

final paper. I had no way of articulating that it was based on the transgression I felt. Since I had no words or theory, I answered that the strategies in the book were written for “tall white guys” (i.e., most privileged), and that the issues of racial inequality and power were not dealt with from my experiential perspective. However, 20 years later, Cervero, one of the authors of that 1994 text, is examining white privilege in this new text and Johnson-Bailey’s critical race theory is engaging with such issues, while other collaborators, in particular Scipio Colin III (2012), say that we need a lived story to tell other minority-oriented citizens of the world, in the words of the old Negro spiritual, “I am still here, I am still here, I made it through, and so can YOU!” We can meet power head on as we understand it.

This is a righteous work by black and white and folks of colour who have struggled with the issues about which they write to find a respectful equity in education. I would welcome them to my kitchen table again and again, for I, as an adult educator who speaks to race relations in education in a western Canadian context, have been comforted, supported, and strengthened by their witness.

References

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- Colin III, S. (2012). Second inaugural lecture: Race and adult education, College of New Rochelle, New York [Video file]. Retrieved from http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_5U5RgyUFyc

Marlene R. Atleo
University of Manitoba

LIFELONG LEARNING AND SOCIAL JUSTICE: COMMUNITIES, WORK AND IDENTITIES IN A GLOBALISED WORLD

Sue Jackson (Ed.). National Institute of Adult Continuing Education, Leicester, England, 2011, 298 pages.

If the world we seek to understand is constantly changing, so must our knowledge of the world. The neo-liberal conceptualization of constant or lifelong learning, however, situates lifelong learning within the framework of the market. Through a neo-liberal lens, lifelong learning is viewed as the lifelong, voluntary, self-motivated pursuit of knowledge for the purpose of personal or professional advancement. Within such a framework one cannot have a critical relation to knowledge; one can have only an accumulative relation to it – that is, accumulation for the benefit of the market. The writers of this edited collection, *Lifelong Learning and Social Justice: Communities, Work and Identities in a Globalised World*, subvert the neo-liberal conceptualization of lifelong learning and suggest social justice as its goal and purpose. They critique the notion that individual lifelong learners should gain technical knowledge and accumulate skills in order to be marketable in the

globalized economy. As editor Sue Jackson rightly asserts, this stance is grounded in a theory of education that is at the service of the market and has no analysis of the learner as a social being, thus leading to the view of an ungendered, unraced, unclassed learner as responsible for his or her success in the market. Moreover, the frequency with which the discourse of “choice” is used in policy and practice of lifelong learning leaves relations of race, gender, and class unproblematized. As Weedon and Riddell (Chapter 6) emphasize, the idea that an individual is in charge of his or her own learning increases stigmatization of the marginalized and exacerbates inequality. The marginalized appear to be responsible for their exclusion and are portrayed as an underclass dependent on benefits.

The book starts with a general introduction by Sue Jackson, who lays out the theoretical conceptualization of lifelong learning in relation to social justice in the chapters to come. The introduction offers a very concise explanation of neo-liberalism, globalization, colonialism, post-colonialism, and Freireian theory of education, as well as a critique of Freire’s thought. Three sections follow, each with an introduction and conclusion by the editor. Part 1, “Sustainable Communities,” explores the relationship between social justice and communities. Authors in this section focus on how “social justice can be developed through engagement with lifelong learning” and conversely how a commitment to social justice brings about the development of learning (p. 13). In Part 2, “Learning and Working,” the authors critique how the policies and practices of lifelong learning are aligned with employability. The final section, “Identities,” deals with lifelong learning and social justice within the context of recognition. I found the editor’s introductions and conclusions for each section unnecessary interruptions in my engagement with the contributors, who each clearly introduce and conclude their work in their chapters.

All chapters in their own way criticize the dominant policies and practices of lifelong learning and offer an alternative grounded in inclusion. A common thread throughout the chapters is the positioning of an inclusive social justice orientation to lifelong learning in opposition to the neo-liberal individualized conceptualization of learners having the responsibility of continually retraining and upskilling themselves for the benefit of the workplace.

An impressive and eclectic list of contributors, from PhD candidates to professors and department directors from Australia, Scotland, England, Canada, New Zealand, Ireland, and the United States, offer their analysis of lifelong learning and social justice. Although the authors are all writing from a Western standpoint, the contexts from which they approach the issue are so diverse that the result is very rich. In Chapter 3, Paul Nolan explores the possibilities and limitations of feminist groups, community-based women’s organizations, and peace campaigns for women’s education in Northern Ireland. Helen Aberton (Chapter 10) looks at the informal learning of “older women” in rural Australia. The context in which Olivia Sagan (Chapter 11) situates lifelong learning is the under-theorized topic of mental illness.

The variety in the methodology and methods of data collection also adds to the level of engagement with the book. For example, Rob Mark (Chapter 2) uses action research with literacy learners in a reconciliation and peacebuilding project. Weedon and Riddell (Chapter 6) use data from a survey and interviews to understand the contradictions between the policies of lifelong learning, experience of learners, and views of “education managers” in Scotland. Each writer challenges the dominant conceptualization of lifelong

learning in their own way while offering an understanding of lifelong learning within a context of social equity and justice.

Several chapters draw on Freire's work. In Chapter 2, Rob Mark uses creative methods such as drama, storytelling, visual art, music, and image theatre to develop generative themes important to learners in his peacebuilding project. That some learners criticized these methods as being childish while other learners questioned their pedagogic value was interesting. Also, the difficulty that the educators had in implementing these creative methodologies is telling of structural barriers such as rigid curricula and the favouring of text-based teaching in institutions. Vicki Carpenter, in Chapter 9, uses Freire's dialogical approach in two teacher education situations. However, statements like "Freire posits... people should be proud of their identity (class, in particular)" or "identity is central to Freire's thinking" (p. 213) sever the radical educator of his revolutionary roots. Freire succeeded in developing a method of teaching literacy by linking personal experience to the social in order to find the root causes of the experience as the means to take action within the social. Being oppressed is not an identity and neither is social class. Freire revealed the dialectical relationship between the oppressed and the oppressor and their relationship to oppression. What makes this analysis revolutionary is the postulation that it is the relationship that must be transformed, not the individuals within the relationship.

Many critical educators and activists have posited education as a powerful tool that can change the world. Lifelong learning aimed at the realization of social justice through inclusion and equitable redistribution and recognition has great potential to reform our understanding of lifelong learning. *Lifelong Learning and Social Justice: Communities, Work and Identities in a Globalised World* provides the theoretical grounding for such a reform.

Bahar Biazar
Seneca College, University of Toronto