Book Reviews Recensions

ADULT AND HIGHER EDUCATION IN QUEER CONTEXTS: POWER, POLITICS, AND PEDAGOGY

Robert J. Hill, André P. Grace, and Associates (Eds.). Discovery Association Publishing House, Chicago, 2009, 306 pages.

Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transsexual, and queer (LGBTQ) research contexts have recently gained recognition (albeit with contestation) within adult education as marked by the first LGBTQ Caucus at the Adult Education Research Conference in 1993. Since this conference, research exploring queer contexts has continued to be created and expanded within adult education. Resultant of social, cultural, and political barriers, this emergent body of research is an overdue, yet necessary, endeavour to promote inclusivity and social justice within education, research, and society. LGBTQ communities have confronted and continue to contend with their exclusion from civic rights and human liberties in society as well as within adult education. Hill, Grace, and Associates' 2009 book, Adult and Higher Education in Queer Contexts: Power, Politics, and Pedagogy, is a compilation of research studies, personal narratives, historical accounts, and theoretical re-envisionings that holistically maintains and advocates for LGBTQ representation in educational research contexts. Hill, Grace, et al. effectively articulate complexities of gender, barriers to exploring queer theory, and support for expanding research of and for disenfranchised groups in adult education. In my reading, the research presented in this book demonstrates how educational research and practice can encourage praxis needed to challenge marginalization and promote equity. Thus, this book is a valuable text that recontextualizes adult education.

Adult and Higher Education in Queer Contexts is divided into twelve chapters written by different authors who are grouped into four sections titled "Discourse," "Adult Education," "Adult Learning," and "Community." The chapters within these four sections contribute to different contexts and frameworks within adult education. "Discourse" positions queer theory and LGBTQ research within a broad social context that often silences disenfranchised groups. Despite seemingly open and critical positions associated with academia, queer theory continues to meet resistance and suppression. "Adult Education" then maps adult education landscapes that frame lived experiences and privilege heterosexuality, advocating for research as a means to promote inclusive education. "Adult Learning" extends conceptions of education beyond formal schooling to learning gender representation through social contexts. Finally, "Community" exemplifies learning as integrated within communities and cultural contexts, exploring how location and culture shape lived experiences.

The structure of the text maintains a collective theoretical body while also representing diverse voices. While Hill, Grace, et al. focus on gender marginalization,

these experiences are not presented as monolithic. Instead, the text encompasses a spectrum of political, social, and cultural positions that connect to and are represented within queer theory. As such, queer theory does not maintain a stable political, social, and cultural position, but instead expands theoretical frameworks to include underrepresented voices such as trans-feminists; sober, full-bodied gay men; LGBT in midlife; and bisexual Yugoslavian men. The authors thus support LGBTQ voices as "u/s" and "w/e" rather than forcing narrow categorization to uphold a single understanding of queer theory. Although LGBTQ experiences and queer theory maintain a common theme, the chapters also speak to interlocking sources of oppression such as race, gender, age, and class. Research projects and narratives position accounts of lived experiences within a marginalizing social system that reproduces dominant culture. As such, I found this text effectively highlights complexities associated with experiencing and researching marginalization, as lived realities are not disciplined into isolated categories but connected within a complex web of marginalization within and outside of gender.

Furthermore, this text enacts praxis as it calls readers to challenge the current structure of adult education by problematizing research practices, knowledge dissemination, educational administration, social organization, and cultural influences. By interrogating hegemonic research and educational structures, Hill, Grace, et al. perforate existing dominant structures and inspire continued interrogation in support of social change. Each chapter not only problematizes oppressive social structures but offers physical, written spaces where marginalized voices are heard through personal narratives and subversive knowledges are disseminated through published text.

Despite multiple sites of resistance within and outside of education for LGBTQ researchers and community members, Hill, Grace, et al. effectively advocate for continued research of queer contexts within higher education in order to evoke praxis and support transformational education. Given the editors' interconnecting and complex representations of experiences, this book is well situated within adult education academia and queer theory. Meanwhile, the book's diversity supports incorporating selected chapters into subject areas that do not traditionally include queer studies but would benefit from doing so. Its seamless integration of a number of topics and authors allows each chapter to be effectively used in isolation within disciplines, but it is most effective in its entirety as a trans-disciplinary text. This book would, therefore, be useful to explore a breadth of queer issues in subjects such as international law, business studies, public health, geography, and human resources. While it includes a variety of perspectives, each chapter speaks to the core themes of the text while maintaining individuality. Holistically, this book supports post-modern tenets of queer theory by disrupting singular notions of truth, valuing lived realities, and challenging oppressive structures that continue to promote heteronormativity.

This text's trans- and interdisciplinary applicability positions it as a valuable addition to the field of adult education. I suggest that students engaging in LGBTQ research would find this book of assistance in theoretically framing and methodologically approaching their research. This book would also prove beneficial for post-secondary educators seeking to broaden course reading selections to include issues of social justice often overlooked in academia. Finally, those conducting research that is often marginalized

within academia would likely take interest in how this text, in its structure and use, carves space for silenced voices challenging and changing systems of marginalization.

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SUCCESSFUL TRANSFER OF LEARNING (PROFESSIONAL PRACTICES SERIES)

Sandra Ratcliff Daffron and Mary Wehby North. Krieger Publishing Company, Malabar, FL, 2011, 189 pages.

The discourse continues among academics, practitioners, and organizations on how learning acquired in traditional learning and training environments transfers to the workplace, the community, and other contexts. Intended to inform and support program planners, training providers, and organizations, Daffron and North provide a multi-faceted lens through which to better understand numerous factors and processes that impact the transfer of learning from the field of training and continuing professional education to the workplace.

Drawing from prior research on contexts of learning, training effectiveness, professionalism, transfer of learning frameworks, and program planning, and guided by Broad (1997), who defined learning transfer as "the effective and continuing application by learners … to their performance of jobs or other individual, organizational, or community responsibilities" (p. 2), the authors address three key questions:

1. What are the factors that influence transfer of learning on the job?

2. How do these factors compare or differ from the findings of previous research?

3. Is there a good model for transfer of learning that will help program planners design effective programs, trainers present more successfully, organizations figure out how to support and encourage transfer, and trainees use more than 10 percent of the information gained through training?

This practical, research-informed text draws from case studies conducted on 17 professional groups. An analysis of data gathered from 498 participants and a comparison and contrast with research conducted from around the globe provided a foundation for the development of a multi-directional, interactive "Model for Successful Transfer of Learning." Comprising seven transfer variables, this model illustrates and emphasizes the interconnectedness and interrelatedness of each component and how all variables are critical for effective learning transfer. The interactive components, referred to as variables comprised by the Model for Successful Transfer of Learning, include (1) planning process, (2) learner characteristics and motivation, (3) design and delivery, (4) learning context, (5) immediate application, (6) workplace environment, and (7) eliminating barriers. Each chapter in the text is dedicated to one of these seven variables and all stakeholders involved