues that assuming a multi-scalar or global perspective in policy research provides adult education scholars with the capacity to trace the influence of the multiple political entities and agencies involved in shaping adult education policy.

Thomas Sork and Bernd Käpplinger in Chapter 4 take up the themes of the book from a different perspective by exploring power and programme planning. They discuss how power in program planning has been a crucial theme in adult education especially in North America. Drawing on previous empirical research in Germany and Canada on this topic and reflecting of the influential work of Cervero and Wilson (1994), they do two significant things. They offer a fascinating overview of the changing way power has been theorized within adult education and explore how

program planners can generatively respond to the multiple pressures, including from policymakers, in a way that responds to wider social needs and pressing problems today. Reflections on the macro and meso levels clears the ground to offer guidelines for practice and discuss the competences required for program planning to read and respond to power. Program planning is, they argue, a type of creative action which relies on ethical, socio-political and technical competences and which needs conceptual tools to grapple with visible and hidden forms of power in order to create new possibilities in adult education.

The first part is intentionally wide in scope and highly layered and thus illuminates adult education as a complex and evolving field through which dominant, residual and emergent forces operate. The three authors suggest that to understand power and possibility in adult education we need to be cognizant of our own history to discern accurately the fractures and faultlines which run through contemporary adult education. This is the departure point for a further exploration of power and policy today which is explored in the second part of the book.

THE AGE OF METRICS AND THE RECONFIGURATION OF POLICY AND PRACTICE IN ADULT EDUCATION

From the second world war up until the late 1980s adult education (at least viewed from much of Europe and North America) was a relatively stable field of practice, albeit quite loosely boundaried, which was served, and partially shaped, by a growing body of academic work. In Europe adult education as a field of practice and scientific field was strongly shaped by the imperatives of welfare state capitalism which led to a period of unprecedented and dramatic expansion in educational provision across the lifespan. Based on a historical compromise described by Peter Alheit (2005, p. 391) as a:

> … a somewhat unusual alliance between social-democratic reformism and capital's drive to modernise both itself and society. What one side envisaged as an emancipatory opportunity for personal growth, especially for the working classes, was seen by the other side as the benefits of having the wide-ranging skills that were considered essential to remain competitive.

From the 1980s this compromise began to unravel due to social and economic crises and increasing neoliberalization (Brenner, Peck, & Theodore, 2010). The social, political and cultural coordinates – most significantly the configuration of state power and the organisation and orientation of progressive social movements – that shaped adult education in Europe in the post-war period have disappeared. The promotion of individualized and competitive forms of culture and politics has had a profound consequence of what is deemed possible or even thinkable within the social imaginary. More concretely markets and quasi-markets have been created now in many national educational systems (Bowl, 2017). The authors in the collection make the case that it is the neoliberalization of national and international adult education

policy, and the associated growth of managerial 'audit culture', linked to funding that has most directly impacted on the field. As a result we have seen the emergence of procedures, measures and practices through which power operates in a subtle manner to change how program planning, pedagogy and research is conducted and which cumulatively alter the purpose of adult education.

As Rosanna Barros recounts in her analysis of Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) in Portuguese adult education (Chapter 5), the state along with transnational bodies have devised indicators and set goals which have had a profound impact on adult education. She reveals how educational policy through compulsory targets and outputs, has resulted in the reimaging of educational work in technical and administrative terms and the contradictions and pitfalls that this has created. In a period of crisis and austerity this has centralized control over education while decentralizing responsibility. This double movement sets tight bounds on what is deemed possible and Barros argues has neutralized or hampered the development of critical forms of adult education.

Mary Hamilton in Chapter 6 reveals in her analysis of how people's own experience and meanings of literacy are devalued and rendered invisible in international comparative surveys such as PIAAC. As she argues, such surveys play a significant role in the establishment of new forms of governance and social regulation on a global and national basis, where power is exerted through data management and efforts are made to normalize knowledge in line with neoliberal views of the world, leading to a narrowing of the educational imagination.

Barros and Hamilton illustrate the operation of the 'microphysics of power' and how this resets the boundaries of possibility in education. In Chapter 7 Henning Salling Olesen builds on this analysis through a discussion of the notion of competence. He argues for a critical form of research from a 'bottom up perspective' that seeks to explore everyday practices related to competence and learning from a new perspective. He contends that adult education micro-practices related to the subjective interests and experience of individuals need to be studied to "trace their unrecognized potentials" for supporting autonomous action and societal change. While recognizing current limitations in the bureaucratic conception of competences Olesen also suggests how this might be reimagined drawing on empirical research in workplaces and with trade unions.

THEORISING POWER AND POSSIBILITY IN A COMPLEX WORLD

One of the primary aims of the book is to explore whether the paradigms that have been used to understand power and possibility in adult education are still adequate in a period of fluidity and change. This question is explored throughout the collection but is most systematically addressed as a theoretical challenge in the third part of the book. To do this we invited four authors to reflect on the themes of personal and social emancipation, transformative education, equality and social justice in relation to adult education. The authors approach this through various notions of praxis and

different conceptions of the source of 'really useful knowledge'. Close philosophical inquiry of concepts is accompanied by grounded reflection on literacy practices and a discussion of a 'prophetic' figure from the history of adult education – Mary Parker Follett – who is rescued from the 'enormous condescension of posterity'

It was argued earlier that hidden powers, blocked and unused capacities pushing against the constraints of tradition and institutional systems have been recurrent tropes in adult education which are articulated through and sustained by a range of metaphors of change, expansion and transformation. As we have already argued political conditions are vastly different than they were forty years ago. Related but distinct to this is the way progressive social movements organize and produce knowledge is changing (Wainwright, 2009). Furthermore, as is the case with social science more generally, the post-modern 'turn' means questions have been posed about the practical and theoretical limits of progressive ideas (Usher & Edwards, 1994) questioning the simplicity and linearity of such models. In particular, post-structuralists have problematized notions of emancipation which, they argue, are based on dichotomous models with a clear division between the powerful and the powerless and draw our attention to the subtle operation of power at all levels of social life mediated through practices, techniques and discourses. Power is not so much held or resisted as exercised in various ways.

Interestingly, most of the writers invited to explore power and possibility in theoretical terms occupy a middle ground between early versions of critical theory and post-structuralism. It is significant that the four thinkers here all argue emancipatory desires, knowledge and values remain integral to adult education. In various ways, and to varying degrees, the four authors also acknowledge the importance of established traditions of thought in adult education but they all suggest that these living traditions needs critique and development. There is also a consensus that theory building is a contingent and contextual activity which should be approached in a critically pragmatic manner. Each author also is at pains to stress complexities of identity and praxis in thinking and research; suggesting "we have to try to engage with a diverse and fragmented culture by means of an analysis that sees through its own fantasy of homogeneity […] and seeks out complexity (Samuels, 1993, p. 11). Just as significantly emancipation is discussed in relation to multiple actors but with relatively little focus on the issues – such as movement organizing – which were once mainstays in theorizing power and possibility.

Both Lyn Tett and Leona English speak out of long experience of thinking and working through radical and feminist traditions and suggest ways of building on these bodies of thought. In Chapter 8 Lyn Tett approaches equality in a multidimensional manner, drawing on the work of Nancy Fraser. Tett uses Fraser's concepts of recognition, redistribution and participatory parity, to analyze enduring inequalities experienced by learners and also the democratic possibilities opened up to adult learners in the context of family literacy. Tett concludes that participation in critical adult education does empower and enhance participation

and address misrecognition but she also indicates that equality requires wider efforts at economic redistribution.

In Chapter 9 Leona English makes a case for the importance of feminist analysis of power and possibility by bringing us back to the work of Mary Parker Follett (1868–1933), a community-based educator whose emphasis on collective action and the co-creation of power views democracy as an "ongoing project" and power as an integral part of human relations. In this reflection on the lessons of the past, English is also offering a way of thinking through and responding to discussion of identity and equality that are now so widespread and often very contentious. English also frames this in terms of global challenges and prospects for women and suggests that to think accurately about power and possibility we need to develop a genuinely internationalist perspective.

In Chapter 10 Kerry Harman argues that emancipatory possibilities depend on a critique of hidden assumptions which are held as normative, including by those who claim to be advancing emancipation. Drawing on the work of Jacques Rancière, Harman argues that increasing diversity and complexity in society has resulted in a less unified understanding around what constitutes progressive social change and makes the notion of a universal truth seem much less certain. The idea of vanguard knowledge, the expert and crucially envisaging equality as something worked towards on a distant horizon – and here Marxism and critical pedagogy is squarely in view – is criticized by Harman. Instead it is the immediate practice of emancipation in the here and now that is being argued for as the basis of emancipatory pedagogy and research.

Michel Alhadeff-Jones in Chapter 11 revisits emancipation and the democratic ideals of adult education through an analysis of time. Alhadeff-Jones looks carefully at the temporal dimensions of adult education, raising important questions about the experience of time and why the multiple and complex rhythms of human activity needs to be thought about carefully in research on adult learning and development. He proposes developing a rhythmanalytical approach to adult education to deal with the complex experience of time. He contends that a scarcity of time, the strict demarcation of learning activities and the acceleration of aspects of social life express something significant about contemporary power dynamics, revealing social inequalities in the way adults experience time in their struggle to manage the competing rhythms of life. Emancipation, he suggests, lies, at least in part, in finding one's own rhythm, the appropriation of one's own time, a proposition which throws up exciting challenges for adult education.

POWER AND POSSIBILITY IN A DIVERSE WORLD: LEARNING, EDUCATION AND GLOBAL MIGRATION

Power can be mapped relationally in terms of the possession, use and circulation of economic, social, cultural and symbolic capitals in social space marked by lines of division and structured inequality (Bourdieu, 1985, 1996). Grasping the dynamics behind the movement of commodities, people, images, symbols, practices and ideas

across social space is crucial to social analysis (Lefebvre, 1992) and as noted earlier we are in a period of accelerated flows (Rosa, 2013). The last two parts of the book explore how adult education is responding to this changing and changeable world in which questions of diversity, solidarity and participation are key.

We are living in a period of heightened interest in questions of migration and intercultural exchange. Current transnational flows of people through forced and voluntary migration fits into a longer-term historical tale of colonialism, displacement and crises. Power continues to be centrally evident in the policies and practices of how states manage these population shifts, using immigration policies to attract certain groups – usually on the basis of education skills and employment – and constrain the movement of other groups of people – through employment visas, border and migration controls, access to welfare and educational supports (Morrice, Shan, & Sprung, 2017). This raises significant questions for adult education in terms of access and recognition, pedagogical practices and community inclusion (Guo & Lange, 2015).

In this part of the collection, how power relations, migration and diversity are mediated in context is explored in three key sites of learning; civil society, formal education and workplaces. Firstly, in Chapter 12 Brigitte Kukovetz and Annette Sprung discuss the relationship between solidarity, power and with adult learning, in the context of migration regimes and within humanitarian refugee relief. They explore volunteering as an important learning process which responds to human need in a time of political crisis. But equally they highlight how this activity can be linked to a sense of the state divesting itself of responsibility in a neoliberal context and that such activity can serve to reproduce deep inequalities related to race, ethnicity and citizenship rights. To deal with this 'doubleness' of power they argue we need to be able to link everyday solidarity to a wider analysis of power structures.

In Chapter 13 Karen Dunwoodie, Susan Webb and Jane Wilkinson also identify the limits of efforts to address inequalities in the context of higher education. Their case study documents the complexities of equity and inclusion for certain groups of migrant. It reveals the symbolic violence evident in the apparently neutral admissions processes and practices of higher education institutions for students from refugee and asylum-seeking backgrounds through the organizational processes and procedures which reproduce systems of classification and require forms of evidence that reinforce relations of domination and subordination in higher education access and participation who applied to attend Australian higher education institution. Like Kukovetz and Sprung they make the case for multileveled and integrated power analysis as vital for research and institutional reform.

One of the most important developments in adult education in the past two decades has been the increasing importance given to workplace learning (linked most often socio-cultural perspectives and Actor Network theory). In Chapter 14 Joke Vandenabeele and Pascal Debruyne explore workplace learning in relation to interculturalism and diversity from a new perspective drawing on the work of Gert Biesta and Sharon Todd amongst others. They explore the lived experience in a 'super diverse' shopfloor

of Tower Automotive in Ghent and the organic forms of undramatic but nevertheless important forms of solidarity built through cooperation on an everyday level which reflect workers' understanding of diversity. Solidarity is practiced in a double sense: sharing and redistributing material and immaterial resources with 'newcomers' and also taking up the responsibility to renew this world in which we want to live, work and play together.

MAKING HOPE PRACTICAL

The issues raised by the contributors in this book highlight the challenges facing adult education and society more broadly. In many respects the collection as a whole indicates that responding to a diverse and complex world terms of theory, research and practice is far from easy. While there remains a strong sense of the potential of adult education we are struggling to make sense of rapid changes inside and outside of adult education and there is some tentativeness and even anxiety as we look towards the future.

The British adult educator and cultural theorist Raymond Williams (1980) argued that making hope practical and despair convincing was a fundamental task in critical intellectual work. Several of the contributions to the book (Elfert, English, Tett, Sork & Kapplinger) indicate the history of adult education is in itself a resource of hope we can draw upon. It is certainly worth recalling that adult education played an important role in democratizing societies through the elaboration of new practices, value and institutions – the process Raymond Williams (1961) called the 'long revolution' in the twentieth century. But the long revolution has been halted quite some time ago. And many of the contributors suggest we need to question and critically build on tradition while finding new ways to reimagine the space and time of adult education which match the challenges of the current conjuncture (Alhadeff-Jones, English, Harman, Milana). In several chapters (Olessen, Harman, Tett, Vandenabeele and Debruyne), it is argued that we need to pay attention to the power of everyday learning practices as a source of solidarity and change. But this needs to be framed in theories of power and possibility which pay attention to macro, meso and micro levels (Milana, Sork and Käpplinger, Barros, Hamilton, Dunwoodie, Webb and Wilkinson, Kukovetz and Sprung).

But how can such emergent practices alongside a realistic, multileveled and nuanced theory of power feed into a wider sense of social possibility and where are the sites where this can be advanced? This is the question that the final part of the book explores. The answer given by the three featured authors is that formal adult education should link and learn from contemporary social movements, and voluntary and civil society organisations inspired by the principles of equality and democracy.

Linden West in Chapter 15 bridges past and present and explores possible futures through reflections on his research (West, 2016) in a British post-industrial city to illustrate how a politics of hopelessness breeds racist and xenophobic politics, but also how we can begin to restore hope. He contends that we have:

> … responsibilities as citizens, academics and educators, to question powerful neo-liberal trends and to illuminate their effects, and how they can be resisted in processes of democratic, dialogical community education … how intercultural and community education can help forge new collective resources, at a time when cultural super diversity seems, for many, a threat.

He argues that we can draw on the history of adult education in imaginative and practical ways and seeks to create the conditions for careful dialogue and solidarity across settings. Here adult education is envisaged as a type of dialogical practice which takes place across a multiplicity of formal and informal settings in support of a reflexive democracy.

In Chapter 16 Marta Gregorčič explores counter-tendencies and alternative practices to neoliberalism, through case studies of the impact of experiments in participatory budgeting (PB) in Argentina and Slovenia. PB, in its optimal form, creates a system of co-governance in which self-organized citizens and engaged civic society can exert public control over the municipality. Gregorčič explores how creating and nurturing authentic, democratic, learning communities that aspire towards democratization of existing governance systems empowers citizens but also creates learning opportunities for city councils. Of particular interest is the claim that increasing participation in society is a deep form of learning which is transformative on a personal level but also leads greater solidarity and informed collective action. Like West she proposes critical dialogue across learning spaces as a source of transformative power.

It is fitting that a collection that explores the dialectic between local and global and power and possibility in complex times finishes with a chapter on climate change. In Chapter 17 Pierre Walter and Jenalee Kluttz explore learning in and from a climate justice movement led by indigenous people in North America. They argue that what is called for is a complete paradigm shift away from anthropocentric perspectives. The earth and non-human relations are moved centre stage and they argue for careful reflection on one positioning in terms of power in relation to networks of life and in differential and unequal social relations. They argue that the form of environmental education that took place within this movement indicates what might be possible through a wider 'decolonializing' dialogue in which the Earth is viewed as central to learning, culture, community, identity and human existence.

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PART 1

TAKING THE LONG VIEW OF CONTINUITIES AND CHANGES IN ADULT EDUCATION

MAREN ELFERT

2. REVISITING THE *FAURE REPORT* AND THE *DELORS REPORT*

Why was UNESCO's Utopian Vision of Lifelong Learning an "Unfailure"?

As John Field (2000) remarked, lifelong learning is a "beautifully simple idea" (p. vii). Lifelong learning as a policy concept came to prominence in the 1960s in the context of accelerating post-war social transformation and economic growth that required a greater democratization of educational institutions. However, its meaning has changed. In the 1960s and 1970s, especially in the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), lifelong learning (at the time the term "lifelong education" was in use) represented an emancipatory and rights-based concept. Since the rise of neoliberalism in the 1980s the meaning of lifelong learning has shifted to denote the individual's responsibility to obtain the necessary skills to find employment in the marketplace (Biesta, 2006). This chapter will shed light on the reasons for this shift by tracing the history and fate of two flagship education reports published by UNESCO, which were instrumental in promoting and conceptualizing lifelong learning as a global educational "master concept": *Learning to Be* (otherwise known as the *Faure report*), published in 1972, and *Learning: The Treasure Within* (otherwise known as the *Delors report*), published in 1996. The key ideas in these documents, and the way they have been taken up in some quarters and disregarded in others, illuminates important continuities and changes in thinking about power and possibility in adult education.

UNESCO AND LIFELONG LEARNING

It is fair to say that UNESCO is the international organization that has made the most significant philosophical and theoretical contributions to the concept of lifelong learning. But it is important to note that in parallel to UNESCO's intense engagement with the concept, especially during the 1970s and the 1990s, the idea was much discussed in educational circles more broadly, and other international organizations played a part in bringing it to prominence under different names with slightly different meanings, such as the OECD's *recurrent education* and the Council of Europe's *permanent education* (Kallen, 1979).

UNESCO's concept of lifelong learning grew out of the organization's universal and utopian humanism and was strongly related to the idea of education as a human

right, entrenched in the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* of 1948 (Elfert, 2018). It was influenced by French and Scandinavian traditions of popular education and a blend of classical and social democratic liberalism, as well as radical social democratic ideas, with traces of Marxism especially in the case of the *Faure report* (Lee & Friedrich, 2011; Elfert, 2018). In this chapter I will argue that UNESCO's humanistic vision of lifelong learning constituted an "unfailure", drawing on Gilman (2015), who borrowed the term from Jennifer Wenzel (2009). Wenzel used the term in relation to a prophecy that led the Xhosa people of southern Africa to kill their cattle in the late 19th century in the hope that their ancestors would return to drive out the colonizers. Although the Xhosa people did not achieve their goal, Wenzel shows how the supposed failure of the prophecy and the action it ensued has continued to inspire anti-colonial movements. Gilman (2015) defines the concept of "unfailure" as "the paradox that many seemingly failed political and social movements, even though they did not realize their ambitions in their own moment, often live on as prophetic visions, available as an idiom for future generations to articulate their own hopes and dreams" (p. 10). On the one hand the humanistic vision of lifelong learning has arguably lost out to more powerful economistic interpretations of the concept that dominate education policies today (Bagnall, 2000). In the struggle over "global governance" in education the *Faure report* and the *Delors report* proved unsuccessful in asserting their worldviews against powerful counter-ideologies promoted by organizations challenging UNESCO's authority such as the OECD and the World Bank. On the other hand, both reports continue to capture the imagination of scholars and educators. In particular, the *Delors report*, despite its limited policy influence, continues to exert a "soft influence" on educators all over the world.[1] Revisiting these reports shed light on the debates and controversies in the context of their time and they also tell us a great deal about power and possibility in education policies.

UNESCO's vision of lifelong learning, as put forward in the *Faure report* and the *Delors report*, had a much stronger citizenship dimension than, for example, that of the OECD, which emphasized the economic aspect of lifelong learning in terms of investment in human capital. UNESCO's interpretation represented what Cropley (1979) called the "maximalist position," which involved "a fundamental transformation of society" (p. 105). The notion of citizenship embedded in UNESCO's concept of lifelong learning invoked the right and responsibility of the individual to employ education for the sake of the betterment of society, and the importance of solidarity among all the people of the world. Also, in terms of the reports' views on international development, they represented a counter perspective to the dominant development discourse of Western modernization. In particular the *Faure report* showed a tendency to supporting endogenous development based on dependency theory.

THE *FAURE REPORT*

The *Faure report* emerged from the *International Commission for the Development of Education*, established in 1970. UNESCO's General Conference had charged the

Commission with the task of producing a report on the future of education. The report was an attempt to (re-)assert UNESCO's authority at a time when the World Bank and the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) were challenging UNESCO's role as the lead agency for education. Thinking about the future of education seemed timely as Western countries were shaken by student revolts and civil society movements calling for reforms of the education system; at the same time the newly independent countries of the South were desperate to rebuild their education systems. Education was increasingly viewed as a 'pillar of development', which had become an important domain of Cold War foreign policy (Coombs, 1964).

Chaired by Edgar Faure, a French socialist politician who had been appointed Minister of Education after the 1968 May student uprisings in France, the Commission produced the report *Learning to be*, which recommended "lifelong education" (*éducation permanente*) as the global "master concept" for education. Lifelong education had been promoted in UNESCO as an educational paradigm since the 1960s. The concept was concerned with reforming the linkages between education and work, which was necessary as the post-war reconstruction required mobilizing all potential members of the workforce. But much stronger than the economic aspect was the citizenship dimension of lifelong education. The post-war democratic project required adults who were educated and empowered enough to exercise their role as citizens and help to build a new society out of the ashes of World War II.

Compared to similar concepts that were used in parallel such as "recurrent education", the *Faure report*'s concept of lifelong education was utopian – or what Cropley (1979) called "maximalist" – insofar as it entailed a call for a new democratic society. The overwhelming message of the *Faure report* was an unwavering faith in education as the means to prepare human beings "for a type of society which does not yet exist" (Faure et al., 1972, p. 13). The report stated "that any undertaking which aims at changing the fundamental conditions of man's fate necessarily contains a utopian element" (p. 163). Lifelong education blended the post-war idealism with the critical spirit of the 1960s and the humanistic-cosmopolitan worldview that permeated the report was in tension with human capital theory, which around the same time fueled what was seen as a more pragmatic approach to educational planning. The title *Learning to be* reveals the influence of existentialism on the report that placed the focus on the human condition and on the role of education for the development of every individual's potential.

The *Faure report*'s vision of the "learning society", which was a much-debated idea at the time (e.g. Thomas, 1963; Hutchins, 1968; Husén, 1974), was in line with other utopian visions spread during the 1960s. On the one hand, the *Faure report* was an optimistic document, exuding confidence that the "learning society" would come true. On the other hand, a spirit of crisis was noticeable as well as the fear that technocratic forces would alienate and enslave human beings and deprive them of their freedom and capacity to act. The existentialist theme of the tension between instrumental rationality and human freedom prevailed not only in contemporary literature such as Herbert Marcuse's *One-dimensional man*, but also in lifelong

learning circles, for example in the writings of Bogdan Suchodolski (1976), who contributed several background papers to the Faure Commission.

The *Faure report* needs to be understood in the context of its very particular time, the 1960s and early 1970s when the dominant economic and social model was the Keynesian social-democratic welfare state. Education policies were, "in essence, welfare policies of the state performing a range of social democratic functions" (Griffin, 1999, p. 331). Edgar Faure was a strong believer in the "social contract" and he authored a book by that title (Faure, 1973). The attack of the economic sphere on education greatly preoccupied him (Elfert, 2018, pp. 103, 121). In terms of the *Faure report*'s view of development, it anticipated the claims for a New International Economic Order (NIEO), an initiative put forward during the 1970s by developing countries to establish a more just economic world order based on redistribution of resources from rich to poor countries. The report did not refer directly to the NIEO because it was produced before the time when the NIEO gained prominence but some of the members of the Faure Commission supported the ideas underpinning the NIEO, such as Majid Rahnema, former Minister of Higher Education and Sciences in Iran, who brought the ideas of critical theorists such as Paulo Freire, Ivan Illich and Everett Reimer into the Commission.

The broader significance of the *Faure report* lies in it being an expression of a movement driven by socialist and social democratic forces pushing for democratization and the regulation of capitalism in the 1960s and early 1970s. Arguably, the NIEO was another expression of this movement, as was the *"Ordnungspolitik"* (regulatory policy) promoted by the German social democratic Chancelor Willy Brandt[2]; and the 1976 report of the Club of Rome, *Reshaping the International Order*, which took up the demands of the Third World and the NIEO (Tinbergen et al., 1976, p. 23). But this social-democratic movement was challenged by market-oriented counter-forces since the late 1970s. While in 1969, Social Democrats had held government responsibility in fourteen countries (Van der Pijl, 1993, p. 35), by 1983 the German political magazine *Der Spiegel*, in an article written by Ralf Dahrendorf, declared that "we are experiencing the end of the social-democratic century in the OECD world" (Der Spiegel, 1983). The reactions to the *Faure report* show that some of its ideas constituted a provocation for some of its readers. The OECD response, for example, authored by the American diplomat Edwin Martin, criticized the report for its "heavy ideological overtones which are inappropriate in a U.N. document designed to have global significance" (cited in Elfert, 2018, p. 129). Other responses reflected irritation about the report's critique of the school system, such as the Swiss response, which noted that the references to Ivan Illich in the report "have not only surprised but shocked many people" (p. 128).

THE *DELORS REPORT:* "LEARNING TO LIVE TOGETHER"

Learning: The treasure within (the *Delors report*), the second UNESCO report on the future of education, was launched by the *International Commission on Education*

for the Twenty-first Century in 1996, in the context of UNESCO's "Education for the Twenty-First Century" program. Although larger and much more diverse in its composition, the Commission was again chaired by a French socialist – or social-democratic – politician and intellectual, the President of the European Commission at the time, Jacques Delors. The Commission was situated in a very different socio-political context. Education was high on the agenda again following the fall of the Berlin Wall and the educational demands of new states that emerged from the collapse of the Soviet Union. Following in the footsteps of its predecessor, the *Delors report* propagated lifelong learning as the educational paradigm of the future. But it introduced a new term, "learning throughout life". Beyond the temporal – some would say the vertical – dimension of "lifelong", it included the horizontal notion of "lifewide", considering the learning that occurred in all spheres of life and emphasizing the idea of learning as a "continuum" (Delors et al., 1996, p. 100).

The *Delors report* adopted a more pessimistic tone than its predecessor did. The democratic and participatory society based on freedom, creativity and solidarity imagined in the *Faure report* had not come about. The first chapter of the report, written by Jacques Delors himself, stated that "the prevailing mood of disenchantment forms a sharp contrast with the hopes born in the years just after the Second World War" (Delors et al., 1996, p. 15). The *Delors report* shared the *Faure report*'s concern about a too narrow, economistic view of education. But while the *Faure report* was still situated in "the golden age" of capitalism, economic crises and recessions had hit, and the situation of the developing countries looked much bleaker than in the late 1960s. The *Delors report* perceived a crisis of democracy and a loss of interest in its values in terms of the "widening gap between those who govern and those who are governed" (p. 55) and pointed to "a crisis in social policies which is undermining the very foundations of a system of solidarity" (p. 56). The *Delors report* was more conformist than the *Faure report* and did not question the foundations of society as much. It exhibited a subtle spirit of disenchantment in propagating education as a necessary condition for the ability of humans to stand against an "alienating", even "hostile" system (p. 95).

Delors' chapter in the report is titled "Education: The necessary utopia". Like its predecessor, the *Delors report* took a philosophical and utopian approach to the task of envisioning the future of education, in sharp contrast to the World Bank's human capital approach, as exemplified by its report *Priorities and Strategies for Education,* published in 1995 and which the Delors Commission discussed at length. The *Delors report* argued there are four pillars of education – learning to know; learning to do; learning to live together; and learning to be (Delors et al., 1996, pp. 85–98). The emphasis shifted from the *Faure report*'s individualistic "learning to be" to the more collective perspective of "learning to live together", which the Commission regarded as the most important of the four pillars and the guiding principle of the report (p. 22; see also Carneiro & Draxler, 2008). Elsewhere, I have argued that the utopian and collectivist stance taken by the Delors Commission was a reaction to neoliberalism (Elfert, 2018, Chapter 6).

WHY WAS UNESCO'S 'UTOPIAN' VISION OF LIFELONG LEARNING AN "UNFAILURE"?

It is not easy to assess the actual influence of the *Faure report* and the *Delors report* on education policies, as there is very little literature on the subject. Ryan (1999) traced the influence of the *Faure report*'s concept of lifelong education on Training and Further Education (TAFE) policies in Australia. Deleon (1996) listed Canada, Japan, Sweden, Norway and Argentina among the countries that took up the *Faure report*, but most of the country activities were limited to seminars and panel discussions, and "most experiments have been fragmentary and sporadic, with limited resources" (p. 14). Jones (1992, p. 213) pointed to the report's influence on the World Bank's strong commitment to non-formal education between 1974 and 1979. As a reaction to the *Faure report*, the European Commission launched *For a Community Policy on Education* (the "Janne report") (Field, 2001, p. 9). In parallel, the OECD's Centre for Educational Research and Innovation (CERI) published a report on recurrent education (CERI, 1973). The educational literature of the early 1970s contained frequent references to the report, and it "has aroused widespread debate on the Continent" (Richmond, 1974, p. xiii). It is fair to say that the *Faure report* functioned as a catalytic agent for lifelong learning in Western countries, but it was too philosophical and impractical to have much influence on developing countries, which at the time "regarded lifelong education as a luxury of the Developed World" (Rubenson, 2006, p. 71).

In terms of the *Delors report*, the strongest response came from Europe and Latin America. The Nordic countries organized a conference of the Nordic Council of Ministers that was directly inspired by the *Delors report* and attended by representatives from 18 countries (Elfert, 2018, p. 185). The report sparked the development of indicators for lifelong learning (Bertelsmann Stiftung, 2010; Canadian Council on Learning, 2010) and reflections on educational reform (see, for example De Lisle, 1996, for Latin America; Dohmen, 1996, for Germany). According to Carneiro and Draxler (2008), the *Delors report* generated initiatives in 50 countries, and was translated into about 30 languages. However, apart from the rhetorical and intellectual exercises, little evidence points to actual influence on policies around the world (Elfert, 2018, Chapter 6). In contrast to the *Delors report*, the 1989 OECD report *Education and the economy in a changing society* "became a bible for Ministers of Education" (Rubenson, 2008, p. 255).

I would like to suggest several interrelated explanations for the lack of influence of UNESCO's two lifelong learning reports. While UNESCO represented the "powerhouse" for education in the 1960s and to some extent remained so in the 1970s, in the course of the next decades, as one of the members of the Faure Commission's secretariat put it, "the … power centre was shifting across the Atlantic" (cited in Elfert, 2018, p. 142). The World Bank emerged as the most influential international organization for education in the developing world and the OECD became the most powerful shaper of education policies in the industrialized world. Field (2001) noted that of the various international organizations concerned with adult education, "only

the OECD's proposals appeared to have any concrete influence on governments" (p. 8). The utopian vision of the *Delors report* did not offer a strong enough alternative to the financial and "coercive" power exerted by the World Bank (Chabbott, 1998, p. 212) and the "persuasive" approach taken by the OECD with its focus on indicators, output measurement and rankings that fit better in the political economy of our time than UNESCO's normative-philosophical approach (Rubenson, 2008). In this regard, it is important to note the "Frenchness" of the reports, both produced by commissions led by French politicians: The highly philosophical *Faure report* exemplified a French endeavour, "the kind of symbolic declarations by the French of the importance of Paris and culture" (cited in Elfert, 2018, pp. 135–136). The same could be said about the *Delors report*. Delors told a journalist that he wanted to put all his authority and good reputation behind "a battle of ideas to be fought and won" (Henderson, 1993, cited in Elfert, 2018, p. 184). But he fought his battle with tools that remained caught up in French approaches to philosophy, exemplified by the first question he posed to the Commission, "what is modernity?" (p. 192).

The rise of other more powerful international organizations and ideas needs to be situated in the overall shifting ideological climate towards neoliberalism, defined by Overbeek and Van der Pijl (1993) as a "counter-revolution" to moderate social-democratic forces and Third World calls for a regulation of capitalism and redistribution of wealth through the NIEO. In accordance with this view, Gilman (2015) qualifies "the failure of the NIEO [as] the result of a deliberate and concerted strategy on the part of leaders in the north, compounded by strategic choices on the part of the south" (p. 10). To some extent, I would assess the "unfailure" of the *Faure report* and the *Delors report* along these lines. Both reports were out of line with the market-oriented and divisive ideology that gained the upper hand.

Although their actual influence on policies remained very limited, the message of both reports continues to resonate. The *Faure report*, while unknown to the general public, has captured the imagination of educational scholars until this day. Field (2001, p. 6) saw the report as a "turning point", as it marked a shift from the emphasis on schooling to a broader perspective including less traditional pillars of education such as non-formal and informal education. Torres (2013) touted the *Faure report* as the "humanist educational manifesto of the twentieth century" (p. 15). The *Delors report*'s four pillars of education (commonly known as the "four pillars of learning") are not only frequently cited in policy reports and the scholarly literature to this day, but they are also used in schools (Elfert, 2018, p. 193). In this respect, the *Faure report* and *Delors report* could be characterized as "unfailures". They represent an "unfailure" because their translation into actual policies has been limited but their influence is notable to this day. Gilman (2015), when discussing the claim made by many that the NIEO was an "inevitable" failure, argued that "we should always be wary of ascribing inevitability to outcomes that seemed deeply uncertain to the actors at the time" (p. 9). Elsewhere, I made a similar point about the *Faure report*: "Maybe the ideas and discourses that seem very radical and new …, or in other cases totally archaic, were not so radical or archaic at the time" (Elfert, 2018, p. 29). Engaging with

these reports opens up a space in which it becomes possible to imagine alternatives to the prevailing instrumental view of education promoted by the current dominant economic and political order. In that respect the *Faure report* and the *Delors report* exemplify the limitations, but also the possibility of a utopian vision of education.

NOTES

[1] In particular the idea of "learning to live together" from the *Delors report* continues to inspire educators. It suffices to do a google search to find some of the numerous examples of reports and strategies using the phrase, such as a 2013 report on education for conflict resolution published by the Qatar Foundation (https://www.gcedclearinghouse.org/sites/default/files/resources/LEARNING%20TO%20LIVE%20TOGETHER.pdf) or a 2017 report by the Council of Europe on citizenship and human rights education (https://rm.coe.int/factsheets-learning-to-live-together-council-of-europe-report-on-the-s/1680727be3).

[2] Brandt initiated the *Independent Commission on International Development Issues* that discussed the NIEO proposal, resulting in the publication *North-South: A Program for Survival* (Gilman, 2015, p. 7).

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MARCELLA MILANA

3. COMPARATIVE AND GLOBAL POLICY STUDIES ON ADULT EDUCATION

Key Patterns in Contemporary Adult Education Policy Research

INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses the type of knowledge that *comparative and global policy studies on adult education* contributes to adult education research broadly conceived.[1]

Comprehending transformations in adult education today requires us to look beyond and across the national scale if we are to comprehend continuities and changes in adult education policy, practice and research.

Fittingly, regional and global cartographic and mapping exercises are receiving serious attention on both sides of the Atlantic Ocean (Nylander & Fejes, 2019; Fejes & Wildemeersch, 2015; Milana, Webb, Holford, Waller, & Jarvis, 2018; Knox, Conceição, & Martin, 2017). But mapping change and continuities in adult education research also calls for meta-investigations on what sort of knowledge the varied traditions of adult education research have contributed to the field, and how new distinctive bodies of work emerge from collaboration and cross-fertilization among research traditions.

Adult education researchers increasingly make reference to policy changes that happen at local, national, European or global levels when describing the background of, or context for, a study in adult education (see, among others: Waller at al., 2014, 2015; Hinton-Smith, 2012; Bartlett, Rees, & Watts, 2000). But *policy research* – specifically research *of* policy (Desjardins & Rubenson, 2009) is something different. It is research that makes policy its object of inquiry, and examines *how* policy contributes to change and continuities in the formation of ideas and concepts about adult education, and in adult education practice.

However, a good deal of policy research must be critically assessed as it (still) assumes the nation-state as its main unit of analysis, for instance, to appraise the implementation of a governmental policy, and its effects on delivery systems (adult education, higher education, etc.) and/or in a locale (a city, a county, etc.). Other studies compare countries to identify and explain similarities and differences in national policy developments and implementations, through large-scale surveys on adults' participation (e.g. the Adult Education Survey, AES), or adult's skills (e.g. the Programme for International Assessment of Adult Skills, PIAAC). This strand of

policy research builds on a conception of polity as a territorially based community, where a country or nation-state represents a unique, territorially-bound entity.

However, policy research has increasingly assumed also a multi-scalar or global perspective, which acknowledges that a polity may include also non-territorially-bound political entities or communities that, despite their territorial localizations are "oriented towards the governance of a common 'governance-object'" (Corry 2010, p. 159). Elsewhere (Milana, 2012, 2015, 2017), I argue and demonstrate how adult education has been constructed as such a 'governance-object' by global, non-territorially bound polities (see also: Desjardins & Rubenson, 2009; Nesbit & Welton, 2013; Milana & Holford, 2014; Milana & Nesbit, 2015; Milana, Holford, & Mohorčič Špolar, 2016). This distinctive construction, it is argued, effects the adult education sector, and particularly supply and demand (Milana & Klatt, forthcoming) which depends on various factors and on which global governance also impinges. These include existing laws and regulations, available resources, the positioning of adult education providers in local, national and global education markets, and adults' perceptions of what provision is worth their time and money. Exemplary in this respect is the increased liberalization of the broader education market (Marginson, 1997) that brings about market competition among public and private providers to reach out to 'adults-as-customers'.

Hence, there is now a flourishing field of research on the work of intergovernmental organizations in legitimizing different political interests, through new international agendas, soft governance mechanisms and the promotion of monitoring culture in adult education (see among others: Milana, 2013; Panitsides, 2015; Ioannidou, 2007; Jacobi, 2009; Rubenson, 2015; Tett, 2014).

It is this body of work that I refer to in this chapter as *comparative and global policy studies on adult education*. In short, it comprises the comparative investigations *of* policy that pays attention to policy developments also at European and global scales, and their interactions with national and local policy developments.

In what follows, I describe the methodology employed to perform a meta-investigation (Sandelowski & Barroso, 2007) of *comparative and global policy studies on adult education*, comprised of a set of fifty-eight academic texts, largely articles in international peer-reviewed journals published between 2000 and 2015. Then I present and discuss the four research patterns that emerged from the analysis. By pattern I mean a fairly coherent and intelligible configuration, which is limited to the texts under scrutiny, based on the combination of the main unit of analysis, and the specific research aims. Finally, I assess how these patterns are contributing to adult education research, and in so doing, to our understanding of change and continuities in adult education policy and practice.

METHODOLOGY

A meta-investigation is a process of rendering a set of academic publications the object of reflection and analysis. The analysis is neither causal nor exhaustive and

has the purpose of prompting a documented reflection on the "connections between existing studies […] [and] gaps and omissions in a given body of research [that] enables dialogue and debate" (Sandelowski & Barroso, 2007, p. 3). The first step of a meta-investigation is the identification and selection of a relevant set of academic publications. I started by gathering a few familiar texts to me, then carried out systematic searches, using different combinations relevant keywords in libraries and online databases, among which ERIC (Education Resources Information Centre). I extended my search through the internal search engines of four journals: *Adult Education Quarterly, International Journal of Lifelong Education, International Review of Education, Comparative Education* which were chosen as they specialize in adult education and/or comparative education. Resulting from these searches, and the reading of abstracts, about two hundred texts were first selected initially; however, from a second reading of abstracts and full texts, I selected those that were pertinent to my scope. So, for instance, texts dealing with adult education policies in a given country, which did not adopt a comparative perspective or which did not connect to the work of intergovernmental organizations, were excluded from my data set.

The second step in a meta-investigation is the adoption of a strategy to analyze the data set. I used an inductive analytic strategy to synthesize the data so to generate inferences (Polkinghorne, 1983) that were "grounded in data and not speculative or abstract" (Schwandt, 2001, p. 125). Such an analytic strategy relies on the researcher's knowledge and understanding of the phenomenon under consideration.

Three research questions guided the meta-investigation: What are the main units of analysis, either explicit or implicit, in comparative and global policy studies on adult education? What do these studies aim at? Is it possible to identify (and distinguish between) one or more research patterns?

Procedurally, I employed a two-step strategy: First, I read each of the texts from my dataset and grouped them on the basis of observed similarities in terms of their main 'units of analysis'; then, I considered each of the study's aim and regrouped the texts in light of the study's aim alongside the unit of analysis (as outlined in results section).

RESULTS

Four intelligible research patterns emerged from the meta-investigation, as reported below. There are a group of studies which aim to increase our understanding of shifts in political ideologies and how they redefine the boundaries of adult education and learning provision (Pattern 1), but also change and continuities in discourses, agendas and actions that occur across geographical and/or geopolitical territories (Pattern 2). Moreover, there is a body of work that explicates the dynamic elements that compose specific systems of governance in adult education, and their effects on other systems (Pattern 3). Finally, drawing on existing evidence, they also problematize common political beliefs concerned with the education and learning of adults (Pattern 4).

Describing Changes and Evolutions along a Temporal Continuum (Pattern 1)

The studies grouped under pattern 1 assume *time* as the primary unit of analysis and represent 20% of the total number of studies under consideration. Their main aim is to comprehend, explain, and critique changes in political ideologies that brought about perceptible shifts in discourses on, and around, the education and learning of adults. For the most part, these studies illustrate evolutions (and to some extent involutions) in policy discourses that occur at ideational level, but also the changes they produce at normative, administrative and/or financial levels. Such changes can be of a soft or drastic nature, and pertain to the norms and standards for the education and learning of adults (normative changes), the organization and control over education and learning opportunities (administrative changes), and the allocation of public and private resources to support these opportunities (financial changes). All of which redefines the boundaries of how adult education and learning opportunities are provided, who is responsible for these arrangements, who will benefit from them, and to what end. Historical accounts found in the literature depict the evolutions in thinking about education and learning of adults by the so-called 'big actors' in education governance, like the World Bank, UNESCO, the OECD and the EU (see for instance, Holford & Mohorčič Špolar, 2012; Jacobi, 2009). These studies usually begin with the identification of a value-laden policy concept like 'lifelong learning', and go back in history to depict how such concept has been differently signified over time by one or more intergovernmental organizations or national governments. At times, they juxtapose governmental powers, ideologies, or actions by single national and/or local governments (see, for instance, Branchadell, 2015; Milana & McBain, 2014). As a whole this body of literature has brought to light conceptual and policy changes in the way of thinking about adult education and learning and how this has provoked normative, administrative and financial alterations in the provision of education and learning opportunities for adults in different localities.

Comparing Policies by Different Actors, Either at a Certain Point in Time or from an Historical Perspective (Pattern 2)

Horizontal studies included under this pattern adopt *space* as the primary unit of analysis and represent 40% of the data set under consideration. These studies have two main aims. On the one hand, they aspire to comprehend, explain, and critique similarities and differences in policy discourses, agendas and actions across geographical and/or geopolitical territories at local, national or international scales. On the other hand, they purposely use geographical and/or geopolitical lenses with the aim of focusing attention on, and debating, the complexity of national or international policy and their practical implications for adult education and learning (see, for instance, Storan, 2010). A growing number of investigations deliberately centre attention on political actors with international reach, as their secondary unit of analysis, examine changes in the governance of adult education and learning,

assess the working of specific policy instruments, and debate possible implications for adult education and learning practices (see, for instance, Moosung, Tryggvi & Na'im 2008; Panitsides, 2015; Rubenson, 2015; Németh, 2015; Easton & Samples, 2015; Tuckett, 2015; Milana, 2012). At times the secondary unit of analysis is specific programs and/or international implementation plans to which national governments subscribe; programs and plans that are coordinated at continental or global scales under the aegis of intergovernmental organizations, yet implemented by public-private partnerships. Exemplary here is *Education For All* (EFA), a declaration that, adopted by UNESCO in Jomtien (1990), and reaffirmed in Dakar (2000), has turned into major implementation plans covering up to 2015 and beyond (e.g. The Post-2015 Development Agenda) (see, for instance, Goldstein, 2006). In short, these studies help us to better comprehend the complexity of global governance in adult education, and the interplay between local-global dynamics.

Juxtaposing Policies by Intergovernmental Organizations with Those of Their Member States, and Assessing Convergence and/or Divergence (Pattern 3)

Vertical studies comprised under this research pattern represent 26% of the data set and use *system* as their primary unit of analysis. Like in pattern 1, these studies acknowledge the role that intergovernmental organizations play in producing changes at normative, administrative and/or financial levels, but pay attention to how this is the result of the interplay between international, national and local systems of governance. A system refers to a number of things that are connected in dynamic ways to form a complex whole and that governs an organized society, through laws, norms, power and language. Hence, these studies aim at unpacking the dynamic elements that compose specific systems of governance, and investigate their effects on other systems of governance. Like a matryoshka doll, systems of governance are vertically nested, while the organized societies they govern are also interconnected.

For the most part, these studies appreciate that the documents intergovernmental organizations produce, the activities they coordinate (e.g., international conferences) or requests and inputs they address to member states are not isolated but rather dynamic elements that contribute to the global governance of adult education (see, for instance, Milana, 2012, 2015, 2016). For example, Rubenson and Nesbit (2011) examined the process of producing a national report for Canada, in preparation to the *VI International Conference on Adult Education* (CONFINTEA), upon request by UNESCO. They reviewed how the production process played out in their national context and juxtaposed the Canadian report with that of a few countries with similar participation rates in adult education (i.e. Finland, Sweden and the United Kingdom).

Several studies also take a point of departure in a political notion introduced and/or sustained by the OECD or the EU, among others, and investigate how it is concretized within specific national contexts, often by juxtaposing two or more national systems (see, for instance, Plant & Turner, 2005; Pohl & Walther, 2007;

Cavaco, Lafont, & Pariat, 2014; Papastamatis & Panitsidou, 2009). For example, Pohl and Walther (2007) examined policy developments within the European Union to explore the notion of 'activation of disadvantaged groups'. They discuss different activation models in place across selected member states, and pinpoint different activation mechanisms in education, training and the labor market.

Overall the studies under this research pattern have contributed new knowledge on the rise (and fall) of political notions and their concretizations in terms of new educational models, services or provisions. Moreover, they have contributed to our understandings of the impact that global policy-relevant activities have had or may have at either national or continental scales.

Questioning and Countering Widespread Political Beliefs (Pattern 4)

A fourth pattern was identified to collate all those contributions (14% of the total work under consideration) for which it was not possible to identify a primary unit of analysis. These contributions aim at countering dominant political beliefs concerned with adult education and learning, and at problematizing the social imaginary it produces as the only way of making sense of society and its practices. A few clarifications are needed here. First, *political beliefs* cannot be used as a unit of analysis, as most academic work that falls under this pattern is not empirical in nature and most of these contributions can be catalogued as think pieces or discussion papers which scrutinize political beliefs and claims in policy. For instance, Ahmed (2010) looks at the policy claims that have increased since the 2009 global financial crisis that undertaking new educational actions in support of lifelong learning will offset the effects of the crisis, support sustainable development and help in the global fight against poverty.

A different yet common political belief is that lifelong learning promotes a country's development, independently from its geopolitical positioning in the world system. By adoption of a postcolonial perspective, and building on available evidence from Africa, Preece (2009) challenges this and demonstrates how the Global North sets learning priorities for the South and therefore reduces lifelong learning to basic education. Further contributions falling under this pattern problematize specific policy priorities at national, regional and global scales for which there is still limited evidence, and assess the impact of neoliberal policy, for instance on adult educators (Bowl, 2014), or on the social inclusion of vulnerable adults (De Greef, Verté, & Segers, 2012). This body of work may not necessarily contribute novel knowledge to comprehend change and continuities in adult education policy or practice, but it helps preserve a space for subverting commonly held policy beliefs about adult education.

Table 3.1 outlines a summary of the findings in relation to the main units of analysis used in comparative policy research on adult education, as well as the strengths and weaknesses, which characterize each of the patterns described above.

Table 3.1. Comparison of the four research patterns found in comparative and global policy studies on adult education and learning

Pattern	*Unit*	*Aim*	*Strengths*	*Weaknesses*
No. 1 Diachronic/ Historical accounts	Time	Comprehend, explain, and critique changes in ideologies over time	Policy evolutions (or involutions). External factors' impact on normative, administrative and financial aspects	Limited attention to internal factors and dynamics that also affect provision
No. 2 Horizontal comparisons	Space	Comprehend, explain, and critique differences at local, national or international scales	Complexity of global governance in adult education Interplay of local-global dynamics	Lack of attention to intra-national dynamics: a) among different institutional layers and b) between state, market and civil society
No. 3	System	Unpack the dynamic elements of specific systems of governance, and investigate their effects on other systems of governance	Political notions and their concretizations in terms of new educational models, services or provisions Impact of global policy-relevant events at either national or regional scales	No attention to the scaling up (from local to global scales) of dynamic connections and effects
No. 4	Political beliefs	Provide counter-evidence to a political belief to problematize the social imaginary it produces	Space for subverting the viewpoints Open up for new research questions	Does not produce new empirical data

CONCLUSION

Summing up, different patterns in comparative and global policy studies contribute different types of knowledge to adult education scholarship. Specifically, pattern 1 has given attention to policy evolutions (or involutions) within intergovernmental organizations, hence helped increasing understandings, among adult education scholars, of external factors that impinge on normative, administrative and financial alterations in the provision of education and learning opportunities for adults in different locales. But it has paid only a limited attention to internal factors such as within country power relations and other internal dynamics that also affect such provision.

Pattern 2 has helped increasing understandings among adult education scholars, of the complexity of global governance in adult education, and the interplay between local-global dynamics. But it has likewise overlooked the potential for deeper investigations of within-country power relations and other internal dynamics, such as within-country relations between federal states, regions, suburbs, cities/towns, and neighborhoods (as relevant by country), as well as by state, market and civil society.

Pattern 3 has contributed new knowledge to adult education research on the rise (and fall) of political notions that govern adult education, and their concretization in terms of new educational models, services or provisions. Besides, they have contributed to adult education scholars' understandings of the impact that global policy-relevant events have had or may have at either national or regional scales. Unfortunately, research following this pattern has not yet explored the potentials of exploring the scaling up (from local to global scales) of dynamic connections among different systems of governance, and their effects. This could be done, for instance, by placing attention on a country and then examine whether, and if so to what extent, local and national systems of governance may influence the working of more complex systems (e.g. the EU), or exploit policy-relevant events with a global reach (e.g., hosting CONFINTEA) for internal political gains, etc.

Last but not least, pattern 4 has helped adult education scholars to preserve a space for critiquing widespread political beliefs about the aim and value of adult education and learning through the adoption of novel perspectives to make available research evidence 'speak'. This, in turn, also raises new questions that deserve attention from researchers.

Taken together, all four research patterns reflect a collective effort by adult education researchers with an interest in policy developments to examine the changing power dynamics between international organizations, national governments and local communities. This is in line with a traditional concern of adult education scholars to understand the interactions between power *over* and power *to* in relation to people, and their communities. Yet, it recognizes that such communities have multiplied and expanded well beyond territorially bound polities. Therefore, assuming a multi-scalar or global perspective in policy research provides a better opportunity for adult education scholars to acknowledge also non-territorially-bound political entities as exerting power over people, and their communities. However, especially pattern 4 opens up new opportunities to handing a different form of power *to* adult education scholars, and the academic and practice communities to which they belong and/or interact with. This is because it creates a space for individuals and collectives to exploit available research and knowledge to develop counter-narratives to taken-for-granted assumptions that are mostly based on partial or inaccurate analysis. Moreover, it allows for asking different sets of questions in the interrogation of available data, hence to bring to the fore evidence that otherwise would pass unnoticed in mainstream political debates about the education and learning of adults. This body of work may not necessarily contribute novel knowledge to comprehend change and continuities

in adult education policy or practice, but it helps to preserve a space for subverting commonly held policy beliefs about adult education.

What can this research achieve when dominant neoliberal discourse, based on a competitive market approach, positions adult education as any other good that provide utility in a global market? Research that falls under patterns 1–3 can shed additional light not only on the pervasiveness of the dominant neoliberal discourse and its effects on adult education, but also on its cracks as well as on different forms of 'resistance' (Hollander & Einwohner, 2004). Moreover, such knowledge can be appropriated by adult education scholars to further nurture pattern 4, thus to problematize taken-for-grant policy beliefs on adult education. So, providing counter-evidence to erroneous or limited political beliefs on adult education constitutes a political space for adult education scholars to use research *of* policy to actually stimulate change in policy thinking and new social imaginaries in adult education.

NOTE

[1] This chapter draws on the results of a meta-investigation first presented in Milana (2018).

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THOMAS J. SORK AND BERND KÄPPLINGER

4. "THE POLITICS OF RESPONSIBILITY" REVISITED

An Analysis of Power as a Central Construct in Program Planning

PROGRAM PLANNING AND POWER

Adult educators are continually planning courses, seminars and other educational events. This might be considered by some as primarily a routine and straightforward "management" activity only vaguely connected to pedagogy and quite distant from politics and ethics. But planning is far from an interest-free, neutral or solely managerial practice. It is a social practice and often requires creative action performed within structured power relations that may be clearly visible or hidden, symmetrical or asymmetrical. How do adult educators make decisions and act responsibly within these relations? What helps them theoretically to read and respond to such power relations? What capabilities are required by program planners in the current global context of growing inequality, environmental degradation, political instability, forced displacement and economic uncertainty?

This chapter is based partly on the claim that program planning – and the concepts and theoretical models that underpin it – are central to adult education practice (Käpplinger & Sork, 2014). Program planning has been regarded in the US, Canada and Germany as a "core competency" in most professional preparation programs for adult educators (e.g., CPAE, 2008). There is some evidence that it is increasingly regarded as important in other regions of the world although it may be labelled differently (Käpplinger, Popovic, Shah, & Sork, 2015).

Nonetheless, there is still no global consensus on its importance or what should be included in courses on program planning. This sort of cross-national comparative work is of interest to us because it has the potential to inform policy discussions about the prospects of globally-transferable competencies.

Our goal in this chapter is to establish the relevance and importance of scholarship on program planning to questions of power and possibility. We do this by focusing primarily on the evolution of power as a central construct in planning theory, and how power is addressed – or not – in contemporary planning models as well as the capabilities required of program planners. We give particular attention to the influential work of Cervero and Wilson and acknowledge the influence of feminism, postmodernism, critical theory, postcolonial studies, and other intellectual currents

that have challenged conventional understandings of what responsible practice involves in adult education and in related fields.

FOREGROUNDING SOCIAL DYNAMICS

In *The Politics of Responsibility* Cervero and Wilson (1994a) proposed a theory of program planning – elaborated more fully in Cervero and Wilson (1994b, 2006) – that has been used to frame research studies (e.g., Cervero & Wilson, 1996) and incorporated into planning texts (e.g., Caffarella & Daffron, 2013). Power and interests are key concepts within this framework which emphasizes the central role negotiation plays in the responsible design of adult education programs. They define power (after Isaac, 1987) as "… the capacity to act, distributed to people by virtue of the enduring social relationships in which they participate" and define interests (after Morgan, 1986, p. 41) as "… complex sets of 'predispositions embracing goals, values, desires, expectations, and other orientations and inclinations that lead a person to act in one direction or another'" (Cervero & Wilson, 1994b, p. 29). Numerous case studies carried out in a wide range of contexts have provided rich descriptions of typical conflicts encountered as various interests are negotiated – and power exercised – during planning (e.g., Bracken, 2011; Cervero & Wilson, 1996; Maruatona & Cervero, 2004; Ryu & Cervero, 2011). Studies based on their theory make it clear that successful program planners must negotiate in flexible, creative and imaginative ways within continuously changing contexts and often challenging, asymmetrical power relations.

Based on our own teaching experience, Cervero and Wilson's theory seems to resonate more with experienced planners – rather than novice planners – because it not only recognizes the central role of power in planning but also because they illustrate – through a wide range of case studies – the variety of ways planners can exercise their power and how power is exercised on planners. It foregrounds the complex social dynamics that produce the programs made available to learners. Students who have already worked in organizations can provide several examples of how power is exercised and interests negotiated within those settings. They are happy to acquire a language to describe, analyze and critique these dynamics. Novice planners who lack an experiential base seem primarily interested in acquiring basic procedural knowledge and skills. The complexity and lack of a stepwise approach in Cervero and Wilson's theory irritates or disengages many novices who are often seeking an unambiguous 'right way' to plan.

Several studies based on their theory have explored specific tactics planners can use to respond to the power dynamics they encounter. For example, Yang and Cervero (2001) suggested that planners have access to seven "power and influence tactics" they can use depending on the political context: reasoning, consulting, appealing, networking, bargaining, pressuring and counteracting. Their study also categorized four types of planners based on the tactics employed: bystander, tactician, ingratiator and shotgun (p. 292) based on the specific configuration of tactics they use. But what

is less clear is the degree to which the configuration of tactics used can easily be changed by planners when they encounter a different set of power relations or when the power relations shift during planning. In other words, does the planner (with his/her beliefs, knowledge, social embeddedness, disciplinary background, preferences, etc.) choose the configuration of tactics or are the tactics determined or limited by the nature of the power relations encountered?

Cervero and Wilson were not the first to recognize the central role of power in program planning although they certainly raised its profile within adult education and added a decidedly critical spin. In a comprehensive study of what was then an innovative approach to program planning within agricultural extension in the US, Beal et al. (1966) recognized that power was one of several "social system elements" (p. 65) necessary to fully understand the dynamics of program planning. Although by today's standards their treatment of power might be regarded as narrow or even naïve, they did look closely at how various forms of power influenced the planning process.

It must also be recognized that Cervero and Wilson drew heavily from the work of John Forester who, in 1989, began his influential book, *Planning in the Face of Power,* by observing that "In a world of intensely conflicting interests and great inequalities of status and resources, planning in the face of power is at once a daily necessity and a constant ethical challenge" (p. 3). Forester's primary audience was those working in community and regional planning, but his book resonated in other fields because it arrived at a time when "critical theory" was increasingly influencing many scholarly debates. Forester has been articulate and persistent in promoting participatory planning processes. In a later book Forester (1999) made the following plea:

> Precisely because planning and policy analysis take place in a political world, planners and analysts need to anticipate and respond to foreseeable relationships of power and domination. Precisely because severe inequalities of wealth and power, opportunity and victimization persist in cities and communities, we need practically sensitive, politically realistic, and theoretically insightful accounts of democratizing and advocacy practices. (p. 9)

Such a description and analysis seems valid today and it is perhaps even more important than ever in the current context of major threats to species survival, crisis and increasing social complexity. Informed and reflexive program planning underpinned by a clear theory of power strikes us as a crucial framework for crafting educational responses to these threats and exploring new possibilities in adult education.

THE DOMAINS OF POWER

Power is often perceived critically as manipulative and something exercised by oppressors. But power can be also be viewed as a positive source for change. Power understood as *the capacity to act* is neither positive nor negative. The sources,

legitimation and uses of power – and how program planners position themselves toward it – are key messages we take from Cervero and Wilson's work. However, Sork (2000) makes the case that there is more to planning than knowing how to recognize and deal with power across a variety of domains (see Figure 4.1).

Firstly, program planning requires a high degree of technical prowess and versatility – the technical domain. People have to know how to organize, implement, and manage various processes. These range from budgeting/financing, marketing, target group analysis, needs assessment, scheduling, recruiting instructors, crafting course announcements, interacting with learners, to planning evaluations. These are just a few of the "knowledge islands" – coherent clusters of related knowledge and skills – about which program planners must be aware (Gieseke, 2000). Although such technical tasks are required in many different domains outside of education – and some have their origins outside of education altogether – they must be adapted to the contexts within which adults learn.

Secondly, program planning is a deeply ethical process – the ethical domain. Program planners have to decide how they deal with conflicting interests and asymmetrical power relations. Are they trying to solely serve the interests of the oppressed? Is this realistic in a world of project funding, performance targets, and the varied institutional interests of providers? Is it always clear in a complex world who are the oppressed and who are the oppressors? How does one deal with the inevitable conflicts, dilemmas and paradoxes? Von Hippel (2013) has used the term *antinomy* (a paradox) to demonstrate that there are often conflicts which cannot be mediated leaving program planners to make hard decisions with political and ethical consequences. The seminal work of Freire (1970) is of course crucial, but the binary distinction between "banking education" and the "pedagogy of the oppressed" is not a sufficiently complex perspective through which to understand the many challenges of practice. Responses to the dilemmas planners encounter can rarely be judged as simply right or wrong, good or bad. It is important for planners to reflect critically on their decisions and to understand that even with good intentions, bad outcomes are possible. It is not enough to position oneself in the field of good-minded people who consider their own ideas about what is fair and right as justifying all their decisions and actions. Programs and pedagogical approaches must understand the complicated and diverse interests of the many people involved.

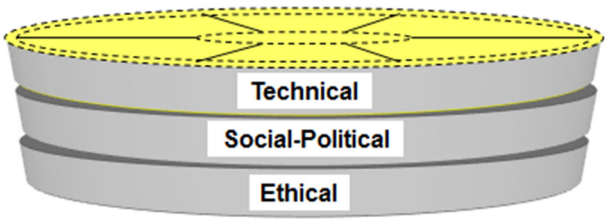

Figure 4.1. Three domains of planning (Sork, 2000, p. 185)

It is important to note that these three domains cannot neatly be separated in practice. They are often deeply interwoven and interacting. For example, conducting a needs analysis may seem to be primarily a technical task – how to do it (questionnaires, interviews, inventories, etc.), but it is also a socio-political activity – whom to do it with (learners, funders, tutors, stakeholders, etc.)? and ethical – whose needs count and how are they being framed? It is likely evident that all this often leads to conflicts and questions about who to include and who to exclude. Cervero and Wilson (2006, p. 6) have used the metaphor of "who has a place at the planning table"[1] in order to stress that there are deliberate decisions made that exclude actors with interests in the program, even when it is considered a highly participatory process. For example, in community education all people cannot always be involved in planning activities; there are real practical constraints on the number and diversity of actors who can be involved in planning. Having too many people involved in planning can lead to paralysis. This illustrates the dilemmas encountered in practice which are worthy of more research and of being problematized more fully in the literature.

MAKING A DIFFERENCE: TO CHANGE OR NOT TO CHANGE?

It is a fundamental characteristic of education and learning that they oscillate between conservative continuity and progressive change. Achieving a balance between change and continuity is more difficult than some might assume.

How program planners deal with change and conflicting interests is crucial. Cervero and Wilson raised this issue by recognizing that planners "act in" but can also "act on" the context. For them, redressing power imbalances detected in planning – levelling the "playing field" – is one important example of acting on the context. Historical program analysis (Käpplinger, 2018) helps us understand how much we are the "children of our time". Decisions made about whose needs are addressed, what content is included, and how programs are represented in brochures and on websites all reflect the contemporary political, cultural and economic context. Nonetheless, like in sociology, it is important to understand exactly how structure and agency interact. It is especially interesting to question whether planners are mainly *reactive* to the context or where and how they are able to *act on* the context. To what extent do they have the power to bring about a change in the context? In what circumstances *does or should* this happen? Which skills do planners need in order to make such changes in a positive way? Answering these questions requires in-depth analysis of the planning process and of the programs that result.

For example, a recent analysis (Käpplinger & Falkenstern, 2018) demonstrated that health education initiatives focusing on stress and resilience not only make people alert to the problem, but also reflect providers' commercial interests. Thus, adult education is not only reacting to a growing social problem but providers are also actors with their own (often commercial) interests and could be considered part of the problem. It is a misconception to think that adult educators can only react defensively within the constraints of neo-liberal lifelong learning agendas. But we have agency

and are therefore often complicit in defining and reinforcing these constraints. The role of power within daily practice and how to deal with it are important subjects of study as is how we can exercise agency to overcome constraints.

REDEFINING CAPABILITIES OF PROGRAM PLANNERS

The planning theory of Cervero and Wilson has put power, interests and negotiation in the foreground, but when you place certain concepts in the foreground, they mask or overshadow other concepts and processes that might be equally important in understanding the complexities of planning (Sork, 1996). We close this chapter with our current thoughts on the configuration of capabilities that planners must develop to be effective and responsible professionals in today's complex adult learning landscape. We are aware of competency frameworks (e.g., Research voor Beleid, 2010) and curricula (e.g. Avramovska, Czerwinski, & Lattke, 2015) intended to articulate the basic knowledge and skills required by adult learning professionals – primarily teachers and facilitators – but we find these incomplete when it comes to the role of program planner. In earlier work (Sork, 2000; Käpplinger & Sork, 2014; Käpplinger, Popovic, Shah, & Sork, 2015) we discussed in general terms the capabilities needed by planners, but we now take this opportunity to extend our analysis to reflect more fully the complexity of the role and the challenges of the current age. As we do this, we are also mindful of Gieseke's (2000) metaphor of "planners as seismographs" which, although useful in sensitizing us to the importance of carefully monitoring social, economic, environmental, technological and other developments as they unfold, it also reinforces a "reactive" posture for adult educators. Seismographs only register seismic events as they unfold; they are not predictive of the scope and destructive potential of future events.

We agree with many commentators that we live in perilous times … socially, politically, economically, environmentally. The current politics of division, unregulated use of technology, massive forced displacement of people, climate change, and growing economic inequality are only five examples of developments that signal major problems now and in the future. We use as a reference point for a more future-oriented perspective on the work of adult educators the *Transforming our world: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* by the United Nations (2015) and the *17 Sustainable Development Goals* (2016) derived from the *Agenda*. Although many educators focus primarily on Goal 4 – Ensure inclusive and quality education for all and promote lifelong learning – there is a clear role for adult educators in addressing each of the remaining 16 goals. We agree with Steffen (2016) that, "The implementation of the 17 SDGs by 2030 can succeed only through societal rethinking and a change in our political and personal patterns of behavior. This transformation needs a great deal of education, as moral pleas and knowledge transfer based on facts apparently are not enough" (p. 67). We suggest that the challenges to adult education represented by the SDGs can only be addressed by more assertive, politically involved and skilled forms of planning practice.

It is beyond the scope of this chapter to propose a comprehensive competency framework for program planners. Although we understand the role that competency frameworks can play in forging greater consistency across professional preparation programs and increasing the portability and recognition of credentials, we are not convinced that a "globally-relevant" competency framework for adult educators is feasible given the diversity of sites of practice, interests, and sociocultural contexts. What we can do is address what we regard as important clusters of capabilities based on Sork's (2000) three interrelated domains of planning: technical, social-political and ethical.

Being Technically-Capable

Power, understood as the *capacity to act*, is in part a function of being technically capable. There are many technical aspects of program planning that must be mastered if planners are to gain the trust of those they work with. Knowing how to conduct needs assessments, write objectives, prepare budgets and marketing plans, select and hire instructors, organize instructional activities, and develop evaluation plans are all mainly technical skills, although decision-making is often normatively informed. But equally important is the ability to recognize when each of these is required, what their strengths and limitations are as planning tools, and what alternatives might be best suited to a specific planning situation.

The technical-rational mindset critiqued by Cervero and Wilson (1996a) still leads some to regard planning as a collection of tasks to be completed in a prescribed order. In fact, some planners work in organizations that insist on using a prescribed planning model in the mistaken belief that this will ensure greater quality. (For an overview of different planning models, see von Hippel & Käpplinger, 2017).

Doing this may ensure greater consistency, but consistency, quality and responsible practice are not necessarily related. And time spent applying a rigid, prescribed planning process reduces the time that can be devoted to developing more innovative and creative – and higher risk – programs. Program planners who work on "the cutting edge" will occasionally suffer program failures, but failures that come about by trying new, bold approaches to intractable problems and through addressing critical social, economic, political, environmental and other issues should be celebrated – then made subject to careful reflection and learning to find out why they didn't work as planned (Sork, 1991). Many great ideas needed a second or even third try until they succeeded. As Michael Jordan, the basketball phenomenon, said, "I've failed over, over and over again in my life. That's why I succeed". It is a mistake to assume that a bold, innovative idea will always work out right from the beginning.

Being Politically-Astute

Reading power relations – and acting within and upon those relations – is at the heart of this cluster of capabilities. Whether the primary form of interaction in planning is

"negotiation" as Cervero and Wilson suggest (2006, pp. 97–98) or some other social process, planners must first be aware of how they and their interests are situated in relation to others. In addition, being aware of their own power and their disposition to exercise power make it possible for planners to take informed decisions about how they might best participate. In asymmetrical power relations where the interests of one stakeholder seem to be dominating the interests of others, planners should have the ability to either negotiate a more symmetrical relationship or employ counteracting tactics.

Cervero and Wilson place great confidence in "substantively democratic planning" as the defining feature of responsible practice (2006, p. 98). And yet, many of the cases they describe are arguably anything but substantively democratic. The aim to achieve substantively democratic planning is indeed noble and certainly consistent with core values found in a great deal of adult education literature. But achieving a reasonable degree of democratic participation by stakeholders requires capabilities that may be lacking in many planners, especially those trained in the technical-rational tradition where power and interests receive little or no attention. More research is needed to determine the degree to which planners can shift the influence tactics they employ to match the power relations they encounter. But even if there are limits to the range of tactics that may be employed, achieving a planning process that is adequately – rather than substantively – democratic may be good enough.

Being Ethically-Responsible

Cervero and Wilson (2001) regard all adult educators as social activists in practice (p. 12). In introducing a collection of chapters on power in practice, they assert that:

> Asking the question, Who benefits? is an important tool for understanding the politics of adult education in any setting. However, out of the struggles that define the politics of practice comes an adult education program, practice or policy. By their actions, adult educators have answered the ethical question, Who should benefit? (pp. 12–13)

If all adult educators are social activists, then it makes a great deal of sense that the twin questions of "*who benefits*?" and "*who should benefit*?" must always be to the forefront because they frame the political and ethical problematic that might be confronted by planners if the answers to both questions are different. To Cervero and Wilson, the primary ethical challenge is to ensure that programs support those who should receive the benefits. But not all adult educators regard themselves as social activists and not all are in positions to negotiate such matters. Beyond this "macro" ethical question, there are many other ethical choices that must be made while planning programs.

The tools and techniques commonly used in planning programs can be applied responsibly but also in ways that violate ethical norms and natural justice. As novice

planners learn the craft, they must also learn the dangers of applying these tools as if they are "value free" – which they certainly are not – and their application has no ethical consequences. Given the challenges faced by humanity in the current age, we may need to push the boundaries of acceptable educational practice in the name of human survival, but we must do this in a deeply reflective, critical and responsible way.

CLOSING COMMENTS

In this chapter we have attempted to show how the role of power in program planning has evolved from early references in the 1960s to the more recent and influential work of Cervero and Wilson beginning in the 1990s. The work of UNESCO in *Rethinking Education* and of the UN and others in identifying the important role that education will play in addressing the *Sustainable Development Goals* set the stage for a radical rethinking about the possibilities of influencing the types of programs that are planned and who should benefit from them. They remind us that:

> We are living in a world characterized by change, complexity and paradox. Economic growth and the creation of wealth have cut global poverty rates, yet vulnerability, inequality, exclusion and violence have escalated within and across societies throughout the world … These changes signal the emergence of a new global context for learning that has vital implications for education. Rethinking the purpose of education and the organization of learning has never been more urgent. (UNESCO, 2015, p. 85)

The need to design and deliver a new generation of programs that address urgent global problems – while not ignoring more "local" concerns – has never been greater. We believe that technically-capable, politically-astute and ethically-responsible planners will play key roles in realizing these possibilities. Program planners must learn to *deal with power* and to *exercise their own power* in responsible ways in order to contribute to a greater "common good".

NOTE

[1] A notion which was later challenged by Butterwick and Sork (2010) with the provocative notion and metaphor of the kitchen table in order to discuss feminist perspectives within program planning.

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PART 2

THE AGE OF METRICS AND THE RECONFIGURATION OF POLICY AND PRACTICE IN ADULT EDUCATION

ROSANNA BARROS

5. THE ROLE OF TRANSNATIONAL BODIES IN LIFELONG LEARNING AND THE POLITICS OF MEASUREMENT

The Promise and Pitfalls of Outcomes-Based Assessment into Recognition of Prior Learning System in Portugal

INTRODUCTION

In a new era of Lifelong learning (LLL) that has been characterized by an increasing use of metrics, and an analysis of the influential role of transnational bodies, such as the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the European Union (EU), in promoting this in adult learning and education (ALE) is necessary. The restructuring of the regulatory political power of the state, with a corresponding shift in the relationship between the market, the civil society and the state marks a major discontinuity in ALE. I want to make the case that this is a political issue rather than a merely a technical issue. Who decides what should be measured, how and why, are questions of power and help to delimit and define what is deemed possible. And who benefits from these changes? In this chapter I explore these issues through the case of indicators and outcomes-based assessment recently introduced in the Portuguese policies and practices of recognition of prior learning (RPL).

THE ROLE OF TRANSNATIONAL BODIES IN LIFELONG LEARNING

An international governmental organization may be defined as "a formal, continuous structure established by agreement between members (…) of two or more sovereign states with the aim of pursuing the common interest of the membership" (Archer, 2001, p. 33). These organizations flourished after the Second World War to become influential actors in the establishment of international and national guidelines, programmes, evaluations, audits and standards in various aspects of social life. In the last quarter of the 20th century, International Organisations (IOs) became increasingly central actors in shaping education policy. Some of these have taken a humanistic approach, such as UNESCO, others a more individualized and economy-centred perspective such as the EU, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and the World Bank.

UNESCO has been a key IO mainly contributing to the establishment of an international research field, first based on adult education (AE) and nowadays focused on adult learning and education (ALE). UNESCO's International Conferences on Adult Education, known as the CONFINTEA, and UNESCO official documents and recommendations have been prominent in constructing the field in international settings (Ireland, 2011; UNESCO, 1976, 2016). As concepts are not neutral devices, these changes in terminology in this field, and what this discloses about power and policy, has been one of my abiding research interest (Barros, 2011a).

The move from 'adult education' to 'adult learning and education' in LLL policy marks a paradigmatic shift and is one of the most deeply political processes that have occurred in recent times on this field (Barros, 2012). In this context, the promotion of the lifelong learning paradigm is especially linked to the OECD and the EU. Both IOs produced widely disseminated policy documents, such as the OECD report published in 1973, *Recurrent education – a strategy for lifelong learning*, and the *Memorandum for Lifelong Learning*, published by the Commission of European Communities (CEC) in 2000.

In the *Memorandum,* the concept of lifelong learning is understood as: "any learning activity with an objective, undertaken on a continuous basis and aimed at improving knowledge, skills and competences" (CEC, 2000, p. 3). The distinction is clearly made between two dimensions associated with the concept: one of them is expressed in the term 'lifelong', where "the emphasis is laid on time: learning during a lifetime, continuously or periodically" (2000, p. 3); and a second dimension is expressed in the term 'lifewide' in all areas of life, which "draws attention to the dissemination of learning, which can take place in all aspects of our lives (…), during our leisure time and in our continuing social and professional life" (2000, p. 3).

The EU is probably the most influential IO in making the concept of lifelong learning dominant in today's transnational policies about ALE, which can be traced back to the European year of lifelong learning in 1996 (Kopecký, 2014). However, it is the OECD which is the most relevant IO in how outputs are being assessed in many areas of LLL practices. A crucial part of this has been the development of international surveys in the 1990s (i) the International Adult Literacy Survey (IALS); and (ii) the Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC), which means nation states increasingly use comparative measurements and take rankings into account in setting national targets and priorities in ALE.

These IOs are influential and powerful agents and should be considered, together with the *Education Strategy 2020* of the World Bank, as responsible for ushering in a new lifelong learning era. Competitive globalization is leading states to seek competitive advantage through the improvement of competencies of working adults, including through the recognition of prior learning (RPL). As a result, several international recommendations and national policy instruments for the governance of RPL have emerged with the explicit purpose of increasing 'effectiveness' and improving levels of national qualifications.

THE RISE OF THE POLITICS OF MEASUREMENT AND GOVERNMENT BY INDICATORS

Central to the reform of the welfare state is a redefinition of the means and purposes of government, as Le Galès puts it "the contemporary question of measurement and quantification is part of the agenda of state restructuring" (2016, p. 12). Essentially, states have changed from being tasked with ensuring the production and maintenance of key public goods. Nowadays, the new model of social regulation reflects the transition from solid modernity to a more liquid form of social life (Bauman, 2000). In this process the redefined state adopts a strategy of finding consensus between pluralistic interests, and creates a new set of decentralized mechanisms. This is linked to new forms of political organization in society, where networks and flows from heterogeneous sources and different kinds of organizations predominate and combine to bring local, national and global factors onto the political agenda in new combinations (de Sousa Santos, 1995). The state, today, serves a meta-regulatory function (de Sousa Santos & Jenson, 2000) through its role in the selection, co-ordination, prioritization and control of non-state actors. Through this process the state has significantly changed both the scope and the form of its own social regulatory power and a panoply of innovative devices, instruments and indicators has emerged. Additionally, the EU has, since the 2000 Lisbon Agenda, induced a new rationality on how to govern (Nedergaard, 2007) by means of New Public Management (Hood, 1991).

This political turn, presented as a technical enterprise meant to be neutral, is based on the development and deployment of a vast array of public policy instruments intended to improve public performance in the name of effectiveness, efficiency and a decrease on public sector expenditure (Jackson, 2011). This can be understood as mechanisms of political discipline, allowing the consolidation of a regulatory state and new forms of domination (Le Galés, 2016). As noted in the introduction this is directly related with the questions of who decides what should be measured, how and why.

Therefore, a subtext of the politics of measurement and its focus on targets and outcomes is a major concern about control (Radin, 2006). The EU controls member states' performances and governs controlling performances of institutions and individuals. However, the intended consequences of measurements (as part of an explicit and implicit agenda) coexist with unintended undesirable consequences (Lewis, 2015).

THE GLOBAL PROMISE OF OUTCOMES-BASED ASSESSMENT IN LIFELONG LEARNING

In the supranational scene, an active role has been performed by EU[1] in the production of lifelong learning policy documents which include precise recommendations and reporting schedules for member states. Three policy documents are of particular

importance in this regard: (i) EU's 2006 Parliament and Council *Recommendation on Key Competences for Lifelong Learning*; (ii) the Council's 2012 *Recommendation on The Validation of Non-Formal and Informal Learning*; and (iii) EU's 2018 *Recommendation on Key Competences for Lifelong Learning*. Together those widely disseminated documents aim to make the European 'space' the most competitive area in the world.

The documents explicitly promote competitiveness, employability, equity, social inclusion and active citizenship. The tool used to monitor the achievement of these goals is the updated 2018 version *European Reference Framework*, which was first published in 2006. Through this, the member states are invited to create a system that allow each citizen to develop a "wide range of key competences to adapt flexibly to a rapidly changing and highly interconnected world" (2006, p. 13). At the same time each state must "report on progress through the biennial progress reports on the *Education and Training 2010 Work Programme*" (2006, p. 12). In the EU's 2018 Recommendation the ability to monitor progress of members' states is reiterated:

> The Commission proposes to develop a scoreboard to monitor the development of key competences and to provide information on the measures implemented to support competence development. It intends to develop a proposal for future European benchmarks in competence development with regard to the next cycle of the strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training. (2018, p. 12)

The development of competence frameworks that help define learning outcomes and form a basis for assessment and validation practices is much valued (2018, p. 8), supported by the results of international surveys, where validation will:

> Enable individuals to have their competences recognised and obtain full or, where applicable, partial qualifications. It can build on the existing arrangements for the validation of non-formal and informal learning as well as the European Qualification Framework, which provides a common reference framework to compare levels of qualifications, indicating the competences required to achieve them. In addition, assessment plays an important role in structuring learning processes and in guidance, helping people to improve their competences also with regard to changing requirements on the labour market. (2018, p. 15)

Those 2006 and 2018 recommendations together with the *Council Recommendation on the Validation of Non-Formal and Informal Learning* (2012) created the policy framework for national states to operate nowadays in the context of the *Strategic Framework for European Cooperation in Education and Training* (ET2020) and the Commission Communication on a *New Skills Agenda for Europe*, COM (2016) 381.

Therefore, the role of EU in developing the new lifelong learning era ties national states in different ways according to the dynamics operating on the global, national and local scenes. This next section aims to highlight a set of problems and

contradictory agendas that recently became apparent in ALE in Portugal where there has been an attempt to combine recommendations of two main IOs with differentiated visions and power capabilities, as well as the advent of government by indicators and outputs in the field of recognition of prior learning national policies.

OUTCOMES-BASED ASSESSMENT – REFLECTIONS ON THE PORTUGUESE RPL CASE

Considering that Portugal has a history as an imperial power but has become a semi-peripheral state (Wallerstein, 2004), its political relationship with the core and the peripheral world areas has been multifaceted and implied a constant renegotiation of (colonial and postcolonial) power, legitimacy and sovereignty in the global arena (de Sousa Santos, 1993). Indeed, shifts in the global economic and political power relations have frequently disrupted the governing agenda and the emergence of counterhegemonic forces on the national scene, which resulted in the hybrid semi-welfare and semi-neoliberal Portuguese state of today. Particularly since its entry into the EU, in 1986, the impacts of Europeanization processes have been highly visible in diverse spheres of Portuguese public policy.

This is clearly reflected in Portuguese ALE where transnational bodies had a marked impact on the field after 1996, when it became subject to pluriscalar governance, particularly through European co-financing mechanisms (Barros, 2013a). After the advent of democracy in 1974 up to the 1990s ALE was mainly 'second chance' and/or recurrent education. A policy of ALE for the 21st century was announced, inspired by the 1976 UNESCO recommendation for ALE and based on recognition of experience. The government's presence in the fifth CONFINTEA in 1997, and the Hamburg's Agenda for the future, influenced the emergence of a new political program[2] in 1999. Adult education and training has been understood, since then, as:

> Ongoing initiatives in the field of education and lifelong learning, intended to raise the educational and qualification levels of the adult population and the promoting of personal development, active citizenship and employability. (Melo et al., 2001, p. 11)

In this context, the year 2000 and 2001 were marked, in Portugal, by the National Agency for Adult Education and Training (ANEFA[3]), which introduced new institutions and educational processes fundamental for the establishment and implementation of the Portuguese national system of RPL (Barros, 2013b). This RPL system originated a network of centres of recognition, validation and certification of competences (Centres RVCC) to meet the educational needs of the adult population, revealed by an extensive literacy study (Benavente et al., 1995). However, that original humanistic vision informed by UNESCO, has given rise to a narrower focus, influenced by the EU, in which RPL was understood as a structuring element of the state's post-Fordist economic modernization.

This national RPL system agenda was characterized by a strategic vision that tried to address the lack of recognition of competencies within the adult population. With this scope RPL was considered a means towards achieving social justice and an opportunity for vulnerable adults to have recognized and certified skills and knowledge that have been acquired over the course of their lives in various contexts. Indeed, RPL practices introduced in Portugal between 2001 and 2005, focused the process on the adult specificities and on his/her life experience, using tutorial practices with educators employing different methodologies (such as competences assessment, life narratives, portfolio building, and others), valuing self (re)cognition and drawing on this to initiate new educational projects with transformative potential. In this period, even with some tensions, I would argue, the RPL process mainly served the project of personal and social emancipation for the most disadvantaged citizens (Barros, 2013c).

The model adopted in Portugal for RPL process presupposed three fundamental axes of performance, which were sequentially as follows: the recognition of key competences; the axis of validation; and the axis of certification. Thus, the recognition of key competences was understood as the personal identification process of previously acquired competences, "which seeks to provide to the adult occasions for reflection and assessment of his/her life experience, leading to the auto and hetero recognition of their competences and promoting the construction of significant personal and professional projects" (ANEFA, 2002, p. 15). This axis of performance was one of the most important for activating a transformation in the perceptions of the adults about themselves and about the world; the next axis of performance was the validation of key competences leading to the granting of official status for individual competences. Procedurally the validation of competences was made, by an oral presentation of the portfolio to a jury of validation. It was conceived, then, as a "formal public act undertaken by an entity duly accredited to award certification with school equivalence" (ANEFA, 2002, p. 15). Finally, the last of the structuring axis concerned the certification[4] of key competences. This certificate had an equal legal value when compared with the regular school certificate. In short, the main purpose of Portuguese RPL policy and practices during this period was to promote the visibility of informal and experiential learning, assigning it with a use value, in educational, social and professional spheres.

This was how Portuguese national system of RPL worked until the end of 2005, when a new policy for ALE and RPL appeared, called *Program of the New Opportunities Initiative – INO* (2006–2012), through which the new governance of ALE was introduced, representing a milestone for RPL practices. This marks a decisive moment in the rise of the politics of measurement and government by indicators in the Portuguese ALE and RPL, and in this the policies developed by the EU, since the Lisbon agenda, were crucial.

The *European Area of Education and Training,* launched another phase in the process of Europeanization of the educational and training policies (Barros & Belando-Montoro, 2013), visible in the Portuguese case through the INO Program.

I argue that the INO Program, and subsequent political events, can be interpreted as an effect of this particular supranational agenda (Barros, 2011b, 2018).The strategy of the INO Program was based on two fundamental pillars, on the one hand, to give new opportunities to young people through the increase of techno-professional courses; and, on the other hand, to provide new opportunities to adults by increasing assets of ALE and RPL process. Significant targets were announced in December 2005 to be achieved by 2010, to certify about 1,000,000 adults (650,000 via RPL and 350,000 through other forms of ALE). These unprecedented targets, in the Portuguese context, had a dual purpose: (i) to expand the democratization of access to ALE, through a territorial increase of the network of Centres offering ALE and RPL practices; and, at the same time, (ii) to create more effectiveness and efficiency in the ALE and RPL systems, against a set of criteria that educators must achieve to ensure financing and keep their jobs. The aim was that people would obtain higher certification rates in a shorter time.

In this context, several studies have warned that these processes seemingly transformed a complex educational process of ALE and RPL into a simplistic administrative one (Rodrigues & Nóvoa, 2005). Indeed, a new type of 'remedial' rationality associated with ALE and RPL emerged into the political public discourse since then. Other studies have counselled that educational actors need to remain alert and critical to prevent ALE and RPL becoming just outputs, and so neglecting the personal and social emancipation projects of citizens, in general, and of the disadvantaged, in particular (Barros, 2014).

A fact, much celebrated, was that through these new technologies of government, and according to data provided by INO, the 'efficiency' of ALE, particularly of RPL system, has been improved rapidly. The total number of adult certificates awarded between 2001 to 2005 was 59,040 (44,253 via RPL process and 14,787 via other ALE course) and this number increased between the years 2006 and 2007, to a total of 83,970 (76,922 via RPL process and 7,048 via other ALE course). The success was measured by the large number of centres and candidates, in process and already certified. Thus, ALE and RPL acquired a lot of public visibility, totally unheard in the context of its national history, obtained through marketing campaigns acclaiming the achievements of the INO Program. However, the other side of this story though was the high pressure put on educators to achieve targets. Serious dilemmas emerged regarding the non-measurable aspects of RPL process as well.

New problems and paradoxes had emerged, from the rapid mass production of RPL processes, for RPL centres and educators, as well as for individuals. Adult educators have changed the way they work to avoid the consequences of not achieving targets, and time consuming aspects of ALE often became neglected (with a loss of educational quality); the adults who obtained the certificates faced a subsequent problem that there has been a devaluation of school certificates obtained via RPL. One of the most significant pitfalls of 'governance by numbers', has been the replacement of the aspiration for greater social justice, through RPL, by a neoliberal idea of individual competiveness, where adults are expected to be responsible and

self-accountable for their 'employability'. However, as more certified competences do not necessarily correspond to a greater availability of jobs for unemployed adults, the question of who wins and loses with the rise of government by indicators becomes key.

The effects on the RPL system shows that, the significant questions about the new policy indicators are not technical but political. From a social justice perspective the RPL system, under the politics of measurements and government by indicators, almost became a confirmation mechanism of inequalities by distributing to the least powerful in society certificates which have been devalued due to the scale and rapidity of their production. The outcomes assessment has implied a significant reshaping of the educators' performances and roles, as they have no access to the creation, decision and control of the measurements system. In the Portuguese case, the rise of measurements was used as a tool to maintain centralized control of ALE and RPL system while decentralizing responsibility. In this context, the adult educator's fragile position, without a firmly established professional status, effectively prevents resistance. Additionally, by focusing responsibility on them legitimated the argument that any closure of an INO Centre was not a political circumstance but a technical one related to an underperformance in outcomes-based assessment.

The restructured Portuguese state used the INO Program as a political expedient to adapt national ALE to supranational requirements under the new policy paradigm for statistics, in which International Surveys have been giving a remarkable contribution.

The instrumentalization of educational policy through compulsory targets and outputs, has resulted in a co-optation of educational work into technical and administrative work narrowing the previously open focus of RPL and diminishing the attention to emancipatory values. With the subsequent advent of austerity policies the short-term centrally driven targets, with concerns about public sector expenditure, definitively won at the expenses of long-term educational objectives. As a result of the global economic and financial crisis, the Portuguese state was severely monitored according to a new set of criteria and goals. Between 2011 and 2015, just a residual network of ALE centres remained as Centres for the Qualification and the Professional Education (CQEP) operated in schools without financing. Under a political action justified by a public discourse of crisis and austerity, with policy instruments of external legitimacy, adult education in Portugal, during that period, disappeared from the political agenda without public resistance. In a sense just this single fact showed, through the field of ALE, how devices for maintaining social order succeeded in neutralizing counterforces, by centralizing control while decentralizing responsibility.

FINAL REMARKS

Regulatory power of states continues to mark public policies, but its main role now implies coordination of different kind of interests from actors spread in a pluriscalar

way. Different national states have thus different capabilities for conducting the global structured agenda for public policies. In this context, IOs became increased influential entities, producing comparative measurements and evaluations, and should be considered together with national bodies in analyses of the dynamics of power and possibilities in lifelong learning era. These are the mechanisms of a political turn in Europe, in which the restructuring of states serves to consolidate an increased regulatory state with new forms of subnational domination, reflecting the increasing power of IOs such as the EU, with new mechanisms of political discipline for states and new forms of national domination.

Therefore, the rise of the politics of measurement in ALE comes inscribed in an agenda that represents a promise of making the European space the most competitive area in the world. However, tensions and contractions have emerged in national policies and practices that express important pitfalls of outcomes-based assessment into ALE. This chapter has highlighted a set of problems and conflicting agendas in the sphere of ALE and RPL in Portugal. If the national agenda for evaluation and assessment on this field, until 2005, was based on a formative rationality and was mostly concerned with social justice for the most disadvantaged citizens in accordance with UNESCO's vision and recommendations; after 2006 evaluation and assessment on this field came to be based on a summative rationality, mostly concerned with obtaining a higher certification rate of low qualified working adults in a shorter time. Indeed, the advent of government by indicators and outputs-based assessment in the field of RPL national policies was used to enact an accelerated state post-Fordist economic modernization, under the auspices of the EU agenda.

NOTES

[1] Together with other powerful global actors as: OECD, P21 (Partnership for 21st Century Skills), World Economic Forum, etc.

[2] *Action Programme's knowing +: Program for the development and expansion of adult education and training, 1999–2006.*

[3] The role of ANEFA was fundamental in supporting extended partnerships increment with the third sector. It has had however a short existence: created in September 1999 was closed in September 2002.

[4] Until 2006 the RPL process could provide certificates only for basic level (4 years 1º cycle; 6 years 2º cycle; or 9 years 3º cycle). In 2007, the RLP has been expanded as a certification for a secondary level (12 years).

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MARY HAMILTON

6. THE DISCOURSES OF PIAAC

Re-Imagining Literacy through Numbers

INTRODUCTION: WHAT IS THE PIAAC AND WHAT IS ITS PURPOSE?

The PIAAC (Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies) is the newest of the OECD's international surveys aiming to organize the notoriously diverse area of adult learning in order to make it tractable to comparative analysis and policy. Such surveys play a significant role in the development of new forms of governance and social regulation, where power is exerted through data and efforts are made to normalize knowledge in line with neoliberal views of the world (see Ozga et al., 2011; Tsatseroni & Evans, 2013). PIAAC has three dimensions: Literacy (L), Numeracy (N) and Problem-Solving in Technology Rich environments (PSTRE). The literacy and numeracy dimensions are directly linked to previous comparative surveys, namely the Adult Literacy and Lifeskills Survey (ALL) and The International Adult Literacy Survey (IALS). They are also linked with the school-aged assessments developed through the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA). The third dimension, PSTRE, is designed to capture the digital aspects of adult skills and, in the pipeline, are further assessments of personality and social skills that can be added to the mix and will connect the PIAAC with other survey tools (see World Bank, 2014; Kirsch & Lennon, 2017).

Clearly, this is an ambitious program with the potential to shape understandings of the field of adult education across many contexts. Grek (2010, p. 403) claims that PIAAC is a landmark development in international benchmarking in that it is designed to bring together performance measures from all these surveys in order to monitor and promote Lifelong Learning (LLL).

The PIAAC is a program of household sample surveys of adults aged 16–65 years, administered by an interviewer in participants' own homes using a laptop or pen and paper. For each of the L and N assessments, each respondent is assigned a score which is transformed into one of six levels from 'below level 1' to 'level 5' (OECD, 2013, 2016). Results are provided by the OECD both as country averages, and in terms of percentages at the different levels. As with other OECD surveys, a background questionnaire is also completed by each respondent, detailing demographic and attitudinal information including job-related information such as pay; the use of and need for skills at work; education and training record; perceived skills match with employment; educational level of parents; motivation and so on.

This information is used to allocate people to subgroups for analysis and to generate patterns of relationships between the skills tests and social outcomes.

Twenty four countries reported in the first round, and a further nine in round two, the results of which were released at the end of June 2016 and integrated with the earlier survey findings (OECD, 2016).[1]

The discourse of the PIAAC presents literacy, numeracy and problem-solving as clearly defined key information processing skills. It offers a simple model of causality in relation to social reality and its logic is seductive. As O'Keeffe says "Situating itself in a tradition of labor force surveys designed to measure human capital, the PIAAC offers an enticing portrait of the adult worker for use by governments, businesses, universities and training providers" (2016, p. 100).

However, from my perspective as a researcher in the field of adult literacy, it is important to pause and think about the known diversity of adult capabilities before we get drawn into the globalizing discourse of the PIAAC. Literacy ethnographies from many countries and historical periods (Street, 2014) as well as educational accounts and first-hand narratives from adult learners (see, for example, Barton et al., 2008) have documented the immense diversity and uneven "spikey" profiles of adult learners. These are constituted through the diverse contexts of their lives and learning trajectories and the variety of meanings and activities that "literacy" takes on within these contexts. There are multiple languages that cannot be fully represented in the survey samples or through the complex translation of test items. There are large, mobile populations travelling across national boundaries by choice or to escape conflict or economic destitution and carrying with them cultural traditions and mixes which are constantly evolving. Also evolving are communicative practices in relation to digital technologies. All of these features make literacy a fast-moving target which defies the necessary methodological constrictions of large-scale surveys.

Given this diversity, my starting assumption for this chapter is very different from those underlying the OECD's model. I argue that in order to understand adult performance on the PIAAC, we should think in terms of 'practices' rather than individual skills: practices which are relational, contested, changing and situated in the flux of day-to-day activities. I use sociomaterial theory to look critically at and beyond the discourse of the PIAAC to see how selected aspects of literacy practices are continually being assembled as part of evolving projects of social ordering. From this perspective human actions are seen as continuous with the material world of objects, technologies and tools, and agency is dispersed across these (Edwards et al., 2015). International surveys can thus viewed as powerful actors in their own right within the field of adult education (Hamilton, 2012).

NARRATIVES OF LITERACY

There are many ways in which people have tried to define and explain how literacy functions in individual lives and in society, asserting its usefulness for the state and for other social and economic institutions. Over time and in different contexts,

literacy education has been imbued with a wide variety of aims: religious, moral, cultural and emancipatory. It has been enlisted to support nation building, wealth creation and universal human rights. As a term, literacy is elastic and slippery and it can be made to carry all kinds of hopes, judgements and expectations presenting heroic stories that result in a heavy burden of expectation on literacy achievement that is not substantiated by the historical evidence (Graff & Duffy, 2008). These narratives about literacy are part of what shapes literacy education in different historical eras and places, affecting our views about who literacy learners are and what should be appropriate curricula. They circulate in many places – in policy documents, in the news and popular media, but also in everyday social interactions in homes and classrooms.

These narratives of literacy present it variously as a moral and symbolic good, as an essential component of nation building, as empowerment for individuals and disenfranchised groups, as a commodified technology for getting things done and for increasing prosperity.

Different interest groups make use of these narratives for their own purposes at particular moments of history and change. Each narrative proposes particular relationships with other factors in individual lives and in society at large. Seen from this perspective, current attempts by international agencies to organize literacy through comparative survey tools are revealed as the partial, though powerful, interventions of particular interest groups.

Situated models using a more complex notion of causation have been developed (see Street & Lefstein, 2007, for an overview). Scholars of literacy studies have concentrated on describing the vernacular, everyday practices of reading and writing, the processes involved as readers and writers use texts embedded in everyday networks and activities and highlight the indeterminate effects of reading and writing, that may be both positive and negative for individuals and societies. They view institutions as selecting and privileging certain practices, and educational policy regimes are one example of this. This social practice approach to literacy demands a different methodology for assessment, based on literacy as a situated, distributed and collective resource, process-oriented rather than an individually possessed skill (Street, 2014).

WHAT IS THE DISCOURSE OF PIAAC?

Like many others (e.g. Tett, 2014), I argue that a technological narrative of literacy predominates in international surveys like the PIAAC whereby literacy is seen as a fixed set of information processing skills, that can be measured and precisely defined by experts, regardless of context. I maintain that the simplistic model of causation that underlies this approach is misleading and unproductive for policy-makers and practitioners alike.

I demonstrate the assumptions of this model through the discourse of PIAAC found in OECD publications – that is, through the ways in which literacy is

discussed and framed using words, numbers and images. As for other international surveys, copious information is offered by the OECD about the PIAAC programme, online, in print and via webinars and videos. There are explanations of how the test is constructed, how the surveys are carried out, the methodological issues arising, findings for individual countries and policy guidance for them, as well as the familiar league tables that show participating countries ranked in order of their populations' achievements in specific subject domains and scores.

As an example, we can look at the press release on the date of publication for the round two PIAAC results, on June 28th 2016 (see Appendix). This is aimed at already interested experts and advocates and is straightforward in its expression of the core features of the survey.

The survey measures adult lifelong skills for employment ("*what people know and how they use their skills at work*"). Thus literacy is defined as an economic and work-related skill while other dimensions or reading and writing are made invisible and only a particular population ("*16–65 year-olds*" who are economically active or potentially active adults) are included.

It is based on an expert technical view of individually tested skills, defined as information processing and based on cognitive psychometric theory. Again, as I explain above, this is only one possible way of viewing literacy but it is built into the survey and thus circumscribes it. It is not possible within this discourse to explore the notion of literacy and numeracy as relational, distributed practices.

Nation states (or sometimes selected parts of these as in Jakarta, England and Northern Ireland) are the unit of comparison. "*Governments*" and "*countries*" are the target for policy advice. This invites us to imagine the global world as composed of these units and obliterates other possible views. For example, a language map would look very different, as would a cultural map based on ethnic or religious groupings or even an economic map composed of rich and poor and the distribution and/or control of economic resources by corporations or governments, all of which alternatives could be argued to be relevant.

Additional assumptions underlie this statement and the whole enterprise of comparative testing of adult skills. These are unstated but powerful in shaping our understanding of the topic. The technological model of skills is re-iterated in numerous other communications and in promoting it, the OECD creates what John Law calls "collateral realities":

> Practices enact realities including collateral realities … Collateral realities are realities that get done incidentally, and along the way. They are realities that get done, for the most part, unintentionally. They are realities that may be obnoxious. Importantly, they are realities could be different. It follows that they are realities that are through and through political. (Law, 2009, pp. 1–2)

In the case of international assessments, these collateral realities are not so much unintended as pre-supposed by a specific world view that is not challenged in the discourse. This world view assumes:

- a single dimension and scale of comparison for measuring skills which implies there should be an agreed, universal curriculum (see Seller & Lingard, 2015). This assumption inevitably narrows the range of skills to be tested. As an example, the items used to measure "literacy" only test "reading" despite the fact that respondents themselves report that "writing" is the most frequently used skill at work (OECD, 2016, p. 17).
- a view of the nature of problem-solving and of digital competence as an essential good while presenting a confusion around the issues of print versus digital literacies.
- that large-scale, de-contextualized evidence matters more than situated and local knowledge for understanding literacy and making policy decisions.
- that decisions about development and change should be based on futures imagined by techno-experts and expressed through data rather than drawing from past traditions and existing knowledge/wisdom.

Gorur (2011) outlines the steps by which these assumptions and their underlying values come to be embedded in international assessments like the PIAAC as the experts make crucial decisions about how to operationalize ideas of literacy and other areas of practice in order to carry out the survey. She identifies the significant decision points as: (1) choose items to represent domains of knowledge (2) translate these across cultures and languages (3) choose a sample to represent the population in each national context (4) agree on methods of data collection (5) apply statistical techniques.

As Gorur's (2011) data shows, the processes of decision-making are often fraught with controversy and involve many compromises which later become invisible. These 'moments of translation' relate to the "collateral realities" identified by Law and are the means by which they are achieved.

HOW THE DISCOURSE OF PIAAC CIRCULATES

The OECD's discourse of PIAAC is picked up and locally interpreted in media and national policy documents. The OECD's view enters the public domain via the materials it produces and promotes which are aimed primarily at journalists, researchers and government policy makers.

However, the translation of any OECD agenda into national policies is mediated by many actors including the media, research, advocacy and policy communities. The "public" consists of differentiated groups with more or less interest in the survey findings on a given topic. What presence the PIAAC has for general members of the public will depend most heavily on the mass media and that is why media research is of particular interest.

We have shown this through our comparative study of the media coverage of the first round of PIAAC findings, how the OECD Country Notes frame and guide journalists' writing in the three countries we researched (Yasukawa et al., 2016). We

tracked the media coverage in Japan (a high-ranking country), the UK (median) and France (low). Our findings (apart from the realization of how challenging it is to do such work) can be summarized as follows.

The analysis shows how, in each national case, particular aspects of the PIAAC results were foregrounded, depending not only on the performance measures themselves, but also on how accounts of the results are assembled to extend national cultural narratives and debates around education and social policy. PIAAC acts as a policy intervention initially through framing public awareness of adult skills and persuasively enrolling key national actors. The OECD itself actively mobilizes media responses and offers copious (yet selective) resources to guide public interpretation of the findings. These resources shape media coverage in national contexts, and provide a credible evidence base that is hardly contested in the ensuing media discourse. Importantly, the OECD material summarizing complex data that are otherwise not easy for journalists to quickly access and absorb. It inevitably directs attention to particular facts and issues in a format that is easy to translate into press reports and headline news.

Digital media offer new channels for communicating about the PIAAC such as Twitter but equally important, they also enable interested audiences to interact with the data online to produce their own selection of findings and to craft their own tables and infographics for use in national contexts. While the expressed motivation for producing such a plethora of information is to make the data transparent and accessible to the OECD's many partners, the result can also be seen as contributing to a totalizing discourse of adult skills which powerfully colonize our understandings of literacy and the other domains of learning that are tested. Moreover, the apparent freedom to analyze the data is itself controlled and limited, not least by the statistical methods and algorithms used to produce and present the data (see O'Keeffe, 2017).

The interactive manipulation of data and training workshops offered to researchers around this, actively entangle audiences in this discourse and the logic of the surveys and is facilitating a veritable industry of secondary analysis which consumes increasing volumes of research time and resources. (A Google scholar search on "PIAAC" in April 2018 gives over 7500 results.)

The policy prescriptions consistently offered by the OECD outline the key features of educational and training systems that policy makers should attend to and their task is presented as that of achieving these reforms by adapting to their local context of education and employment. Beiber et al. (2015, p. 168) summarize this policy advice as being "composed of political measures such as introducing measurable standards in relation to students' reading literacy, and promoting school autonomy in terms of financing, curricula, and personnel" (see also foreword to OECD, 2016, and the press release reproduced in the Appendix to this chapter which offers further advice related to adult skills development).

IMAGINING LITERACY THROUGH WORDS, NUMBERS AND IMAGES

I have argued in various publications (Hamilton, 2012, 2014) that the use of numbers to imagine and measure literacy significantly contributes to the high credibility of the technological narrative promoted through the international assessments such as PIAAC, despite its flaws. I use analytical resources from Van Leeuwen (2008), Lemke (2005) and O'Halloran (2008) to support this argument, who are some of the few discourse researchers to take up the challenge of analyzing multimodal discourse including numbers. In summary, their approach suggests that as a mode of communication, numbers have affordances that fit with the commodification of literacy because they de-contextualize and objectify the objects and people they describe. They enable qualities (such as being functionally literate) to be isolated and to stand in for individual people. O'Halloran shows how the system of mathematical semiosis or meaning making conceived by Descartes was explicitly designed to "banish human context, experience and sensuality from truth" in order to offer unique analytic powers in place of these (O'Halloran, 2008, p. 46).

The power of numbers is to make possible precise description and manipulation of continuous relations between entities in time and space in a way that natural language is not so well-equipped to do. Numbers make it possible to present reality as amenable to prediction and control.

Numerical data facilitate the process of making comparisons through processes of aggregation and classification. In this process, they render value judgements invisible and offer an illusion of technical precision which is welcome to policy – in the words of Latour (2004, p. 231) they render "matters of concern" as "matters of fact". Research suggests that the power of numbers is amplified if modes are skilfully combined for communicating messages. Each mode (words, images and numbers) interacts with the others resulting in expansions of meaning.

The most traditional form of numerical presentation is the use of the matrix or table which Lemke (2005) suggests offers a very dense and succinct form of meaning-making which also displays relationships and patterns in a visual way. Presentations of international assessment data frequently use these kinds of display and web-based interactive applications allow audiences to select and shape their own tables, so seemingly taking control of the information.

Increasingly such tables are combined or transformed into creative visualizations and infographics which, arguably, enable audiences to absorb information about literacy from the surveys while by-passing the numbers it is based on. Primitive forms of these visualizations are in the form of bar charts, scatterplots, graphs and time series, but color, movement and spatial features are now being used to develop narratives from the findings (Williamson, 2016).

The developing specialism of data journalism makes sophisticated use of such visualizations. The well-known appeal of visual images and their capacity to promote emotionally powerful messages in headline form are useful where audiences are

unwilling or unable to engage in a sustained way with the numbing detail of complex tables or narratives about the intricacies of the skills assessments.

Both Lemke (2005) and Gorur (2011) warn about the dangers of such disengagement and the importance of opening up the black boxes of numbers if we are to be able to develop useful evaluations and critiques of survey findings that can be applied in policy. Such critiques are essential to recover the situated detail, dynamics and relationships that shape literacy practices in all their variety and which are crucial to making effective decisions in policy and practice for adult learners.

CONCLUSION

The use of numbers to imagine and measure literacy significantly contributes to the high credibility of the technological narrative of literacy and other adult skills, despite its limitations (Hamilton, 2012). Uncritical enthusiasm for Big Data is pervasive across many social policy domains and my argument thus has significance far beyond literacy and lifelong learning.

Despite their appearance of technical factuality the metrics on which surveys of adult skills are based are laden with value assumptions about the nature and meanings of literacy and the goals of adult education. These assumptions are made by a narrow range of experts, mainly based in the global north and are hidden by numbers which are hard for lay users to question. Peoples' own experience and meanings of literacy are devalued by this power grab. One of the urgent tasks for research and practitioners alike is to make visible and to challenge these assumptions which are colonizing the discourse of adult education, and to demystify the numbers that veil them. If the power of big data in adult education remains unchallenged, the result will be a narrowed and impoverished version of literacy learning that will do little to equip us for the demands of life in a complex and unpredictable world.

NOTE

[1] First round countries were: Netherlands; Finland; Japan; Flanders (Belgium); South Korea; Austria; Estonia; Sweden; Czech Republic; Slovak Republic; Germany; Denmark; Norway; Australia; Poland; Canada; Cyprus; Northern Ireland; France; Ireland; England; Spain; Italy; United States (also Russian Federation).

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APPENDIX

OECD Press release (http://www.oecd.org/newsroom/improve-skills-to-build-fairer-more-inclusive-societies.htm). See also https://youtube/2fLlGLr8RQs

Improve skills to build fairer, more inclusive societies

28/06/2016 – Poor skills severely reduce a person's chance of a better-paying and more-rewarding job, and have a major impact on how the benefits of economic growth are shared within societies. In countries where large shares of adults have poor skills, it is difficult to introduce productivity-enhancing technologies and new ways of working, which stalls improvements in living standards, according to a new OECD report.

"Without the right skills, people will languish on the margins of society, technological progress will slow and countries will struggle in the global economy," said Andreas Schleicher, OECD Director for Education and Skills, launching the report in Singapore. "Governments must improve their education system and work with business and unions to develop fair and inclusive policies so that everyone can participate fully in society."

As part of its ongoing work to measure and improve adult skills around the world, the OECD has tested the skills of more than 50,000 16 to 65 year-olds in Chile, Greece, Indonesia (Jakarta), Israel, Lithuania, New Zealand, Singapore, Slovenia and Turkey. The assessments of reading, numeracy and problem-solving abilities measure what people know and how they use their skills at work. This builds on the 2013 Survey which tested the skills of more than 150,000 adults in 24 countries.

Skills Matter: Further Results from the Survey of Adult Skills finds clear evidence that developing and using skills improves employment prospects and quality of life as well as boosting economic growth. There was a strong link between a country's performance in the survey and in the OECD Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) for 15 year-olds, suggesting that high quality initial, compulsory education is essential for countries to build a highly skilled work force.

The Survey also shows that proficiency continues to improve over time, and that developing and maintaining skills over a lifetime is affected by participation in work and training. High-quality career guidance services, complemented with up-to-date information about labour-market prospects, are needed, together with effective active labour-market measures, such as counselling, job-search assistance and temporary hiring subsidies for low-skilled youth.

HENNING SALLING OLESEN

7. THE CHALLENGE OF COMPETENCE ASSESSMENT

Problematizing Institutional Regimes – Proclaiming a Paradigm Shift?

Adult education has often been perceived as a social practice that had the potential to change the world. The driver for promoting, organizing and teaching in adult education has then been informed by the vision of changing the world, and struggles inside adult education were seen as political struggles. Today it is rather the other way around – external societal changes often determine the need for adult learning. Although adult learning has gained much stronger attention and is viewed as more necessary on a societal level, the significance of the agency within adult education is becoming less obvious. In this situation it seems even more important to study adult education micro-practices and seek to trace their unrecognized potentials for societal change. Often micro-practices are doing something different from their immediate and declared functions. Critical research should reveal possibilities not normally recognized by the agents themselves, it cannot be developed by focussing on the explicit power relations. It seems easy to be critical on the level of intentions or by revealing hidden agendas in political discourses and documents. But I think a critical social science of learning and education should rather seek to discover the possible implications of everyday life practices and relevant alternatives within the horizon of individuals' and professionals' agency. In this sense a bottom-up orientation may have exemplary epistemological value.

This perspective underpins my interest in competence assessment and the bureaucratic procedures involved in establishing qualification frameworks – something which at first glance seems to be part of the general economic mainstreaming of continuing and adult education in service of employment and competitiveness. In particular, I am interested in exploring the technical challenges in the implementation of procedures for validation or the recognition of prior learning. On the one hand, it consists of relatively hidden or unnoticed decisions and bureaucratic initiatives on a general systems level – in the guise of being 'just technical'. And on the other hand, it is being practically applied and refined on the level of individual agents – in relation to guidance, admission, administration and fulfilling commitments to improve institutional inclusivity. I contend that a comprehensive policy for lifelong learning – which is a shared agenda all over the world – can hardly be implemented without these tools. In the next few years validation of prior learning will be part

of an overall EU strategy of open coordination. Understanding these changes and considering how, and for what ends, the tools of competence assessment and validation of prior learning can be developed is at the centre of the themes of power and possibility in this book. It is also worth studying for the theoretical challenges it raises: the practical process of validation entails a set of complex assumptions about the nature of the transformation of life experiences from one life situation to new ones. In this chapter I present a case to the reader of the importance of this topic.

The idea of Lifelong Learning entails a vision of every individual not only having access to formal and non-formal education and training throughout the lifetime but also making use of all the informal learning in everyday life. The driving reason in the contemporary policy interest in lifelong learning is to mobilize human resources and competences for economic competitiveness and an increasing skepticism among business people and bureaucrats towards the formal education and training system. This has led to a new interest in workplace learning and an increasing emphasis on learning in everyday life (Rubenson, 1996; Salling Olesen, 2008).

On the policy level the thinking about lifelong learning has broadened to include not only education and training, but in principle a multitude of policies related to the organization of work, labor markets, community development and culture. Already in 2001 the theme of ESREA's triennial research conference had the theme of the *Wider benefits of learning*, with the aim of widening the discussion of adult and lifelong learning beyond its previous horizon which was increasingly employment and economy (ESREA, 2002). This was an early anticipation of a more integrative approach which has been gaining ground, seeing learning as an integrated dimension of societal and cultural processes in general, and seeking to highlight and support the learning dimensions of policies in key areas such as gender equality, health promotion, agricultural reform etc. This thinking has been transmitted into international adult learning promotion, e.g. UNESCO (2016). Integration of policy domains is seen both as a necessary and productive way to increase learning resources by developing learning policies for those other important life spheres.

Diverse as they are, these ideas can only be formulated in rather abstract policy notions like the learning society, learning cities etc. which nevertheless point to a more holistic view of learning. Access to educational resources – the agenda of *Education For All* (UNESCO & United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization, 2015) – is still relevant and important for large parts of the world in the Global South – but it is increasingly being questioned if the institutions and forms of knowledge can just be transferred from "western culture" or the Global North (Preece, 2009; Torres, 1996). And in the developed capitalist countries there is also a new trend: instead of just continuing a process of expanding formal education and specialized knowledge institutions a more comprehensive thinking of learning and a more open attitude to informal learning is emerging. This complex and asynchronous historical transformation may either lead to a decline of the role of formal education and training and knowledge institutions, or to radical reforms, which will inevitably recognize the importance of informal learning in different life

spheres. My idea is that micro-practices are not only symptomatic, but may also be a key to a reform process and new ways of thinking. Such new ways of thinking can hardly be promoted by a top-down regulation. In this chapter my focus is on the challenge of developing a language which is able to embrace learning in formal education and other institutions and life world contexts in which informal learning is taking place.

REGIMES OF COMPETENCE RECOGNITION

In the developed capitalist world we can see two dominant regimes of recognition each with their own specific criteria for recognizing competence: work/life competence applied by business and industry; and scholastic assessment of knowledge and intellectual skills applied by formal education institutions.

Recognition by business and industry usually operates from a fairly basic instrumental perspective focused on the perceived ability of the subject to function in a work situation. Staff selection procedures and Human Resource Development (HRD) functions attempt to assess competences in relation to a specific job. Simple in principle, but complicated in practice. It could be argued that some of the short-sighted practices in industry (hire-and-fire) are simply the result of the real complexity in assessing staff competences combined with relatively low on-the-job-training costs which enables a trial-and-error approach to recruitment. Vice versa HRD policies with high internal investments and/or long cycles in employment are benefitting from a huge adaptability of work force which is often not recognized in theory. Employees learn and adapt more than one can predict or direct. But the underlying rationale, even with these variations, in business is still orientated to employability and specific job relevant competence. During recent decades, and with great variation, internal labor market adaptation and competence development have come to play a more significant role – businesses increasingly make their own "bilan de competence" (competence accounting).

Unlike this, recognition of learning in the educational system is based on the documented completion of formal courses. This mode of recognition validates specific knowledge and skills, and presumes a linear learning structure in which each element stands on the shoulders of the previous element. In recent decades this rationale has been modified in at least two ways, Educational systems are no longer so clearly linear. First, training and vocational education has developed institutional systems in their own right in many countries. Second, a mix of liberal culture and the need to mobilize new groups of students have led to a range of new admission and access pathways to higher education and continuing professional education. It is my impression however that validation of prior learning is still granted very much *in spite of the main educational structures*, and is driven mainly by counsellors and liberal educationalists, who deal with a minority of students. And last, and not least, the admission criteria are assessing equivalence of prior learning to the traditional core *curriculum* of the education in question, or the perceived potential to fulfil this

criterion within the education program. It is not an assessment of some alternative competences that might be valued socially or professionally.

With some variations these two regimes of recognition are basically disjointed, and rather narrow-minded. The introduction of competence assessment does not change that. Tools for assessment at the individual level have been introduced in European countries under slightly different headings – such as "Validation/Recognition of Prior Learning", "competence assessment", "learning portfolios", the Danish "realkompetencevurdering", the French "bilan de compétence", etc. (Alessandrini, 2016; Duvekot, Coughland, & Aagaard, 2017; Salling Olesen, 2018). The assessment criteria used in these various examples vary considerably and the functions are also different. In some cases, they are just used for recruitment or for determining learning needs in relation to specific jobs. But mostly they are used to enable new pathways into formal education. Rapid changes in technology, the division of labor, and the structure of the labor market combined with cultural detraditionalization have made traditional career ladders within occupations, industries and institutions obsolete or less accessible, and formal educational qualifications are expected and seen as 'standard'. Recognition of non-formal and informal learning as a basis for access to formal education can be seen as a more systematic way of facilitating and accelerating career shifts and developments.

Often these interventions thereby consolidate the recognition regimes of formal education. Never the less these interventions can be seen as beginning to fragment. In order to meet the ambitions of a lifelong learning policy that integrates formal education and informal learning it is necessary to develop tools and procedures which are relatively independent both of traditional academic and scholastic curricula on the one hand and labor market skills requirements on the other hand – while it must at the same time make the description of competences understandable in both contexts. The real challenge – which is also the opportunity – is that the need to overcome the incompatibility of these "regimes of recognition" – will enable a critical reflection of their different rationales and their limitations. This may open a real chance to move from an *adaptation measure* based on the categorization of individuals by two rather static and narrow set of criteria to an assessment which discovers and appreciates the potential and hidden capacities of individuals.

PARTICIPATION IN EDUCATION AND MOTIVES FOR LEARNING

These implications in the shift from 'access to education' to 'lifelong learning' have not always been grasped clearly. Most policies aim at coupling the existing regimes of recognition without integrating them and provide a bureaucratic framework that can fence the conflicts between the two main regimes outlined above through qualification frameworks.

To unfold the transformative potential in the validation and recognition procedures requires new thinking and a new language, which adopt the perspective of the individual subject and see validation and recognition not only as necessary

adaptation measures but as potential tools for autonomous self-evaluation and windows to alternative careers and new life perspectives.

The micro-practices of recognition may illuminate the sutures in the repair work, from which a different approach might arise.

The motives for learning are deeply seated in the entire life situation of each individual, and dependent on collective social and cultural pathways. Interests in education and training are widely differentiated in strength as well as direction. The wide difference in motivation and potential for learning is symptomatically clear in sociological analysis of participation in formal and non-formal continuing education. But much of the variation may also be less visible, connected as it is with people's life experience, lifestyle and identity, and not primarily related to education and training. Under these political and social circumstances, the increasing appeal for learning may be perceived as a promise for new opportunities for some, for others a stressful attack on one's sense of identity, and for others again just something quite irrelevant.

I present some cases which illustrate the potential role of competence assessment in different types of learning. Three Danish doctoral research projects have addressed the mechanisms of individual competence assessment (IKV) of applicants to professional bachelor education within a number of areas (teaching, preschool pedagogy, nursing, physiotherapy, construction) (Mellon, 2018; Salling Olesen, Aagaard, & Husted, 2017). These professions were previously based on practice-oriented education and training with a close connection to the field of practice. In recent years entering these fields requires a professional BA and the standard gateway to this is through the final stage of formal education and state exams. However, an access pathway exists for people who have a lower formal school education and then some kind of non-academic professional education, called an IKV (Individual Competence Assessment). The specific admission procedure evaluates whether students' individual background can compensate for the absence of formal school qualifications. The assessment procedure involves an evaluation of these students' "messy" careers, and the education program is expected to integrate this relatively small group of "deviant" students. Our research investigated these students' career shift through a life history approach which explored their life experiences and their prior education, their decisions for a career shift, their experiences of the education for a new profession. We focused on the students' subjective experience of their identity process in which knowledge and skills were reconfigured and gained new cognitive as well as emotional meaning, and also paid particular attention to how the students make use of their non-academic experiences and skills, which can in some cases be seen as resources in the education and later in the profession (Mellon, 2018; Salling Olesen, Aagaard, & Husted, 2017). A wider purpose of this research is to problematize the adequacy of the "scholastic turn" in professional education by investigating carefully how learning takes place when formal schooling, informal learning and identity formation are interwoven. We see in this research examples of the complex development of (new) competences on the base of life experiences –

empathy, social and organisational skills, self-reflection – and in this way the study is a contribution to a general theory of learning.

Whereas the admission to professional educations on the basis of untraditional trajectories represents a case of validation within the recognition regime of formal higher education I would like to sketch out another, quite different direction through a discussion of the possibilities of using validation procedures of prior learning within the labor market of skilled and unskilled work. The Danish trade union *3F* has launched the idea that each worker should have the right for a "competence development plan" or more plainly an "education plan", based on a "real competence assessment". The union's members are mainly unskilled workers and some groups of highly skilled workers in manufacturing industry, construction, food processing, and transportation who are among those who are most vulnerable to economic and technologically driven structural changes, most often in the guise of globalization. These workers have very diverse relations to education and training (Kondrup, 2013). The necessity of strengthening the workers individually and collectively in a risky labor market with increasing competence requirements presents a challenge to the trade union. There are already quite numerous – and to some extent not fully exploited – opportunities for continuing education for these workers. But the problem seems to be the fact that they are not based on employees' interests and motivations apart from those which are direct and narrow preconditions for their employment. The union launched the demand that every worker school have access to a competence assessment, and guidance helping him/her to consider possible training and education opportunities, future employment outlook, potential career shifts in the light of his/her life situation and visions for future life.

The idea was that a competence assessment and "education plan" would on the one hand strengthen workers' self-recognition of their own capacities. On the other hand, it should raise workers' awareness of opportunities immediately or at a later stage. Such a procedure would have to combine individual and collective rights for competence assessment with guidance and proactive provision of relevant education and training related to *subjectively relevant* career developments. For the moment there are individual rights but they are limited to adopting a full apprenticeship on unfavorable terms. The alternatives are mostly narrowly instrumental – and declining.

The challenge already appears in the policy discourse: The union argues for an education and training plan, well aware that many members are already ambivalent to this education, and decline to foreground the notion of competence, which appeals to workers' self-consciousness grounded in actual possession of competences.

INVENTION OF A NEW LANGUAGE OF COMPETENCE

A language for validation of prior learning – and in a wider sense for linking different arenas of learning – must not be confined within one of the existing regimes

of recognition, but must on the other hand be able to integrate and reformulate the concerns which are their core rationales. In this context the challenge is not a language issue in a narrow sense, it is *a discourse issue*. A discourse depends on language use which is closely interwoven with and reflects societal practices and realities that cannot be made disappear by inventing a new terminology. This means that the development of a new language based on the competence notion must be developed through processes in the societal relations and institutional contexts. Such new ways of thinking can hardly be promoted top-down, by defining a new language of regulation. Validation of prior learning can be useful if it enables a dynamic practice from below.

Norwegian and Danish VPL initiatives have selected the term "competence", as can be seen from the terms of "realkompetanse/realkompetence". This concept has been launched by economists – first in the OECD – as an element in an overall reconfiguration of the evaluation and description of education. The concept of competence was picked from social psychology, and transferred to organization and management theory about work organizations. It was the intention to grasp the relation between the objective practical functions, in which people are supposed to apply their capabilities, and the psychological generic nature of learning these capabilities.

Competence has been promoted as the standard tool in order to describe all educational and training arrangements to outcome (target) descriptions instead of input (curriculum) descriptions. The purpose was to enable measurement and comparison of the efficiency of education. The notion of competence offers a new and more holistic view of human capabilities, which is in line with lifelong learning, rethinking the relation between education, training and learning in everyday life. In the meantime, the new terminology is also used as a governance tool *within the educational systems*, and more widely as a mental priming, preparing for a more market driven management. The use of the terms of competence in the European and national qualification frameworks and in governance documents is until now mainly a paper exercise. The objective of enabling more flexible cross-national comparison is obviously obtained on the surface, at least as far as institutional education and learning is concerned, by using more standardized vocabularies, but the connection to underlying realities is very loose.

I contend that a language for validation can be based on the notion of competence, but it will have to be reinterpreted. In the first place this will be a great challenge for formal education and training: a deeper reconfiguration of educational practices in line with the outcome description and the notion of competence. Education and training is still mainly structured around disciplinary knowledge and prescriptive approaches to professional practice, making little or no use of students'/participants' experiences and insights from previous learning in other spheres of life.

The main understanding of competencies in everyday language is actually related to work. But it has a broader meaning than the narrow and one-dimensional job-oriented view of work qualifications, such as is used in, for example, labour market

statistics. When economists imported a concept from social psychology it was not only in order to educate the bureaucracies in formal education systems, they also intended to provide a framework for a new and more dynamic perception of human resources in business.

In the 1950s and 1960s both industrial sociology and management realized that industrial one-to-one-qualification framework was insufficient to identify the qualification needs – partly because they changed rapidly, partly because they changed qualitatively so that different types of non-specific, processual skills became essential. In the following years discussions were running both in business, among researchers and politicians about "soft qualification", "generic skills", "Schlüsselqualifikation" etc. OECD launched a project to identity the generic factor(s) under the headline of *key* competence, Definition and Selection of Competencies, DeSeCo (Rychen & Salganik, 2001).

However, this project seems more or less resigned from its original ambitions, and resulted in the bureaucratic use of the vocabulary in a seemingly general matrix of all people related to formal education and training.

In Denmark the agency for Labour Market training supported a large R&D-project which should draw up those new trends of general/generic qualifications that could hardly be conceived within a narrow job-related training, but were important for this segment of the work force. In this project we tried to define a concept of general qualification which was based in life experience and mediated the subjective (prior) learning and the actual labor market skills requirements (Nicoll & Olesen, 2013; Salling Olesen, 2013).

The original competence concept acknowledges the subjective nature of competencies. This means that the assessment of competence must in principle include individual experiences and assessment of subjective dynamics of the individual. Taken to its limits this is both impracticable and in opposition to the current function of prior learning validation as a legal basis for access to education and training, and in a few cases to certain jobs or work licenses.

One of the experts who were engaged in the project describes the problem in the following way: "such scientific plans have often failed in psychology, however. The underlying multilevel models can be logically reconstructed, but not validated psychologically. The different degrees of abstraction mean, therefore, a fundamental asymmetry in competence research – high abstraction: intellectually brilliant, pragmatically hopeless; low abstraction: pragmatically useful, intellectually unsatisfactory" (Franz Weinert, in Rychen & Salganik, 2001, p. 52). I think that Weinert's difficulty was connected with the built-in challenge for the development of a "general equivalent" of human capability. And this difficulty is also the reason that the break-up in dominant regimes of recognition opens a window for new negotiations of competence, knowledge and power. I shall try to explain.

The validation procedure attempts to interpret and assess the potential for transforming specific individual life experiences into a capability of changing perspective in a new professional context, or in relation to the type of study which is

the aim of the individual. A suitable language must be able to describe such individual transformative potential. A language which is sensitive to subjective diversity could only be established by an elaboration of a more dynamic concept of competence. The ambition to establish a canon of generic skills that could be measured/assessed for each individual, and held against criteria of recognition related to one or the other job or a scholastic curriculum can – as Weinert remarks – not be carried out in a psychologically valid way. Competencies are established in processes of subjective engagement which are individual and situated – they may be gendered, class based etc. – but always mediated in individual experience. Their "transferability" represents the cognitive and emotional work of the individual subject which has the nature of learning, detachment and discovery of *something specific*.

I do not think there is a theoretical solution to the gap between logical output categories and psychologically valid subjective transformation. But there is a task for theoretical and empirical research as well as the accumulation of practical experiences from conducting validation procedures in practice. I tried with my two examples to illustrate that such categorization involves a contextualization of capabilities in relation to societal practice. This contextualization involves something more than abstract cognitive knowledge, it involves also the subjective significance of these practices. It is difficult to specify theoretically the "non-cognitive" psycho-social prerequisites (Salling Olesen, 2016).

In order to become a useful tool also for the legal/certifying part of validation it will have to enable description of *patterns of transformation* – cognitive and emotional in relation to careers and experiential trajectories – that are (for the time being, in the context) socially acknowledged *in practice* – this means that the language will emerge from the struggles within the practice contexts – i.e. matters of professional domains, the relations between professionals and clients, industrial relations and eventually of politics. This is the real societal space of competence recognition, in which the questions of 'power and possibility' is grounded, whether it operates with the term competence or not, and, I have presented a broader theoretical and diagnostic discussion of the questions in Salling Olesen (2013) to illuminate different ways of using the notion of competence and the connotations with which a competence discourse is perceived.

CONCLUSION

Recognition of Prior Learning and Assessment of Competences are tools for the reshaping of adult learning from above, under the heading of competence development. But the competence requirements are contradictory, and these tools might also be shaped to enable individual and collective empowerment of learners, recognizing their own capacities and discovering new possibilities for learning and career. How they will actually work depends among other factors on the way of conceptualizing competences in the micro-practices in adult and continuing education. The task of critical research could be to follow the micro-practices of

validation of prior learning carefully, support assessment procedures which enable the discovery and reflection of learners'/workers' resources and possible life prospects, and conceptualize the recognition as a collective effort to make visible "the potential of people" for individuals. In a time where globalization and increasing precariousness really requires defensive actions it is extremely important also to create conceptions of worker autonomy which are based in subjective experience and the actual lives and careers of people, forming the minimal background for a self-conscious worker identity.

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PART 3

THEORIZING POWER AND POSSIBILITY IN A COMPLEX WORLD

LYN TETT

8. RECOGNITION AND REDISTRIBUTION

Rethinking the Meaning of Justice in Adult Education

CONCEPTUALIZING INEQUALITY

This chapter discusses how adult education might contribute to the achievement of greater equality by drawing on case studies of three family literacy programs in Scotland. What is meant by equality can, however, be conceptualized in a number of ways. At one end of the spectrum is *equality of opportunity* where the focus is on the achievement of equality of access to, and participation in, education. The underlying assumption is that education is meritocratic and we live in a fair society that ensures that people will progress according to their ability (Gerwitz, 1998). From this perspective socio-economic adversity can be overcome by enabling access to a wide range of educational opportunities that individuals can take up or not according to their own motivation. At the other end is *social justice* where not only the economic but also the cultural aspects of justice are seen as vital. From this perspective remedying injustice requires not only the redistribution of opportunities but also equality of condition, which encompasses recognition of people's identities and their cultural diversity (Keddie, 2012).

Within this broad conceptualization of social justice there have been disagreements with some authors arguing that, rather than bringing the two aspects of recognition and redistribution together, the politics of redistribution and recognition are mutually exclusive alternatives. Writers such as Gitlin (1995) and Rorty (2000) argue that the focus on recognition serves to distract from the real issue of distributive injustice because concentrating on identity exaggerates difference rather than emphasizing commonalities. They suggest instead that recognition should be accorded to individuals rather than groups because focusing on what people share with "members of traditionally despised groups" (Rorty, 2000, p. 15) is more likely to promote broader political co-operation. Conversely, theorists such as Taylor (1992) and Honneth (2003) argue that ignoring differences and focusing exclusively on redistribution can serve to reinforce injustice by compelling minority groups and identities to 'fall in line' with the norms of the dominant group. Therefore, the struggles over a fairer distribution of opportunities, resources and rights should be thought of as struggles for recognition.

Nancy Fraser (2003), however, argues that issues of distribution and recognition interpenetrate. Though they do not fold neatly into one another, they interact causally

and so it is important to be attuned to both dimensions. Treating every injustice as both economic and cultural, all must be assessed from both outlooks without reducing one to the other. Key to this approach is what Fraser calls the 'status model' of recognition. This model views misrecognition as a matter of *social status*, where: "patterns of disrespect and disesteem are institutionalized, for example, in law, social welfare, medicine, public education, and/or the social practices and group mores that structure everyday interaction" (Fraser, 1998, pp. 25–26). Fraser points out that some groups are subjected to both types of discrimination, particularly those from racial minorities, because they are "discriminated against in the labour market [whilst simultaneously] … patterns of cultural value privilege some traits … [meaning that they] are constructed as deficient and inferior others who cannot be full members of society" (Fraser, 2003, p. 23).

It is important to be clear about how we understand equality because its conceptualization strongly influences the policy structures, the pedagogical approaches and the expected outcomes used in adult education. I consider that Fraser's (2003) conceptualization of inequality is invaluable for exploring how education might contribute to social justice because its comprehensive view makes it more likely that its many dimensions, and their complex entanglement, can be interrogated and effectively responded to by researchers and practitioners. So, in the next section, I will use her concepts of 'redistribution' and 'recognition' to examine the impact of participation in family literacy education.

REDISTRIBUTION AND RECOGNITION

This section illustrates the impact of maldistribution and misrecognition on learning lives over the medium-term. It draws on interviews with family literacy learners, all women, that participated in three different projects in Scotland. All the projects were based in community settings in areas with high levels of unemployment: project 1 was on the outskirts of a large city in the West, project 2 in a large town in the East and project 3 in a small town in the North of Scotland. The participants in the projects were mothers of children who attended the primary schools in the area who had said they had literacy problems that they would like to work on in order to help themselves and their children. The research aimed to investigate the impact of participation on these learners' lives.

The interviews used an autobiographical approach where learners were asked to talk about their individual life histories, the circumstances in which they were currently situated and the impact of their participation in learning. All the projects were based in community settings and were selected because they represented good practice. I start with participants' previous experiences of school to illustrate how these had influenced their current views of themselves and their ability to learn and then move on to consider the impact of their programs.

Schooling

Many participants emphasized the maldistribution of the opportunities available to them. For example, some learners, slower than the 'brighter' children in large classes, reported that they simply dropped off the teachers' radar and did not receive the attention that they required. One reflected: "I liked my first school, but the other kids were better than me … The classes were too big, there wasn't enough time to learn what I should have". Another remembered having difficulties at primary school. She was very slow at reading but did not feel that the teachers noticed and she thought that they were: "more interested in the ones that could get on … They sort of just left me to one side".

In addition, some people remembered being bullied and this affected their ability to learn which led a number to stop participating in their schools either by being physically absent or not paying any attention even if they were there. For example: "I was bullied so much … I didn't take anything in and I just used to sit and doodle all day". Another learner's memory of education was dominated by the impact of bullying teachers: "if you answered a question and got it wrong you were punished so I tried to avoid answering anything".

One learner, however, described school as "a haven [that] provided a chance to escape from the problems at home" where she was bullied by her older brothers. Few learners were able to identify a teacher who had recognized their capabilities and invested time in supporting them which research has shown has a positive impact on attainment (Bynner & Joshi, 2002). Moreover, hardly any reported that their parents had helped them with homework or discussed their progress with teachers and many lacked a stable and supportive family environment. In addition, many said that they had lived in poverty where "there wasn't enough money to go round" and this impacted not only on their academic achievements in their school years but also on their attainment in adulthood (Schoon & Bynner, 2003).

Not achieving at school had a lasting effect on recognition through its impact on individuals' self-esteem. For example, one participant said "I am not very academic; I have not got a lot of confidence in myself. I scraped through, only got one 'O level'. I am not brainy". As Charlesworth (2000, pp. 243–244) has argued: "being told that one is not clever is … not something about which one can achieve indifference … Thus we end up with people defined … as 'useless', unable, stupid; lacking in the dignities given to the privileged".

These learners' stories illustrate that the educational opportunities open to them were not equal and so they did not benefit from their schooling to the extent that their more advantaged peers did. Clearly many experienced maldistribution in terms of their access to good quality education as well as misrecognition because their teachers, their peers and, in some cases, their parents constructed their skills and experiences as inferior.

One driver of these inequities is the adoption of particular assessment and evaluation regimes. A key influence on how these regimes are implemented is

the statistics that are gathered and analyzed by the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) for its international comparisons (Meyer & Benavot, 2013). The league tables produced by these international comparisons, such as the Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC) (OECD, 2013), are underpinned by an equality of opportunity approach. This is because the focus of the comparison is on the distribution of access to, and the successful outcomes of, participation in education (Lingard et al., 2014). As a result, attention is paid only to outcomes related to economic growth such as qualifications and not to an education that adapts to the needs of all learners.

So, rather than an education that is inclusive because it recognizes people's social and cultural backgrounds, we end up with one that is driven by efficiency and economic growth. Moreover, the underlying structural and socio-economic factors that produced these unequal outcomes in the first place are neglected (Connell, 2012). It is clear then that learners in these family literacy programs had neither experienced redistribution nor recognition at school but did their later experiences in the family literacy programs change this?

Learning in Family Literacy Programs

Research shows that participating in family literacy programs can lead to positive changes in both parents and children (Forté, 2013), but not all programs are empowering. This is because if it is not recognized that "families' lives are deeply shaped by racial, class, and migrant inequality" (Baquedano-López et al., 2013, p. 172) then schools reproduce these inequalities by using deficit perspectives that reinforce parents' negative views of themselves. Practices in schools are strongly connected to issues of ideology and power that result in the view that parents should fit into the dominant culture rather than that schools should be engaging with the diversity of parents. For example, Moll (2005, p. 280) argues that there is a focus on "how parents can accommodate to the routine of schooling, [but not on] how they can get the school to accommodate their needs, conditions, and desires". To reverse this assumption requires a view that all parents and communities have important 'funds of knowledge' (González et al., 2005) to contribute to education and are 'knowledge-rich' rather than 'knowledge-poor'. Therefore, pedagogies that build on, rather than denigrate, the expertise of participants and start from their own goals are more likely to lead to greater equality (Barton et al., 2007).

The programs studied did support parents to fulfill their aspirations and further develop their own expertise as their children's first educators. One important aspect of this was the use of authentic assessment situated in real life contexts, which is done *with,* not *to,* participants. Assessment was based on the extent to which participants had been able to change their literacy practices from their own baselines – the distance that they had travelled. People's learning is normally assessed through the use of standardized outcome-based methods so this different approach was empowering

because it enabled participants to have an equal say in the direction their learning should take based on their own goals.

As a result of these approaches many learners talked about the way they thought about themselves: “here they build you up and help you to think positively”; “the staff treat you like a person”. Working together was important because: “being part of the group has helped me to keep going even when things were really difficult at home” and “the others knew I didn’t like writing on the flip-chart because my spelling isn’t good but with their encouragement I did it and after that I felt really proud of myself”. In addition, because participants felt their knowledge of their children was valued, they considered that “education was probably something that I could go back to as an adult. It just made me see things in a different light. Everything wasn’t awful”.

Others spoke about being respected: “in this program you’re respected as a person that has a lot of knowledge that others can learn from”. This respect was created through learners feeling that their issues, circumstances and concerns were both acknowledged and valued. For example: “here you don’t get judged on what you can’t do. Instead the tutors help you to find what you can do”. Another said that she “used to just go to the shops and back to the house but now I’m out doing lots of things and I’m not isolated any more”. Learners found that their progress made them feel differently about what they could achieve: “I felt more confident. It made me a more confident parent with the girls … [and] in what I could achieve myself”.

Using a ‘funds of knowledge’ pedagogy that focused on what learners *could* do increased confidence: “the tutor helped me to work out what I could do and then, once I was happy about that, I worked on what I couldn’t do”. It also involved participants valuing their own skills. For example, one found that her ability to tell stories from her Traveller culture meant that she had a much better oral memory than other people but this skill had been unacknowledged before she joined the group. For many being part of a group helped with learning: “you’re in with the group so you get involved … we’ve worked together on making books for the children and it’s very satisfying”. A number of learners suggested that it was the tutors that made an impact: “she [tutor] brings stuff out of me and stretches my mind” and “it motivates me to really try because the tutors are working so hard”.

An atmosphere had been created where learners were treated with respect within relationships of trust (Feeley, 2014). Having a caring ethos not only enabled participants’ strengths to be recognized but also helped to create supportive social networks (Prins, Tosso, & Schafft, 2009, p. 336). Participants in these programs said that they had changed their dispositions to learning and altered their practices partly because of these positive caring relationships. For example: “the staff are always available to listen to your questions and because of this you feel able to ask even if you think it might be a silly question”. So, most of the learners had worked through previous negative learning identities and were much more engaged in learning so that, as one put it: “now I feel that what I know is of value then I’m

much more willing to try anything whereas before I just used to say to myself 'you can't do it'".

There is evidence here then that participation in the programs brought about changes in the recognitional aspect of Fraser's (2003) model of social justice and, as a result, there are also examples of the redistributive aspect. The learners clearly saw the recognition of their experiences as a step towards greater redistribution because, for example, "the tutors trusted us with important tasks like creating the children's book so that made me feel that I could get a job where I would also need to be trusted". 'Because the program developed my confidence I went on to apply for college and now I'm at university and have a new career in front of me'. Most of the changes that the learners experienced in the employment opportunities that were open to them were quite modest but this does demonstrate, as Fraser has argued, that the recognitive and redistributive aspects of social justice fold into one another and action needs to be taken in both spheres simultaneously to obtain greater equality.

RETHINKING SOCIAL JUSTICE

So far, this chapter has considered how participants in family literacy programs have experienced two of the dimensions of social justice namely redistribution and recognition. Fraser also proposed a third dimension that she named 'participatory parity', because it focuses on equality of participation in decision making. She argued that this concept "sets the procedures for staging and resolving contests in both the economic and the cultural dimensions" (2008, p. 17). Its achievement requires that individuals participate on an equal footing in processes that give them a voice in public deliberations and democratic decision-making particularly over issues that directly affect them. So, this aspect of social justice involves making social arrangements that mean that *all* people are enabled to participate as equals in social life. It is concerned about how injustices should be remedied and requires the critical interrogation of the ways in which equity is understood and pursued. This means that there needs to be a revaluation of the knowledge, skills and understanding of non-dominant groups so that rather than providing an education that is considered to be good for them instead we need to ensure that the curriculum is built around their views.

In the projects I researched curriculum approaches were developed that operated to support the decision making of the participants. The curriculum was based on the learners' concerns and aspirations about their own and their children's learning and relationships to their teachers so that education was seen as a co-operative activity involving respect and trust. The teaching was based on a group process, where the tutor and students learnt together, beginning with the concrete experience of the participants, leading to reflection on that experience in order to affect positive change. As a result, the participants were able to add new and different knowledge and become the subjects of learning rather than the objects of educational interventions that were supposed to be good for them. Learning then became a shared endeavor between tutors and students, a two-way, rather than a one-way, process.

This approach provided a real incentive for learning because it concentrated on what really mattered to the participants. As a result, learners commented that they now saw some of their earlier assumptions differently. For example: "I see how my school teachers tried to put me down and now I'm involved in a family literacy project so that I can help other parents to be a bit more challenging". Another example was from the only male in one of the groups who acknowledged that he had come to see that he had a very gendered approach to his life. "In my family the girls did all the housework and I was just allowed to go out with my friends and I kind of carried this over in my family life too but now I'm the one at home looking after the kids I can see how sexist I used to be". These examples show that the learners became more reflexive about their experiences and had found ways to reconstitute previously internalized injustices. As one participant put it: "learning can open your eyes to what you are good at and means that you are willing to take risks in trying to make changes both for your children but also in the community". Participants had become more confident about challenging the social injustices they had experienced: for example, "I speak out more at home if I think things are not fair' and 'I'm more confident in challenging the teachers' views about my child".

Engaging in participatory processes in implementing and evaluating programs, being in a safe and open space to discuss, dissent and agree on the best courses of action, and integrating different views, fosters dialogue and enables the recognition of difference and diversity (Baquedano-López et al., 2013). This form of education meant that participants were enabled to take these experiences of equality of decision-making and participation into their families and communities. In addition, a few learners were able to participate in the broader political arena, where the power imbalances and negative discourses they experienced could be most effectively challenged. For example, participants in one project reported that they were taking action to tackle racism in their community as a result of shared experiences in their group. They commented:

> Kurshid told us about how bad the racist graffiti that was all over our community made her feel and so we saw that we should all do something about it. We had got a lot of strength from working together in this group and so we are challenging the Council about why they haven't done anything to clean it up. It's hard work as they aren't very responsive but we are determined that we will just carry on until they agree to our demands.

For this group then, an issue that they had come to understand through sharing and reflecting on their experiences together had resulted in action that focused on the political level. Their action was driven by equity concerns enacted in solidarity that gave them a voice in resolving issues that were located in their community but had far wider implications politically. Thus a conceptualization of social justice that is based on 'participatory parity' can and should be a goal for adult education if it is to prioritize the voices of those that had previously been excluded.

CONCLUSION

In this chapter I have argued that the dominant 'equality of opportunity' conceptualization of equity that assumes that we live in a fair society is seriously flawed. Instead, I have used the social justice lens offered by Fraser (2008) and her concepts of recognition, redistribution and participatory parity, to think through both the enduring inequalities experienced by learners and also the democratic possibilities opened up to them. In particular, I have shown the importance of using pedagogical approaches that build on the knowledge that participants bring as well as using a distance-travelled method of assessing progress based on the learners' own goals. This social justice approach to adult education has led to positive changes in the recognitive sphere whereas learners had previously experienced institutionalized patterns of disrespect and lack of esteem in both the education system and in their everyday interactions. I have also highlighted how issues of distribution and recognition interpenetrate causally because learners have pointed out how increases in their self-confidence, brought about by being treated with respect, have enabled them to go on to further and higher education or to gain employment thus enabling some action in challenging economic discrimination. Creating a democratic curriculum so that learners are seen as having the right to make decisions about their lives has led to action at the family, community and political levels so changes have also been made in moving towards more equity in this sphere. All this adds up to an education that shifts the focus onto the systemic and contextual factors that operate to limit democratic participation whilst simultaneously ensuring that individuals' personal and social circumstances do not interfere with their potential.

A great deal of research has shown that there have been dramatic rises over the last decade in inequality in incomes and wealth that have negative consequences for society as a whole (Piketty, 2014). Set alongside this the evidence presented here that participation in family literacy programs does lessen social injustices may seem trivial. However, educating in socially just ways through creating learning environments that enable participants to have the necessary material and human resources to achieve their goals, to have their cultural experiences respected and their views acted upon is an important step on the way towards achieving greater social justice.

In the light of this there are a number of implications for adult education arising from using the lens of social justice rather than the dominant equality of opportunity lens. First it provides a way of conceptualizing the impact of participating in literacy programs that goes beyond the usual assessment method of only measuring increases in narrow literacy skills. This is because it demonstrates the importance of social justice as a positive outcome of participation. Second this perspective challenges the individual deficit view of literacy learners. Instead the focus is on the democratic assumption that people are equal in a variety of different ways but social structures operate to deny social justice to some whilst privileging powerful others. Third participation in democratic decision-making is foregrounded as an important

outcome of learning and thus enables more active challenges to contest at both the economic and cultural levels leading to greater participatory parity. Whilst education is not a panacea for all social ills and cannot alone compensate for the inequities of society, I have demonstrated that it can make a difference in creating more equitable conditions for those that have already experienced the greatest injustice.

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LEONA M. ENGLISH

9. RE-INFUSING ADULT EDUCATION WITH A CRITICAL FEMINIST FRAMEWORK

Inspiration from Mary Parker Follett

This chapter argues the necessity to create space for a critical feminist perspective not only for the good of adult education but for the good of the global community as well. Feminist theorizing, especially around issues of power and collective change, can contribute greatly to our creation of this space, especially to understand women's learning and activism within the larger international sphere and contribute to the global project of active citizenship. Such theorizing, inspired by giants such as hooks (2000), needs to be reclaimed as a part of the adult education toolbox so our conversations and dialogue are always grounded and challenged by ideas, and complex and deep thinking. This must be accompanied by a strong adult education focus built on theory, practice, activism, and community, highlighting teaching practices and contexts where adult educators themselves learn informally and nonformally.

As established earlier (English & Irving, 2015), there is a continuing need to draw from and further contribute to a literature on women and learning, especially from a critical, political and engaged perspective, namely feminism. Issues of women, learning and resistance continue to matter, and despite conservative rhetoric (e.g., Sandberg, 2013), a deliberate focus on women, gender and learning, as well as a more nuanced view of power, is required to address the recurring myth that adult education has moved beyond the need for attention to women. In response, this chapter argues for the importance of a feminist analysis of the nexus of women, power and possibility drawing on a major theorist of power – Mary Parker Follett (1868–1933), a community-based educator and lecturer in the early 20th century (Follett, 1924, 1941). Follett's stress on collective action and the co-creation of power undergirds her understanding of democracy as an ongoing project and of power as an integral part of human relations.

FEMINISM AND ADULT EDUCATION

First, though, a word about the general relevance of feminism to the overall adult education project. Clearly, not all adult educators are drawn to an emphasis on radical social change that feminist adult educators like Butterwick, Taber, and

Clover have led and have written about (see English & Irving, 2015). In its stead, humanism, long the mainstay of our field in education contexts, has encouraged a personal and individual focus; while in certain respects laudable, it has sometimes championed a stress on safe and secure teaching and learning practices and efforts at self-development and actualization, at the expense of attention to criticality. Witness the emphasis on personal transformative learning in North American contexts to the degree that there are entire journals and annual conferences dedicated exclusively to this stream of research. Yet, it is feminist theorizing and more particularly social transformative efforts that have given support to many of these humanistic efforts, to the point where inclusive education, a focus on the marginalized in learning, and support for personal transformation and creativity have become mainstream practices, without due credit to or positioning within the feminist pedagogy that launched it (Brookfield, 2010). Adult education has been slow to recognize the central and vital role that theoretical and practical efforts of feminism have played in bringing our ideas into the mainstream (English & Irving, 2015).

A contributing factor to the backlash against feminism and to a certain reticence in using the term is the mistaken belief that equality is now the norm and that women have attained full and equal rights (see English & Irving, 2015). Western media is preoccupied with portraying women through self-focused practices such as yoga, relaxation, and self-reflexivity (sans the critical) and of highlighting individual women who have reached the top rung of corporations. Our popular press is so besieged by discussions of women attaining high-ranking corporate status while struggling to balance work and family life that one can be forgiven for thinking that it is 1950 and not the 21st century. The danger of such thinking, of course, is that it is "nostalgia without memory" (p. 30) to use anthropologist Arjun Appadurai's (1996) phrase. We can easily forget that we are global citizens and that our struggles for equality are not over; indeed, we can also forget that there was a struggle and it is ongoing. Western privileging of the "self" moves the focus from the collective and social approach of feminism and its political approach of addressing discriminatory practices and systems, which diminish the whole. A feminist perspective sees adult education in broad terms and is willing to continue contributing to an understanding of education, learning and change.

Despite the lapses in current educational thinking, scholarship published sporadically in the past few decades has been helpful in keeping a collective focus on feminism and learning. When activists Walters and Manicom (1996) issued their edited volume *Gender in Popular Education: Methods for Empowerment,* they were able to highlight feminist-informed popular education methods used in community contexts around the world.

From a complementary sociological perspective, Miles' (2013) edited volume, *Women in a Globalizing World*, analyzed complex development issues for women; like Manicom and Walters (2012), Miles' contributors highlighted the diversity of the spaces claimed by women to promote learning and action, especially in community development contexts. Contributors to Taber's (2015) special issue of

the *Canadian Journal for the Study of Adult Education* also emphasized the links between feminism and the community. In Ireland, scholars such as O'Grady (2018) continued an interest in how women have been working together in the community for collective societal transformation. Yet, much needs to be done to maintain this focus and to expand its reach. One possible solution is to look back to our forebears such as Mary Parker Follett for insight.

WOMEN, GLOBAL CHALLENGES AND DIFFERENT VERSIONS OF FEMINISM

For all these signs of hope, the early 21st century has nevertheless been challenging for those pursuing feminist approaches to adult education. Sociologists Eichler et al. (2010) have made this point as have English and Irving (2015). Eichler (2005) herself pushed back at increasing corporatization in adult education by studying women's housework as the site of valuable informal learning, calling for even more attention to the everyday nature of women's learning. Despite important scholarship like hers, feminist adult education concerns are not at the forefront of adult education scholarship. For instance, in 2018, the editors of the decennial American *Handbook of Adult and Continuing Education* replaced the chapter on women and feminist analysis with a chapter on LBGTQ issues, which while broader and presumably more inclusive, takes the focus off women as a political category (personal correspondence with the author). Such a stance is troubling since the reality of women's position globally remains very unequal. For instance, UNESCO's (2016) *3rd Global Report on Adult Learning and Education* observed that "The majority of those excluded from school are girls, with 9.7% of the world's girls out of school, compared to 8.3% of boys. Likewise, the majority (63%) of adults with low literacy skills are women" (p. 4). With such a basic issue as women's literacy on the table, the stakes continue to be high. Women and girls continue to be disproportionately affected by issues such as literacy, climate change and even disability (UNESCO-UIS, 2018). Stromquist (2013) has shown that even UNESCO has fallen short of its commitments to women. Its global conference, CONFINTEA VI, in Belém, Brazil in 2009, did not focus any of its recommendations on women, save for indirectly referring to it in one place as "participation, inclusion and equity" (p. 32). Clearly, the need to focus on collective change and action for women needs global as well as local impetus and support.

An immediate challenge is attracting young women to feminism and its concerns. Susan Bracken (2008) notes that one of the most difficult aspects of her teaching is naming it as feminist and of having her students engage with the term; she reports that some of her undergraduate students find the term problematic and dated, and associate it exclusively with radical protests. Bracken struggles with whether to call the work feminist and whether to insist with advancing her feminist theory and pedagogy in a higher education context which may for some students seem to be disconnected from oppression, poverty and literacy issues and which may make the political goals of feminism seem foreign. It may also be true that the neoliberal and

right-wing agenda of "learning for earning" pervades higher education, making it difficult for debt-saddled students to attend to critical issues that seemingly do not involve them. Education becomes the commodity of the knowledge economy where the market dictates what learning is valuable or saleable.

Arguably, second wave feminist language and arguments, which grounded writers such as Miles (2013) and Manicom and Walters (2012), are in need of redressing and re-invigorating. In part, this is an acknowledgment that younger feminists, especially those in adult education, did not live through the 1970s, and have divergent interests.

LOOKING BACKWARDS; LOOKING FORWARDS

With this current context of scholarship and practice as a prelude, I propose looking backwards to the sources available pre-second wave feminism, as a way to find inspiration for this decade in adult education. Though such an intellectual approach may initially seem somewhat counter-intuitive, it may provide resources that can help us reengage with feminism, especially with its theorizing about power, the key to understanding major education and learning dilemmas, especially as they affect life in the community. A key feminist source that has been overlooked, especially in North America, is Mary Parker Follett, who has been claimed by scholars in the management sciences, despite the fact that much of her early working career was in community organizing and social change in inner city Boston. Interestingly, adult educators Preskill and Brookfield (2009) drew on her ideas of power in their book on theories of leadership and social change, but they have yet to look at her overall contributions to adult education and learning. Somehow, Follett has escaped the eye of mainstream adult education practices and thinking, at least in North America, a situation that needs addressing, especially given her insights about power. It is also fair to say that our field needs to mine the insights of its own people for its own theoretical purposes.

Feminist theorizing (and the absence thereof) can contribute greatly to our understanding of women's learning and activism within the sphere. In focusing on the practice of the adult educator teaching and learning such as Follett did in the inner city, there is a possibility of a deeper examination of Eyben's (2014) tension of "working within existing paradigms or changing them" (p. 160), in order to present possibilities for bona fide inclusion and participation in learning and action. Feminist learning and citizen's learning are intertwined: both involve the ways people come together to create a collective understanding of social conditions in order to claim and open up spaces for participation and to change power relations.

Feminist theorizing and feminist adult education is, of course, not distinct from the adult education field. Its concerns ought to be those of the field in general – dealing with difference, marginalization, participatory engagement, and progress. Feminist adult education would be richer for looking back to the insights of women such as Follett. In the current attempt to unite with other causes, to find multiple heuristic lenses, to struggle for the rights of learners, we have seemingly foregone

special attention to women; such de-politicization means that women's needs and causes are increasingly hidden. In focusing on women as a distinct political category and group, and using a politically infused feminism as a critical lens, we can find spaces of hope.

Follett's theory, especially that developed in her book *Creative Experience* (1924) starts from her contradictory experience of being born into an elite Quaker family in Massachusetts, and yet dedicating her early years to building and strengthening community centres in the troubled Roxbury neighborhood of inner city Boston. An intellectual, lesbian and graduate of what is now the prestigious Radcliffe College, the sister school of Harvard University which did not then admit women, Follett knew firsthand the challenges of inequality in society. Although she never held a university position, she ably used her community experience and her many invitations to address groups, to deepen public awareness and to record her own insights and theories of power. That her ideas have not been fully unpacked for adult education, and for feminism in particular, is a shame. In her lifetime, she gave public lectures and wrote extensively; her publications include *The Speaker of the House of Representatives* (1896); *The New State: Group Organization the Solution of Popular Government* (1918); *Dynamic Administration: The Collected Papers of Mary Parker Follett* (1941); *The Illusion of Final Authority: Freedom and Co-Ordination: Lectures in Business Organization* (1954).

Mining afresh the writing of Mary Parker Follett may indeed provide new insight for adult education, which is also interested in educating and leading organizations. Follett's theory addresses the community – politics, school, neighborhood – which are the central sites of adult education practice. One of her seemingly benign insights is that there is need for people in the community to talk to each other, to break down barriers, in order to address collective concerns and to negotiate conflict (Follett, 1941). At heart, she believed in the democratic process, whereby the people most affected by particular problems need to work together to figure out their own issues and solutions. Key in her practice and theorizing was her refusal to defer to experts and her insistence on the need for engagement in collective work and decision making to effect change. For example, she thought that the day school buildings ought to be used as neighborhood centers where people in the community could come together face to face to plan and move forward, a fairly basic idea that is still meeting resistance today. In her willingness to engage the other, to put forth realizable solutions, and to prioritize participatory processes, Follett's ideas unfolded in a similar way to those of feminism which also privileges collective struggle for social change. Although one might argue that she herself did not politicize her work or thinking fully, we might also say that for her time she was both ingenious and effective; as a result of her steady and committed leadership, the community center idea took hold in Boston and surrounding areas, as well as across the United States (Tonn, 2013). She chose strategic thinking as her modus operandi and the everyday world as her locus, allowing her to reach ordinary people and to create a change in thinking about women, collective action and power. Her approach was to be

directly involved in the mundane world of community centers, literally bringing groups together to talk and plan about issues that affected them. She recognized that being with vulnerable populations in the inner city and helping them find collective solutions to their problems was important.

Perhaps best known of Follett's ideas on power, and perhaps the most misused, was the concept of "power with", not "power over" (Follett, 1941; Mott, 2015). A practicing Quaker, Follett wanted to look at how to work with strengths and difference to enhance society and promote peace, despite the multiple social and economic barriers one encountered. In her book *Creative Experience* (1924), she outlined her aspirations of "power with" practice to reach a point in our communities and workplaces where we are actively engaged in creating decisions and enacting plans to move forward. For instance, in her inner city work, she saw great value in sitting opposing sides down together to dialogue about controversial issues. Her books drew on her community organizing experience and showed how dialogue with people who are different can help create new awareness and possibility. Despite the obvious critique that true equality can be elusive, her ideas are refreshing in that they came from the community and were part of an ongoing community-based effort to work together for change (Preskill & Brookfield, 2009). Significantly, she was also not averse to using so-called power or authority positions as she served on committees to create a minimum wage for workers and she headed up a national community center organization. As a participant in these groups, she was able to infuse her ideas and strengthen civil life.

Though her work experience was limited to the community, Follett readily applied her theories and practices to business and management. She (1924) explained her theory saying that power:

> is the problem of industry, of politics, of international affairs. But our task is to not to learn where to place power; it is how to develop power. We frequently hear nowadays of 'transferring power' as the panacea for all our ills … but the transference of power has been the whole course of history – power passing to priests, or king or barons, to council or soviet. Are we satisfied to continue this puss-in-the-corner game? … Genuine power can only be grown. (1924, pp. xii–xiii)

Her idea was to avoid a top down approach and to find ways for workers to come together to create new solutions. As a strategic thinker, she identified power as the central social problem and she had unique ways of thinking about it – she saw it as something to be developed with others, not over or against them. In her words,

> … genuine power is capacity …. The main problem of the workers … is how much power they can themselves grow. The matter of workers' control which is often thought of as a matter of how much managers will be willing to give up, is really as much a matter for the workers, of how much they will be able to assume. (Follett, 1941, p. 109)

Follett (1941) felt that "integration" (p. 45) or the meeting of all sides in labor disputes, community debates, and personal interactions was the only way to create power. She saw the other choices such as domination and compromise to be lesser alternatives and to fall short in the long run.

> What happens to a man, *in* a man, when an order is given in a disagreeable manner by a foreman, head of department, his immediate superior in store, bank or factory? The man addressed feels that his self-respect is attacked, that one of his most inner sanctuaries is invaded. He loses his temper or becomes sullen or is on the defensive; he begins thinking of his 'rights' – a fatal attitude for any of us. (cited in Tonn, 2013, p. 400)

In Follett's eyes, power arises, so our educational and organizing job is to grow this power: to take or seize the moment to create a new social order. This concept anticipates later thinking on power such as that of Foucault (English & Mayo, 2012). Follett complemented her primary ideas on power with her understanding of "circular response" which acknowledges the ways in which one person's ideas interact with and influence the next, how a group's actions inform and interact with each other to create new possibilities and formulations (see Preskill & Brookfield, 2009). The "power" embedded in this formulation helps to advance our understanding of the collective change process and helps debunk narcissistic individualism that prevents change. Embedded in the theory of circular response is the recognition of the transformative aspects of conflict and the creative tension that is often the bedrock of change and growth, a key idea for feminist adult education. Sadly, Follett's theory of power has sometimes been reduced to the win-win philosophy of business practice, which is a very minimalist reading of her thinking. For her, community organizing was deeply democratic and sometimes painful work and was not done in a quest for increased profit. Rather, its end goal was collective resistance and change. This clearly is a feminist idea that sits well with the ordinary educational tasks of the adult educator engaged in meaningful community work. We could say the same of adult education work in higher education contexts, global initiatives, community development and non-profit leadership.

Follett's ideas are helpful to adult educators interested in feminism as they parallel feminism's struggle to create equality and to have democratic principles at the core. Her struggles as an intellectual woman in a patriarchal society infuse her work and ideas, challenging us to bring energy to our collective struggles. She was not known as an activist, yet her very work, ideas and forward thinking on power and collectivity were indeed oriented to social transformation. In many ways, Follett's seemingly basic ideas on community and power are brilliant in their simplicity. These ideas have substance in that they acknowledge the complexity of everyday life and promote a sense of self as well as community. They reflect a deep sense of meaning and orientation to transformation, key feminist ideas. Yet, despite all her writing, one wishes she had spent more time in theorizing power and applying it to

multiple contexts; the fact that she did not have an academic position likely limited her time for writing and developing these ideas.

While Follett was not writing only about women, her own lived experience of marginalization as a gay woman working outside the academy with vulnerable populations rings true for feminism which privileges those disproportionately affected by problematic social, economic and cultural issues. We can only speculate on how her feminism would have been enacted in the public sphere if she were living now. The only alternative is to mine the ideas she has left us.

The precarious nature of women's lives globally forces adult educators to keep their focus on women. In the attempts of adult educators to focus on multiple identity issues, and to support gender mainstreaming we have obscured women's issues and theories of power. Jenevieve Mannell (2012) pointed out that after Beijing World Conference in 1995, there was a deliberate effort to mainstream women's issues (and not separate them out), which often led to the inclusion of women becoming little more than a technical task – one more box on a checklist to be filled in to show that one was diverse and inclusive. Inspired by Follett, we might do better to confront the issues and work with them directly as she advocated and practiced. Rather than shy away from controversy, she engaged it and worked through the differences.

Meanwhile, we can see that the global issues before us are increasing complex for women. The issues played out in the American election in 2016 and those of the 2018 #MeToo Movement are a not so subtle reminder that feminist issues are still at the forefront of the public agenda. Mary Parker Follett's insights can inform a feminism of co-created power, inclusion, and community and help to bring adult education into the world as a key hermeneutical lens from which to view many crucial aspects of our collective life. Our challenge is not to see it as an aside to adult education but as a key part of our toolbox; similarly, feminism depends on education. bell hooks (2000) notably said, "Most people have no understanding of the myriad ways feminism has positively changed all our lives. Sharing feminist thought and practice sustains the feminist movement. Feminist knowledge is for everybody" (p. 24).

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KERRY HARMAN

10. ENACTING EQUALITY

Rethinking Emancipation and Adult Education with Jacques Rancière

INTRODUCTION

The organization of much adult education, whether it be vocational, further, community, higher or civic education, is often underpinned by liberal-humanist ideals associated with the Enlightenment. In this tradition, education is understood as *the means* for providing a way out of darkness and ignorance and this is closely linked with the notion that education emancipates. In other words, education, whether it takes place in universities, community groups, or workplaces is understood as contributing to the ongoing march of social progress and it does this through producing more knowledgeable individuals and societies. To this end, critical theory has been a key resource for adult educators interested in equality, democracy and emancipation as it draws attention to power and its relation to oppression.

However, the emancipatory ideals of education have increasingly come under attack, along with the hope that critical theory will contribute to progressive social change (e.g., Bingham & Biesta, 2010; Cooper, 2014; Kompridis, 2006; Latour, 2004). Increasing diversity and complexity in society has resulted in a less unified understanding around what constitutes progressive social change and transformation (Alhadeff-Jones, 2017), and the notion of a universal truth seems much less certain. At a time when there is a growing skepticism towards experts and elites, as seen in the current exploitation of 'post-truth' politics by the populist right (Friedman, 2017; Hull, 2018; Runciman, 2016); with inequality and xenophobia on the rise in many countries (Dorling, 2015; Winkler, 2017); and the issue of global warming rolling on in a seemingly unrestrained way (Cox, 2018; Nuccitelli, 2018) do we, as Wildemeersch (2014, p. 823) asks, need to "redefine what critical theories and practices are about?" And if so, what other approaches might be possible for those interested in equality, democracy and emancipation?

One theorist questioning widely shared assumptions about emancipation is Jacques Rancière. Rancière (1991, p. 7) proposes that conceiving equality and democracy as the *end* goal of education contributes to 'stultification' rather than emancipation. There is a growing scholarship in the field of education on the work of Rancière, with much of this literature examining the alternative conception of emancipation he provides and exploring the implications for education (e.g., Bingham & Biesta, 2010; Galloway, 2012; Harman, 2017a; Pelletier, 2009; Simons & Masschelein, 2010).

This chapter contributes to this scholarship by thinking with Rancière to explore the possibilities for doing adult education and research. In the first part of the chapter, Rancière's alternative conception of emancipation is introduced. In the second part the possibilities for doing and researching adult education using Rancièrian concepts are explored.

AN ALTERNATIVE CONCEPTION OF EMANCIPATION

For many adult educators, it could be said that effecting social change and transformation is our raison d'être (e.g., Dewey, 1966; Tawney, 1931; Williams, 1965), and this is often closely linked with an emancipatory ideal of education embedded in Enlightenment thinking. Even more radical perspectives on adult education, which have as their goal the more equal distribution of wealth, opportunities, and privileges within a society, tend to be underpinned by an understanding that (critical) education emancipates (e.g., Brookfield & Holst, 2011; Mayo, 2015). Indeed, it could be said that the hope of the critical tradition is that a *better understanding* of how power *really* works will lead to the mobilization of oppressed groups in their struggle for emancipation. Much of this work is underpinned by the Marxist notion of false consciousness and, from this perspective, a better understanding of oppression is facilitated by a 'knower' who understands the true operation of power (Biesta, 2010; Breuing, 2011). In other words, one is *led* to emancipation by the critical educator/political theorist.

However, Rancière (1981, p. 7) points out that the delay embedded in such "explicatory" pedagogic practices produces "stultification" and is constituted by a relation of dependence rather than emancipation. And nowhere is this more evident than in the academy, where 'the teacher' is positioned as "the knower" and students as "the novice". Rancière argues that this particular ordering of relations works to produce an ongoing temporal delay with an underlying assumption that just a little more knowledge and the student will eventually become "the knower". He describes the assumption that the explicatory practices of the teacher are emancipatory as "the pedagogical myth" with the problem being: "The pedagogical myth divides the world into two. It says there is an inferior intelligence and a superior one" (1991, p. 7). Furthermore, using the example of continuing education in the late 1800s, he discusses the institutionalization of equality in education, whereby the task of education was "making an equal society out of unequal men" (p. 133).

Rancière also proposes that the same hierarchical ordering of intelligence underpins much critical theory. Indeed, *The Ignorant Schoolmaster* can be read as a thinly veiled critique of the public intellectual who contributes to the ongoing separation of knowledge into higher and lower orders by revealing the truth of oppression (Ross, 1991). These practices divide the world into two: those who know and those who are ignorant and oppressed; and assume the latter need to be led by 'the knower' in the task of recognizing their own oppression before they can be emancipated. In other words, a higher-level knowledge is understood as providing

a pathway to freedom and this is achieved through revealing the truth of oppression (and inequality). For Rancière, this leads to a "pedagogicized' society" (1991, p. 130) and reinforces inequality.

There are many similarities between Rancière's critique of the public intellectual and Freire's work on critical pedagogy (1996), where dialogic and participatory techniques are the preferred pedagogic approach. Both draw attention to active knowers and the importance of non-hierarchical relations between teachers and students. Furthermore, Freire's critique of a "narrative" element in much pedagogy (1996, p. 71), is very similar to Rancière's critique of explicatory practices. However, for Freire, the educational experience provides the opportunity for the oppressed to become conscious of the previously hidden operation of power and this is the first stage in achieving emancipation. This leads Bingham and Biesta (2010) to contend that implicit in this view is the assumption that emancipation (and equality) can be achieved only after the truth of oppression and its relation to power is revealed.

In contrast, Rancière argues that rather than thinking about emancipation as a goal to be reached in the future, which produces inequality in the present, equality must be enacted in the here and now. The "circle of emancipation must be *begun*" (1991, p. 16, author's emphasis) and this entails the presupposition and verification of an "equality of intelligence" (p. 38). For Rancière, an equality of intelligence assumes the common capacity to "invent objects, stories and arguments" (2014, p. 279) and this assumption provides the starting point for further action. There can be no temporal delay as equality and emancipation is something one enacts in the present. It is an act rather than a possession. Moreover, it must be demanded rather than waiting for it to be given as the latter incorporates a temporal delay, which produces inequality. And because it is an act (rather than a possession), equality needs to be constantly remade. It must be made and remade in order for it to be sustained.

And this was the great discovery made by Jacotot, the protagonist in *The Ignorant Schoolmaster* (Rancière, 1991). In telling the story of Jacotot and his accidental discovery of the principles of 'universal teaching', Rancière directs attention to the performativity of pedagogic practices (Pelletier, 2009). When Jacotot commenced teaching at the University of Louvain in the early 1800s, he was unable to pass on his knowledge of his subject to his students as he could not speak Flemish. Out of necessity, he used a bilingual copy of a book in his classes, the *Telemaque*, and to his surprise this method of teaching was extremely effective. This experience led Jacotot to realize that we *all* have the common capacity to learn by experimentation and "groping blindly" and that this is made possible by an "equality of intelligence". There is not a higher and lower order of intelligence, rather, the scientist and the artisan learn in the same way. For both it is a question of "observing, comparing and combining, of making and noticing how one has done it" (p. 36). And when Jacotot made this discovery:

> There was nothing else to do but to persist in indicating the extravagant path that consists in seizing in every sentence, in every act, the side of equality.

> Equality was not an end to attain, but a point of departure, a supposition to maintain in every circumstance. Never would truth speak up for it. Never would equality exist except in its verification and at the price of being verified always and everywhere. (p. 138)

A key concept introduced by Rancière is his notion of "the distribution of the sensible" and an aesthetic dimension of politics (2004). The distribution of the sensible is the ordering of the social (Rancière refers to this as the "police order"), which creates divisions in terms of what is sayable and not sayable, what is visible and not visible, and what can be heard and what is unable to be heard. It is in this sense that Rancière draws attention to the ontological dimension of politics and questions 'what is able to exist?' in a particular ordering of the social. Who and what can (and cannot) be seen, heard, listened to, thought about, named? For Rancière politics involves reconfiguring the distribution of the sensible and this is achieved when the previously excluded demand equality and become part of the commons. Directing attention to equality in the here and now is a very different political strategy to that available in certain versions of critical theory, which focus on the relationship between oppression and the hidden operation of power and, as I propose below, this provides great possibility for adult educators.

However, not all adult education theorists, nor all political theorists, agree with Rancière's political strategy. For example, Alhadeff-Jones (2017), who is interested in how education might contribute to sustaining emancipation, sees Rancière's focus on the ongoing need to enact equality in the present as a limitation rather than a strength. However, the notion of achieving sustained emancipation implies a social ordering without hierarchy, which seems unlikely. Rather, Rancière (2017, unpaged) speaks of equality as a "world in the making". It is "a world born of specific breaches in the dominant commonsense, of interruptions of the 'normal' way of the world". In other words, the present world of hierarchy provides the 'stage' where the worlds of inequality and equality are able to meet. Rancière's focus on performativity and the need for the *ongoing* enacting of equality in order for it to be sustained is the great possibility offered by this approach. This strategy not only makes emancipation in the present possible, it makes it a necessity – there can be no temporal delay, no deferral. This is a political project in which all adult educators can and must take part.

POSSIBILITIES FOR DOING ADULT EDUCATION AND RESEARCH

So, what might enacting equality in the present actually look like in adult education? Again, *The Ignorant Schoolmaster* provides a useful guide. Rancière is not suggesting a world without teachers, rather he proposes a world without explication (Bingham & Biesta, 2010; Wildemeersch, 2014). A world where there is no splitting the common capacity to think and speak and create stories into a world which assumes a higher and lower order of intelligence. This requires the teacher to be 'ignorant'. In other words, the ignorant schoolmaster does not teach their knowledge to students.

Rather, by leaving their knowledge out of the pedagogic relation, the 'knower' – 'not knower' relationship of explicatory pedagogy is able to be reconfigured.

A key concept for Rancière is the notion of aesthetic experience (2006, 2014). This is a form of engagement which does not involve a hierarchical relation and enables the appearance of something new. An important mechanism for removing hierarchy from the relationship is by providing a setting where students engage with texts (in the broadest sense of the word). This might include books but it could also include theatre, music, dance, films, poetry, artwork, television and other cultural objects. For example, when reading a book, one reads and makes their own interpretation of the text. The student uses their own intelligence to interpret the book and thus the book provides "the egalitarian intellectual link" (1991, p. 13). The notion of translation is key here and the capacity, which Rancière argues is common to all humans, to perceive, make connections and create meaning. Furthermore, the 'ignorant schoolmaster' does not verify what the student has found. No feedback is provided on the student's interpretation, rather the ignorant schoolmaster verifies: "that the student has searched" and "has paid attention" (p. 31). The ignorant schoolmaster will ask: "what do you think about it?" (p. 36). The purpose is to encourage students to be attentive and, to this end, practices such as searching, experimenting, researching and storytelling are employed. The goal is to extend 'moments of equality' through its enactment (Rancière, 2017).

Rancière provides many examples in *The Ignorant Schoolmaster* of aesthetic experience, including the enactment of equality in painting (p. 65) and poetry (p. 67). In a section titled *The Community of Equals* (p. 71) he describes an emancipated community as "a society of artists" which:

> … would repudiate the division between those who know and those who don't, between those who possess or don't possess the property of intelligence. It would only know minds in action: people who do, who speak about what they are doing, and who thus transform all their works into ways of demonstrating the humanity that is in them as in everyone'.

Wildemeersch (2014) further explores the notion of aesthetic experience and what it offers to adult educators drawing on Rancière's notion of 'the emancipated spectator' (2009). In engaging with an artwork (but it could be theatre or music or television), the spectator is not passive. Instead, the spectator provides an interpretation of the artwork and this engagement is without hierarchy. The painter or sculptor does not tell the spectator how the work should be interpreted. The interpretation is 'active' and involves the translation and appropriation of the artist's story and making it one's own. An equality of intelligence is enacted in this relationship where neither the intelligence of the artist nor the intelligence of the spectator dominates.

Rancière (and Wildemeersch) are both interested in the creation of democratic moments, which provide the opportunity to experience equality: "One need only *learn* how to be equal men in an unequal society" (1991, p. 133, my emphasis).

This involves transgressing boundaries (or social positionings), including the ongoing crossing of occupational and disciplinary boundaries, through a process of 'disidentification' and a refusal to take up a particular social position that has been allocated. It is transgression which enables the 'distribution of the sensible' to be reconfigured:

> It is thus impossible for shoemakers just to make shoes, that they not also be, in their manner, grammarians, moralists, or physicists. (Rancière, 1991, p. 34)

The above text could be applied to other occupations. For example, it is impossible for hairdressers not to be psychologists, carers and scientists; it is impossible for cooks not to be chemists, artists and herbalists; and so on. This way of understanding the world disrupts the notion of a linear view of progress and the associated divisions produced by this way of thinking:

> … as long as peasants and artisans form moral, mathematical, or physical notions based on their environmental routine or their chance encounters, the reasoned march of progress will be doubly at risk: slowed down by men [sic] of routine and superstition, or disrupted by the haste of violent men [sic]. (Rancière, 1991, p. 34)

Following Rancière, the adult educator creates the space for democratic moments but this is not about achieving consensus in the group, rather dissensus (Rancière, 2010). Rather than a community of shared practice and meaning, the enactment of equality contributes to "the invention of specific moments where the very landscape of the perceptible, thinkable, doable is radically reframed" (Rancière, 2017, unpaged) and a community of difference is produced. The removal of established boundaries and hierarchies results in variation and hybridity and the production of new meanings and subjectivities (Lewis, 2009). In other words, what was not previously able to exist is now able to appear.

Furthermore, rather than research approaches which attempt to reveal the truth of oppression, Rancière suggests a very different political strategy. Instead of attempting to mobilize action for emancipation in the future, a common equality of intelligence should be verified in research accounts. This would include drawing attention to democratic moments where enacting equality disrupts the 'normal' world of hierarchy with its ongoing separation of the world into a 'higher' and 'lower' order of intelligence. For example, Rancière's notion of disidentification, which is the refusal to take up allocated social positions, is useful for researching learning in and through everyday workplace practices (Harman, 2017b). Rather than accounts which reinforce a view of knowing (and accepting) one's place, the crossing of occupational, disciplinary, temporal, geographic and sensory boundaries at work should be verified and documented. These accounts verify the new modes of subjectivity brought into effect through transgression. This could entail the refusal to take up particular gendered or classed subject positions associated with occupations,

for example nurses as carer, sweetheart and angel; teacher as knower, judge and expert; cleaners as low skilled; and so on.

For Rancière, the refusal to be positioned provides an opportunity for the enactment of equality and a reconfiguration of the distribution of the sensible. This is where the world of inequality and the world of equality are able to meet on the same stage. For example, the hierarchical organization of most workplaces into 'the manager' and 'the managed' and the inherent separation of a higher and lower order intelligence this entails, provides an ideal site for verifying the moments when these boundaries are crossed and equality is enacted. Rancière provides an example of transgressive boundary crossing in *The Nights of Labor* (1989) where workers, during the 1830 revolution in France, transgressed temporal and occupational boundaries to produce worker-run newspapers, letters, journals, and worker-poetry. Rather than sleeping during the night and restoring their bodies for a full day of labour, these worker-intellectuals demanded equality by engaging in intellectual pursuits and refusing to be positioned simply as 'workers'. While some political theorists criticize Rancière's approach as romantic (e.g. McNay, 2014), the *verification* of the enactment of a utopian vision in the present is precisely his point. And this point has been taken up and explored by various authors (e.g., Kompridis, 2014; Cooper, 2014).

A focus on aesthetic experience and the notion of non-hierarchical engagement opens up pretty much everything in terms of exploring adult learning as the boundaries embedded in the division of the world into 'the knower' – 'the ignorant' binary begin to crumble and other ways of knowing are able to appear (Clover, 2010; Manicom & Walters, 2012; Rigney, 1999; Smith, 2012). For example, in contrast to the prevailing focus on reflection on experience in workplace pedagogies, which could be understood as providing a particular mode of 'doing' experience that embeds hierarchy (Bradbury et al., 2009; Michelson, 1996), an exploration of experience and how it is 'made up', including the ways different senses are connected with experience, opens up a vast terrain to explore. This approach contributes to more expansive accounts of learning and experience rather than assuming learning only takes place in particular spaces and at particular times (e.g. Ruitenberg, 2012). Further, if learning is reconfigured as moments where equality is experienced this presents possibilities which are not usually documented in the literature on learning at work (Harman, 2016, 2017b). If the exploration of aesthetic engagement is incorporated as an approach to researching learning, for example, the ways we engage with books, films, artworks (and so on) and the ways these are translated and made into one's own story (Jarvis, 2018), the possibilities are vast. The focus shifts to the verification of equality and documenting the ways experimentation and creativity contribute to the appearance of the new. Furthermore, the very separation of adult education practice and adult education research is challenged in this approach.

THE FRAGILITY OF EQUALITY (BUT ALSO THE FRAGILITY OF INEQUALITY)

In summary, Rancière points to two very different political strategies for achieving emancipation and both are completely intertwined with pedagogic and research practices. The first is the view underpinning many critical approaches in adult education where it is believed that revealing the truth of inequality in the present will lead to equality in the future. This is the world of explication. An alternative is enacting equality in the present. Rancière insists on the latter approach as the former results in the ongoing enactment of inequality in the present in order to achieve emancipation in the future. In drawing attention to the performative function of pedagogic practices, Rancière enables us to rethink how we might do adult education. Adult educators are intricately entwined in ontological politics and our pedagogic practices are absolutely integral to achieving equality.

While the separation of the world into higher and lower orders of intelligence by way of explicatory pedagogy is completely embedded in the 'pedagogicized' society, the fact that inequality also needs to be enacted to remain durable provides great possibility. Just as equality is fragile, so too is inequality, as both must be enacted. The ubiquity of the 'pedagogicized' society means that there are multiple points (or nodes) for educators to enact equality. And this means adult educators do not need to wait for emancipation in the future, there is no need to defer. Instead, we must act now so the "circle of emancipation can be begun".

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MICHEL ALHADEFF-JONES

11. TIME, POWER AND THE EMANCIPATORY AIMS OF ADULT EDUCATION

INTRODUCTION

Adult Education and the Fluidity of Power Dynamics

In Western societies, the experience of time has probably never been as ordered, controlled and disciplined than it is today. It appears in adult education through the rigidity imposed on schedules and planning, or through the age requirements defined by educational policies. At the same time, the temporalities of adult life are more often experienced as discontinuous, troubled and chaotic than before. Nowadays, the evolution of adulthood is characterized by the destandardization of the life course, the heterogeneous rhythms that divide the everyday life (e.g., family, work, studies), or the frequency of organizational and technological changes disrupting daily routines. The effects of such dynamics have become more intense, influenced by the preponderance of 'speed'. Thus, rigid temporal frameworks, coupled with a sense of urgency lead to the experience of stress, burnout or the compulsive repetition of monotonous behaviors. As time scarcity and the acceleration of learning invade the everyday practice of adult education (e.g., Plumb, 1999; Wlodkowski, 2003), they jeopardize the possibility to exercise sound judgment and critical reflection. With the compression of temporal perspectives to the immediate present, they make it more difficult for people to revisit their past, anticipate their future, or assert their own rhythms of development. If the influences of temporal constraints have a long history in education (Alhadeff-Jones, 2017), their current configurations express something significant about how power dynamics and alienation may be experienced. They reveal social inequalities in the way adults experience time and their struggle to articulate the competing rhythms that pace their lives. They also raise questions about how people learn to sustain the development of their autonomy through time and how they regulate their sense of agency when facing conflicting temporalities.

Considering such a context, the purpose of this chapter is to revisit emancipation and the democratic ideals of adult education, questioning their temporal dimensions. This reflection assumes that the temporal features of the environment we are living in, and the rhythms that currently shape both adulthood and adult education should become a focus of critical inquiry and praxis. One of the specificities of this contribution is that it assumes simultaneously the social and political nature of this

topic, as well as its physical, biological, psychological and philosophical dimensions. The experience of time relates to heterogeneous forms of change, occurring at the different levels of one's existence. From an educational perspective, the relation between time and emancipation carries an epistemic complexity. Echoing a long tradition of interdisciplinary research around human rhythms and their political dimensions (e.g., Alhadeff-Jones, 2017; Bachelard, 1950; Barthes, 2002/2012; Lefebvre, 2004; Michon, 2005), and inspired by original contributions developed in the French-speaking field of adult education (e.g., Ardoino, 2000; Pineau, 1986, 2000; Lesourd, 2006), this chapter intends therefore to demonstrate both the relevance of reinterpreting emancipatory processes, focusing on the fluidity of power dynamics, and the specificity of analyzing their rhythms from the perspective of adult education (Alhadeff-Jones, 2017).

Four Postulates to Envision the Complex Relations between Time and Emancipation in Adult Education

To envision how the exercise of power relates to the experience of time and how they affect the complexity of adult learning and development, the reflection conducted in this chapter formulates four postulates. (i) The first one relies on the assumption that the exercise of power always relates to the experience of natural and cultural temporal constraints. To understand how power dynamics unfold and how they affect the praxis of adult education, it is therefore critical to analyze the emergence of successive, concomitant and intertwined strategies implemented to control those temporal constraints. (ii) A second postulate assumes that a cultural shift has marked late modernity and currently affects the way people experience and struggle with the temporalities of their life, including their experience of lifelong learning. To describe and interpret such disempowering experiences, the notions of 'temporal alienation' and 'schizochrony' are introduced. (iii) A third postulate claims that the aim of emancipatory education should be envisioned through the development of a critical capacity to interpret and challenge the way time is experienced and meanings are constructed around it. (iv) The fourth postulate is to conceive emancipation in itself as a phenomenon that unfolds through time and that reveals the idiosyncrasy of one's own development. Emancipatory education relates to people's capacity to regulate the ever-evolving dynamics between autonomy and dependence; it expresses the rhythms through which adults change, grow and transform themselves throughout their lives. This chapter finally proposes to envision further critical development in adult education through the lenses provided by rhythm studies and rhythmanalysis – a dedicated method focusing on the study of lived rhythms – as they may provide resources to imagine innovative educational praxis focusing on the experience of time in the everyday life and throughout the life course.

QUESTIONING THE SOCIAL REGULATION OF TEMPORAL CONSTRAINTS

The Ubiquity of Temporal Constraints

Like social and cultural life, education is determined by physical and living phenomena – whether natural or artificial – whose rhythms influence people's behaviors and interactions. Chronobiologists and chronopsychologists have for instance demonstrated how learning activity is regulated by biological and psychological rhythms that are partly determined genetically (e.g., sleep cycle, attention span) (Koukkari & Sothern, 2006; Testu, 2008). Cosmological and ecological rhythms (e.g., circadian rhythm, cycle of seasons) also impact human activity, through the influence of physical, chemical and biological changes that occur in the environment and that follow their own temporalities. Such phenomena are examples of natural rhythmic influences. Temporal constraints confine, bound, restrict or put into tension the operations involved by human activity, including in education, where they eventually influence the temporalities of individual and collective learning, transformation or development (Alhadeff-Jones, 2017, pp. 51–52). Although they do not manifest power or control *per se*, the way such temporal constraints are regulated is a matter of power dynamics.

Time and Power

How a society defines and controls time is at the core of the way it exercises power (e.g., Adam, 1994; Attali, 1982; Bergmann, 1992; Foucault, 1975/1995; Thompson, 1967). Thus, the primary function of those in power is to give meaning to the multiple times of the world, to name them and to organize collective life based on their rhythms (Attali, 1982, p. 13). As summarized by Bergmann (1992, p. 99):

> Time's ordering character for social life does not arise from the passage of time or the temporal duration of social systems, but from its normative effect on the structure and coordination of behaviour.

For Adam (1994, p. 107):

> As long as we remain part of a society that is structured to the time of clocks and calendars our activities and interaction with others can only escape its pervasive hold to a very limited extent.

Thus, even when human activities are not explicitly referring to the time of clocks and calendars, the constant processes of adjustment that occur between people – consciously or not – translate rhythmic forms of influence that eventually express power dynamics (Michon, 2005). In adult education, such dynamics appear clearly through the experience of temporal pressure, that is the imposition of a specific rhythm to one's activity, due to social, economic or political reasons. Such a pressure appears for instance through the implementation of 'accelerated learning'

in higher education (Wlodkowski, 2003), privileging economical imperatives over pedagogical considerations.

Temporal Discipline, Temporal Norms and the Disorganization of Lived Time

The history of education is characterized by the emergence of successive, concomitant and intertwined strategies implemented to control existing temporal constraints, such as those inherent to the natural world and the human body. Those strategies of control have produced specific forms of temporal constraints that are social and cultural. They reveal conflicting principles, interests and ideals (e.g., temporal efficiency, rhythmic harmony) (Alhadeff-Jones, 2017). Their most prevalent forms appear through the temporalities that organize institutions, such as education. On the one hand, the way they participate in the exercise of power is functional. For instance, the implementation of temporal discipline reduces individual's margins of autonomy through the imposition of fixed schedules, sequences of actions, or the influence of specific rhythms, in order to regulate what would be otherwise perceived as asynchronous, unpredictable or uncontrollable behaviors (e.g., Zerubavel, 1981). On the other hand, social forms of temporal constraints also operate at the symbolic level. The influence of specific representations (e.g., clocks, calendar) binds the social imaginary of time by reducing it to an abstract, quantified, linear, and universal conception. Its dominance may thus limit how the everyday experience of change is appreciated and interpreted (Ardoino, 2000). In the same way, the definition of age norms (e.g., legitimate entry and exit points relative to formal instruction) reinforces temporal standards that influence the way life trajectories are experienced and appreciated. Constraints associated with the shared experience of time do not necessarily come from the imposition of a temporal order. They also appear through the experience of disorganized temporalities. Thus, the increased confusion and disorder inherent to conflicting temporal demands (e.g., family versus working life), as well as the fragmentation and the discontinuities that punctuate the life course (e.g., unemployment, sickness), emerge as disorganizing factors. They tend to increase uncertainty and instability and constitute disempowering experiences that may prevent one from developing a genuine sense of autonomy (Alhadeff-Jones, 2017; Pineau, 2000).

CONSIDERING THE CONTEMPORARY EXPERIENCE OF TEMPORAL ALIENATION

Defining Temporal Alienation

The concept of alienation has been used in social theory to evoke "a loss, a severance from a part that becomes alien, as well as to the independent power that such a lost part acquires over one's own existence" (Martineau, 2015, p. 14). For Marx (1847/1955), working time required in order to produce merchandise is alienating,

partly because it is based on an abstract estimate, opposed to the concrete time experienced by workers. The rationalization of work contributes to the reification of time, which loses its qualitative, changing, and flowing attributes and becomes rigid, delimited, quantified and objectified, according to a mechanical logic, detached from the subjective experience (Lukacs, 1960, cited in Pineau, 2000). Furthermore, working time is alienating because it determines and constrains individual actions (Postone, 1993, p. 215). The tyranny of time in capitalist society remains therefore a central dimension of Marxian analysis and a recurring theme in sociological studies focusing on the role played by the rigidity, the coercion and the regularity imposed through the temporal framework of industrialization (e.g., Adam, 1994).

The New Temporal Imperatives: Speed, Urgency, Acceleration

During the past decades, many authors have revisited this problematic, exploring the effects of temporal alienation through specific notions such as 'speed' (e.g., Hassan, 2009; Virilio, 1977), 'urgency' (e.g., Bouton, 2013), and the 'acceleration' of the everyday life (e.g., Rosa, 2005/2013). Doing so, they provide us with interpretations to grasp the cultural shift that seems to have marked late modernity and currently affects people's experience and struggles with time. Nowadays, conflicts associated with the experience of time (e.g., stress, burnout, lack of work-family balance, monotonous or compulsive repetitive behaviors) express renewed forms of temporal constraints that reveal underlying power dynamics and conflicts of interest. Research is needed in order to critically assess such contributions and discuss how their commonalities and divergences may be articulated. Not everyone is indeed equally equipped to cope with temporal tensions. Gendered inequalities and differences related to class, ethnicity, or age, have to be considered in order to fully grasp the extent to which temporal alienation is experienced. It remains that such an evolution impacts educational practices and determines the way adults regulate the temporalities of their lives and the rhythms of their own development.

Adult Education and the Experience of Schizochrony

In the field of adult education, Pineau (1986, 2000) was among the first to start reflecting on the meaning of *éducation permanente*, as it relates to people's experience of temporal alienation. He proposed the neologism 'schizochrony' (from the Greek *schizo-*, meaning divide, and *chronos*, time) to refer to the various forms of temporal divide that may be experienced and eventually lead individuals to the feeling of being temporally alienated throughout their life, including in the way they relate to their own self-development. Such splits occur for instance between the qualitative aspects of lived time (e.g., the feeling of flow) and the social necessity to remain temporally oriented and therefore quantify and measure one's time (e.g., checking the hour or the date). For Pineau (1986, p. 100), the alienating dimension of the temporal frame imposed by society is omnipresent in the temporal organization of adult education.

Its homogeneous and homogenizing aspects, the monotony of the 'mechanical succession' of days, weeks, months and years, all erase the qualitative differences of lived moments, that could be experienced as heterogeneous opportunities for self-development. If traditional educational theories conceive learning time as uniform and homogeneous (e.g., the course's hour, the daylong training), Pineau's contribution challenges the way they compartmentalize learning and the various meanings it carries. It stresses for instance the role played by alternative temporal patterns, such as the alternance between day and night: "Just as the day is the realm of an education received from others [*hétéro-formation*], the nocturnal realm is that of self-development [*auto-formation*]" (Pineau, 2000, p. 105). Once it is no longer kept separated and lived as if it were strictly free and private, nighttime – including dusk, end-of-the-day transition, evening, dreaming, waking time, sleeplessness and dawn time – provides indeed a privileged moment for the emergence and development of one's own autonomy. By discussing the formative dimension of the 'nocturnal' component of existence, Pineau finally stresses the fact that being able to establish relations between the different moments of one's life carries emancipatory effects.

AIMING AT THE APPROPRIATION OF ONE'S OWN TIME

Articulating Heterogeneous Experiences and Conceptions of Time

One of the common features identified by authors referring to the idea of temporal alienation appears with the disconnection, the 'distorsion' (Rosa, 2010) or the 'decoupling' (Thompson, 1967), that occurs between the 'qualitative' time experienced as meaningful by people, and the quantitative, standardized and abstract time imposed onto their activity, through social dynamics favoring speed, acceleration or the generalization of temporal norms such as urgency. According to Postone's (1993) reinterpretation of Marx's critical theory, one of the specificities of capitalism is that people are dominated by abstractions, rather than by other individuals or groups. Capitalism throws people into abstract time and work, that become the measure of everything (e.g., labor time as an objective temporal norm) (Postone, 1993, p. 215). From this perspective, what appears to be at stake is the individual and collective capacity to relate and articulate heterogeneous experiences and conceptions of time, especially as they may be conceived as disjointed, contradictory or antagonistic with each other. Rosa evokes Taylor's (2006, as cited in Rosa, 2010) idea of 'resonance' in order to envision an existentialist and emotional strategy of emancipation centered on the way people relate to the world around them. From an epistemic perspective, following Morin's ethic (2008), we could also refer to the notion of 'reliance', as a capacity to articulate ideas and experiences, which would remain otherwise disconnected, fragmented or compartmentalized (Alhadeff-Jones, 2017). In order to resist against the autonomization of an abstracted and generalized conception of time, that imposes itself onto people's life and contributes to a feeling of alienation, strategies of reliance should be found and promoted. They may for instance bring

one to articulate different moments of the everyday life, as suggested by Pineau's reflections on the alternance between daytime and nighttime, as two antagonistic and complementary moments of one's own development. Such strategies should help people to relate and interpret the heterogeneous experiences and meanings of time that are constitutive of their life, including those lived as temporal constraints.

Learning to Synchronize the Heterogeneous Rhythms of One's Life

What is critical in such an emancipatory process is the capacity to organize heterogeneous experiences of time (e.g., linear, circular, quantitative, qualitative, fast, slow, internal, external, fixed, flowing, reversible, irreversible) as they emerge in different spheres of one's life. The term 'organization' does not refer here to the instrumental notion of 'time management' as a set of skills required in order to arrange one's commitments according to a schedule or a calendar. It rather refers to the ability to articulate meanings that translate complementary, contradictory and antagonistic experiences, such as those associated with the different moments of one's existence (e.g., education, work, family, leisure). In a context of temporal alienation, emancipatory education relies on the capacity to challenge the way time is experienced and meanings constructed around it (Alhadeff-Jones, 2017). Such a perspective is for instance found in adult education through practices that privilege the use of life history (e.g., Dominicé, 2000). Through their multiple expressions, such approaches assume the potential benefits inherent to the organizing effects, catalyzed by the production and the sharing of a life narrative. For Pineau (2000), what is critical is to bring adults to learn how to distribute, combine and balance the rhythms and times that compose the historicity of their lives to fight against the experience of schizochrony. Inspired by the work of Bachelard (1950) and Lefebvre (1992/2004) around the idea of 'rhythmanalysis', Pineau refers to the term 'rhythmoformation' to envision an educational praxis whose aim would be to support adults to develop themselves through the integration and the articulation of the plurality of biological, social and physical rhythms that compose their lives. Borrowing the concept of 'synchronization' from chronobiology, Pineau (2000) suggests that the appropriation of one's own time requires a process of adjustment, based on the capacity to synchronize the heterogeneous rhythms that constitute one's life. Accordingly, the emancipatory aim of adult education would require the capacity to take charge of the temporal conditions through which meanings emerge in everyday life, as well as through the life course (Alhadeff-Jones, 2017).

CONCEIVING THE RHYTHMS OF EMANCIPATION

Defining Emancipation

Emancipation literally means to give away ownership (*ex*: away; *mancipum*: ownership). More broadly it means to relinquish one's authority over someone. By

extension, the term refers to the action of freeing or liberating (oneself) from a state of dependency, or the state that results from such an action. Emancipation is rooted in the refusal of an established order. It designates the opening of a space and time of rupture. It also constitutes an effort and a movement that reciprocally carries on the subject that exercises them (Navet, 2002). Any movements of emancipation aim at modifying fundamental relationships between humans, and affecting them by their very existence. Such a movement is linked to a critical moment through which the social and political organization of society appears through its arbitrary power and contingency (Navet, 2002). However, the meaning and the aim of emancipation can never be taken for granted. First, because the forms of dependence and power dynamics evolve constantly throughout history. Second, because emancipation is not a state that could be reached once for all. It should rather be conceived as a fluctuating process that evolves through time. It is therefore critical to envision it through the dynamics it encompasses.

Conceiving the Temporal Complexity of an Emancipatory Process

Morin (2008) proposes to conceive emancipation and alienation through their dialogical relationship. The 'autonomy-dependence' principle he formulates focuses on the property according to what makes a system self-sufficient and autonomous is also what makes it dependent. For instance, students who go deeply into debt to cover the cost of an academic degree potentially increase their autonomy, as they may get access to a larger number of professional opportunities over the long-term; at the same time, they also increase their financial dependence on their lenders, which therefore reduces their immediate margins of action. Accordingly, it appears as misleading to conceive freedom without reflecting on the constraints or dependency it involves. Morin's autonomy-dependence principle encourages one to systematically consider emancipatory processes through the complex interplay between complementary, contradictory and antagonistic forms of self and mutual control (e.g., exercised through symbols, discourses, bodies or social relations), rather than considering them as separated and mutually exclusive. The feeling of being emancipated fluctuates therefore, because it relies on the changing level of autonomy that people experience in different situations and at different periods of their life (Alhadeff-Jones, 2017). Considering the emancipatory aim of adult education, such considerations raise questions not so much related to the possibility to eradicate or dominate temporal constraints and power dynamics. They rather display the importance of being able to purposefully regulate the balance that may always exist between the experience of autonomy and dependence.

Envisioning the Rhythms of Emancipation

As a fluctuating process, emancipation, from this perspective, relies on both the experience of ruptures (e.g., ordeal, crisis, revolution) and what Jullien (2011) calls

'silent transformation', that is unconscious ongoing dynamics of change which encompass multiple dimensions of one's existence. Michon (2005, p. 423) – who privileges the term "individuation" to describe processes of emancipation – stresses the fact that such a movement is neither static nor totally erratic. The dialogic between emancipation and alienation, autonomy and dependence, must therefore be conceived neither as fully ordered nor as fully disordered. It fluctuates through evolving forms – involving discourses, bodies, moods, social interactions – organized through time. Such 'forms in movement' can be conceived as rhythmic, based on the etymology of the term '*rhuthmos*' (Michon, 2005). In *How to Live Together*, Barthes (2002/2012) calls it 'idiorhythmy' in reference to the phenomena through which people aim at finding and following a particular (*idios*) rhythm and those experiences where individual freedom is understood as the conquest of one's own rhythm. Barthes' concept of idiorhythmy relates to the everyday life in a community, but the phenomena he refers to evolve throughout the life course and history. Every day, autonomy emerges as people regulate the way they express themselves, the way they move or interact with each other (Michon, 2005). The flow of those discursive, embodied and social configurations evolves and translates specific rhythms and temporalities through which people eventually develop – individually and collectively – their autonomy throughout their existence. From that perspective, emancipatory education is not just about overcoming a feeling of temporal alienation. It also involves the capacity to sustain such a process over time, through one's own rhythms. Conceiving emancipation as a fluctuating and rhythmic process raises therefore new questions for adult educators about the ways people develop their capacity to regulate their sense of agency through time.

TOWARD A RHYTHMANALYTICAL CONCEPTION OF ADULT EDUCATION

Finding, asserting and sustaining the idiosyncratic rhythms through which people regulate the ever-evolving tensions between autonomy and dependence provides the field of adult education with a renewed interpretation of what could be its emancipatory aims, in a context of temporal alienation. Such a perspective opens up at least two paths of inquiry. Firstly, that we renew the educational praxis in order to take into consideration how people learn to critically assess and negotiate the complementary, antagonistic and contradictory rhythms that are constitutive of their life and the power dynamics that relate to them. It raises questions regarding how adults develop the capacity to discriminate, interpret, evaluate, argue, judge and eventually challenge the qualities of the temporalities through which they experience the everyday life. Secondly, that we study and foster the rhythms that shape how adults develop their sense of agency and sustain an emancipatory process over time. It raises questions regarding the patterns and the repetitions experienced throughout the adult life that are constitutive of the temporality of such a movement. It also questions how to describe and influence the flow of experience through which people constantly regulate autonomy and dependence in adulthood.

Continued clarification and development of additional resources to analyze, interpret and assess the temporalities involved in adult education and the way they contribute to alienate and/or emancipate learners and educators as well is required. The reflection briefly developed in this chapter should be conceived as a starting point. Envisioning a rhythmanalytical approach to adult education may lead to the development of innovative praxis aiming explicitly at uncovering the rhythms that determine and shape how adults learn, transform and develop themselves in the different spheres of their lives. In the contemporary context, it seems particularly relevant – and urgent – to pursue such an aim.

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PART 4

POWER IN A DIVERSE AND COMPLEX WORLD: LEARNING, EDUCATION AND GLOBAL MIGRATION

BRIGITTE KUKOVETZ AND ANNETTE SPRUNG

12. QUESTIONING POWER RELATIONS

Learning Processes through Solidarity with Refugees

INTRODUCTION

Migration and refugee movements have become an important and highly charged topic of political and media discourse in many countries around the globe. Extreme right political positions and racist speech have turned out to be a formula for success in several national elections within Europe, where debate has been intensely focussed on the topic of forced migration over the past three years. Statistics on refugees reached a historically high level in 2016. Although most of the 65.6 million forcibly-displaced people around the world are actually being hosted in developing regions (UNHCR, 2017), the European Union has also recorded 2.5 million applications for asylum in 2015 and 2016. Germany, Sweden and Austria were amongst the countries with the highest number of newly arrived refugees (Eurostat, 2018). Restrictive policies and border controls have led to a significant decline in asylum applications since then; nonetheless, the host countries still have to deal with numerous challenges to do with the inclusion of newcomers (e.g. difficulties in labour market integration, discriminating practices in housing and educational programs, racist attitudes of the longer-established population, etc.).

As social change due to migration is probably one of the most important present and future challenges for the advancement of democracies and citizenship, it is timely to explore how people are learning to deal with these challenges in a critically reflective and peaceful way. Refugees have partly been met with hostile reactions. But we have also observed an impressive level of volunteer support for these migrants, which emerged in summer 2015. In this chapter, we will explore the potential of volunteering as an area of (mostly informal and incidental) political learning. We will discuss the relationship between solidarity, power structures and the learning of adults. This includes the specific power relations in the context of migration regimes and within humanitarian practices, particularly in refugee relief. Seeking out the critical potential of volunteering, we will also provide a few remarks on the system-stabilizing function of volunteering in neoliberal societies. The promotion and support of volunteering – for example through adult education – is often seen as a contribution to strengthening a sense of community. Nonetheless, we will also critically discuss how this is linked to the state divesting itself of responsibility. The main focus of the chapter will be the political learning of volunteers with regard

to their potential to question and overcome dominant power relations. As well as theoretical analysis, we will draw on current empirical findings from Germany and some selected outcomes from a qualitative study ('Learning Solidarity?'), which we conducted in Austria in 2016.

In Austria the volunteer support for refugees was initially triggered by the deficient public management of the situation and by poignant reports and images of death and suffering on refugees' routes in the summer of 2015. The volunteers worked in established relief organizations as well as in new groups that were spontaneously set up, often organized by means of social media. Volunteers were of different ages, genders, socio-economic or national backgrounds – but a study from Germany indicates there was an above-average proportion of highly educated, well-off and female (75–80%) helpers as well as people who were migrants themselves or descendants of migrants (Karakayali & Kleist, 2016).

Up to the present, some of the volunteer activity has developed into ongoing, long-term solidarity work including a wide range of activities, such as educational programs, counselling, cultural exchanges and (to a lesser extent) political activism around migration and asylum issues. The fact that many people have also ceased their engagement in the meantime can be partly explained by structural shifts within volunteering. Volunteering has changed historically from rather long-term oriented forms of working in established organizations (which of course still exists, too) to a more flexible, short-term and project-based pattern of engagement (Zimmer & Vilain, 2005). Other reasons which are specific to volunteer work with refugees and asylum seekers will be described later.

POWER RELATIONS IN MIGRATION SOCIETIES

Global migration nowadays is strongly connected to colonial experiences (Nghi Ha, 2007). Historically, European expansion and power are based on colonial occupation and subjection of Non-European countries. Since the 19th century, a portion of the national economic wealth of western societies have built on the labor of migrants (Nghi Ha, 2007, p. 50). Social control, the unequal distribution of social goods and services and the exploitation of labour force can be seen as a continuation of colonial practices; thus, as postcolonial theorists argue current inequalities and discriminations are racialized. Unequal representation of migrants (on both an economic and a symbolic level) often mirror these hierarchies. Migrants are subject to a process of 'othering' (Hall, 1997), which means that the majority society uses its hegemonic position to construct migrants culturally as 'others'. 'Othering' often leads to discriminatory practices, which are reflected not only through individual interactions but also in formal regulations, organizations, politics and law.

Member States of the European Union tend to react restrictively to the challenges arising from migration, as we can observe both in recent elections and policies. As to the former, right and extreme right-wing parties are gaining in importance all over Europe. For example, in both France and in Austria, politicians from the

far-right-wing parties the French Front National (FN), and the Freedom Party of Austria (FPÖ) made it to the final round of the presidential elections in 2017. Since the extreme right became part of the coalition government in Austria in December 2018, there has been rapid tightening of immigration and asylum regulations and financial cuts to integration programs.

These recent developments are grounded in long-standing inequalities between certain groups of migrants or refugees and members of the host societies in Europe. We name just a few examples here: Many migrants face discrimination in different areas of life, mainly when seeking employment, across all EU Member States (FRA, 2017). They often work in low-paid jobs with poor working conditions, and the deskilling of migrants is a big problem. Even though qualifications do influence labour market position, we can see that there are also a lot of skilled or highly skilled persons who do not find appropriate jobs. For example, 39% of foreign-born people work below their qualifications, while only 19% of native Austrians do so. The problem of deskilling of migrants in Austria is rather pronounced compared to other OECD countries (Sadjed, Sprung, & Kukovetz, 2015).

National origin is also crucial for getting proper access to the health system or various social services (EMN, 2014). Asylum seekers face particular challenges. The European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA) reports many human rights-related problems concerning access to territory, reception conditions, asylum procedures, education, family and asylum rights of unaccompanied children, and immigration detention within the EU (FRA, 2018). FRA (2016) also points out various forms of violence and harassment towards asylum seekers and migrants. Increasingly, too, activists and politicians perceived as 'pro-refugee' are victims of hate crime (FRA, 2016). Later, we shall address how much this influences the volunteers' decisions to stay active.

POWER RELATIONS IN THE CONTEXT OF VOLUNTEERING

The State and Civil Society

Although the enormous engagement of volunteers within this situation described can be understood as a strong and vital demonstration of acting in solidarity and thus being an example of active, inclusive citizenship (Kleinschmidt & Lange, 2018), we would also like to reflect critically on a specific function of volunteering, namely that volunteers' engagement is, more and more, compensating for tasks for which the state no longer takes responsibility (van Dyk & Misbach, 2016). This is true not only for refugee relief but also for other fields like care work, education, social services and others. Many volunteers took part in 2015 because they noticed that the public authorities were not able to handle the situation concerning refugees, and they felt affected by the human harm that was occurring directly on their doorsteps. The allocation of public responsibilities is part of neoliberal governance or, in other words, part of a governing technology that uses the 'community' and

therefore unpaid work (beyond families) as a resource. The idea of achieving a balance between the spheres of government, market and civil society is found in many current political concepts and theories. A strong civil society is seen as an important part of saving social cohesion (Bröckling, 2005) and is therefore a target of political interventions. Neoliberal 'governing by market' will be controlled and compensated by a 'governing by community' (Rose, 1999). We can see these keywords and this type political discourse in the idea of 'caring communities' or 'The Big Society', as promoted by the former UK prime minister David Cameron (van Dyk, 2017).

The mobilization of numerous citizens in 2015 was framed by a rhetoric of crisis and emergency, which seemed to confirm the fact that the authorities were not able to manage the situation by themselves. It may be wrong to conclude that the state is simply withdrawing from tasks associated with social welfare; moreover, it is in the process of establishing a new logic of governance, as it conceives citizens as being obliged to take responsibility for themselves (van Dyk & Misbach, 2016). Governmentality theorists argue that if there is an interest in governing and influencing the sphere of civil society, the community and its potential has to be defined, professionalized and analyzed (Bröckling, 2005). Looking at the individuals through this analytical lens, we can identify specific processes of subjectivation. Bröckling (2005) has pointed out that neoliberal systems need appropriate types of subjects such as the 'entrepreneurial self', but also the 'engaged member of the civil society'. He states that there is an imperative of participation in our times, which is promoted by diverse educational activities. A "community-boom" (van Dyk, 2017) can be observed as a consequence of top-down policy of the so-called activating welfare state, but also as a trend in alternative bottom-up groups and left movements. Thus support (such as through adult education) and recognition for volunteers entails certain ambiguities; on the one hand, they are certainly legitimate claims, but they also promote problematical developments.[1] Consequently, an evaluation of volunteering in terms of its potential for political criticism and effecting power relations has to consider the diverse functions of volunteering within present societies.

Paternalism in Humanitarian Aid

The dynamics of humanitarian aid also create other distinct power relationships. One of the strongest motives for volunteering in summer 2015 was the media reports about the suffering of the refugees (Karakyali & Kleist, 2016), that is, the situation in the war zones, the conditions of their flight, their inadequate resources and their extreme hunger and exhaustion on arrival. Numerous adversities almost inevitably lead to a perception of refugees as victims, which often goes along with attributions such as passive, helpless and speechless (Fleischmann & Steinhilper, 2017). On this basis, paternalistic and discriminatory practices are easily reproduced

(Barnett, 2017). These practices mainly concern the self-determination of refugees and their representation in support activities, structures and decisions. Even if volunteers try to build up participatory projects and avoid paternalism, an asymmetry in power relations between volunteers and refugees arises from political and socio-economic preconditions. These can be, for example, differences in legal status, unequal social recognition, different socio-economic resources and/or knowledge about bureaucratic structures in the host countries (see Strotmann, 2018).

The refugees often perceive themselves as powerless (Reimers, 2018). They want to take autonomous decisions, but for volunteers, it can be difficult to support them in these needs. One key factor may be that many volunteers do not have an experience of flight or marginalization and have a middle-class background, which may limit their capacity to understand refugees' experiences and their need for autonomy (Hamann & Karakayali, 2016).

It can be assumed that the risk of asymmetries and dependencies between supporters and those who are in need of help is increased, when aspects of social security are no longer provided by the state and therefore are not guaranteed as an individual right but left to charity engagement (van Dyk & Misbach, 2016). Barbara Harrel-Bond (2002), who analyzed humanitarian work with refugees in United Nations programs and camps in various countries, points out that there are many possible reasons behind paternalistic and often inhuman or violent behavior in such activity. A deeply asymmetric relationship does not only emerge from unequal resources but also from the dominant ethos of humanitarism ('charity') with its symbolic disempowerment of those who receive help and the organizational culture of certain humanitarian organizations. Didier Fassin (2017, p. 78) talks about humanitarism as international paternalism:

> It entails moral obligation rather than coercion, that is, a relation between the obliging and the obliged, epitomized through the general principle of an exchange in which the gift has no counter-gift. This domination, which we can call soft paternalism because it is benevolent and accepted, is historically inscribed in asymmetrical international relations – between colonizers and colonized, the North and the South, the West and the rest.

Furthermore, the distinction between deserving and non-deserving refugees has been prevalent in the media discourse around current refugee movements to the EU (Vollmer & Karakayali, 2018). Asylum seekers in Austria in 2015 and 2016 predominantly came from Afghanistan, Syria and Iraq (Statistik Austria, 2016, 2017). In 2016 only 33% of asylum seekers were women, in 2015 only 27.7%. (Statistik Austria. 2017) A vast majority of refugees in Austria are Muslim (over 85%) (Buber-Ennser et al., 2016). In the public discourse, the male Muslim migrants have been put at the bottom of the *deserving-hierarchy*. Additionally, reasons for paternalistic behavior can be found in a lack of appropriate skills in the supporters and in psychological phenomena, which lead to certain reactions by individuals in

the face of suffering and distress. Harrel-Bond (2002, p. 52) pleas for a "right-based humanitarism" beyond private charity:

> This approach is not about discretionary assistance when the mood for benevolence takes us. It is about defending, advocating and securing enjoyment of human rights.

This also implies a shift in the view of refugees as victims to a recognition of their strength, autonomy and dignity.

Questioning and Resisting Asymmetric Power Relations

In practice, we see that asymmetric power relationships between volunteers and refugees do not always entail a paternalistic approach on the part of the volunteers. Many search for alternative options. Some try to encourage (former) refugees supporting other newcomers (Hamann et al., 2017). Others try to develop shared strategies to question migration policies and power structures within the state. These volunteers fighting for refugees' rights often condemn the non-political approach of other volunteers as contributing to keeping people in a position of inferiority (Castro Varela & Heinemann, 2016). Within the politically-engaged groups of activists, it is quite common to address explicitly the problem of asymmetric power relations between volunteers and refugees. Nevertheless, within common political and other volunteer activities, hegemonic logic is often reproduced – such as the public representation of refugees by volunteers (Fleischmann & Steinhilper, 2017). At the same time, in the attempt to avoid paternalism with regard to refugees, other power relations can persist too, like gender relations, as for example Nadiye Ünsal (2015) has shown by an analysis of patriarchal practices within the refugee movement in Berlin.

LEARNING PROCESSES IN VOLUNTEERING

To explore the political learning processes in volunteering against the described backdrop, we conducted a qualitative pre-study[2] in Austria in 2016. The analysis was based on seven semi-structured interviews with volunteers who had engaged in refugee relief (some of them in a coordinating or supervising role). We chose individuals who had become actively engaged for the first time as well as others who already had previous experiences in volunteering. We conducted interviews with men and women of different ages, amongst them also migrants or descendants of former refugees. Furthermore, we tried to find interviewees who worked in different areas of support (such as education, distribution of basic necessities, language assistance, political campaigning, supervision of volunteers, etc.). We were mainly interested in the motivations, biographical aspects, experiences and finally the learning of volunteers – and how these aspects interact with structural conditions and the public discourse.

Learning in Social Groups

Studies about learning in social movements – which often takes place in a tacit, incidental way – have shown that various organisational, personal and social skills are acquired in volunteering (Foley, 1999; Duguid et al., 2013). Our interviewees learned how to deal with bureaucracies, about migration policies and the asylum system and about different cultures and lifeworlds. Collaborative learning in activist groups can lead to the widening of perspectives and agency in terms of democratic participation (Truman, 2013). Our interviewees described, for example, how they had become familiar with participatory procedures in groups that had often been spontaneously created. They acquired these competencies in meetings or via the use of social media. Key persons often used (project) management skills, which they had acquired in their working life or education. They imparted this knowledge with their fellow volunteers and thus played an important role in the learning processes of the group. Besides negotiating roles and responsibilities, they learned how to lead teams, deal with conflicts and set up communication strategies.

Learning can also include finding out that it may be easier for someone to work by themselves than directly being involved in a group. However, the reasons for this withdrawal from the group, as given in one of our interviews, can also be interpreted in terms of power. In this case, the interviewee, whose own family had flight experience, had apparently different (and more empowering) conceptions of the right of self-determination of refugees than the other group members. As these ideas were not recognized within the group of volunteers, the interviewee decided to pursue her engagement in her own way. This is not the only possible way to resolve diverging opinions of what is adequate refugee aid. Katherine Braun (2017) who conducted research in a German village observed that volunteers with a migrant biography were able to intervene in paternalistic situations of refugee aid and even to initiate processes of reflection within the group of refugees. Thus, volunteers with a privileged background learned from migrant volunteers, and previous hierarchies within the group of volunteers and the organization of the activities were transformed (Braun, 2017).

Dealing with Power Relations within Migration Regimes

Other learning processes of volunteers participating in our research involved the topics of culture, migration, and migration policies. Volunteers mentioned that they had learned about foreign cultures or different ways of thinking (see also results in Jungk & Morrin, 2017). They had improved their knowledge about asylum regulations and developed strategies for dealing with authorities in this context. Being confronted with the often precarious and desperate situation of the refugees, they had learned how the structural framework around asylum and migration policies shapes the lives and opportunities of refugees. Moreover, they also experienced how this affected their own engagement in terms of being hindered in giving efficient support but also by not feeling recognized by the state for taking over community

tasks. Some volunteers thus developed a critical understanding of a formerly often unknown social reality and power relations in migration regimes through reflection and action (Foley, 1999; Jungk & Morrin, 2017; Fleischmann & Steinhilper, 2017). Many people were critically aware that they were compensating for state failure but nevertheless felt a need to provide concrete support in this specific situation.

Volunteers also tried to analyze and understand *global* interdependencies around migration. Some respondents had already reflected on questions of self-representation and power relations in earlier engagements, such as in development policies, but for others, the topic was quite new. They pointed out that the engagement had made them more conscious and content with their own privileged lives in Austria and motivated them to take responsibility for less advantaged people. The specified experiences encouraged some volunteers to expand their original engagement of individual help to activities like organizing consciousness-raising (anti-racist) events for the local population or supporting public protests against asylum policies. As Truman (2013) has pointed out, members of civic groups mostly work on their concrete problems first and improve their knowledge step by step. During the learning processes, they often place their insights and interests into a wider social and political context and thus begin to expand their agenda.

Influences of the Social Environment and Public Discourse

Finally, many interviewees reported that they were challenged to justify their positions in discussions with families and friends; this seemed to be a very intense experience because the public discourse became very negative towards refugees and their supporters from the end of 2015, which also influenced debates within families. Therefore, volunteers were searching for reliable information and had to analyze these issues critically, but were also forced to reflect intensely on their own values to be able to explain their engagement in their social environment.

Further empirical work will analyze if this can be regarded as a process of critical reflection as defined by Jack Mezirow (1998). But what we can identify is the development of a critical understanding of migration regimes and the related power aspects in some cases, but also a sort of positioning as a political subject. Our study does not provide representative results but allows a closer look at the potential of volunteering in this respect. To understand different developments within volunteering, we also looked at what interviewees reported about colleagues who had withdrawn from their engagement after a while. Many people simply felt tired, exhausted or overstressed by the difficulties that were connected with the precarious situation of refugees and by the lack of governmental support and recognition. Besides that, several volunteers seemed to be disappointed by refugees who had not behaved in line with their helpers' expectations. This points to the phenomenon of a charity approach to refugee relief as described above, where spontaneous compassion is a primary motivation (triggered strongly by public discourse). If the idea of refugees having a right to be supported is not a leading concept, and

volunteers do not critically reflect on paternalism, but maybe act according to a distinction between 'deserving' and 'non-deserving' refugees, volunteers often react in a very disappointed way when they are not shown deference.

Apart from disappointing experiences within the actual work, the deteriorating public discourse on refugees seemed to have had a negative impact on volunteers. This shows how the cultural and socio-political context influences the extent and the kind of actions the volunteers carry out and in what way their activities change. Whereas in 2015 initially, the media spread a very positive atmosphere towards supporters in Germany and Austria within the first weeks (so-called 'welcome culture'), the public and media discourse turned more negative towards the end of 2015 initially. Many volunteers reported feeling under pressure from the worsened atmosphere; furthermore, they sometimes suffered from criticism on the part of their own families and friends. In some cases, volunteers even had to face violent attacks by groups from the extreme right. In many reports on people withdrawing from their engagement, a certain incident was mentioned: On New Year's Eve in 2015, dozens of women were sexually harassed by men from Arabic and northern African countries in the streets of the German city of Cologne. This incident shocked the public and marked a turning point for numerous supporters of and sympathisers with refugees. Criminal acts and terrorism were associated with all refugees or (male) Muslim migrants. These negative discourses on mainly Muslim migrants led to reflections and doubts about who 'deserves' support and who does not (Vollmer & Karakayali, 2018). Thus some of the volunteers reduced or withdrew from their engagement.

However, other volunteers who were harassed due to their social engagement looked for allies and engaged in new networks for sharing their experiences and/or made the assaults public, e.g., in the local press – and went on with their activities. Negative reactions from the social environment and dismissive reports in the media also led some volunteers to broaden their activities and to organize anti-racist workshops with the aim of sensitizing the population. This was observed in Germany as well, where a study showed that negative media discourse also led to resistance and therefore even more anti-racist engagement in some cities (Hamann et al., 2017).

In the present situation, we have the impression that there is not much ongoing anti-racist work taking place. Many volunteers have established continuous structures of support, whilst we also observe a tendency for volunteers to withdraw. This is partly due to frustration, as the refugees, whom they have supported for months or years, have been deported to their countries of origin. We started a research project in March 2018 to take a closer look at present developments in volunteering, with a focus on interviewing individuals who have resigned from their engagement.

CONCLUSION

Various studies conducted on volunteering in refugee relief in Germany and Austria since 2016 show that the motives and concepts behind volunteering are very diverse.

Part of the engagement arises from a mainly 'humanitarian' impulse to alleviate the suffering of newcomers; others are framed by a clearer political idea of refugees' rights and a universal concept of solidarity. Acting in solidarity is connected with various informal and incidental learning processes. For one thing, they lead to the acquisition of concrete knowledge and competencies; for another, transformative processes can be initiated by volunteers' reflection on themselves and the surrounding conditions.

We contend that spontaneous compassion and empathy as the only motivation for volunteering can be a rather fragile base for engagement and be easily unsettled by negative discourses, pressure from others or by burdensome individual experiences. Nonetheless, volunteers with a humanitarian approach can – potentially – develop new and critical understandings of the situation and their own role within this system over time. We have pointed out several learning processes and outcomes in terms of active citizenship and a critical understanding of migration regimes in our data. In the context of refugee relief, many different power structures are in place. These concern the economic, social and political inequalities within migration regimes, governance through fostering volunteers' engagement and, more concretely, the different hierarchies within the groups of volunteers and the power gap between volunteers and refugees. Learning processes include the problematization of these power relations and the reflection on paternalistic practices of volunteers.

The social context or concrete inputs which people get, for example via supervision or adult education, could be influential to enable them to develop various interpretations of their experiences and support them to develop strategies to cope with these challenges. Some educational offers for volunteers already exist, but they mainly focus on skills around management, legal issues, dealing with financial aspects, communication and so forth. From our perspective, adult education could engage even more intensively in this field by focussing on political learning, and thus create spaces for critical reflection and action and foster volunteering as a vital learning space for inclusive citizenship and the further development of democracy.

NOTES

[1] Another critical aspect of volunteering can be seen in the de-professionalization and de-standardization of social services, but we will not go deeper into this dimension here.

[2] Based on this pre-study, we are currently working on a more extended research project entitled 'Learning solidarity? The potential of volunteering for political learning in migration societies' (3/2018–12/2019).

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KAREN DUNWOODIE, SUSAN WEBB AND JANE WILKINSON

13. EMBRACING SOCIAL INCLUSION?

The Asylum Seeker Experience of Applying for Admission to Tertiary Education in Australia

INTRODUCTION

Whilst the world is still attempting to evaluate the overall effect of the current global refugee situation, for many nations developing responses to the recent growth in the numbers of people seeking asylum is a highly sensitive issue.

In light of this global phenomenon, universities around the world are considering their social equity obligations and offering specific student scholarships and bursaries for those seeking asylum in the host country. For example, in the UK a recent social movement to expand access to university education for refugees and people seeking asylum (RPSA) has drawn on the concept of the right to education (United Nations, 1948) adopting the name 'Article 26'[1] to highlight the movement's purpose in advocating the 'right to an education' for people who are regarded as outside the responsibility of a nation state. In considering this issue, a critical race lens (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995) is employed to discuss findings from an empirical case study that explored the institutional processes and experiences of applicants from RPSA backgrounds to one Australian university. The following two questions are addressed:

1. What processes and procedures do Australian universities have in place for admitting RPSA?
2. Whether, and if so, how, university admissions' processes may operate as mechanisms of power to exclude and/or marginalize RPSA applicants?

At the time of writing the Refugee Council of Australia (RCOA, [2017a]) estimated there were in excess of 30,000 people living in the Australian community without permanent protection[2] and without state support to pursue higher education. Current Australian Federal Government policy notes, that even if those seeking asylum have their refugee status determined, they will still not be eligible for permanent residency and will instead be granted either Temporary Protection Visas (TPV)[3] or Safe Haven Enterprise Visas (SHEV)[4] (Refugee Council of Australian [RCOA], 2015).

Yet over the last decade the Australian higher education sector has been committed to widening access and participation (Bradley, Noonan, Nugent & Scales, 2008) and has achieved some progress in relation to one of the target equity groups, namely,

those from low socio-economic status (Edwards & McMillan, 2015). However, RPSA are not included in this strategy as it is limited to domestic students, i.e., those with permanent residency or citizenship (Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency, 2017). Instead RPSA applicants are categorized as international students and are required to pay full international tuition fees. For the vast majority, this fee is unaffordable. As a result, their employment prospects are considerably diminished and they are further marginalized, socially and economically.

In recognition of this policy problem, a handful of universities are providing scholarships to cover tuition costs and in some instances a small living allowance. Of the 43 universities in Australia, the Refugee Council of Australia (2018) listed 19 offering fee waivers and/or financial bursaries to RPSA in 2018. In addressing the two preceding research questions through an analysis of case studies of RPSA seeking university access, the chapter aims to explore the implications of this recent policy move to extend university equity policies and practices and contribute to a better understanding of how universities may develop more inclusive equity policies in relation to this marginalized group.

CONTEXT AND BARRIERS

Over recent years scholars in Australia have devoted significant attention to addressing the employment and education needs of immigrants (Webb, 2015) and refugees (Naidoo, Wilkinson, Adoniou, & Langat, 2018). The consensus from these studies is that migrants, especially RPSA face a number of ongoing difficulties accessing employment and higher education. Similarly, research in Canada and Europe has identified that not only do migrants experience difficulties accessing education, training and employment because of their status and lack of familiarity with the local contexts (Hynes, 2011), but also because of the institutional barriers they encounter (Chadderton & Edmonds, 2015; Guo, 2015b).

In order to inform the analysis of the institutional barriers facing migrants, researchers have turned to the framework and insights provided by critical race theory (CRT). CRT originating in the USA sought to understand how white privilege and racial power were maintained over time (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995). Turning their attention to how education helps to sustain social inequalities, Ladson-Billings and Tate (1995) applied CRT to explain the continued racial disadvantages experienced by African American students in the US. Similarly, in Europe and Canada, CRT has been employed to account for inequalities in the participation and outcomes of refugees and immigrants of color (Chadderton & Edmonds, 2015), including the assessment of immigrants' skills (Guo, 2015b).

Although more than 25 per cent of Australia's population was born in countries other than Australia, we consider CRT a relevant theory to analyze university admissions because it explains how systems of structural discrimination maintain the dominance of groups that historically have been constructed as 'white', rather than referring to skin color or ethnicity. In exploring the issue of RPSA access

to tertiary education, therefore, CRT provides a number of useful concepts when considering the implementation of equity policies, e.g., the permanence of racism in white majority nations; the role of 'white' power in only permitting changes that sustain white privilege; attention to how race intersects with other identities and experiences; and the role of ideologies such as meritocracy in sustaining color-blind, apparently neutral institutional decision making.

A central tenet of CRT is the use of research methods, such as narrative inquiry, to provide counteracting stories of inequality. Critical analyses of institutions that examine everyday practices of organizations through people's experiences have the potential to give voice to vulnerable groups and minorities. Stories are an opportunity to reveal experiences and name discriminations. Once discrimination has been named it can be contested. Hence, powerfully written stories and narratives may begin a process of contestation in our systems.

METHODOLOGY

Our case study drew on the experiences of RPSA applying to one university in Australia where scholarships to support the access and participation of RPSA had recently been introduced. In order to understand the practices of the institution in awarding scholarships, narrative data was collected from those responsible for developing and implementing its policies, as well as from a purposefully selected sample of three prospective students[5] who failed to secure an offer or funding. Narrative inquiry enabled a focus on the perceptions and experiences of RPSA in relation to the university application and scholarship award processes, policies and procedures. Consequently, this purposive selection of three cases of failure to gain university scholarships, can reveal much about the processes of the admissions and awarding system from below (Flyvbjerg, 2006).

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with each participant and recorded and transcribed. The interviews explored participants' backgrounds, how they went about applying for a place at university; and their reflections on their experiences of university student admission and scholarship application process and procedures. The participants were also encouraged to reflect on what it would mean to them if they were awarded a place at university. The interviews were coded and analyzed by the authors with particular attention paid to recurring themes. The participants were aged between 19 and 43 and all had arrived in Australia in the past 3 years. In addition, each participant shared with the researchers all email correspondence between themselves and the university.

The research team were very mindful of ethical considerations in research with RPSA concerning vulnerability, power, and the relationship between research and advocacy (Block, Riggs, & Haslam, 2013). Voluntary participation was stressed with all participants and they had the right to withdraw at any time.

Following the interviews with student applicants, interviews were also conducted with four professional staff involved in student admissions, the award of scholarships,

and the implementation of the social equity strategy. The interviews included questions about university process and procedures, as well as the university's social equity strategy, and the implications of this strategy for staff training and awareness.

THE UNIVERSITY CONTEXT

In 2015 the university in the case study revised its strategic plan and equity structure, and established an office to deal with issues of social inclusion, including access to education for disadvantaged groups. From this initiative came the idea for two full fee scholarships and bursaries for students seeking asylum. The application process required the potential student to apply online submitting a 500 word essay, stating why they felt they should be awarded the scholarship. However, in order to be considered eligible for the scholarship, the applicant needed to apply and be accepted to the university through the standard student admission channels providing all relevant documentation (including original documents for certification) as well as evidence of their English language testing score. It is important to note, that at the student admission stage there was no mechanism by which the applicant was flagged as a person awaiting the outcome of their refugee application (that is, residing in Australia with an eligible visa[6]).

In total the university had 59 applications for the two scholarships and bursaries. However, after the selection process the university increased its provision and offered eleven full tuition scholarships (including a $3000 bursary for each student).

FINDINGS

This study found that there were tensions and ambiguities inherent in the operation of the social inclusion initiatives in this case study university because existing university policies and procedures to assess student eligibility for admission did not align well with the new policy. Interview analysis highlighted three key themes about the experiences of RPSA applicants: homogenization of equity in processes and procedures; assessing legitimacy; and insecurity, powerlessness and mistrust.

The narratives of the three RPSA failed application cases describe feelings of alienation, discomfort and anxiety when encountering university staff who appear to view them with suspicion for not having the correct documents.

Theme 1: Homogenizing of Equity in Processes and Procedures

Exploring how the RPSA awards were allocated revealed that professional staff were aware of the tension between the aims of the university's social inclusion policies and the constraints that they had to work within by offering only two scholarships. As Amy who was in charge of procedures to award the scholarships said, "Asylum

seekers is such a sensitive topic that everyone wants to support". Therefore, in recognition of the problem of assessing applicants' English language skills and meeting the standardized university's entry requirements, Amy proposed developing new pathway routes through the local English language college for otherwise well-qualified RPSA applicants. In order to fund this new pathway, Amy approached the faculties for extra funding. She noted:

> It wasn't something we initially planned on doing or anything like that. I just decided let's just give this a go and see and I didn't think they would get that much. I thought maybe one per faculty but everyone was very enthused by it so as faculties were coming on board I have confidence to be able to keep going and to other faculties and it's quite unbelievable. (Amy – Head of Scholarships)

Change seemed to rely on the efforts of individual staff such as Amy using her knowledge and networks to gain additional funding from faculties. This drew on the general consensus amongst professional staff about the right to education for RPSA. Annie from the equity office described the decision-making process for the asylum seeker scholarship initiative:

> We had a number of discussions with the Vice Chancellor about how scholarships should be targeted […] we identified there were asylum seekers in need. (Annie – Social Equity Manager)

However, despite these good intentions, little consideration was given in relation to more fundamental changes in the university policy, practices and procedures that might be required. As Annie remarked:

> We've got just a template with all the details of things that need to be decided on that exist for every scholarship […]. There are procedures in place at a policy level – policies and procedures at a university level for scholarships and developing them, so it was done in line with all those. (Annie – Social Equity Manager)

Robby, an RPSA applicant concurred in regard to the template that

> the people who … answering the phone, they have some … chart in front of them and you know they say if the applicant, […] talks to you and says this, the answer is this, but if the answer, the question is this, the answer is this. It's something like FAQ. (Robby – RPSA applicant)

There was an unexamined assumption that standard policies and practices in relation to admissions would be relevant to those from RPSA backgrounds. However, since these RPSA applicants were regarded as international, not domestic students by the admissions policies, tensions emerged in the admissions process because of this homogenization of students as either domestic (where specific equity support was available) and international (where equity policies were not considered applicable).

Theme 2: Assessing Legitimacy

Being treated as international students meant that many of the encounters between RPSA and the university staff involved assessing the legitimacy of their applications. For two of the applicants, the lack of recognition of their overseas work experience, and the university staff's insistence on applicants providing original documentation of their previous higher education qualifications was distressing and perceived as structural discrimination. The university staff made it clear that the admissions process had rules, regulations and a template they had to follow in order to approve an application. However, the RPSA experienced this process as one to deny them access. For instance, Elliot commented:

> I felt embarrassed because then I was talking about like asylum seeker visa, I was – I felt embarrassed, because I felt like I am putting them in such a pain, because she had to go through all the like website and stuff, [stating], "Oh, there's not such a thing as asylum seeker scholarship". (Elliot – RPSA applicant)

According to the Head of Admissions, there is a clear template setting out entry requirements and procedures for evaluating applications and validating documents in order to avoid fraud by international applicants. Hence, the procedures that applied to RPSA required the verification of qualifications, certified translations, as well as the sighting of original documents and certificates. If RPSA are unable to produce original documentation the university would not consider their application. In addition, there is no system-based mechanism available to the admissions or front-line service staff to identify RPSA as potential applicants, so they are treated like any 'standard international applicant'. For example, proficiency in English language is one criterion used in the admissions process for international students and for ease of evaluation of this skill, a particular grade in the international language test IELTS is often used as the performance indicator. Not surprisingly, Lucy, who speaks several languages had no prior knowledge of the IELTS system, made this comment about the process of completing the admissions form:

> I've been completely confused about that [University] email because they ask me there is an IELTS and the lack of documents on things like this, so it was really, really confusing. (Lucy – RPSA applicant)

Despite recognition that the implementation of social equity policies requires staff training to increase knowledge and understanding and improve practice, staff working in the Social Equity Unit observed that their resources were concentrated on academic staff and the work of faculties, rather than on professional and administrative staff. For example, the equity manager, Annie, when speaking about the professional staff groups stated, "that's left up to them to work out how they train their staff and educate them".

However, the professional staff all identified the need for ongoing information and training for all management, frontline and support staff as the following comment highlights:

> We're not used to dealing with this [RPSA] … we need to and want to help but it's sounding to the student applicant very much like we, we don't want to help and we're actually putting a barrier in the way. […] I think we need to explore options for better training and better processes to deal with those students. (John – Head of Admissions).

On the surface, the university processes appeared to be fair and treat applicants similarly. However, despite the commitment to equity by the professional staff, the three university applicants experienced the university processes as inappropriate and unfair. From the perspective of the applicants, the process of recognizing previous qualifications and readiness to study at university by applying templates designed for international students did not acknowledge the circumstances that had forced the migration of these RPSA. Consequently, the applicants had to re-live the trauma of their migration and because they were unable to provide documentation that met the requirements of the template, their previous qualifications were rendered illegitimate. Thus, these classification processes, were experienced by RPSA as arbitrary mechanisms, which naturalize and perpetuate the domination of stable Western-centric education pathways (Bourdieu, 1989).

Theme 3: Insecurity, Powerlessness and Mistrust

One consequence of this exercise in assessing legitimacy manifested itself in the symbolic violence (Bourdieu, 1989) experienced by the applicants deemed illegitimate and resulted in feelings of insecurity, powerlessness and mistrust. The application process both "produces and protects dominant interests" (e.g., applicants who are deemed 'legitimate' because they fit the criteria) and "inflicts … suffering and misery" (e.g., upon unsuccessful applicants; Schubert, 2014, p. 180). The nature of the suffering of the three unsuccessful applicants includes reports of feeling unsafe and lacking the 'power' to confront frontline staff in relation to the submission of documents. For example, when asked to describe her experiences during the application process and her dealings with the university frontline student services staff, Lucy noted that it made her feel "Unsafe, I feel unsafe".

Lucy also described feeling powerless in relation to the authority of the university to question her:

> I had to answer that question and every time I have to explain to them I came by boat and I couldn't bring my documents […] it was distressing because I remember all those moments. (Lucy – RPSA applicant)

The insistence on providing the correct documents according to the 'template' frustrated the applicants. It reinforced their suffering and perceptions that the

university had no appreciation of the insecure situation of the students and their families often in their countries of origin:

> It was really bad and frustrating and I was really sad then they said to me we cannot accept you because of that original document, it was really bad feeling. I cannot ask my family back to Iran to send all the documents to me, it's so hard to send all documents in Australia. Security is a concern absolutely; I'm really scared to ask them to send this document because then they can know where am I […] I don't want to be in trouble. (Lucy – RPSA applicant).

These applicants were very aware of the power imbalance of the dominated and dominant, e.g., between themselves as applicants and the university staff implementing university policies:

> Well it was me, an 19 years old student, trying to apply. And at the other side it was the whole University team […] it doesn't matter how much I applied and how much I went there, I received the email stating I was not eligible […] I went back to the university, it didn't matter how much I tried again and how much I talk – she was like, "You are not eligible". So, I didn't have the *power* to argue for my right. (Elliot – RPSA applicant)

When we asked Robby if he would challenge the decision of the university to turn down his application, he responded:

> So I'm not going to, I'm not going to complain about or I'm not going to question them […] because we are guest in this country and sometimes we think that we impose some troubles, I don't know, some costs, some extra things for this country, and we should not, I mean we should not be something like, what's it called in accounting? Creditor, every time we say you to be in debt to us, nobody is in debt to us. (Robby – RPSA applicant)

Rendered as applicants who are not legitimate, these RPSA did not feel able to challenge the admissions policies and procedures, which by default did not recognize their non-stable and insecure pathways to higher education.

DISCUSSION

The preceding themes indicate tensions between the aims of the university's social equity policies and the admissions' processes that categorize RPSA applicants as international students and do not identify them as a separate equity group with specific needs and circumstances. Narratives from these three applicants show the workings of symbolic violence through these apparently neutral admissions processes. This finding is similar to the Guo's findings about recent immigrants to Canada (2015a), which revealed that the main issue for migrants (humanitarian or voluntary) lay in gaining entry to an organizational space. For applicants from RPSA backgrounds, the admissions process formed the barrier to the university space. The

processes and procedures reproduce systems of classification that reinforce relations of domination and subordination, i.e., those who are constructed as 'legitimate' RPSA applicants versus those who are 'illegitimate'. The subsequent suffering of the unsuccessful applicants is manifested in their feelings of insecurity, powerless and distrust. The staff participants recognized and acknowledged this suffering at some level. All showed understanding and acknowledgement of the inappropriateness of the admissions and scholarship templates they were required to use. Whilst their accounts reinforced the applicants' narratives of a homogenized approach to the processing of admissions of refugees and people seeking asylum, the practices of staff in seeking out alternative pathways and funding sources for RPSA applicants indicates that the structural discrimination displayed in this case study institution may be open to change although this seemed to rely on the goodwill and capacity of individual staff to use their insider knowledge and networks rather than systemic change at institutional level.

The participants' narratives highlight the urgent need for awareness-raising and ongoing professional development for general and academic staff and management in relation to the issues that refugee background students face and the strengths and resilience they bring to the learning environment. Yet just as Naidoo et al. (2018) highlighted, staff reported feeling ill-prepared and equipped to understand and meet the complex needs of refugee students. Staff need to be carefully trained in regard to the multiple and complicated issues which RPSA face, particularly in relation to issues such as documentation and paperwork. Moreover, admission policies need to be rethought for what may be seen as neutral and fair from one perspective would appear to be at best, risking re-traumatizing potential applicants, and in some cases, putting their lives in danger. This highlights the need for critical analysis and reform of the institutional systems and processes of higher education admissions to recognize the educational pathways followed by RPSA.

CONCLUSION

Universities internationally and in Australia face new challenges and inequities when it comes to catering for students from a refugee or asylum seeking background. They are to be congratulated on taking positive steps to embrace this precarious group of students. However, our case study has documented the complexities of equity and inclusion for such students. If the Australian universities wish to embrace an inclusive approach to higher education then they must consider what systematic changes are needed to ensure they become responsive to those adults who are living precariously. They must consider as a matter of urgency, ongoing awareness-raising and training for frontline staff in how to deal with students who have arrived in Australia in recent times seeking asylum. These actions are not an optional extra, but are part of a fundamental demand for human rights and recognition that acknowledges the highly complex needs of this newest group of students.

NOTES

[1] Article 26 states 'Everyone has the right to education. Education shall be free, at least in the elementary and fundamental stages. Elementary education shall be compulsory. Technical and professional education shall be made generally available and higher education shall be equally accessible to all on the basis of merit' (The United Nations, 1948).

[2] A permanent protection visa entitles the holder to live and work in Australia as a permanent resident, and eligibility to apply for citizenship (Australian Government Department of Home Affairs, n.d.a).

[3] A Temporary Protection Visa (TPV) is one of two types of temporary protection visas available to those claiming asylum who come by boat. The TPV visa provides protection for three years (Refugee Council of Australia, 2017b).

[4] A Safe Haven Enterprise Visa (SHEV) is one of two types of temporary protection visas available to those claiming asylum who come by boat. This visa provides protection for five years. Its main feature is that people who hold it must intend to work or study in a part of 'regional Australia' (Refugee Council of Australia, 2017b).

[5] We allocated university staff pseudonyms whilst the students selected their own 'assumed names' to safeguard anonymity.

[6] Eligible visa include: A TPV, a SHEV, a Bridging Visa E (BVE) which lets the holder stay in Australia while making arrangements to leave or awaiting an immigration decision and a Bridging Visa A (BVA), a temporary visa allowing stay in Australia while the applicant's substantive visa application is being processed (Australian Government Department of Home Affairs, n.d.b).

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JOKE VANDENABEELE AND PASCAL DEBRUYNE

14. NURTURING SOLIDARITY IN DIVERSITY

The Superdiverse Shop Floor of Tower Automotive in Ghent

It is no coincidence that a focus on solidarity is returning to the center of public discussions in many Western European countries. International migration and neoliberal economic restructuring have created a situation of socio-political turmoil dissimilar from the historical conditions under which the modern concept of solidarity emerged. In January 2013 we started a research project called 'Diversity and Community Building' as we wanted to scrutinize the conditions in which innovative forms of solidarity become possible. It is a research project that is carried out by an inter-disciplinary research team of 15 scholars in cooperation with an advisory committee consisting of more than 60 frontline, intermediary and policy level organizations which are active in four settings of everyday life: labor, education, leisure and social housing, most of them situated in the Flemish region of Belgium and some of them in the city of Brussels. The underlying assumption of this project is that solidarity needs to be rethought and reformulated in a spatio-temporal framework that looks beyond the territorial nation state to solidarity practices hic et nunc. As educationalists we try to understand how social workers, community organizers, teachers, volunteers, delegates of trade unions and other engaged citizens create solidarity among people who do not have much in common apart from the school, the park, the factory, the sports field or the neighborhood center they share. We want to understand the modes of community interaction and the process of education that emerge through particular interventions of professionals in these places. For this chapter we go into one case in particular, the superdiverse shop floor of Tower Automotive in Ghent.

SOLIDARITY AS A KEY ISSUE

Over the last decade, many people have moved from place to place over the globe. These large migratory movements present challenges for people living within Western society today (Oosterlynck et al., 2015). The intensification of global flows of people creates increasing social and cultural diversity, resulting in a level and kind of complexity – called 'super-diversity' – surpassing anything previously experienced in society (Vertovec, 2007). Researchers refer to the day-to-day reality of our society as a "minority-majority" society. Differences between different groups are growing, and minorities have become majority (Vertovec, 2007). This

increase of a multiplicity of diverse, and often antagonistic, ways of living lead to questions about what it actually means to be part of a collective with whom people feel attached to and with whom people are willing to share and redistribute material and immaterial resources (Stjernø, 2004). In this chapter we start from the following assumption: solidarity in super-diverse situations is possible and is already been practiced in schools and parks, in workplaces, sports fields, social housing projects and in neighborhood centers.

This focus on how people collectively engage in the here and now is different from the approach to 'solidarity in diversity' argued for by Putnam (2007). Responding to his empirical findings on how in the short and medium-term ethnic and cultural diversity has negatively impacted on solidarity, Putnam (2007) recommends a long-term strategy aimed at the construction of new and more encompassing national identities, "a novel 'one' out of a diverse 'many'" (p. 165). We do not necessarily want to contest this claim, but what we would like to argue for is a much more in-depth understanding of the educational possibilities that emerge from everyday practices of people engaging with the multiplicity of cultures in a superdiverse society.

Although both "social cohesion and social solidarity are generally used interchangeably" (Vasta, 2010, p. 507) it is crucial for our analysis to make a distinction between the two concepts. Both concepts refer to the question of living together in an increasingly diverse society and culture but work from different perspectives on how diversity should be approached. The preferred term in current policy discourse is indeed 'social cohesion' and by definition it stresses the importance of integrating people into a collective with a homogeneous identity (Vasta, 2010). Community building efforts often share this focus and as Kearns and Forrest (2000, p. 996) argue the kernel of these practices is the idea "that a cohesive society 'hangs together'; all the component parts somehow fit in and contribute to society's collective project and well-being; and conflict between societal goals and groups, and disruptive behaviours, are largely absent or minimal". Such an approach is problematic as it "potentially privileges some residents over others – namely those with legal status and/or those who assimilate within the unified communal 'whole' over those without legal status and/or who represent 'difference' that might disrupt the unified communal 'whole'" (Squire, 2011, p. 294). Focusing on groups of people who do not 'fit' and who bear the burden to integrate into this communal whole also tends to reaffirm an essentialist frame of identity and culture. As Todd (2011) shows there is a particular ontology underpinning this approach which "turns a person into an aggregate of her cultural attributes: she bears these attributes like a mantle into encounters with others as though they stand for who she is" (Todd, 2011, p. 103). When educationalists try to intervene and facilitate a process of education based on this 'social cohesion' approach, they often focus upon the knowledge and skills migrants have to acquire in order to participate as full members of the communal whole, primarily understood in terms of what a neo-liberal labor market expects of people. It is an intervention that is based on strong but also conflicting beliefs in the abilities of a person: everyone can be a competitive entrepreneur but some people

have to be qualified to do so through the acquisition of the 'proper' knowledge, insights, skills, and attitudes (Biesta, 2011). In any case, neither the standards, nor the imagined society that undergirds these educational initiatives are being widely challenged (Mollenhauer, 1986).

In shifting our focus onto solidarity we want to explore how a pedagogy which acknowledges vulnerability, weakness and fragility (Prieto, 2015, p. 306) encourages people to share and redistribute material and immaterial resources. More in particular, we are interested in what we want to call 'transformative modes of solidarity' that do not aim at dissolving differences between people into one clear-cut defined collective. As already indicated we want to locate these transformative modes of solidarity in a spatio-temporal setting that is different from the way these issues are managed by and through the nation-state. We shift to what diverse populations do and collectively engage in the here and now through everyday activities. From a spatial perspective, we move from the bounded territory of the nation state to the everyday places and practices in which people engage with the social and cultural differences they encounter. From a temporal perspective, a similar move is made from the imagined continuity through history of a national community to concrete places as schools, social housing projects, workplaces, neighborhood centers etc., where people jointly engage with the culturally and socially diverse groups of people that are present in these places. As educationalists, we believe we need to make this shift, away from a focus on education as a process of becoming a member of a predefined community to a process of being able to live in the concern for a 'we' for which a common denominator is not available and which always entails moments of transformation and disruption of the established order (Biesta, 2006). The emerging collective opens then the possibility of what Todd calls "an ontology of plurality' where the givenness of plurality (in all its contingency) can emerge and 'the boundaries of a democratic plurality" can be redrawn (Todd, 2011, p. 101).

A SUPERDIVERSE SHOP FLOOR

In this chapter we delve into a particular case, the superdiverse shop floor of Tower Automotive in Ghent (Belgium) and want to understand the significance of particular learning processes that can support transformative modes of solidarity. Tower Automotive is a worldwide producer of metal components for cars. We did our case-study in a division that is located in Ghent where Tower Automotive is a supplier for Volvo. Tower Automotive Ghent has 38 nationalities amongst the 350 employees (44 white collar, 265 blue collar and a fluctuating group of around 10% of the workforce who are on fixed-term contracts). There is a lot of diversity within the existing diversity and this diversity is not limited to cultural or ethnic backgrounds. Workers from African backgrounds for example, do not share the same status or the same origins. Some workers moved to Belgium because of marriage or family reunification, while other workers are former refugees. Some workers have support from networks of friends and family, other workers do not have these networks or

support at all. A significant group of workers experience a range of problems with legal documents, are financially indebted and struggle to survive on low wages.

For this case-study one of the authors of this chapter made use of diverse research techniques. He conducted semi-structured interviews with key figures from the socialist trade union 'ABVV Metaal' and the Catholic trade union 'ACV Metaal (METEA)', the diversity officer of both trade unions and the sector delegates of both trade unions. He also interviewed the Human Resource Manager (HRM) who is responsible for the daily management of the factory floor. Apart from these interviews he worked for four weeks on the shop floor. He was concerned that there would be too much distance between the researcher and the workers in the factory and this would make conversations and in-depth interviews difficult. As one of the union delegates stated "once people see you as an outsider, they talk amongst each other about you, instead of with you". Every two hours he took a break to sit down and write his observations made at the assembly line. Conversations during longer breaks could be written down right away and at the end of each working day, he wrote more extensive fieldnotes reflections on them in the form of a diary. Lastly, he participated in some training and education initiatives that both trade unions organized for their members about anti-racism and intercultural competences on the shop floor and analyzed a set of documents relevant for the policy on diversity on the shop floor within Tower Automotive Ghent. All data was brought into NVIVO and in analyzing our data it became clear how the delegates of the two trade unions in this company are challenged by a differentiation of concerns on culture, religious rituals, multi-lingualism and a mosaic of issues connected to differences in economic and political positioning.

DOING THINGS TOGETHER

In the central hall of Tower Automotive Ghent images of all the workers are hung up and underneath these photos is the main slogan of this company: "Tower promotes diversity by giving equal opportunities to all." For this company, with its headquarters in America, dealing with the super diverse shop floor is about putting forward multiculturalism as a valuable and unifying standard for the company as a whole. Also, HRM and trade unions try to establish a whole range of actions that aim to 'deal' with diversity. For example, a nondiscrimination rule was introduced in this company following an incident of a racist slogan appearing in the toilets of Tower Automotive Ghent. The company decided to intervene and asked everyone to sign an agreement that discrimination and racism are not tolerated within factory walls. Trade unions as well as HRM also organize training sessions on antiracism and intercultural competences. In these courses they try to acknowledge the many differences among the workers and make these differences both understandable and workable for the employees of this company.

What research on diversity on the workplace (Estlund, 2006) shows, is that people can be encouraged to get along with each other, despite the relatively high degree

of demographic diversity. Additionally, what is rather unique about the workplace is "its capacity to convene individuals who would not otherwise choose to interact and compel them to cooperate" (Estlund, 2006, p. 88). The process of working together depends on, and helps to produce, constructive and even amicable intergroup relations (Estlund, 2006, p. 81). As our analysis also shows, the outcome of working together on the shop floor is the normalization of difference or the acceptance of difference as an everyday and even banal feature of working life. An employee of Tower Automotive Ghent for example indicates that he appreciates his fellow workers "for what they do". He elaborates on this by saying:

> Of course, we all judge each other. Maybe you think black man and think drugs or so. Or we think white man and see an authoritarian person. But what's different here is that we are forced to work together. One has to talk to another person. In a few years, and with time, the prejudices disappear when other things take over. If I now look at some people or think about them, it's through what they do. What they do and who they are starts to mix.

The observation of changed attitudes towards fellow workers made in this quote confirms what supporters of the 'contact hypothesis' over and over again have sought to demonstrate, that prejudices between groups are reduced when interpersonal contact under appropriate conditions becomes possible (Allport, 1958). What our research on Tower Automotive Ghent shows, is that a particular type of contact, a contact which encourages people to do things together, is likely to result in a changed attitude towards each other or at least temper tensions and prejudices and making feelings of respect, empathy and affinity possible. In line with Bauman (1995, p. 49) we understand this as a shift from simply occupying a shared space without interacting in any significant way ('being aside') to interacting with others as occupants of particular roles and expectation ('being with others').

People are joined together during an activity and shared objectives, tasks and roles substitute the possible tensions and prejudices towards each other. The underlying educational process is a cooperative form of learning as people learn to collaborate with others, learn to share objectives and apply problem solving strategies together. Sharing and redistributing material and immaterial resources become possible but only when it is suitable for the ongoing cooperation. The solidarity that becomes possible through collaborating on the arrangement of holidays in Tower Automotive is a good example of this. Holidays of two weeks are unfeasible for workers from Ghana, Jamaica, Russia or Ivory Coast as they want to visit their family in their countries of origin. Throughout this holiday period, a complex holiday roster was developed which manages to combine this particular demand for long leave by a group of workers with the right for every worker to take enough holidays. Another example is the request to pray during Ramadan and do less physically hard work during this period. Based on the data we were able to collect we could observe how the company but also delegates of trade unions tend to smooth down possible tensions and discussions that could arise from these particular issues. The solidarity

that emerges, aims at integrating workers into a collective of participants that share a stake in performing a particular activity and is based on the importance of dialogue, learning to deal with conflicts and seeking to compromise.

But our analysis also shows that there are particular issues that challenge the clear-cut identification with Tower Automotive as one fixed collective and open up the potential for more transformative forms of solidarity. The first issue prompting this demand is the socio-economical vulnerability of some of the workers. Notwithstanding the fact that everyone on the shop floor has a formal job there are huge differences among workers in terms of job status and wage levels. Likewise, a significant number of workers with migrant roots are living in precarious living conditions. They do not have a social network they can rely on, they have limited possibilities as they survive on low wages and are not accustomed to the bureaucratic procedures that are required to obtain social security insurance, civil status etc. Delegates within both trade unions realize that the typical union actions of striking are not appropriate to respond to these extreme situations of social exclusion. They seek the proximity of the shop floor and are open for talks and support outside the walls of the factory floor. In doing so, they find themselves in a 'zone of discomfort' (Kunneman, 2007) as they recognize that they cannot build on existing institutional measures and proven methodological expertise. The vulnerable situation of the other cuts deep into what they were taught to as a professional. In search for a response they experience this zone of discomfort as worth exploring as it triggers the opportunity to loosen existing standards and positions in society. The issue of extreme vulnerability brings forward a situation of uncertainty, or even what could be called a crisis of judgement. Questions such as 'What should I do?' and 'On what grounds?' implicitly or explicitly urge them to reflect upon their own positioning. These questions are profoundly educational, not only for the professionals but also for the people they are working with. They provoke a site "of critique, of change, of newness" and more specifically an experience of a possibility "that the community we are taking ourselves to be representatives of can be changed, reoriented, broadened etc." (Ramaekers, 2010, p. 62).

In Tower Automotive the use of language is a second issue that is encouraging a potentially transformative form of solidarity. The language policy of Flanders, as one of the three language regions in Belgium, stipulates Dutch as the standard language to be used in all written and oral communication inside companies and organizations located within the Flemish territory. It is a directive that trade unions are much in favor of as it creates transparency about the communication that should be understandable for all the workers. But in the case of Tower Automotive both the company and the trade unions have chosen not to force workers to speak the Dutch language but only to encourage them to do so. Hence, in the day-to-day communication on the shop floor, the choice is made to talk the language that 'works'. Moreover, both in formal and informal communications multilingualism or experiments with using more than one language is the mainstream practice. What these experiments with multilingualism enhance, apart or beside its particular aim

of getting the work done, is a more lightly or a less rule-governed way of working together. Multilingualism as an answer to the obligation of speaking one particular language, in particular the Dutch language, is then less disruptive or uncomfortable than the vulnerability of workers but it does enhance a space for sharing the capacity of communication, thereby untying one particular language as decisive in the way workers should define themselves as a collective. It reinforces a being together that exceeds a dynamic of rejections and identity claims. As an intervention it is about inviting people to co-create an activity where rules are still important but are less rigorous. The importance of this mode of interaction is also emphasized in research on conviviality, understood as relations where cultural, linguistic and religious particularities of people are present but not as fixed categories nor as sources of intractable problems (Nowicka & Vertovec, 2014).

WHAT IS EDUCATIONAL IN SOLIDARITY BUILDING?

For many contemporary policy-makers, access to formal and informal solidarity is conditional on the integration of newcomers in the existing socio-spatial structures and the presumed cultural homogeneity of nation states (Kymlicka, 2015). This kind of 'affirmative' solidarity may become a politically conservative endeavor, however, if the order and hierarchies in which (new) groups are integrated are excluding and cannot be questioned. For this reason, we have argued in this chapter that there is need to track and trace transformative forms of solidarity in the everyday places where people work, live, play or study together. What we found on the superdiverse shop floor of Tower Automotive in Ghent is that working together on the shop floor does not only address people as occupants of particular roles and expectation but has the potential to enhance interactions that are disturbing some of the symbolic categories and the powerful structures that organize social life. Workers, HRM managers, trade union professionals etc. are asked to respond to particular issues while a common ground on which one can build this response, is shifting, fragile or not existing.

In the context of solidarity in diversity, the question is then whether solidarity is framed through an integrationist or transformative perspective. The former sees assimilation (i.e., becoming more similar to mainstream society) as a precondition for solidarity, whereas in the latter the confrontation with 'otherness' and the subsequent transformation of the socio-cultural and economical order to include other voices and subjects as equals is the very substance of solidarity in diversity. The former requires 'socialization', the latter implies 'subjectification' (Biesta, 2009). Socialization is about getting to know one's place, function and voice in a social order through learning processes that are implied in becoming part of a group. Learning understood as socialization inserts "individuals into existing ways of doing and being" (Biesta, 2009). Subjectification on the other hand refers to an educational experience of becoming a subject. It is not about the insertion of newcomers into existing orders, but about ways of being that hint at questioning and changing such orders.

What we found on the superdiverse shop floor of Tower Automotive in Ghent were, what we want to call, minor acts or interventions which blur or even refute the way migrants fall between clear-cut social, cultural and legalistic conventions and categories (Squire & Darling, 2013). The minor acts we observed, are not about the confirmation of one's own socio-cultural identity or the expression of specific socio-cultural values of a certain group. They make the emergence of acting and speaking subjects possible who through their acts and voices transform and dispute pre-given identities. What these minor acts actually do is rather small, creating for example playfulness, experiments with multilingual conversations, being open for talks and support outside the walls of the factory floor. But these minor acts are at the same time very powerful as they enhance a sensibility that the terms on which people can respond collectively to the inevitable differences between people are not given. These minor acts install moments in which solidarity is practiced in a double sense: sharing and redistributing material and immaterial resources with 'newcomers' and also taking up the responsibility to renew this world in which we want to live, work and play together. From this perspective of minor acts, the focus of professionals (trade unions delegates in this case but also adult educators and community workers in a lot of other cases) is no longer on the conditions that people must meet, but on the kind of interactions that becomes possible. It is about enhancing interactions that are characterized by openness or indefiniteness to the ways others want to be and participate in the world we are living in. The emerging collective – or 'the coming community' in Agamben's terms (1999) lays no claim to identity and refuses any essentialist criteria of belonging. The starting point is then neither certainty nor clear knowledge on how professionals should help participants develop a specific set of knowledge, skills and attitudes. The question what it means to be part of a community becomes a radically open question and can only be addressed by engaging in particular relationships and practices rather than already defining the answers before the practice has even started (Biesta, 2006).

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PART 5

MAKING HOPE PRACTICAL

LINDEN WEST

15. DEMOCRATIC AND INTERCULTURAL DIALOGUE ACROSS UNIVERSITIES, COMMUNITIES AND MOVEMENTS

INTRODUCTION

I argue in this chapter that psychosocial and auto/biographical perspectives have much to contribute to build better understanding of the interplay of complexity, diversity and democracy, within the power dynamics of a neo-liberal world; and in illuminating their social, personal and psychic costs. I also wish to emphasize the central importance of dialogical, democratic education, across difference, historically and contemporaneously, in any new (but also very old) politics of resistance and hope. Historical and recent auto/biographical narrative research, drawing on an interdisciplinary psychosocial sensibility, provides the basis of the case study of how education can facilitate profounder forms of dialogue, resources of hope and personal as well as collective transformation. I locate the whole analysis within a neo-liberal, individualized political economy, in which global capital exercises pervasive power; where inequalities have deepened, and racism, xenophobia, fascism and fundamentalism are on the increase. A place where universities are increasingly incorporated in this dystopia, often distant from marginalized communities, and where various forms of democratic or popular education have weakened (West, 2017; Tuckett, 2017). Notwithstanding, I describe how democratic community learning spaces can be life sustaining, and mind and heart expanding, in the spirit of bell hooks (2003). They give us glimpses of a liberating self/other mutuality, across difference.

Public service and public provision, including publicly provided adult education, are much diminished, often dismissed and disparaged, in contrast to the fetishizing of the market and private sector provision. Individuals, private organizations and Adam Smith's invisible hand, rather than the state or even democratic politics, know best. Moreover, within these dynamics of individualization and privatization, a new and virulent politics of class has emerged, contrary to predictions about the latter's demise. Democratic politics and processes have weakened in the neo-liberal, privatized political economy, as responsibility has shifted from public and collective solutions to personal troubles, towards individuals taking responsibility for everything happening in their lives, including illness, unemployment or other misfortunes. Broadly I take a Keynesian view of macro-economic management and believe there is convincing evidence, as in Wilkinson and Pickett's (2009) work, that

more equal and collectivist societies, such as in Scandinavia, generate better mental well-being for everyone. We have, I suggest, responsibilities as citizens, academics and educators, to question powerful neo-liberal trends and to illuminate their effects, and how they can be resisted in processes of democratic, dialogical community education. We must work to chronicle and explain the psychic, social and ecological costs of the present dystopia, and how intercultural and community education can help forge new collective resources, at a time when cultural super diversity seems, for many, a threat. I draw on research in a post-industrial city to illustrate how a politics of hopelessness breeds racist and xenophobic politics, but also how hope can be restored.

I suggest that we need new ways of conceptualizing educational processes, beyond a narrow cognitivism, or radical thinking reduced to a detached, transcendental criticality. I consider, psychosocially, drawing especially on psychoanalysis, the importance of processes of splitting at an individual but also group level: where the world gets divided into binaries of self and other, idealized and disparaged worlds, the superior and inferior, success and failure. There is, for instance, a process of self-idealization among elites, and the tendency to project on to others, like the working class and people deemed as 'failures', what they most dislike in themselves, such as dependence, vulnerability and incompetence. There is a tendency for elites to believe that their achievements are entirely due to their own efforts, while the poor lack sufficient motivation, desire and moral fibre to improve their lot. Splitting can also be applied to the dynamics of racism and fundamentalism: a kind of defence against anxiety by splitting off those parts of ourselves that we most dislike – like greed, misogyny or the capacity for violence – and projecting these onto the other. The consequence in Melanie Klein's (1998) terms is paranoid-schizoid modes of functioning, in which what is split off comes back to haunt us. Individual psyches and whole groups are correspondingly depleted: idealized or stigmatized, to the detriment of all. Adult education can be reimagined as a space in which we own our messy feelings, inadequacies and strengths, and realise a common humanity in our need for the other in profounder educational experience and to enhance self and collective well-being.

The dangerous, disturbing political economy of neo-liberalism necessitates, in other words, a renewed imaginative effort to think about adult education in new ways: including transcending the old either-or binaries of psyche and society, self and other, therapy and education, as well as critical and personal reflexivity. Both to analyze pathology, and to better understand how new and healthier forms of learning and resistance to stigmatization can be created. New space is opening for a more feminized and inclusive deliberative engagement, where emotions and vulnerabilities are better acknowledged, liberating thought and heart in a kind of therapeutic and questioning process, beyond the clinical hour. Inspired by analytic psychologist Andrew Samuel's (2015) work, political economy itself (and adult education?) really could benefit from time on the couch, but in dialogue with others: economists, sociologists, social activists, critical theorists, environmentalists and educators who question the health and sustainability of present trends or older

ways of doing politics. We need to better understand the dynamics of inner and outer worlds, interdisciplinarily, if we are to build more nuanced understanding of the problems of how power works, and to reimagine how social and personal transformation, and a diffusion of power is possible, from the bottom up.

DIALOGUE

The argument derives in part from a confrontation between my own biography and the effects of neo-liberalism in a frighteningly unstable world. It became important for me to dialogue with particular sociologists and critical theorists, combined with psychoanalysis, which provides, as I experienced it, profounder insights into our troubled times, at both a personal but also collective level (Formenti & West, 2018). Sociologists like Zygmunt Bauman (Bauman & Haugaard, 2008) question the quasi-liberatory individualization thesis of Giddens or Beck, in which late modernity offers new opportunities for individuals to compose lives on their own terms. If we cannot escape the inevitability of new life politics and the necessity to compose a self in the fracturing of inherited templates, this is located within frightening discontinuities and paranoid-schizoid dynamics, as a defence against powerlessness. Class positioning matters here: Bauman insists that the more indiviualized consumer society retains forms of structural domination, not least in the privatization of political and collective issues (notably personal responsibility for unemployment and security).

In the relational politics of neo-liberal austerity, structuring processes continue, if in more fragmented form, and those on the margins are held responsible and stigmatized, for their condition and poverty. Insecurity, anxiety and hopelessness haunt individual lives, and whole communities of poor people. Liquid modernity, Bauman also claims, has created a culture in which we behave like competitive hunters, without regard for others, in search of the latest kill, whether a new job, relationship, iPhone, or even a degree. We can find fleeting bliss in the kill but it does not last as we restlessly seek new stimuli: the hopefulness of modernity is replaced by fear, deepening anxiety about the future and addiction to the latest fad, including social media. In such circumstances, Adam Phillips (2012) suggests, young people on the precarious margins may not get what is happening to them and their communities. This can be resolved by finding gangs of their own, which offer inclusion, recognition, and powerful but ultimately defensive stories in which ‘we’ are idealized and the other – ‘Jew’, ‘white trash’, ‘Paki’, or ‘Asylum seeker’ – are denigrated. This is the damaging political economy of our times and the territory of Brexit and Donald Trump.

AN AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL, NARRATIVE AND PSYCHOSOCIAL IMAGINATION

I have applied psychosocial ideas to the stories told by diverse people living, learning and working in marginalized communities. People located in poverty-stricken coastal towns or post-industrial cities, where the collapse or weakening

of working-class self-help institutions has created an epidemic of hopelessness. I interviewed people on working class estates where racism found purchase, or in Muslim communities, where Islamic fundamentalism appealed to particular young people. Interviews were held as many as five times, over a period of months, and even years, in what can become a kind of transitional relational space of increasing trust, collaboration and relatively open, exploratory storytelling and, in effect, of self-negotiation. It is not psychoanalysis, or even therapy, but an attempt, in a sustained, in-depth and collaborative alliance, to work with people, respectfully, and to chronicle and interpret their stories with them, over time. While, to repeat, this is not psychotherapy, the effect of seriously and respectfully listening can be therapeutic (Merrill & West, 2009; West, 2016).

I draw on diverse theoretical friends, including Winnicott, Freud and Axel Honneth, the critical theorist, to make sense of stories, and the interplay of self/other, psyche and society. Winnicott's (1971) ideas on transitional objects and spaces are helpful. Transitional objects may be a new idea that speaks to us, or an inspiring other with whom we identify, or characters in literature. We feel recognized and encouraged to claim space, in which anxiety is minimized, in the language of psychoanalytic object relations theory. Attuned, empathic and committed professionals can, in such terms, come to represent "good object parent-figures", who intuitively recognize the primitive fear (that we all share) of being exposed, stupid, incapable and unlovable. When people feel accepted in their entirety, and understood – legitimate in these intimate, relational processes – playfulness, risk taking, narrative and self-experimentation become more possible. Spaces can open, in fact, for collective, participative democratic experiment. I have described, how particular professionals encouraged nervous, diffident young mothers to enter transitional spaces of self/other negotiation – in a management group or encounters with professionals – on a so-called 'sink' estate, and eventually learned to talk back to power (West, 2009). These professionals, including educators, walked a demanding, dialogical, emotional as well as cognitive walk, rather than simply talking the talk. The walk included giving time to others and imagining self in their shoes, auto/biographically. These are basic, largely unconscious dynamics of self/other recognition, in Honneth's terms, on which democratic relationships depend.

Honneth (2007, 2009) takes us into thinking at a group and collective as well as a more intimately inter-subjective level. He uses the term self-respect to describe what happens when people feel part of a purposeful, valued group, with rights and responsibilities. Where they internalize the right to be listened to and fully participate, which nurtures a sense of responsibility towards others. Self-esteem is created when people become aware of their importance to the group and value to others. Crucially, we then better recognize and appreciate others, and symbolic otherness, as a basis for social cooperation and new forms of social solidarity. It is important to emphasize that this is a relational, often unconscious, as well as an intellectual and imaginative process. We may find, as noted, self-recognition in a character in literature, with whom we identify, which generates new understanding

as they speak to our experience. This, psychoanalytically, is projective identification: where we project parts of ourselves into another's experience, someone we admire for their resilience and courage, perhaps, and then introject these qualities into our own internal dynamics, changing the quality of self, and self-other understanding (West, 1996, 2016).

The good, in other words, that lies between people, in intersubjective space, can, over time, be internalized, to become part of a young parent's intrasubjective life. The dramatic script or play of psyche shifts, and new and positive dynamics are created (West, 2009). Anxieties are contained, listening is to the fore, collective help, support but also challenge is created to enable groups of young parents to learn, albeit fragilely, the power of an agora, a meeting place, for participative democracy. Unfortunately, such phenomena and programs, including children's centres, are much diminished because of local and national government austerity.

Freud (1953–1974) is helpful in theorizing some of the above in his great anthropological insight that humans are carried by the mother for much less time than other mammals, and from this experience of premature separation, the human is heavily dependent on a protective environment for survival. Herein lies a profound educational, political and cultural imperative, and source of hope, in what can seem frightening super diversity, fracture and collective abandonment. Primitive anxieties can be evoked in young people when they feel abandoned and stigmatized, but we also have new insights into the loving work we must do to counteract this.

DECLINE OF PUBLIC SPACE, LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND POPULAR EDUCATION

The consequences of globalization and neo-liberalism stalk the landscape of the city where I was born, Stoke-on-Trent, in the English Midlands, as they do similar communities across the Western world. Rapid economic decline – of pottery manufacture, mining and iron and steel production, in this instance – combined with the collapse or marginalization of working-class self-help institutions, like trade unions, cooperatives, workers' education and non-conformist churches, has been catastrophic. There has been a dismembering of traditions of municipal socialism too, undermining the capacity of local government to act in meaningful ways. All these trends evoke feelings of crisis, anger, collective depression and despair.

In 2009, when I began my research, racism was on the rise and a mosque was pipe-bombed. Private security firms were employed to protect other mosques (West, 2016). Stoke-on-Trent City Council had nine councillors from the Fascist British National Party (BNP) and the BNP percentage of the vote overtook social democratic Labour. All this happened after a period of dysfunctional local politics when the city was placed under 'special measures', and the national government or its agencies took over the running of the city. It seemed the far right would form a majority on the City Council by 2010 (West, 2016).

This was my city – a place I still thought of as home – and the crisis mattered greatly. Austerity, post 2008, brought cuts in local government funding, which added to feelings of hopelessness and abandonment. Mental health services were stretched while the safety nets of the welfare state looked increasingly threadbare, and the pay day money lenders were filling gaps. Some young people were forced to truant from schools or abandon their education, as they took on the role of carers in their families. As Phil McDuff observes, "rolling back public services has created opportunities for the unscrupulous to take advantage of those with nowhere else to turn" (McDuff, 2018, p. 2).

There was once a regeneration project called Pathfinder – a mix of public and private sector housing regeneration – but the program was aborted midstream, in 2010, by national government, in the politics of austerity. Whole areas of the city were left in limbo, cleared but never rebuilt. Abandonment seemed an appropriate metaphor. As a psychoanalytical psychotherapist and academic, I was aware of the statistical evidence in the UK that mental illness affects one in three families in marginalized communities (Layard & Clark, 2014). Mental distress seemed ubiquitously embedded within the new dis-order of Stoke. As a historian, I understood the extent to which a once proud civic social democratic and popular education culture had unravelled over a relatively short period of time, including universities working in alliance with organizations like the Workers' Educational Association (WEA).

FEELING STIGMATIZED

A constant theme in the narratives of the 50 people I interviewed in Stoke was the feeling of being perpetually judged and stigmatized by elites, whether in the media, the bankers or politicians: as benefit cheats or scroungers, stuck in front of television, morally feckless. Two of my collaborators, Cheryl and Alan Gerrard, ran an art gallery in a poor part of town, which they saw, in part, as an act of resistance. They told me that neither of them painted but saw the potential of art to evoke a better understanding of the city, its history and industrial heritage, and how it could be improved. They sought a broader political project of civic and emotional regeneration, using art as living history.

Alan was angry at what had happened to Stoke and wanted to recover its traditions of solidarity. He was especially agitated about how it was stereotyped and stigmatized:

> … there's a misconception that … local people … are sitting in front of the television watching football … they've got the Sky [satellite TV provider] channels on …. But they do like art and it's local working-class people that are coming in and buying original pieces … the perception of Stoke-on-Trent is …. It's portrayed as being worse by the councillors and the offices that run the city … people outside the city I think have a bad perception ….

Such negative perceptions dug deeply into Alan, making him angry and depressed.

Part of my analysis of the city has been historical, inspired by the work of Jonathan Rose (2010), and interviews with a number of those involved in the adult education movement (West, 2016). Rose challenged the tendency, among some Marxist historians, to disparage the contribution of the alliance between progressive elements in universities and workers organizations, such as the WEA. On the contrary, the testimonies of worker students themselves suggests the alliance was crucial in building self-other recognition, active citizenship and strengthening social solidarities (Rose, 2010; West, 2016, 2017).

To reiterate, a central part of the work is auto/biographical. I began my academic career as a social historian, focusing on the history of working-class education. I tended to dismiss the significance of this, maybe in the arrogance and insecurity of youth (West, 2016). Workers' education involved 30 or more ordinary people – potters, miners and elementary school teachers, for instance – meeting together weekly, in what at best was a highly dialogical culture, in which all were teachers and learners. I now read these workers' classes as good transitional spaces of self-negotiation, individually and collectively, where engagement with the symbolic order, and with diverse others, facilitated by good enough, empathic, robust tutors, built a more cosmopolitan and active citizenry. Bigotry, racism and even fundamentalism found expression in the classes but adult educators who were university professors, like R. H. Tawney or Raymond Williams, challenged the bigotry while keeping dialogue going. They encouraged the group to take tea, for instance, afterwards, to share stories, sing songs, recite poetry together, and harmony was restored. This world has largely died. Representative democracy has hollowed out, too, in many places and countries, with fascist parties like the British National Party and racist populists like UK Independence Party (UKIP) filling the vacuum. The hollowing out has also to do with the decline of more participatory forms of democracy across civil society, which includes adult education. Representative democracy can only thrive, I suggest, if the wider civil society pulses with democratic, participative life.

As indicated, I applied the insights of critical theory and psychoanalysis in the reassessment of my own earlier work on the tutorial class movement. We can observe across student testimonies the commitment to serious learning and social purpose and how the dynamics of self-other recognition found expression. Feeling understood by significant others, operates at a primitive or early emotional and unconscious level as well as cognitively; feeling recognized, in short, provides a building block for self in relationship. Self-confidence, self-respect and self-esteem are created when people feel themselves to be accepted and acceptable, and that they have things to say which are then valued by people they admire and respect. And their role in a group is enriched and enlivened.

Of course, negative dynamics happen in groups and in the psyche too, as individuals can close themselves down to difference and the other, because they are not like us and feel threatening (the basis of which is partly projection); or the other is in some way inferior, or, at an extreme, to be attacked and even annihilated, as with

the racist gang or Islamist group (West, 2016). But a good, diverse group remains open to diversity and thrives precisely because of this. Experience is never ended, or another point of view denied, in the name of some absolute truth, because there is always a different perspective, another set of experiences, or questions, with which to engage. Education becomes a perpetual struggle to understand and build forms of dialogical knowing, which embrace the cosmopolitanism inherent in open and empathic encounters with others. Bigotry and prejudice are challenged, as chronicled in various and diverse worker student accounts (Dobrin, 1996; Rose, 2010). Such understanding of educational process and of the making of intersubjective, highly contingent, developmental, vulnerable but also potentially resilient, generous selves, is far removed from the autonomous, acquisitive, egotistical, materialistic subject that dominates the contemporary academic mind. Or the overly rational self of much adult education theorizing (West, 2016, 2017).

RESISTANCE

Furthermore, there is resistance to austerity and democratic deficit in forms of alternative politics and democratic education – in anti-capitalist, or sustainable development/climate change/environmental movements – which provide elements of self – as well as collective learning but also healing for those involved (Samuels, 2015). This applies to several new community development initiatives in Stoke as well as in the history of workers' education (West, 2016). The act of participation, in good enough groups, including adult education, can encourage new forms of thinking, feeling and action, and even a more feminized politics, in contrast to traditional 'male' competitiveness and omniscience. Take for example, the *Lidice shall live* campaign, led by Alan and Cheryl Gerrard or health groups that bring working-class white and Muslim women together in opposition to austerity. The Gerrard's project was an attempt to create resources of hope. Here was an initiative enabling young children and their families to talk to each other and discover pride in their city and in what their grand- or great-grandparents had done. This was an example of a genuinely inclusive local curriculum narrative project in schools and community groups, helping pupils and families learn about the miners who took a stand against Nazi barbarities. Past entered present in new, refreshing and cooperative ways.

Reinhard Heydrich, author of *The Final Solution of the Jewish Question*, was assassinated in Prague on 27 May 1942. In retaliation, squadrons of Nazi terror units entered the Czech mining community of Lidice and shot dead all the men over 15. At the same time the women and children were rounded up and many were gassed, although the few who looked sufficiently Aryan were deported to Germany to be raised by families of the Reich. Out of revenge for Heydrich's assassination, the Nazis declared that 'Lidice shall die for ever' and razed the mining town to the ground. The link between Stoke and Lidice was forged through the International Miners' Union and the actions of a local councillor and family doctor named Barnett Stross. In that summer of 1942, the miners and others in Stoke organized a great

public rally, under the defiant banner 'Lidice Shall Live'. The rally was addressed by Stross, who became MP for Stoke Central in 1945. He was Jewish, and his own family were refugees from Polish pogroms. He was also active in workers' education and was my mother's GP.

Some 70 years after the massacre at Lidice, Alan and Cheryl organized a campaign to honour this working-class movement against fascism. The few remaining survivors were invited to Stoke in 2012, to commemorate the *Lidice Shall Live* campaign and to remember how the people of Stoke showed moral leadership and gave money to help rebuild the town after the war. This was the best of people's history – a model of mutual recognition, solidarity, internationalism and principle, forged in the workers' movement. Telling stories about Stoke's history in the present was also part of anti-austerity politics as well as a counter to racism. Stross, Alan and Cheryl stated, was not a local name, and Barnett Stross did so much good for the city yet was himself an immigrant and a victim of racism. New qualities of understanding emerged from the storytelling among children and their families.

Stoke municipality is now formally linked to the project and the Lidice survivors visited the city, including local primary schools, to tell their stories. The school children were asked to talk to grandparents and relatives to find out what they knew about the *Lidice Shall Live* campaign and there was an appeal in the local media for people to come forward. Older people began to tell stories and a delicate thread of civic and familial recognition, as well as pride – in the political activism and struggles of previous generations – was woven. Barnett Stross is revered in the Czech Republic. My youngest daughter, Hannah was working in Prague in 2013 and went to visit Lidice after we had a conversation about its history in a synagogue in Prague's old Jewish quarter. We talked about what the people of Stoke had done. Hannah was moved by the Lidice memorial, its rose garden and the road and museum venerating Barnett Stross' name. He was after all her grandmother's family doctor.

Another example of what we can call new democratic, educational and therapeutic politics is of Health Groups organized by the WEA. These consisted of white and Muslim working-class women, protesting against the closures of municipal swimming pools. An organizer stated:

> So they [the participants] were … very upset and at the same time we were running this project … about how people can express themselves and … can protest against decisions. And we were being asked to write letters in protest at the decision …. We pulled people together and created that space …. And again there was a march, much of that was organised online ….

The women were anxious about being "too political". It was the first time they had protested over anything. There was an evaluation and the women felt they had become more active learners as well as politicized. In the context of their biographies, it was a radical step.

These are small, fragile yet important examples of democratic educational activity against the politics of austerity. Therapy as well as learning is found in such

activism: in deliberative and inclusive learning groups, where openness, tolerance, respect, dialogue and collective assertiveness are nurtured, alongside healing. Of course, we need many more such groups to learn our way, inclusively, out of the present democratic malaise and anxiety over the future. Even more reason to witness, understand and celebrate initiatives such as these.

CONCLUSION?

There were many stories about austerity and its distressing, demoralizing effects. The racists propose speedy alternative solutions: it is the Asylum seekers and immigrants, they say, who are stealing your houses, jobs and communities. A new, interdisciplinary imagination is required in response – focused on the interplay of economic, cultural, social, educational, democratic, relational and psychological dynamics. One that challenges the old binary between participative, inclusive democratic learning, and therapeutic processes. In the present ideological climate, the power of populist politicians and new strains of fascism can seem overwhelming. Except, we can take comfort from the fact that resources of hope are being created, *despite* rather than *because* of government, its agencies and the politics of austerity. We must chronicle and learn from them, in new, holistic and interdisciplinary ways. Maybe local universities should pay more attention towards their once and potential future role in building social solidarities via community education, rather than simply being obsessed with social mobility and conventional degree programs.

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MARTA GREGORČIČ

16. THE IMPACT OF TRANSFORMATIVE LEARNING ON SOCIAL TRANSFORMATIONS

A Comparative Study of Participatory Budgets in Maribor (Slovenia) and Rosario (Argentina)

INTRODUCTION

With the current economic and financial crisis, global capitalism is becoming increasingly barbaric, bringing us closer towards planetary social war and societal fascism (de Sousa Santos, 2014). Under these circumstances counter-tendencies and alternative practices which prefigure a post-capitalist world assume enormous importance. Arguably, participatory budgeting (PB) is one of these practices. PB is most often defined as a democratic practice of deliberation and decision-making in which community members in assemblies directly decide how to spend part of the public budget (Cabannes, 2004; Baiocchi, 2005; Sintomer et al., 2014). This creates a system of co-governance (de Sousa Santos, 2005) in which "self-organized" citizens and engaged civic society exert public control over the municipality "by means of institutionalized forms of cooperation and conflict" (p. 308). This chapter will explore PB as a transformative democratic learning process.

First developed in 1989 in Porto Alegre, Brazil, PB has spread variably all over the continent and the world. PB is effective in strengthening democratic processes in local communities, as well as its capacity to afford opportunities for the most marginalized and vulnerable social groups to participate in co-governance (Baiocchi, 2005; de Sousa Santos, 2005; Schugurensky, 2006, 2013).

PB also became a widely used and effective participatory 'bottom-up' democratic practice promoted by transnational political and financial institutions (World Bank, United Nations, OECD, UNESCO, USAID, and EU) which started to implement their own version of PB (Gregorčič & Jelenc Krašovec, 2017). However, they were primarily interested in the technocratic virtues of PB (the efficiency and effectiveness of resource distribution and utilization), but not in its democratic possibilities that has led to the creation of a complex system of participation and distributive justice (de Sousa Santos, 2005, p. 357). It is noteworthy that the cities that established PB according to the terms set by transnational institutions never achieved the same democratic impact that can be seen in Porto Alegre (de Sousa Santos, 2015), or the Argentinian city of Rosario or in the Slovenian city of Maribor where PB emerged from 'below'. This chapter will explore what has occurred in Rosario and Maribor

in terms of power, participation and adult learning and specifically transformative learning in relation to social transformation.

PARTICIPATORY BUDGETING AS A PEDAGOGICAL PROCESS

Many educators recognize that important learning takes place through involvement in social activities (Foley, 1999; Hall et al., 2012; Vieta, 2014) and/or in participatory democratic processes (Schugurensky, 2006; McLaren & Farahmandpur, 2001; Salgado, 2015; Pateman, 1988). Building on this literature this contribution will highlight two pedagogical aspects of PB practices: the importance of 'two-way pedagogy' and the importance of participatory democratic practices in fostering both personal and social transformation.

Schugurensky (2002, p. 12) views PB as political-pedagogical process and emphasizes the centrality of reciprocity in participatory democracy and transformative learning: transformative learning can promote participative democracy, but participative democracy also has the potential to nurture transformative learning. Likewise, de Sousa Santos describes the learning process in PB as a "two-way pedagogy" (2005, p. 362) that take place between active citizens and NGOs on the one hand, and administrative and technical civil servants of a city or municipality on the other. This is partly because there is exceptional potential for learning among the civil servants when an attempt is made to transition away from conservative forms of techno-bureaucratic culture (de Sousa Santos, 2005). Within transformative democratic practices, pedagogical aspects can be seen in the process of teaching about democracy with the method of learning-by-doing, community learning within social institutions (self-organized or in pre-existing institutions with and without an educational remit). De Sousa Santos (2005) found that participation in democratic processes grew and intensified when the scope and complexity of models which constitute PB expanded as well.

This is some of the background for our comparative study. The transformative impact of PB, which began in 1995, on the citizens of Rosario has been researched by Lerner and Schugurensky (2007) and our work further advances this. The study in Maribor was conducted between the end of 2015 and the beginning of 2016 (Gregorčič & Jelenc Krašovec, 2017). PB in Maribor developed as a response to the degenerating political situation in the city and derived directly from popular uprisings started in Maribor in November 2012, which spread all over Slovenia, resulting in the resignation of Maribor's mayor and the national government in the beginning of 2013. It has since spread to five other Slovenian towns.

TRANSFORMATIVE LEARNING IN PARTICIPATORY PROCESSES

To explore in what ways PB has been transformative we want to draw on transformative learning theory. Jack Mezirow, who based his work on Freire's concept of *conscientização* and Habermas' theory of communicative action,

Table 16.1. Categories of transformative learning

O'Sullivan, Morrel, & O'Connor	*Hoggan*	*Lerner & Schugurensky*
Shift in basic premises and thought	Worldview	Knowledge
Shift in feeling	Self	Values and attitudes
Shift in action	Epistemology	Skills
Shift in consciousness	Ontology	Practices
Altered way of being in the world	Behaviour	
	Capacity	

understood transformative learning as a process in which an individual is elaborating the existing frame of reference, learning a new frame of reference, transforming points of view, and transforming habits of mind (Mezirow, 1991; Mezirow & Taylor, 2009).

There is no single or predominant definition on the *impact* of transformative processes among the scholars of transformative learning. Table 16.1 summarizes three attempts by pedagogues to explore possible ways of 'measuring' or 'proving' transformative learning has taken place. O'Sullivan, Morrel, and O'Connor (2002) define transformative learning within five basic categories that range from shifts in basic premises and thoughts to a wider, cosmopolitan perception of the world. These categories correspond with the changing frame of reference measured in four categories by Lerner and Schugurensky (2007) and the six categories offered by Hoggan (2016). He emphasizes that the parameters of determining transformative learning should focus more on the scope of learning than on the type of change in the learning outcome (Hoggan, 2016, p. 79), while Lerner and Schugurensky (2007) place more importance on the domain of the change and determining whether it occurred at all.

Mezirow (1991) argues that there are certain preconditions for transformative learning – rational, critical dialogue, critical self-reflection, maturity and emotional intelligence. Most agree that democratic discourse is especially central to transformative learning (Mezirow, 1991; Schugurensky, 2002, 2006, 2013; Illeris, 2014; Hoggan, 2016; Dirkx, 1998).

Mezirow presents transformative learning as something which first and foremost occurs on a biographical level may or may not lead to social action or wider social change (Finnegan, 2014, p. 4). In the case of Maribor and Rosario the processes of social, community and individual transformation were inextricably linked and occurred in more unpredictable way than is often imagined in transformative learning theory. The research indicates that there was rich "learning through struggle" (Foley, 1999), and "learning in struggle" (Vieta, 2014; Gregorčič, 2017) which is profoundly transformative and was led by the marginalized and oppressed, and sparked by participation in self-organized and autonomous struggles and through deliberation

and decision-making practices. One of the main arguments of this chapter is that the process of participatory democracy is itself an important learning experience for different areas of life, and that it is not only relevant for the identification of new knowledge acquired by participants in such processes, but also because of the 'way' in which the participants learned and transformed on a personal level, as well as the wider social changes that they produced in the process (see also Lerner & Schugurensky, 2007).

BRIEF NOTES ON METHODOLOGY

The comparative study of learning within PB in Maribor and Rosario presented here is based on the model developed at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE) that explores changes through learning in four categories (knowledge, values and attitudes, skills, and practices, or KASP). Research on learning and deliberative practices has been systematically researched at OISE and is very compatible with the theories of transformative learning discussed above. The Rosario case study is based on ethnographic research, which included 40 in-depth interviews and observation with participation in 12 assemblies as well as drawing on other in-depth research on PB practices made by Schugurensky. Extensive qualitative research was carried out in Maribor as well. It included active participation in the assemblies in the first three months and observation of the process from the beginning to the present; a focus group in one assembly; and 12 semi-structured interviews.

There were some differences in methodological processes between the two studies as the Rosario interviewees assessed the indicators across 55 items twice (once before entering the PB practice and once afterwards), while the interviewees in Maribor assessed the change or shift across 70 items only once. Also, interviewees in Rosario had been involved in active community practices for a longer period (from 1995), while interviewees in Maribor barely started (from 2012). Indicators in Maribor were adapted to Slovenian context, thus not all indicators were used across both case studies. Besides which the historical, institutional, political and learning context are very different in Slovenia and Argentina.

The KASP changes presented in the next section in Tables 16.2, 16.3, 16.4, and 16.5 show the average value increase for each indicator, measured on a five-point Likert scale, but not the quality of the change. As a result, an interviewee could have significantly improved their previous specific knowledge within the PB activities, and another could have just started developing or learning new or specific knowledge. The values only reflect the interviewees' perception of change. In interpretations of the results we also used four other research methods, focusing on personal stories, learning situations and the changes that interviewees mentioned during discussion.

Despite these methodological differences we think it is relevant to analyze across contexts what changes (if any) occurred, what were the areas of change and which learning practices were considered the most important by the interviewees. We also assessed whether the interviewees experienced transformative learning, how this

was reflected in their self-transformation and whether their KASP changes has an impact on social transformation.

TRANSFORMATIVE LEARNING IN ROSARIO AND MARIBOR

The results point to the transformative impact of PB in Maribor and Rosario similar to those documented in Porto Alegre, Montevideo, Toronto, and other cities with PB (Lerner & Schugurensky, 2007; Schugurensky, 2013). Interviewees acquired instrumental and technical knowledge of co-management, politics and citizenship, developed analytical, leadership and deliberative skills, enhanced understanding of the importance of the commons and community care, increased tolerance and respect towards the oppressed and the marginalized, and ultimately and most importantly, they transferred new understanding, knowledge, skills, values and attitudes to new social practices, contexts and activities (Gregorčič & Jelenc Krašovec, 2017). In addition to specific knowledge and skills (improving self-expression, using social media and creating radio shows, magazines, etc.), active citizens also began to practice public speaking and performance, wrote public letters, organized public meetings, protests and demonstrations.

The biggest change in Rosario was in terms of knowledge of "people from other neighborhood and organizations" and new knowledge of city government and familiarity with the local communities or neighborhood (Table 16.2). The results

Table 16.2. Acquiring new knowledge

*Indicators of knowledge (the average value increase)**	*Maribor*	*Rosario*
Knowledge of management and work of public enterprises	1.7	**
Understanding of needs of own community or group	1.6	1.7
Understanding of needs of other communities	1.6	1.4
Knowledge of discussion necessary for consensus building	1.5	**
Knowledge of 'active' listening in the assemblies	1.5	**
Knows people from other neighborhood and organizations	**	1.9
Knowledge of criteria/mechanisms used to allocate public funds	1.2	1.5
Personally knows elected politicians	**	1.4
Knowledge of city government	1.0	1.7
Awareness of citizen rights and duties	0.8	0.9

* Interviewees ranked indicators on a five-point Likert scale, where in the case of Rosario 1 represented the smallest change and 5 the biggest, but in Maribor value 3 was the baseline estimate, i.e. the value of each indicator prior participating in the PB, while < 3 marked the level of negative and > 3 the level of positive change.
** Indicators that were defined differently in Rosario and Maribor and thus cannot be compared.

indicate the emergence of a new techno-bureaucratic culture (de Sousa Santos, 2005) created by the long-lasting and intensive two-way pedagogical practice between the self-organized citizens and non-governmental organizations on the one hand, and the political establishment of the city on the other. This was reflected in the high levels of trust for local politicians. However, this two-way pedagogical process had not been established in Maribor even after five years of deliberative practices despite the best efforts of active citizens because of double-dealing by politicians and resistance to change amongst municipal officials

Rosario showed a balanced change with respect to all areas of research – including practice – whereas the changes in Maribor were most prominent in the area of knowledge (see Table 16.2). Results differ, we think, because the PB in Rosario has been long-lasting and stable but also because differing processes of socio-political governance and management in Maribor.

In Maribor "knowledge of management and work of public enterprises" was the most strongly emphasized. Public enterprises are still responsible for providing services in Maribor such as water and basic living goods, which makes this indicator very relevant. The working group *Self-organized council for the protection of the users of public goods – citizen control* has developed into a city institution. The reciprocal process of self-organization and self-learning that the citizens developed into many such new informal institutions led to visible results: interviewees increased their critical awareness and knowledge about the functioning of municipality and they emphasized that they lost their "uneasiness" or "awe of decision-makers in municipality" as they began to recognize ignorance, incompetence and manipulation of the municipality's officials after carefully examining specific areas and problems. Interviewees strongly identified with collective initiatives and with the representatives that they appointed for specific assignments within their assemblies.

Participation in the PB deliberative practice was strongly influenced the values and attitudes of interviewees in both cities (Table 16.3). While the collective transformation of the community was more pronounced in Rosario, self-transformation was strongly emphasized in Maribor. The unplanned and unexpected personal transformation of citizens in Rosario reflected most strongly in self-reliance and affiliation with the neighbors and with the community while the changed attitudes and values also affected personal and family life of the active citizens in Maribor. Personal reflections of the changes can be seen in the statements "I am happier now than I was before" and "this initiative made me realize that I can change something". Transformative impact was also expressed by in phrases such as feeling a "new [sense of] belonging", "a new place in the society", and in relation to the social capital that citizens gained through making new acquaintances and through socializing, and even "finding a new family" for younger participants.

Schugurensky (2013, p. 168) discussed the integration processes established by the PB in Rosario through the concept of "bonding social capital" and "bridging social capital". The latter emphasizes the cooperation of people with very different

Table 16.3. Transformation through the change in values and attitudes

*Indicators of attitudes and values (the average value increase)**	*Maribor*	*Rosario*
Appreciate citizens participation more than before	1.5	**
Feeling of "being heard"	1.5	**
Ability to resolve conflicts	1.3	0.7
Double the number of friends	1.3	**
Concern for the problems of the city	1.3	1.3
Confidence in capacity to influence political decisions	1.3	1.2
Tolerance and respect for others	1.1	0.7
Happier than before	1.1	**
Concern for the problems of the neighborhood	1.0	1.2
Increased respect for people/social groups (Roma, LGBTQ, etc.)	1.0	**
Interest in community participation	0.9	1.0
Self-confidence	0.9	0.9
Feel connected to neighbors	0.8	1.0
Sense of responsibility for the preservation of the city	0.6	0.9

* Please see note at bottom of Table 16.2 for explanation of scale.
** Indicators that were defined differently in Rosario and Maribor and thus cannot be compared.

life histories and above all with high inequality in income and belonging to different communities (bridging the differences between citizens from poor areas and elite neighborhoods). inequality in Slovenia is significantly lower than in the cities of Argentina or Latin America in general, and as such, 'bridging social capital' came in the form of intergenerational cooperation and reciprocity. The older interviewees expressed their self-transformation due to participation in democratic practices as "rejuvenating" thanks to the younger members, evident in statements "I am alive again" and "I am energetic again". The younger participants emphasized the support and affection of the elderly, having felt "protected for the first time", gaining a circle of people they can "rely on", etc. This was a unique experience for both generations, who had not experienced this in previous social activities to the same extent. As in Rosario, interviewees emphasized reciprocity, collectivism, community or bonding social capital, as well as their own transformation in understanding work: "finally I am doing something useful", "I created my employment from the PB initiative", "I am finally trying to do something with my life".

Tolerance and respect for the marginalized and excluded social groups were also important in Maribor; interviewees emphasized new understanding of the Roma people, migrants and other marginalized groups that they did not previously cooperate with, and mentioned several ways they addressed local issues. In 2015

Table 16.4. Acquiring new skills

*Indicators of skills (the average value increase)**	*Maribor*	*Rosario*
Ability to rank and prioritize demands	1.5	1.4
Ability to engage in teamwork and cooperation	1.5	0.8
Ability to make collective decisions	1.5	1.1
Ability to achieve consensus	1.4	**
Ability to solve conflicts	1.4	0.8
Ability to listen carefully to others	1.4	0.7
Ability for intergenerational exchange	1.3	**
Ability to speak in public with clarity	1.3	1.0
Ability to build an argument, to argue, persuade	1.3	0.9
Ability to negotiate, bargain, build alliances	1.1	1.1
Ability to monitor and keep track of actions of city government	1.1	1.9
Ability to contact government agencies and officials	1.1	1.6
Ability to relate to neighbors	1.0	0.9
Ability to understand and interpret official documents	0.9	1.0
Ability to develop and defend proposals and projects	0.9	1.2
Ability to plan and organize meetings	0.7	0.9

* Please see note at bottom of Table 16.2 for explanation of scale.
** Indicators that were defined differently in Rosario and Maribor and thus cannot be compared.

they supported the migration corridor of refugees with solidarity campaigns; in the same year they also responded to the referendum on the amendment to the *Marriage and Family Relations Act* (although they had previously never engaged politically on the issues of same-sex partnerships); they opposed the initiatives that aimed to prevent the first Roma restaurant in the city in 2013, etc.

Furthermore, the self-organized citizens in Maribor, as in Rosario, began to place more importance on the common goods and the needs of the most rmarginalized groups than on individual interests. They began fighting for recognition, social justice, solidarity, and individual and common welfare; many researchers of transformative learning highlight this as the most important change or impact of transformative learning (Hoggan, 2016; Lerner & Schugurensky, 2007, Schugurensky, 2013; Curry-Stevens, 2007). Thus, as acknowledged by Schugurensky (2002), transformative learning can improve the quality of citizens' participation in democratic institutions and consequently quality of life in the broader society, but at the same time democratic participation itself creates powerful opportunities for self-transformation identified in Maribor and Rosario.

Table 16.5. Transformative practices

*Indicators of practices (the average value increase)**	*Maribor*	*Rosario*
Write public letters, petitions, argument problems for the media	1.4	**
Propose ideas/solutions for community problems	1.4	1.1
Strengthen intergenerational cooperation	1.3	**
Discuss problems in the area with the neingbors	1.0	1.2
Think up ideas and solutions for community problems	1.0	1.3
Monitor and keep track of the public budget	0.9	1.6
Monitor and keep track of the quality of public works	0.9	1.6
Attend community meetings	0.9	1.3
Participate actively on community meetings	0.9	1.2
Talk to city councillors and other elected politicians	0.9	1.2
Seek out information about political and social issues	0.9	1.0
Organize protests, working actions, direct actions	0.7	**
Help to keep the city clean and in good repair	**	0.6

* Please see note at bottom of Table 16.2 for explanation of scale.
** Indicators that were defined differently in Rosario and Maribor and thus cannot be compared.

In addition to intergenerational cooperation, consensus decision making, active listening and analytical skills, and teamwork were more prominent in Maribor than in Rosario (Table 16.4). Interviewees developed the ability to formulate and defend proposals, understand official documents, find relevant information and other social skills and leadership abilities. The ability to monitor and keep track of actions of city government and to contact government agencies and officials were more prominent in Rosario, although both indicators were highly ranked (>1) in Maribor as well. Schugurensky's research has shown that one of the most frequently acquired new skills is the ability to identify priorities and rank demands for the community.

Practice was the least mentioned and lowest ranked field of all KASP changes in Maribor, but the research has shown that interviewees were often involved in direct actions and lobbying (public letters, petitions, press conferences, discussing problems in the area with neighbors, monitoring the work of civil servants and tracking the public budget, organizing protests, etc.) (Table 16.5). Interviewees highlighted the importance of non-hierarchical and egalitarian relations, "strategic thinking", "a greater focus on the problem", "a toolbox of tactics for achieving objectives". They managed to force the mayor to proclaim the town a 'TIPP free zone' (against the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership planned by EU and USA) as well as encouraging many other cities, municipalities and their mayors in Slovenia to do the same, demonstrating a understanding of the global politics,

which many scholars recognize as an important aspect of transformative learning (Hoggan, 2016; O'Sullivan, Morrel, & O'Connor, 2002).

The majority of interviewees in Rosario similarly emphasised that as a result of PB, they now do things they had never done before (Schugurensky, 2013, p. 171) and that they moved from a culture of protest and confrontation to a culture of conflict and negotiation (de Sousa Santos, 2005, p. 335). Such libertarian horizontal practices raise doubts about rooted attitudes and habits and open up new opportunities for participation and action; they become important sites for critical learning and developing critical awareness, as emphasized by Freire (*conscientização*). These horizontal practices offer a number of opportunities, from less authoritarian and excluding behavior to learning of active citizenship – as well as learning and implementing civil disobedience tactics when authorities do not respond to other democratic measures.

CONCLUSION

The comparative study of PB in Rosario and Maribor indicates that participation in such processes results in transformative learning and wider social transformations which profoundly affects the quality of life and well-being of all participants in self-organized communities. PB is not only a technocratic and democratic solution that contributes to a more transparent, efficient, just and democratic way of governing cities, but it also creates privileged learning sites, spaces for meeting and cooperation (Schugurensky, 2006, 2013). These spaces address civic and political aspects of change, such as solidarity, tolerance, openness, accountability, and respect, and also develop social and cultural capital and thus give active citizens the capability to co-govern cities and influence political decisions (Lerner & Schugurensky, 2007).

The pedagogical value of the PB practice, its ability to build bottom-up, autonomous learning communities, is one of the most important impacts on the wider local community. As can be seen in Maribor and Rosario, learning and creation of PB practices as a bottom-up approach incites dialogue and critical reflection or *conscientização*, two fundamental elements of transformative learning. Learners in Maribor and Rosario constructed PB responding to authentic and realistic needs within their specific contexts and therefore their knowledge was not inert, decontextualized, pre-determined or alienated from the community and their own lives. Through assemblies based on horizontal communication and the enhanced 'critical literacy' they also managed to develop more emancipatory and just forms of co-governance. It also increased the bonding and bridging social capital and concrete political actions and interventions (political capital) that resulted from the commitment of active participants. This was possible because the PB participants in Maribor and Rosario, unlike in other cities with PB, went through an extensive process of transformative learning; their activities were implemented directly, face-to-face (and not through digital forums), continuously, on regular weekly assemblies led in a bottom-up way by the active members of the self-organized process.

As a result, the participants began a powerful process of liberation within a community; they managed to create 'real' democratic spaces without any assistance of city authorities and public institutions and despite all the obstacles posed to the self-transformative process. In these spaces, people are allowed, and even encouraged and empowered, to learn, explore, consult about, experiment and transform participatory democracy. Precisely because of the pedagogical aspects highlighted in this study, Maribor and Rosario – without planning and almost unintentionally – established an informal network of educational institutions; safe, autonomous and emancipated sites where everyone is heard, respected and encouraged to resolve wider social issues.

In the last decades, creating and nurturing authentic, democratic, learning communities that aspire towards the democratization of existing democratic systems has been recognized as one of the most potent ways of moving beyond capitalism (Hall et al., 2012; Foley, 1999; Vieta, 2014; Gregorčič, 2017; de Sousa Santos, 2014). Our study does not claim that this is the only or the best way, but the practices in Maribor, Rosario, Porto Alegre and elsewhere show that it is a way that enables long-lasting and intense processes of recuperation of communities orientated towards wider social change. Whether the active participants in PB will persist in these processes, whether they will nurture the established learning sites, their 'commons' that appear to the outside to be the greatest contribution of transformative learning, remain open questions that require a new analysis and discussion.

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PIERRE WALTER AND JENALEE KLUTTZ

17. THEORIZING ADULT EDUCATION, POWER AND SOCIO-ENVIRONMENTAL CHANGE

A Consideration of the Climate Justice Movement

In this chapter, we theorize power, adult education and possibilities for socio-environmental change in terms of three theoretical concepts: intersectionality, positionality and place. Our theoretical understanding stems from our experience within the climate justice movement, specifically the Indigenous and popular resistance to the Kinder Morgan *Trans Mountain Expansion Project* in Canada (Cecco, 2018; Shea, 2016). This project involves adding a second pipeline alongside an existing oil pipeline running from the tar sands of Alberta across Indigenous lands to metropolitan Vancouver, British Columbia (B.C.), and into the traditional unceded territories and waters of the Indigenous nations of *xʷməθkʷəy̓əm* (Musqueam), *Sḵwx̱wú7mesh* (Squamish) and *Sḵl̓ilwḵta* (Tsleil-Waututh). The opposition is led by Indigenous 'protectors' of the land and water, who see pipeline construction as a violation of sovereign land and Earth rights, in a long, continuing history of colonization, dispossession and violence by the Canadian state. Both authors of this chapter live in Vancouver as uninvited guests on unceded Musqueam territory and are involved in opposition to the pipeline. Pierre is a Euro-Amero-Canadian white man; Jenalee is a white Euro-American woman. We use our experience within this opposition movement to explain intersectionality, positionality, power and place, and propose a theoretical frame that draws on Indigenous feminism, decolonizing education and environmental justice to understand adult education for socio-environmental change.

Since the pipeline project was approved by the Canadian government in 2016, it has met with strong resistance from First Nations, the B.C. provincial government, local municipalities, and climate justice activists within Canada and the U.S. The opposition views the pipeline as a dire threat to marine life, ecosystems, inland and coastal waterways, and the health and safety of communities, while also citing the impacts it will have on climate change. However, most fundamentally, Indigenous communities are resisting what they see as an active project of continued colonization violating Indigenous land rights and sovereignty. Indigenous communities, settler-colonial activists and others have undertaken a variety of actions to resist the pipeline, from legal battles and political campaigning to direct action and civil disobedience. Resistance to the pipeline intensified in March, 2018, when members of the Tsleil-Waututh Nation announced intentions for a more direct approach to

action at the pipeline terminus in Burnaby, B.C. At the time, Ta'ah (grandmother) Amy George, a Tsleil-Waututh elder, called on "all my relations" to "warrior up, to resist on a new level, to take care of 'the whales, and the salmon, the seal, the clams, the oysters'", and to speak up for "the living things that can't speak for themselves" (Lambert, 2018). Following this, a cedar *Kwekwecnewtxw* (traditional Watch House) was built on Burnaby Mountain to defend this sacred site, act as a spiritual centre of resistance, teach others, and watch for enemies. The Watch House has since become a centrepiece for a community of resistance: it holds space on the land, hosts land protectors, community gatherings, rallies and regular non-violent direct actions often involving road blockades and arrests (Protect the Inlet, 2018).

Standing alongside one another in blockades, marches and rallies, activists learn about the diverse causes that have moved people to action. In volunteer orientations and trainings, they learn about their legal rights, the logistics of organizing, and the power of peaceful, non-violent collective action. By attending community events and sharing meals at the Watch House, they learn about Indigeneity and Canada's history and the continuation of colonization. Through action, individuals come to better understand and communicate their opposition to the pipeline and enhance their sense of agency. This individual learning helps to create a community of resistance which is learning to construct a peaceful, place-based counter-narrative to continued colonization by the fossil fuel industry and its allies. Beyond participation, the complex process of planning and negotiating social action – rallies, blockades, arrests, legal challenges, campaigning, press releases – requires research and information gathering, as well as communication across difference that acknowledges intersections of oppression. This process of collaboration leads to both individual transformative learning, and collective learning and group consciousness.

INTERSECTIONALITY, POSITIONALITY, PLACE AND POWER

The concepts of *intersectionality, positionality* and *place* help us to understand the relational, situated complexities of power and privilege in the adult learning, education and knowledge created through the community of resistance. First, we turn to theorizing on interlocking structures of power and oppression along lines of race, class, gender, and sexuality proposed early on by black feminist Kimberlé Crenshaw (1989) and debated by many others. Intersectionality continues to be taken up in theoretical debates in adult education (Merrill & Fejes, 2018; Verjee & Butterwick, 2014), ecofeminism (Gaard, 2011; Kings, 2017) and in research on climate change (Kaijser & Kronsell, 2014). The concept of intersectionality helps us to recognize how various forms of social stratification combine and act to simultaneously marginalize, degrade and disempower particular groups of people. The lived experiences of oppression for people like women of color, Indigenous Peoples, Queer men, Muslims, and so on will be not only be qualitatively different for each, but will intersect across diverse lines of identities, both those proudly embraced by individuals and those imposed upon them by society.

In scholarship on climate justice, Kaijser and Kronsell (2014, p. 421) note that "from an intersectional understanding, how individuals relate to climate change depends on their positions in context-specific power structures based on social categorizations": climate change and environmental racism will have different ways of impacting poor and racialized people. In the Trans Mountain pipeline resistance, diverse Indigenous and non-Indigenous activists – urban, rural, women, men, straight, queer, transgender, white, racialized, poor and well-off, young and old – are pulled together and collectively call for Indigenous rights, social and climate justice, and a halt to pipeline construction. All will have diverse and intersecting social and cultural identities, and will differentially experience these in a "matrix of domination" (Collins, 2014, p. 21). Indigenous women's experience of power, for instance, differs significantly from non-Indigenous women, Indigenous men, and other social groups within the movement, and accordingly affects what and how they learn and teach others (Grande, 2004; Green, 2007). Indigenous women opposing the pipeline experience intersecting oppressions as they fight for climate justice, and against capitalism, patriarchy, racism and classism, all the while resisting colonialism. Their relational responsibilities to the Earth, to place, and their communities is a duty they assume in regard to specific relations (water, birds, plants, fish, etc.) within a web of responsibilities vital to their communities (Whyte, 2014). Their ability to uphold their relational responsibilities to the Earth are severely and directly impacted by climate change, environmental degradation and projects like the Trans Mountain pipeline. Others, such as the many queer and transgender activists who have joined the protests, experience intersections of power, place and learning differently. Straight white activists and Indigenous elders in their 60, 70s and 80s again have a different, complex positionality in relation to younger activists and decolonizing education.

In the Trans Mountain opposition, each activist and organizer contributes knowledge, information, and a sense of commitment that stems from their own sociocultural experience learned through their positionality. In this way, the potential for individual and collective learning depends on difference. Diverse positionalities serve as tools for learning as the group negotiates a collective identity, generates group consciousness, and organizes in solidarity (Kilgore, 1999). Learning takes place in the opposition as activists and organizers negotiate the means of social action, and depending on the success or failure of strategies and tactics, revaluate and further strategize according to the social, political, and historical context. This process brings clarity to and raises consciousness of power structures inside the movement as the movement discerns who should be centred in strategy and tactics of social action, as well as beyond the movement as organizers and activists come to understand the allies and enemies these power structures create. For example, organizers may encourage older white, rich men to risk arrest rather than young Indigenous women, knowing that one may be treated differently than the other in the courts, or be better able to take on the social and economic repercussions of imprisonment or more easily carry a criminal record. Similarly, elderly women are

fronted in actions and blockades when law enforcement is trusted to be civil and when leaders want to appeal to public sympathy by centring innocent, law abiding 'grannies'. In both cases, positionality is essential to strategic action. The process of organizing and taking action demands individual reflection on positionality and larger power structures, as well as group reflexivity in relation to context. Both are essential to adult learning where there is a need to 'deconstruct positionality's epistemology', to disrupt dominant narratives, structures and stereotypes, and to replace these with situated counter-knowledges and counter-narratives (Kaijser & Kronsell, 2014; Misawa, 2010).

When we consider the concept of place in adult environmental education, the theoretical picture becomes even more complex. Here we begin to trouble contemporary theorizing in adult education to consider the inclusion of Earth rights and an Earth-centred positionality in relation to questions of democracy, equality and power, and to new possibilities for adult education. That is, we understand inequality, power, privilege, adult education and climate justice as existing in a complex, diverse and interdependent world, yes, but we take this world to include not just human beings and human societies, but all our living and non-living relations and communities as well. We must understand not only intersections, positionalities and relations among adult educators and others, but also the rights of Mother Earth, of animals, plants, rocks, streams, fields and mountains (i.e., all our relations). As such, we must adopt an *Earth-centred positionality* to understand the many forms of oppression, inequality, abuse and violence, along intersecting axes of power and positionality, done by humans to Mother Earth. An earth-centred positionality counters anthropocentrism, 'speciesism' and 'humanism', on the one hand, and supports ecocentrism, agency, the rights of nature, animal rights, inter-species relations, and the interconnectedness of all beings and the Earth, on the other.

These and similar ideas have since the 1970s been theorized in deep ecology and ecofeminism, more recently in Critical Animal Studies, Environmental Humanities and climate justice scholarship (e.g. Gaard, 2011; Tola, 2018; Weitzenfeld & Joy, 2014), and have always been present in Indigenous epistemologies. They might now be introduced into adult education to good effect. To this end, deep ecology, for example, calls for education to shift human consciousness away from individual ego and anthropocentrism (i.e. the 'I-self') towards an understanding of the interconnectedness, interdependence and equal value of all life on earth (the 'we-self'; the 'eco-self') (Haigh, 2006). This shift involves a 'deep' questioning of human life and the causes of environmental destruction, the cultivation not only of scientific knowledge, but also of intuitive, spiritual and emotional knowledge of ourselves and the Earth ('Gaia'), and a recognition of the imperative to change our behaviours and take action to protect the earth from human harm (Drengson, Devall, & Schroll, 2011). Ecofeminism adopts similar principles, but underscores the connection between the exploitation of nature and the exploitation of women, and links to patriarchy, racism, colonialism and classism (Gaard, 2011). Moreover, ecofeminism conceives of Mother Earth not as a collection of individual organisms

(as in deep ecology), but as communities of related beings (Stevens, Tait, & Varney, 2018), much in the same manner as Indigenous Peoples do.

From Indigenous perspectives, it is important to recognize that Mother Earth is not a metaphor, and not just "an essential part of the conception of (Indigenous Knowledge) …, it is the lives lived by people and their particular relationship with Creation" (McGregor, 2004, p. 390). From this perspective, all environmental adult education is fundamentally learning about self and identity, as we belong to, and are inextricably a part of Mother Earth. Notably, this is not to reinforce the historical trope of 'Noble Savage' or reify present-day stereotypes of 'Ecological Indians' (Freidel, 2011). Indigenous Peoples are not homogenous, nor do they all live in unchanging 'ancient' societies close to nature; our point is only that Earth-centred Indigenous epistemologies and ontologies are as close as we humans come to an Earth-centred positionality.

INDIGENOUS FEMINISM, ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE AND DECOLONIZING EDUCATION

How then do notions of power, privilege and socio-environmental change play out in an Earth-centred positionality of place in environmental adult education? Since we as urbanized, colonized human beings have removed ourselves so thoroughly from being able to listen to and seek advice directly from the Earth (nor could we represent knowledge gained this way in textual form), we have no choice but to turn to human theorizing once more. Here, we look to Indigenous feminism, environmental justice, and decolonizing education for guidance.

From theoretical work in Indigenous feminism, we understand that although Indigenous identities, societies and peoples are traditionally *of* Mother Earth, and have a history of working within an equitably differentiated gendered division of labor, and while both Indigenous men and women have been subject to genocidal colonial histories, dispossession of land and culture, White Supremacy and racism, Indigenous women also suffer additionally from systems of colonial-induced patriarchy cutting across indigeneity. That is, "Indigenous women have endured a double erasure (and marginalisation) – first, as Indigenous peoples, and secondly, as women" (Grande, 2004, p. 127). Thus, while maintaining an Earth-based positionality, Indigenous feminism seeks to identify and resist "the ways in which (Indigenous) women are subordinated to men and how women can be emancipated from this subordination" (Green, 2007, p. 21).

Decolonizing education requires, first, the historical study of the human systems of oppression – settler colonialism, capitalism, patriarchy, systemic racism – which have destroyed Mother Earth and dispossessed Indigenous Peoples of their basic human rights to land, culture and livelihood. Second, it normally demands a recognition of direct personal complicity in these acts, not only by all present-day settler-colonial peoples living on stolen lands (e.g. Canada, U.S. Japan, China, Australia, all of Latin America, Africa), but also by those residing in colonial states built upon

these genocidal and environmentally catastrophic histories (England, Spain, France, Belgium, Italy, Netherlands, Portugal). An 'Earth-centred conscientization' of adult learners continues through the histories and lived realities of Indigenous, poor, and racialized people bearing the costs of toxic waste, polluted water, and climate change; that is, of environmental racism, classism and oppression (Irlbacher-Fox, 2014). Third, decolonizing education recognizes that Indigenous Peoples have been defending the Earth and their very lands, lives, cultures, livelihood, human rights and identity against the violent onslaught of colonialism continuously for almost 600 years, continue to struggle today for the restoration of stolen ancestral lands, and are actively working to recover scared sites and cultural knowledge ripped away from them by non-Indigenous People (Tuck & Yang, 2012). Finally, with this historical consciousness in place, the question becomes how to re-establish a personal relationship with Mother Earth for all peoples (Plumwood, 2003), and for non-Indigenous people, how to develop a respectful and humble relationship with Indigenous Peoples, who are at once our teachers and 'co-resisters' as well as co-advocates for the return of stolen lands, the struggle against climate injustice, capitalism, racism and patriarchy, and the struggle for reconciliation and the healing of the Earth.

The Tsleil-Waututh Nation leading the movement against Trans Mountain are *Sḵi̓lw̱ḵta* or 'People of the Inlet': they are among the people most directly impacted by the pipeline construction and potential oil spills. As people of the water, protection of the water is not simply a moral or ethical mandate, it is protection of self, of identity and existence, as well as a spiritual duty. Yet all Tsleil-Waututh people do not experience their relationship to the water and the powers that threaten it in the same way: intersections of gender, "kinship, age, wealth, race, religion, political situation, and other characteristics affect and frame what one experiences as an indigenous person" (Whyte, 2014, p. 604), just like any other.

The positionality of Indigenous women within Tsleil-Waututh culture grants them particular understandings, identities, relations and responsibilities *to* water, similar to those they might have to children, elders or other family members. Starting with water in the womb, water is thought of as life-giving and life-sustaining, and as such, women have a special duty to protect this relation. Of course, not all Indigenous women take up this responsibility, but elders acting as leaders of the movement often speak of this connection. When Indigenous women within the movement talk of their sacred duty to protect the water, they speak of it quite differently from non-Indigenous women or others who might see water as life-sustaining, but not as a living relation. These different positionalities both embody and create different types of learning and knowledge generation and exchange within and from the movement. A non-Indigenous woman may resist the pipeline to protect the water as a social or moral responsibility, while an Indigenous woman struggles against colonial ideas that challenge her ability to do her spiritual or cultural duty to a relation (water). Thus, for a non-Indigenous woman, protecting the water may bring about social or environmental consciousness, while for an Indigenous woman, it may support

cultural learning and reconnection to spiritual practice. In the same sense, abuses of power, marginalization and oppression are not experienced by non-Indigenous women (or men) in quite the same way. However, by working side-by-side in the movement, these adults co-enact a decolonizing education, learning from each other, questioning, revealing, undoing and replacing the hegemony of colonial truths with new knowledge of Indigenous history, epistemologies, colonialism, Earth-centred positionality and relations. Decolonizing education places human identity and social action into a web of both human and non-human relations – water, land, air, plants, animals – who cannot then be considered exploitable natural 'resources', and whom we are obligated to protect from harm (Adams, 2003). Thus, 'water protector' becomes not only a name, but also an identity, a relation, a sacred duty, and a way of being. Centering Indigenous voices and leadership, activists and organizers are able to reflect on differences of oppression, identity, and ways of being, as well as their roles within the movement and their own positioning as part of the collective 'we' in relation to place.

Non-Indigenous climate justice activists in B.C. also have strong ties to land and water, sea and sky, based on livelihood, life history, spirituality and identity. Some depend on agricultural production, fishing or coastal tourism to support themselves. Many feel a deep spiritual connection to the immense beauty of B.C.'s landscapes and wild spaces; others value the opportunities afforded by the land and sea for hiking, kayaking, skiing, hunting, camping, boating or fishing. Some ties are shallow, some deep, some cultural, others spiritual or material. Some believe in rights to property and ownership; others see open, un-owned lands for all. However, in learning to see through a decolonizing lens, these and other adults in the movement begin to better understand the situated nature of power in relation to place and Indigenous Peoples. New knowledge uncovers our colonial mindset toward the Earth, where people's relations with nature are controlled by oil companies, governments, courts, rich white men, etc. working against, rather than with, nature (Adams, 2003). Through a decolonizing lens, this knowledge is not limited to the present –where the fossil fuel industry is controlling relationships to land with implications for human and non-human futures – but also extends to the past teaching lessons of the reality of colonization that has controlled Indigenous communities' relationships to the land for hundreds of years.

Positionality in relation to place is complex and varied among adults, in part depending on the extent to which their livelihood is place-based. For some, the Trans Mountain project is understood as both an immediate and future threat to ocean- and land-based livelihood because of oil spills, tanker traffic through marine ecosystems, and the effects of climate change, including sea level rise, acidification and warming. An understanding of environmental justice as integral to decolonizing education highlights these and other positionalities. Wealth, power and education may allow some to shift livelihood in the case of an oil spill or sea levels rise; poorer coastal fishing communities may not have the means to do so. A non-Indigenous organizer working in the coastal tourism industry may be more directly threatened

by the pipeline than an Indigenous woman professional working in an urban office, and so on. The threat of the pipeline is experienced and learned differently – culturally, socially, spiritually and economically – depending on the intersects of social categories and positionality within the larger power structures in connection to place. Indigenous and non-Indigenous activists, for example, differ somewhat in their perspectives of the Earth's role within the movement. Some colonial-settler activists, talking of protecting the non-human world (waterways, orcas, salmon, etc.), frame the Earth as a separate entity, and something to be guarded. By contrast, Indigenous leaders not only speak of a responsibility to protect their relations, but also acknowledge the non-human world's participation in the struggle. This is done in ways as simple as recongizing the presence of trees, birds, animals, and plants in the everyday events and activities of resistance. It might mean drawing attention to eagles flying overhead who are watching over protest marches and rallies, or, before a protest action, acknowledging the history of a place; not only human histories, but also histories of other beings. In this way, the non-human world is included in the movement rather than simply being a beneficiary of it, giving voice to 'all our relations', not just human voices. These recognitions and inclusions provide moments of learning where activists and organizers are encouraged to question colonial conceptions of a separate non-human world.

Through learning from Indigenous leadership, the Earth and non-human relations are moved from the margins to "take their place as narrative subjects in a speaking and participating land, full of narratives and mythic voices" (Plumwood, 2003, p. 67). Inviting the Earth to be part of the conversation teaches an Earth-centred positionality, facilitated by Indigenous leaders and others who recognize the Earth's agency and challenge a colonial 'deafness' to the non-human world (Plumwood, 2003). In doing so, they begin a decolonizing dialogue in environmental adult education in which the Earth is an inseparable part of adult learning and education, culture, community, identity and human existence.

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