

A CASE OF PLAGIARISM

The Special Issue of the Journal devoted to Critical Social Theory in Adult Education, Volume V, Winter, 1991, contained an article submitted by Carmel Chambers, "Habermas and Welfare Capitalism: A Statement from the Excluded Gender Subtext", (pp. 73-93). This article was largely the plagiarized work of Dr. Nancy Fraser of North Western University. We, the current Anglophone Editors, publish this statement concerning this case of plagiarism because it allows the Association and the Journal to offer some reparation to Dr. Fraser and her publisher, The University of Minnesota Press, and to fulfill the legal obligations of the Journal for the offence that has occurred. A letter from Ms Chambers acknowledging the plagiarism follows this statement from the current editors.

We publish this letter with a combination of regret, dismay and alarm.

We regret that Ms. Chambers placed herself, or found herself, in a position wherein her choice was to violate one of the most serious ethics of scholarship. Her act of plagiarism is substantial and cannot be condoned.

We are dismayed that the Journal should have been involved in damage to the original author, Professor Nancy Fraser, whose seminal work was stolen. In her initial letter to us, after she had been informed of the allegation of plagiarism, Dr. Fraser stated that all she wanted was credit for her work. There is no question that the majority of the work in the article submitted by Ms. Chambers was the unacknowledged work of Dr. Fraser: "What's Critical About Critical Theory?: The Case of Habermas and Gender", Benhabib, S. and Cornell, D. (Eds.), Feminism as Critique, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987). We are equally dismayed at the damage done to the interests of The University of Minnesota Press, the original publisher, who has defended the author and the probity of academic publishing throughout the affair. They have both been patient and reasonable during the time required to sort out the affair.

On behalf of the Canadian Association for the Study of Adult Education and its Journal, we apologize to Dr. Fraser and to The University of Minnesota Press.

We are alarmed because this event points to the fragility of the system of academic publishing and of the pursuit and dissemination of knowledge that it represents. The processes of editorial and peer review required by the Journal were followed by the then Anglophone Editor and the special issue's guest editor. Two independent blind reviews were obtained, but the reviewers and the editors failed to recognize that plagiarism had occurred. Our scholarly traditions require a commitment to ethical practices. We are citizens of a scholarly community where citizenship requires that we confront academic dishonesty should we observe it. Editors and reviewers are not intellectual police officers actively engaged in seeking out those who may contravene the ethical guidelines for scholarly work. It may be that this

special issue, which involved cross-disciplinary work in a relatively new area of adult education research, made the reviewers vulnerable to the problem of recognizing a prominent text from another field. However comforting that excuse may be, it will not suffice as an argument to support the belief that we need not be more vigilant in the future. Tempered with that vigilance, we must also make a communal commitment to ongoing discourse of ethical practices and to support each other in the maintenance of them.

Our statement of regret, alarm and dismay, together with this published apology, are all that we believe we can do to rectify the damage done to Professor Fraser and her publisher. Ms. Chambers has apologized and will no doubt regret her mistake for many years to come. The incident, as part of our published record, will serve to remind us of the principles to which we all subscribe, and it will invite reflection on our work in building knowledge about adult education.

Adrian Blunt and
Robert A. Carlson,
for the Saskatchewan
Editorial Collective.

Alan Thomas,
Managing Editor.
Budd Hall,
President, CASAE/ACÉÉA.

6 October 1992

Dr. Alan M. Thomas, Managing Editor
The Canadian Journal for the Study of Adult Education
Ontario Institute for Studies in Education
252 Bloor Street West, Toronto, Ontario M5S 1V6

Dear Dr. Thomas,

In the Special Issue of the Canadian Journal for the Study of Adult education, (Vol. 5, Winter, 1991) devoted to "Critical Social theory and Adult Education," I published an article entitled "Habermas and welfare capitalism: A statement from the excluded gender subtext."

I regret to inform you, that because of a debilitating illness unexpectedly suffered during the time of preparation of the article, substantial portions of the text were taken, without acknowledgement, from an article by Nancy Fraser of Northwestern University, entitled "What's Critical About Critical Theory: The Case of Habermas and Gender" which appeared in *Feminism as Critique* published by the University of Minnesota Press, 1987.

I am conscious of the need for Ms. Fraser to receive full credit for her work. I regret any harm that may have inadvertently been done to her, to the original publisher, and to the Canadian Journal for the Study of Adult Education.

Sincerely,


C. Chambers