

The effectiveness of this book could be increased if Cassara added a summary and conclusion chapter. Such an addition might include the major themes, the problems, and possible solutions raised in most of the chapters. Directions for research in this critical area and implications for public policy would enhance the potential for generating discussion, and hopefully provide a basis for action.

As Jarvis points out in the "editor's note" to this book, there have been few serious studies dealing with adult education and the multicultural society. While some of the chapters could have been replaced with more relevant ones, this book raises some important issues for public policy formulation. Adult educators who are interested in contemporary social change in a cosmopolitan community will be stimulated to think critically about the crucial roles of adult education in our multicultural society.

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ACTION AND KNOWLEDGE—BREAKING THE MONOPOLY WITH PARTICIPATORY ACTION-RESEARCH

Orlando Fals-Borda and Mohammad Anisur Rahman (Eds.) 1991. New York: Apex Press

This is a major contribution to the liberatory tradition in adult education. This book is the culmination of many years work, in the first place, of two long time contributors to the literature. Orlando Fals-Borda, a Colombian scholar, activist and recently elected member of Colombia's Asamblea Constitucional, has worked mainly in Latin America, but knows the world. Mohammad Anisur Rahman, former professor of economics at the University of Dacca and now based in the International Labour Office in Geneva, has lengthy experience in Asia and Africa, and has published widely. In the second place, the book contains six *vivencias* or process studies of participatory action research (PAR) in the Americas, Asia and Africa contributed by long time practitioners in those continents. This then is a gold mine of *theory and practice*.

PAR is a major topic of debate throughout the world and is a cornerstone in the International Council for Adult Education. In a global sense, it was a creation of the South to off-set the dominance of the North. In the

Canadian context, it represents a new expression of adult education's historic commitment to social improvement and can be linked to the community development concept. PAR is disarmingly simple with its appeal to basic democracy and mutual aid. It is a challenging complex in its insistence that we acquire the will and the discipline to live in harmony with each other. PAR arouses emotional discussion about what knowledge is, who owns it, who should it serve and so on. It forces critical examination of traditional positivist research in adult education. It is controversial in that it is clearly political and social change oriented. It is fashionable in that funders of international development projects are favourably disposed to PAR. It is a multi-faceted activity; a method of social investigation, an educational act, a means of taking action and a way of life.

The book is divided into three. Part I contains three essays that introduce PAR; its origins, theoretical standpoints and present overview. Part II includes six *vivencias* that took place during the mid-eighties. Part III is entitled "Steps in Praxiology" wherein are outlined some of the methods and techniques of PAR.

Chapter one is taken from Fals-Borda's 1988 *Knowledge and People's Power—Lessons with Peasants in Nicaragua, Mexico and Colombia* which is still available for \$5.00 from the Indian Social Institute in New Delhi and is a must for a PAR library. This chapter introduces some of the basic ingredients of PAR. He suggests there are three aspects to PAR. It encompasses research, adult education and socio-political action, which are not necessarily consecutive. The purpose is clear—create knowledge upon which to construct power for the oppressed. Fals-Borda argues that a combination of academic knowledge with popular knowledge may result in "total" scientific knowledge of a revolutionary nature which will destroy the previous unjust society. This work is to be performed by two types of change agents, one internal to the community concerned and one external. The dialectical tension between them is long familiar to those who have experienced community development in Canada. Authentic participation means that the unfair subject/object binomial must be replaced by a subject/subject arrangement. This new arrangement means an equal status for the traditional intellectuals and the organic intellectual that lies within us all. Fals-Borda suggests that the creative forces released by PAR will lead to a new kind of state where there will be a healthy balance of human scale proportions. How is people's countervailing power to be established? he asks. Four techniques are outlined in his answer:

collective research, critical recovery of history, valuing and applying folk culture, and production and diffusion of new knowledge. These techniques are discussed in full in Fals-Borda (1988).

In chapter two, Rahman introduces a theoretical standpoint of PAR. The central point is democratizing knowledge because people cannot be liberated by a consciousness and knowledge other than their own. After suggesting that PAR as a cultural movement is growing in several countries, he provides some warnings. Clarity about these matters is needed as never before. He suggests that people's knowledge and expert knowledge may dialogue but neither should claim to be superior. The main danger lies in the cooptation of PAR principles by institutions and agencies that recognize PAR's appeal and therefore wish to appropriate it to their own aims. Rahman fully understands that power can corrupt and that even PARers have to take care. He concludes that PAR will survive if it tells the people that it can betray them. The people must be constantly vigilant.

Rahman and Falls-Borda get together in the third chapter in "a self-review of PAR" where they place the concept into historical and contemporary perspective. They provide lists of events, individuals and organizations engaged in PAR internationally. They show that PAR is as much a philosophy of life as a method and claim that it produces a science that truly liberates. In keeping with current global trends, PAR is preoccupied with autonomy, self-reliance and decentralization. Once again they caution, care must be taken to understand the intentions of those institutions and agencies that may be coopting PAR.

Chapters four through nine describe the *vivencias*. In chapter four, Colombian sociologist Gustavo de Roux writes about a project wherein rural Afro-Colombians organized to get fair treatment from a state electric company. PAR governed the methodology that drove the project, a methodology that met two criteria. First, at the rational level, it had to be capable of unleashing the people's pent-up knowledge. Second, at the emotional level, the process had to be capable of releasing feelings, of tearing down the participant's internal walls in order to free up energy for action. de Roux explains three "moments" in the research process: a mirror-like narrative, strategic codes, and the community's own ideological outlook. Chapter five also reports a Colombian story, this one about a project in Bogota to establish the viability of more critical policies geared to the protection of child labourers. Colombian sociologist Maria Cristina Salazar writes that children participated

throughout the project and produced illustrated booklets, pictures and photos dealing with the child labour problems. She concludes that the children acquired new self-esteem during the process as they came to understand and value their own knowledge. Of course all of this was a lengthy process.

Chapter six is more reflective than the two Colombian stories. It is written by two Dutch rural sociologists with many years practical experience with PAR in Latin America, mainly in Peru. Vera Gianotten and Ton de Wit write about their experience of popular education and rural development with peasant communities in the Peruvian Andes. They comment on many aspects of PAR and sketch the various "participatory models" within it. They emphasize the importance of indigenous knowledge and of indigenous organizational structures. Rather than new organizations they argue, it is much better to try to reinforce existing popular organizations or movements. They underline the value of local culture, urging us to resist the temptation to impose ideas or approaches that may have worked elsewhere. Also central in their experience is the importance of continuous reflection to diminish the incongruities between our theoretical statements and our concrete practice.

Senegal, Rwanda and Tanzania are the sites of the "other Africa" that Rahman writes about in chapter seven. African poverty is well known. Not well known are the many positive initiatives on the continent such as the International Labour Office's Program on Participatory Organizations of the Rural Poor. Rahman suggests that wasted time and energy is expended awaiting outside resources rather than on mobilizing domestic resources. The only hope of generating an authentic development dynamism in Africa is through stimulating domestic mobilization of social energy and resources. One of the most important human resources often is ignored. Rahman suggests that the most basic human need is to create, for being human is being creative, and this is what distinguishes the human from the animal in oneself. "The animal, indeed, needs to be fed and clothed and sheltered and medically cared for, and taught how to find all these, but the human needs to be fulfilled by creative acts." He concludes that African communities may be poor materially but rich in their creative abilities.

Zimbabwean sociologist Sithembiso Nyoni describes people's power in Zimbabwe in chapter eight. Several initiatives taken after independence toward helping people assume power over their own affairs are reported.

In particular, the Organization of Rural Associations for Progress is introduced with its strong emphasis on self-reliance and strong organizational bases. Nyoni comments on the complexities of participation suggesting that the development process usually is delayed while change takes place from within each individual. "If development is about people, then it must take place first in people's minds and where people are and not only at the project sites." This sounds much like a basic tenet in adult education—start where the people are.

Chapter nine is devoted to PAR activities in the United States, particularly work being done at the Highlander Centre in Tennessee, rather than in North America which is claimed in the chapter's title. American sociologist John Gaventa outlines three strategies of popular participatory research. First is the reappropriation of knowledge from the knowledge elite by such means as community power structure research, corporate research and right-to-know movements. However, these merely access already codified knowledge. Therefore the second strategy is needed—the development of people's knowledge, a strategy as useful in the First World as in the Third. Here again, however, this is insufficient for people to help themselves effectively. The third strategy calls for popular participation in the social production of knowledge. This means that lay people should have a say in the production of scientific knowledge, for example, through popularly controlled research centres. Gaventa envisages an alternative organization of science—one that is not only for the people but is created with them and by them as well. This then produces a knowledge democracy.

Part III has two chapters. In chapter ten, S. Tilakaratna, research director at the Participatory Institute for Development Alternatives in Colombo, Sri Lanka, reports on work being done in South and Southeast Asia. Tilakaratna outlines in point form a process of stimulation of self-reliant initiatives by sensitized agents. This process very much resembles good adult education with its emphasis on starting where the learner is and then moving through various rigorous and critical stages. Four interrelated factors are introduced to ensure sustainability of organized initiatives by local people: (1) the emergence of a group of internal animators, (2) practice of self-review by people's organizations, (3) the ability to move from micro groups to larger groupings, and (4) an expansion of the action agenda to move toward a total/comprehensive development effort.

In the final chapter, Fals-Borda highlights many of the central concepts in PAR as he explores "remaking knowledge". The challenge is how to combine expert and official knowledge for the benefit of those victimized by power. Dialogical research is introduced as a method that combines conventional learning and implicit knowledge. Fals-Borda warns against thinking that this kind of research can be imitated and replicated. Imitation and replication can be a means of controlling people. The dilemma in this research lies in employing effective logic which involves sentiments and emotions versus dialectical logic with cold-headed analysis. This, he notes, makes the whole approach suspect in some quarters. He asks many of the challenging questions surrounding knowledge: knowledge for what? knowledge for whom? While reflecting on the meaning of participation, he suggests that in participatory action both researcher and researched recognize that despite their otherness they seek the mutual goal of advancing knowledge in search of greater justice. PAR's important role is to rediscover the vitality of community values and roots. He then explores the value of the critical recovery of history by the people themselves. To him, the rediscovery of history and cultural roots is an essential element in any effort to improve depressed communities. His final section on convergences sketches the international work past and present that is related to PAR.

All the authors in this book see PAR as a strategy to help people search back into their experiences and roots to re-acquire the confidence to respect their own knowledge. This is a liberating experience. In a sense, this book and PAR itself encourage us to rediscover our liberatory tradition in adult education rather than having to create a new one to meet the demands of the twenty-first century.

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AN INTERNATIONAL DICTIONARY OF ADULT AND CONTINUING EDUCATION

Peter Jarvis. 1990. London and New York: Routledge

How do you evaluate a dictionary, especially one as wide ranging as this? Peter Jarvis includes many items not specific to adult education (PhD, alma mater, halo effect) or even education (Karl Marx, ritual, Sigmund Freud); he argues that adult education is but part of the field