

Volume 32 Issue 1

cjsae

the canadian journal for the study of adult education

la revue canadienne pour l'étude de l'éducation des adultes

rcééa

FEELING MY WAY THROUGH GENDERED AND  
RACIALIZED SPACES: LESSONS FROM A LOCAL  
FOOTBALL ADVERTISEMENT

Kaela Jubas

*The Canadian Journal for the Study of Adult Education/  
La revue canadienne pour l'étude de l'éducation des adultes*  
Editor-in-Chief: Robert Mizzi  
[www.cjsae-rceea.ca](http://www.cjsae-rceea.ca)

32,1 April/avril 2020, 97–115  
ISSN 1925-993X (online)

© Canadian Association for the Study of Adult Education/  
L'Association canadienne pour l'étude de l'éducation des adultes  
[www.casae-aceea.ca](http://www.casae-aceea.ca)

# FEELING MY WAY THROUGH GENDERED AND RACIALIZED SPACES: LESSONS FROM A LOCAL FOOTBALL ADVERTISEMENT

Kaela Jubas

University of Calgary

## Abstract

*In this article, I present my analysis of an advertisement for a local professional football team. Central premises here include the conceptualization of adult learning as occurring holistically in the course of everyday encounters, and Sara Ahmed's thoughts on the social function of affect, especially happiness or "good feeling." I draw, too, on Gillian Rose's writing on visual methods, particularly the semiotic and psychoanalytic approaches that fit especially well with Ahmed's ideas. I explore how the advertisement's representation of gender and race work affectively with and for its viewers to tap into both human impulses and hegemonic ideologies. This analysis contributes to scholarship in adult education, especially for those who take up the multidimensionality of learning and who underpin their work with an emphasis on social justice.*

## Résumé

*Dans cet article, je présente mon analyse d'une publicité pour une équipe de football professionnelle locale. Cette analyse est fondée, en particulier, sur la conceptualisation de l'apprentissage adulte comme processus holistique survenant au cours de ses expériences quotidiennes et sur les perspectives de Sara Ahmed relatives à la fonction sociale de l'affect, notamment le bonheur ou les « bons sentiments ». Je m'inspire aussi des travaux de Gillian Rose sur les méthodes visuelles, surtout les approches sémiotiques et psychanalytiques qui cadrent si bien avec les idées d'Ahmed. J'explore en quoi la représentation du genre et de la race dans cette publicité fonctionne affectivement avec et pour son public afin de stimuler à la fois les pulsions humaines et les idéologies hégémoniques. Cette analyse contribue aux recherches dans le domaine de l'éducation des adultes, particulièrement celles qui s'appuient sur la multidimensionnalité de l'apprentissage et qui sont orientées par une préoccupation pour la justice sociale.*

Increasingly, adult educators acknowledge that learning is a multidimensional process, involving emotions as much as intellect (Brookfield, 2018; Dirkx, 2001, 2008; Jarvis,

*The Canadian Journal for the Study of Adult Education/  
La revue canadienne pour l'étude de l'éducation des adultes  
32,1 April/avril 2020, 97–115  
ISSN1925-993X (online)*

© Canadian Association for the Study of Adult Education/  
L'Association canadienne pour l'étude de l'éducation des adultes

2010; Lawrence, 2012; Merriam, Caffarella, & Baumgartner, 2007; Tisdell, 2008b; Yorks & Kasl, 2002). Emotions, which in adult education often are referred to as affect (Dirkx, 2008), are active in all educational and learning settings, including everyday encounters with cultural texts. In this article, I draw on one strand of affect theory (Ahmed, 2004, 2007a, 2007b, 2010, 2014), which has garnered great attention in the field of cultural studies, and attach it to that conceptualization of adult learning as holistic. Using that theoretical lens, I offer an analysis of an advertisement for the professional football team in the city where I work.

I first saw the advertisement at a transit station on my way to work in the summer of 2016. I was struck immediately by one poster image—that of the female fan, clearly visible along with the team colours and logo, even though it was located on the platform for trains travelling in the opposite direction. My first thought was a question: What does the image of one woman in a stadium's stands have to do with promoting the game of football, the local team, and its season's tickets? My thoughts turned quickly to what I had been hearing and reading in media coverage for the weeks leading up to the U.S. election, which saw Donald Trump ascend to political power. Emotionally charged statements about gender and race were everywhere and were top of mind for me when I first saw that image of the tank-top-clad woman. Not yet realizing that this advertisement stretched over the entire transit station, I decided to get off the train after work when I was not in a hurry to examine the one poster more closely and slowly. My stroll later that afternoon up and down the platforms of that station became a longer exercise of theorizing and analysis, as I began to understand what I was seeing as an example of how everyday cultural representations of bodies that are gendered and racialized are encountered and interpreted emotionally or affectively alongside other messages about and representations of bodies in the composition of a lived, experienced social fabric.

Before presenting my analysis, I discuss how emotion and affect are taken up in adult education and other key fields. I then outline the influential ideas of the "new affect theorists" (Leys, 2011) prominent in cultural studies before moving on to a summary and application of the somewhat different ideas of Sara Ahmed (2004, 2007a, 2007b, 2010, 2014), which I apply in my analysis of the advertisement. Central throughout this paper is a three-pronged premise: Emotion or affect is present and important in everyday human experiences and encounters and resultant learning; it is rooted in a combination of social and personal or psychic life; and it needs to be taken seriously to deepen understanding of how adults learn and why that learning matters.

### Thinking about Feelings

As I noted above, many adult education scholars are attempting to extend adult learning theory by highlighting learning's multidimensionality and, specifically, its emotional dimension. Much of the writing produced in recent decades recognizes the power of emotion among learners. In the liberally oriented approach to education and learning that has predominated in Western educational institutions, the mind is, first, severed from the body and, then, held as the centre of learning. For centuries, "learning has come to be equated with mental processes, with knowing through thinking or cognition" (Merriam et al., 2007, p. 189). Other dimensions of human existence, including emotion or affect,

are either disregarded or seen as factors that must be recognized and managed by skilled educators so that they do not disrupt the cognitive processes that properly guide learning.

In the field of adult education, that premise is evident in models emphasizing reflection and advice to set aside emotion and sensation in order to free up mental energy and attention (Jordi, 2011; Merriam et al., 2007). These ideas have given way to an understanding “of learning as a holistic process involving multiple senses, emotional currents and somatic dimensions [as well as cognition]” (Brookfield, 2018, p. 64). Ironically, among some scholars, the attempt to recognize the presence and value of an emotional dimension of learning can lead to an unquestioning, uncritical view of emotion as an inherent positive in the learning process. As Richard Jordi (2011) pointed out, meaningful adult learning begins with

critique [of] the cultural, class, and gender assumptions and prejudices of rationalism that elevate mind over body. But in doing this we must not reverse the bias and give preference to the body over the mind as the site of experiential [and affective] learning. (p. 182)

John Dirkx (2008) acknowledged three ways that emotion is taken up in this more contemporary adult education scholarship: as a precognitive, undirected (re)action, as a learned, contextualized response (e.g., we learn to be afraid of a dog’s snarling bark after having been bitten by a dog), or as “both the experience of particular body states and our interpretation or construction of these states as mediated by sociocultural processes” (p. 13)—a kind of contextualized embodied learning. Despite the different understandings that Dirkx outlined, he maintained a steady emphasis on the individual. In his words, “Emotions always refer to *the self*, providing us with a means for developing *self-knowledge* [emphasis added]. They are an integral part of how we interpret and make sense of the day-to-day events in our lives” (pp. 64–65). Moreover, he acknowledged that adult educators resemble many scholars in other fields who use the words *emotion*, *feeling*, and *affect* interchangeably, a practice that is taken up or rejected in part on the basis of perspective. According to Elspeth Probyn (2005), “Those interested in cognition, social expression, and the interpretation of cultures tend to study emotions. Those interested in the workings of the brain and the body study affect or the affect system” (p. xv).

Although Dirkx (2001, 2008) is interested in highlighting emotion/affect as a dimension of adult learning, he is not among the contemporary affect theorists who attempt to “cross the divide between the social and the biological” (Probyn, 2005, p. xv). Brian Massumi (2002), a leading affect theorist, began by noting that affect and emotion “follow different logics and pertain to different orders” (p. 27). Emotion and affect are both grounded in experience, but, for Massumi, emotion is “subjective content, the sociolinguistic fixing of the quality of an experience which is from that point onward defined as personal” (p. 28); it is “the way the depth of that ongoing experience registers personally at a given moment” (p. 31). In contrast, affect is understood as “asignifying” (p. 27), as “irreducibly bodily and autonomic” (p. 28). In Eric Shouse’s (2005) words, “Feelings are *personal and biographical*, emotions are *social*, and affects are *prepersonal*” (para. 2, emphasis in original). Neither social nor individual, affect is a characteristic of the species, a neurologically programmed connection between body and stimulus, body and environment, with no intervening thought or understanding or intention. Affect registers with the body but not

with the cognitive mind; it is impossible to understand or articulate, and by extension is unrestricted by linguistic or ideological frames, until it is converted to emotion.

Massumi might be popular in cultural studies, but his ideas about affect pose challenges for adult education. Initially, the characterization of affect as "emergence" (Massumi, 2002) or "a sociality without determinate borders" (p. 9) might seem to open possibilities for envisioning the transformative ends that so many adult educators seek. Furthermore, it might seem to hold out the possibility of developing a more deeply integrative model of learning, one that inserts not just emotion or affect but even biology into the mix. Nonetheless, those visions quickly become foggy for adult educators who take up a range of theoretical perspectives.

For adult educators who work in the critical theory tradition, the view of affect as pre- or non-ideological contradicts a core premise: that knowledge is socio-historically grounded and that experience, which emerges from encounters within specific conditions, is always ideologically inflected. In the words of Paulo Freire (2004/2016), "There is no today that is devoid of long-enduring 'presences' in the cultural atmosphere that characterizes its concrete reality" (p. 32). More importantly, as Leys (2011) argued, the problem with new affect theory is that human action is seen as affectively determined, and that

there is a gap between the subject's affects and its cognition or appraisal of the affective situation or object, such that cognition or thinking comes "too late" for reasons, beliefs, intentions, and meanings to play the role in action and behavior usually accorded to them. The result is that action and behavior are held to be determined by affective dispositions that are independent of consciousness and the mind's control. (p. 443)

For humanists, the emphasis on embodied knowledge might seem like an attractive alternative to the traditional Western view of learning and education as intellectual processes; however, the new affect theorists' view seems like a reversal of the tradition of valuing the mind over the body, the cognitive over the sensory or affective. That reversal is no less problematic than the earlier tradition, though. Although he drew on some of the neuroscience that actually informs the new affect theorists, Richard Jordi (2011) seemed to reach a somewhat different conclusion as he argued for a consolidation of cognitive and embodied learning. He proposed a movement away from

the dualistic *structures* of mind and body and understand learning as a *process* that embodies all kinds of moments in its emergence...Within the movement from implicit to explicit, from felt-sense to cognitive awareness and formulation, it cannot be useful to seek out "the moment of learning" or to try and determine any hierarchy of learning moments. (p. 189, emphasis in original)

Nor is the understanding of affect adopted by the new affect theorists the same as that of humanist adult education scholars such as Dirkx (2001, 2008) or Randee Lipson Lawrence (2012), who wrote about "intuition" as encompassing emotions/affect, reason/cognition, and bodily sensations. Although Lawrence characterized bodily knowledge as "foundational," "primal," and even "preverbal" (p. 7), in contrast to the new affect theorists' view of affect, she hung onto the possibility of "getting in touch with embodied knowledge" (p. 9), of being able to apprehend, reflect on, and articulate it directly. For Lawrence or Jordi, affect or embodied knowledge is something that adults can know that they know.

Finally, for post-structuralists, the insistence that affect is pre-linguistic contravenes a foundational premise. Leaving aside the scientific arguments against the new affect theorists, covered at length in critiques by scholars such as Ruth Leys (2011), the necessary dismissal of affect as part of a learning-as-conscious-development process is problematic for adult educators.

Of course, I could abandon use of the word *affect* and instead use the word *emotion*. Doing so would not put me at odds with Massumi's and other new affect theorists' use of the word emotion itself and would enable me to explore the multidimensionality of adult learning through encounters with cultural texts and practices. Still, there is something about the word affect and a portion of the affect theorists' work that remains uniquely compelling. What remains interesting to me about that work is the insistence that affect affects not just the individual but also the social body. In that regard, the new affect theorists expand beyond the uptake in adult education of emotion or affect as personally oriented. Given recent political and social developments, exploring the role of emotions and affect in political decision making and in social life seems especially urgent. In maintaining new affect theorists' view that affect has both personal and, eventually, social effects and adult educators' aim of building (self-)awareness of learning and knowledge-creation processes, I turn to a rather different approach to affect theory, one developed by independent feminist scholar Sara Ahmed.

Ahmed (2004) shifted from a question of what emotion and affect *are* to what emotions and affect *do* (see also Zembylas, 2015). This was noteworthy because, as a feminist scholar, Ahmed is focused on social analysis, critique, and action in her work—aims that I share—and moved from what could seem like abstract preoccupations of the new affect theorists to experiences that are of the body and very much on the ground. There are notable theoretical differences between Ahmed and the new affect theorists. Most obviously, she has not drawn a line between affect and emotion, nor has she viewed affect as an internal bodily process that produces non-conscious responses. She has noted affect's qualities of "intentionality" and "evaluation or judgment" (p. 29) and its ability to "stick" to and connect "ideas, values, and objects" (p. 29).

In contrast to the so-called new affect theorists, Ahmed might be seen as working in "*critical* [emphasis added] affect studies" (Rice, 2008). For critical affect studies scholars, "psychic elements of relational encounters are entangled with historical, cultural, social and political norms and conventions" (Zembylas, 2015, p. 147). Throughout her work, Ahmed has drawn on broadly Marxist or critical theory ideas, which she has combined with ideas from psychoanalytic theory. That combination of perspectives has enabled her to consider affect, which, as I noted above, she has not distinguished from emotion, as a phenomenon that is both intrapersonal and social in nature. For Ahmed, politics are "lodged" within "a social imaginary" (Rice, 2008, p. 205), which is enlivened and shared through language. As Jenny Rice (2008) continued to explain,

Belief and adherence to particular structures are affectively invested in, rather than cognitively weighed.... We are so strongly invested in (or glued to) certain structures of belief that they seem like part of our own identity.... Ideology is not internally agreed to, therefore, but neither is it externally imposed on our otherwise autonomous selves.... Ahmed proposes that emotions are the acts of orientation between bodies. (pp. 205–206)

Moving toward affect's social presence and impacts, Ahmed has considered it as a form of capital and defined "affective economies" as "the movement between signs or objects [that] converts into affect.... Affect does not reside in an object or sign, but is an effect of the circulation between objects and value (= the accumulation of affective value)" (Ahmed, 2004, p. 45). These affective economies "are social and material, as well as psychic" (p. 46). In other words, it is not that ideology works *in concert with* the psychic; rather, it is that ideology only works because it works *on* the psychic level.

In making sense of this psychic/ideological fusion, I might turn to Antonio Gramsci's (1971) notion of "common sense," the utterly taken-for-granted knowledge about social order that goes unquestioned and, sometimes, even unrecognized. As well, Raymond Williams's (1961/2001) "structure of feelings" might be helpful. Considered perhaps Williams's most obscure concepts, structure of feeling

expresses the contradiction that our personal, intimate, individual experiences (feelings) are always, at the same time, informed by collective and historical prejudices, expectations, fears, desires, conventions, institutions, laws, and modalities of the social that transgress even the most extended view of the feeling subject. Structure of feeling connotes the sense that the feelings that belong to us, that animate us as individuals, at the same time, exceed us, extend far beyond the individual. (Best, 2012, p. 194)

From this perspective, affect does not reside in either individuals or the social collective. Affect is not ideological *or* psychic, cognitive *or* emotional; rather, affect bridges all of these dimensions of social existence. Affect "create[s] the very effect of the surfaces and boundaries that allow us to distinguish an inside and an outside" (Ahmed, 2004, p. 10). It enables the establishment of an "I," a "we," and a "them," so that individuals are primed to understand themselves and others in particular ways and to ascribe meaning to social encounters and entire social fabrics. Once those meanings are assigned, individuals anticipate not just behaviour and relations, but also their own feelings. Bodies that are gendered, racialized, and otherwise identified and categorized are attached to affective conditions—happiness or sadness, for example—and are then welcomed into or expelled from societal and organizational spaces accordingly. One wants to feel happy, satisfied, and comfortable, and begins to project who and what will foster such positive feelings.

Arriving at this understanding of affect seems helpful and important in the study of what are referred to as public pedagogies, the "various forms, processes, and sites of education and learning that occur beyond the realm of formal educational institutions" (Sandlin, Wright, & Clark, 2013, p. 4). These pedagogies are referred to as public because they are encountered in places "where people actually live their lives and where meaning is produced, assumed, and contested in the unequal relations of power that construct the mundane acts of everyday relations" (Giroux, 2000, p. 355). As adult education scholars working in this area acknowledge, engagement in and with cultural texts and practices is just as likely, perhaps even more so, to be emotionally rather than intellectually driven (Maudlin & Sandlin, 2015; Sandlin & Maudlin, 2017; Tisdell, 2008a). Indeed, fans of everything from television shows to films to popular music to video games are described as enjoying and even loving the cultural texts, events, and practices that become important in their lives, a point that I explore elsewhere (Jubas, 2015; Jubas, Johnston, & Chiang, 2014;



Jubas & Knutson, 2012). Being a fan means engaging with and in those texts, events, and practices and, in so doing, becoming certain types of people.

Based in adult education and curriculum studies, Jennifer Sandlin and Julie Maudlin (2017) explained that, in today's neo-liberal, corporatized world, "affect is produced, circulated, commodified, and consumed within complex networks of goods and services" (p. 398). The lesson for people of all ages is that becoming who they want to be is achievable through their material and cultural consumption. More importantly, the goods, texts, and experiences made available for consumption inform their very ideas about who and how they want to be. It is in these ways that cultural texts can be seen as functioning not only affectively but also pedagogically.

Exploring Disney's "pedagogies of pleasure," Sandlin and Maudlin (2017) outlined the lessons for park visitors about "how to be particular kinds of Disney subjects who escape into safe and controlled forms of pleasure...a world away from the complexities of the lived American experience" (pp. 399, 401). According to Sandlin and Maudlin, those "kinds" of subjects are drawn into historical relations of gender, race, and class, as Disney exhibits and themes call on "a progress narrative founded on the Western belief in the improvement of humanity through forms of scientific capitalism that enable the control and regulation of nature and other people" (p. 402). Connections with cultural products and processes do much more than bring good feelings to individuals, then; they enable individuals to build a sense of self and belonging and, by extension, a sense of others and exclusion.

Following Williams (1961/2001), I note that the cultural is also always material and that what is experienced as personal is also always social. An affectively oriented analysis exposes

the ways in which flows of emotion coalesce to form a social phenomenon that is beyond the individual subjective responses, feelings, and sensibilities. Affect also moves us on to a terrain where race [or gender] as felt identity is immanent to interactions—and in that sense, it materializes the felt world. (Tolia-Kelly & Crang, 2010, p. 2309)

Focusing on how gender and race are brought into cultural, social, and material experience affectively moves to a consideration of "the relational construction of identities, in the forces created between people rather than in fixed social categories" (Tolia-Kelly & Crang, 2010, p. 2309). In a time when threats to civil society and democratic life seem amplified under administrations that are either blatantly despotic or cowed, the implications of affect directly on politics seem worthy of some exploration. These are the considerations that I bring to my analysis of this advertisement. First, though, I say a bit about how I moved from theoretical framework to a method of working with visual texts.

### **Working with Visual Texts**

Conceptually and methodologically, as I have suggested, this analysis links the fields of adult education and cultural and media studies, as well as geography. In referring to the components of the advertisement as a text, I use cultural studies' understanding of texts as any objects that "have meaning" (During, 2005, p. 6), which are received or interpreted in juxtaposition with one another, intertextually or "multimodally" (Rose, 2007). Texts "always make sense in relation to other things, including written texts and very often other images—



[but] they are not reducible to the meanings carried by those other things" (Rose, 2007, p. 11). Texts appear in popular, mass, and "high" culture, old and new media, scholarship, accounts shared among acquaintances, personal recollections, and—importantly over that past summer—political and activist platforms.

In analyzing the football advertisement as a text, I employ feminist geographer Gillian Rose's (2007) writing on visual methodologies. Rose has outlined various approaches to working with visual materials in research. Consistent with Ahmed's approach to affect theory, I draw on Rose's comments on psychoanalytical perspectives and approaches derived from critical theory, notably semiology or semiotics.

A core psychoanalytic premise is that "we can react to things in ways that feel beyond words" (Rose, 2007, p. 110) and that reactions can be elicited on an unconscious level. Attaching this premise to affect theory, I concur that "we can never fully know ourselves... because the unconscious remains beyond self-consciousness; and our conscious selves are always likely to be infiltrated by excursions from the unconscious" (Rose, 2007, p. 110). Still, that is not the same as asserting, as the new affect theorists do, that affect is inherently, entirely unknowable. Indeed, the aim of psychoanalysis is to uncover the repressions and drives that reside in the unconscious and the apparently irrational, inexplicable defences that manifest in response to them.

From the second perspective employed in this analysis, semiotics, I look to the concept of *dominant codes* or *referent systems*. Using codes or referent systems, analysts can relate representations and messages in cultural texts, including advertisements, to ideologies that are circulating in society. That concept is helpful in uncovering "knowledges which pre-exist advertising and which structure not only adverts but many other cultural and social forms too" (Rose, 2007, p. 95; see also Hall, 1980).

The combination of these perspectives enables me to consider how intellect and psyche, the material and the ideological operate in adults concurrently in learning processes that are informed, in part, by everyday encounters with and readings of cultural texts. In so doing, I neither retain an exclusive emphasis on the cognitive dimension of learning nor, equally problematically, replace it with an idealized view of the importance of emotion. Instead, I return to Ahmed's important point about the joined-up nature of ideological and psychoanalytical dimensions of social life. Although Rose (2007) treated semiotic and psychoanalytical readings as separate methodological directions, Ahmed's (2004, 2007a, 2007b, 2010, 2014) approach enables me to find psychoanalytical resonance through a semiotic reading of text.

### "Seeing" the Pictures

Over the summer of 2016, the visual text discussed here comprised several posters depicting spectators, some of the Calgary Stampeders players, and taglines, all of which were spread throughout the transit station closest to the stadium where the Stampeders play their at-home games. As well, the team logo and the phrase "Go Stamps, go" adorned a low concrete wall separating the station from the street behind it. Collectively, I refer to these items as one advertisement, given that they were the only advertising in the station and that, as a result, they seemed meant to operate in concert with one another, as a whole. I examine how the components of this text represent not just players and fans, but also bodies in the larger social world.

In undertaking this analysis, I began with an understanding of social identity as multidimensional, relational, contested, and performative, consistent with a number of feminist and critical race scholars (Ahmed, 2007a, 2007b, 2014; Knowles, 2003; Zembylas, 2015). Carmen Luke's (1996) statement that "gender identity and relations cannot be apprehended or theorized on their abstracted terms" (p. 1) continues to serve as a starting point for examining representations not only of gender but also of race. Working with this one complex advertisement, I argue that, juxtaposed with other local and extra-local texts and ideas, its images draw on and draw out responses that, quite apart from generating ticket sales for football games, exhibit affect's ideological and psychodynamic bases and encourage viewers to understand themselves in certain ways.

In each of the following sections, I include a photograph of a portion of this advertisement taken as I walked along the station's platforms. As an amateur photographer, I recognize that my photographs are imperfect. Try as I might, I could not capture the images displayed outdoors and behind glass without reflection or glare. Although these imperfections might make it more difficult for you as a reader to see what I saw, they convey something about the physical and temporal space in which I encountered this text. Perhaps they even function metaphorically, implying that cultural texts always reflect and distort the wider world in some way. Here, then, is what I saw and how I have made sense of it with the help of Ahmed and Rose.

### *The Fans*

This first poster (see Figure 1) presents a wide shot of a crowd enjoying a game in the local stadium. The poster captures affect in the fans' high-spirited joy, visible in their raised hands, clapping together and high fiving the people next to them, and in bodies raised

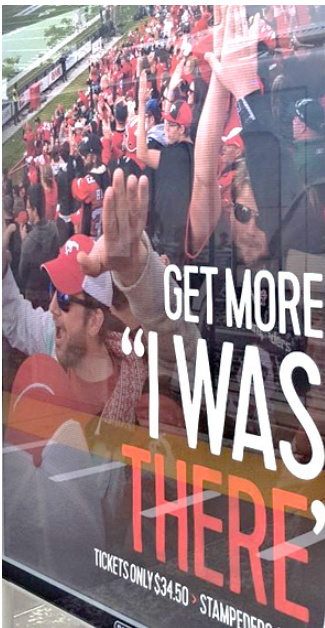


Figure 1. The fans.

from seats, presumably in celebration of a successful play on the field. Open mouths almost make it possible to hear the cheers emanating from the stands. In the bottom right-hand corner, the poster extols its viewers to "Get more 'I was there,'" as if joining in with the fan experience holds out the possibility of being in just the right place at just the right time.

Psychoanalytically, that invitation into the fun of fandom appeals to the psychic need to belong in community. The ability to see oneself among strangers means that one is not (e) strange(d). The sense of social belonging fosters or bolsters a sense of psychic wholeness. Who, though, are the fans portrayed in this poster and, presumably, imagined as ideal members of the community of fans? The maleness of the crowd is obvious quickly. Scanning the poster more slowly and deliberately, I might spot some women, but they remain few and never prominent, what Lawrence Wenner (2012) referred to as "tokens" (p. 141). Whiteness is also embodied by the crowd, apparent in the fans' faces and raised arms. As Paul Gilroy (2000/2004) advised, race has become "the basis for belonging to one another and acting in concert" (p. 12).

These fans in this poster embody and enact a White masculinity that is not only joyful and excited, but also comfortable. In many regards, that White masculinity is common across Canadian and other Western centres; however, it is locally historicized through a connection between the name of the Calgary Stampeders football team and the image of the cowboy. Within the poster, the fans' baseball caps and jerseys—many emblazoned with the team's red and white colours and galloping horse logo—link to another Calgary-based cultural icon: the city's annual, world-famous Stampede celebration of the settler culture as it (is seen to have) developed in this part of Canada. Imagined as a combination of hardy and friendly, the White cowboy has come to represent an idealized Calgarian male figure. For over a century, the Calgary Stampede's central figure of the cowboy has represented "iterations of masculinity...always inflected with racialization and sexuality, the interests of class, and the contingencies of place" (Kelm, 2009, pp. 713–714), at the same time as it reflects something of shifts in broader conditions. The masculinity on display in this poster, then, relates to more than fans of the Stampeders and the game of football; it relates to an imagined local and larger-than-local legacy of ruggedness and determination that are seen as distinctly White, masculine qualities, as well as of conquest by White people and cultures over Indigenous peoples and cultures.

Those subliminal attachments relate not only to an ideology of racism but also sexism, which erases women's contributions to social, cultural, and economic life. According to common-sense (Gramsci, 1971) messages, the fans pictured in this poster, presumably ordinary, hard-working people, have earned their leisure time and the right to enjoy that time as spectators in the stands. Cultural and material consumption is bolstered by feelings and ideas about identity and belonging in the social sphere. The mostly White, mostly male fans are at ease with themselves and one another, as they sit, stand, cheer, live together in the physical and temporal space of the game. Their presence in this poster tempts viewers to recall joy, excitement, and camaraderie that they have felt and, by consuming the game of football, as well as the merchandise marketed by and marketing the Stampeders team, holds out the possibility of reliving such feelings. That temptation and possibility are not extended equally to all viewers, though. Fandom becomes a gendered, racialized-as-White version of the "imagined community," in which "the members...will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion" (Anderson, 1983/1991, p. 6; see also Wenner, 2012).

This analysis resonates with Ahmed's (2007a) comments about how comfort and belonging, a sense of camaraderie, are constructed through racialized bodies, so that it becomes

hard to distinguish where one's body ends and the world begins. One fits, and by fitting the surfaces of bodies disappears from view. White bodies are comfortable as they inhabit spaces that extend their shape. The bodies and spaces "point" towards each other, as a "point" that is not seen as it is also "the point" from which we see. (p. 158)

Extending to gender, Ahmed's statement illuminates how this poster "encodes" (Hall, 1980) the ideal football fan, at least in Calgary, as male and White. That imagined fan is so normal(ized) and comfortable that his race and gender disappear into the crowd.

### *The Female Fan*

In contrast to the first poster, the second one features a close-up of a single fan (see Figure 2). Just as there are points that are obvious or become apparent in the previous poster, this one also has something to say about race and gender. The lone fan pictured here remains White, but is female, and both her femininity and her race are on clear display.

Although professional sports historically have been marketed to male audiences, strategies have expanded in recent years and are making some attempt to appeal to female fans, largely in recognition of women's growing economic autonomy (Pope, 2014; Toffoletti, 2017). Still, research on female fans, especially of historically male-dominated sports, remains sparse (Pope, 2014; Toffoletti, 2017; Wenner, 2012). The woman in this poster is not the tomboyish female fan that Stacey Pope described as displaying "masculine

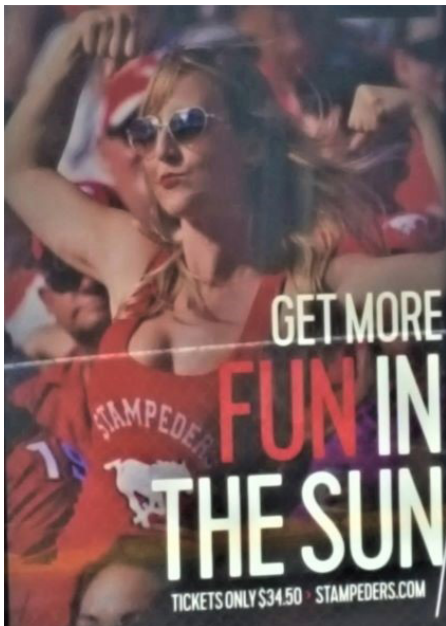


Figure 2. The female fan.

femininities'...characterised by 'doing girl' and 'resisting girl' approaches to presentation of self" (p. 247); rather, she displays "'feminine' femininities...characterised by 'doing girl' and 'being girl' approaches" (p. 247). She exemplifies what Kim Toffoletti (2017) referred to as "sexy women sports fans." Unlike the men portrayed in the first poster, this woman wears clothing that exposes details of her body, even though, like some of the male fans, she wears clothing with the team's name or logo on it. In contrast to the men's loose-fitting t-shirts, though, her tight-fitting tank top reveals both her trim arms and her cleavage. Shapely and youthful, with a lipstick-accentuated pout and long blond hair, the woman is, in Hall's (1980) terminology, encoded as sexually attractive and available, at least according to Western stereotypes.

One way of understanding the particular version of a woman on display in this poster is as an example of the "post-feminist" (McRobbie, 2004) woman who, the argument goes, may now choose freely to embody and enact stereotypes of femininity. Rather than being opposed, feminism in this logic is seen as outdated and unnecessary, given legislative, social, and cultural advances. In a close variation of that concept, Susan Douglas (2010) outlined her notion of "enlightened sexism," which simultaneously appears to praise feminism and foreclose its transformational agenda. The argument here is that feminism enabled girls and women to make choices about their lives but that, "taken too far, [feminism] would turn girls and women into monsters or ridiculous, unlovable freaks. This kind of feminism—that just says no to femininity—had to be repudiated" (p. 74). It might be, then, that this poster illustrates an attempt for marketers to reach women and bring them into the imagined fan community, by appealing to their sense of post-feminist agency even as it reiterates an enlightened feminism, tapping into both the appeal of being sexually desirable (for the woman in the poster) and feeling your own sexual desire appealed to (for the men surrounding her).

In her discussion, Toffoletti (2017) seemed to get at these possibilities. She wrote about "the inauguration of the sexy female fan as a new subject position" (p. 458), which extends the historical masculinization of fandom. At the same time, that image of the female fan "constitute[s] a new form of sexism in sport media that reinscribe[s] gender hierarchies in fan culture by masking sport sexism via narratives of women's choice and agency in performing a sexualised self" (p. 459). From that perspective, the woman in this poster both draws in potential female fans, making visible their newfound consumption choices in everything from leisure activities to clothing, and reminding them (and the poster's male viewers) that performing a particular version of femininity, which is also racialized, is part of the game.

Another point that is obvious in the poster is that, unlike the central male fans in the first poster, this central female fan does not appear to be "with" anybody else. She stands and raises her arms in celebration of her team's success but does not share her joy with others around her. Read intertextually, alongside the previous poster, the woman in this poster serves a particular function, something other than any member of the imagined fan community. Following my reading of the first poster and my assertion that the primary, idealized audience for team marketers and this advertisement is White men, this poster, including the "Get more fun in the sun" tag line, seems directed not to female, but to male viewers. On a psychoanalytic level, this woman can be understood as an object of desire for the imagined male fan, present and notable across the entire advertisement only because she extends the possibility of realizing his desire, his fun in the sun.



As if to confirm that interpretation, looking closely at this poster, I even notice that the attention of one male fan seated behind this woman seems to be focused on her, rather than on the goings-on down on the field. That might have escaped the eye of the photographer and might not be perceived by most viewers of the poster, but the subtlety of that part of the poster only reinforces its psychoanalytic potency. Obvious, vulgar ogling by the other fans might give rise to both a feeling of discomfort and a more cognitively oriented, critical view among the poster's viewers, disrupting the affect of entitled joy that the overall advertisement is designed to elicit.

### *The Players*

In these final pictures (see Figure 3), five members of the Calgary Stampeders football team appear as life-size images, appliquéed on the walls of the glass shelter on the northbound train platform. Rather than the images of fans discussed above, in which bodies are shrunk to fit within posters, these are life-size images of hulking men, staring steadfastly, unabashedly, and directly at passersby. Together with their uniforms, the “#whateverittakes” hash tag, which is the Stampeders' slogan, explains the figures' glares as an expression of determination, a promise of what they will deliver on the field for their fans.

Again, gender and race are represented here. Not surprisingly, given that they are images of actual members of the team, all the figures are male. What seems more striking is how race is present in this part of the advertisement. Unlike those in the posters, the figures on display here are mostly Black. With only one White man among them, the figures convey a message about the racial makeup of the Stampeders team. The lone White player, Bo Levi Mitchell, then the team's well-known, well-liked quarterback, was a team leader on and, apparently, off the field. As one scholar working in the area of race and (U.S.) athletics noted, “The quarterback is usually the face of the franchise and the team's highest paid player” (Winslow, 2014, p. 19). It makes sense, then, that Mitchell is among those pictured here.

What requires more thought is why the remaining four players on display are Black. By no means a football fan myself, let alone a fan of the Calgary Stampeders, I was curious about the racial identity of the members of that team in 2016 and I looked online to see



Figure 3. The players.

who was on the team roster then. Although most members on the team at that time would be identified as Black, there were far more White players on the roster than the display

of these five particular figures suggests. Moreover, consistent with research on this issue (Winslow, 2014), the quarterbacks—effectively the team leaders—who were listed on the roster were White. How, then, might I understand the function of these five figures in this advertisement?

In responding to that question, I return to Ahmed's (2004, 2007a, 2007b, 2010, 2014) writing on affect, in which she often focused on the racialization of happiness, which she also called "good feeling." She used the popular U.K. film *Bend It Like Beckham* to comment on the conflict between racially marginalized immigrants who embody good feeling through their love of soccer and those who embody "bad feeling" because they reject its appeal. She noted that the film "imagines that multiculturalism can deliver its social promise by extending freedom to migrants on the condition that they embrace its game. Those who refuse to embrace the game are attributed as the cause of unhappiness" (Ahmed, 2014, para. 34). In the popular imagination, for those who attach to the much-loved British pastime of soccer, belonging in and to British society becomes a possibility; those who remain distant from that pastime become marginalized from society and seen as threats to social harmony.

The Black bodies pictured in this portion of the advertisement operate in a similarly affective manner, calling on coinciding and interrelated aspects of the psychic and the ideological. Just as those who embrace soccer in the United Kingdom become the "proof" of multiculturalism's success and the possibility of a happy society in which people live together, the presence of mostly Black players in this advertisement might be construed as a statement of the success of Canadian multiculturalism, with the players' images providing evidence that Black and White people have learned how to play well together—on and off the field. As Vanaja Dhruvarjan (2000) pointed out, though, multiculturalism itself can be seen as an affective ploy, as it "has helped to manage diversity, but it has not addressed the issue of inequality in power relations" (p. 169). In other words, as an ideological framework, it builds a shared feeling of openness to diversity even as it maintains rather than overcomes systemic racism. Moreover, when juxtaposed with the other elements discussed above, this portion of the advertisement can be seen as a visual representation of the racist idea that Black workers—in this case, most of the players—perform best under White leadership—in this case, the quarterback. Indeed, one might argue that this idea pervades the entire business of professional football, given that quarterbacks and team owners are much more likely to be White than members of racially minoritized groups.

Read along with the other components of this advertisement, the meaning of these life-size images is heightened. The vision of Black men as physically powerful and virile functions in a similar manner to the poster of the sexy female fan, who combines the psychic element of desirability with the ideological element of racialized femininity. This interpretation is in line with Gilroy's (2000/2004) argument that what he referred to as "raciology,"

the lore that brings the virtual realities of "race" to dismal and destructive life...are unexpectedly turned into important sources of solidarity, joy, and collective strength...so that they provide sources of pride rather than shame and humiliation, [and] they become difficult to relinquish. (pp. 11–12)

After all, the purpose of the advertisement is to celebrate the game of football and the local football team, both of which rely on the abilities and achievements of players. These Black



men might be seen by both White and minority racialized viewers of the advertisement as defenders of the Stampeders and the civic spirit of Calgary.

Looking beyond the advertisement itself and maintaining an intertextual view, the evocation of the image of Black men as physically powerful and aggressive cannot be delinked from news media stories that can be critical of or sympathetic to police violence against and even killing of Black boys and men. In this way, this portion of the advertisement taps into an affect of fear among (White) viewers of the advertisement—the imagined fans and chief targets of the advertisement. That affect of fear is tempered by the players' uniforms, which, together with the rules of the game and oversight by White leaders, serve to harness the players' power and aggression.

The limitation of Black bodies to this portion of the advertisement suggests that Black people belong in “the picture” only when they are in the service of White people's amusement and happiness. This portion of the advertisement works with the posters as an example of “visual microaggressions,” which “reinforce institutional racism and perpetuate the ideologies of white supremacy that justify the subordination of People of Color over white” (Huber & Solorzano, 2015, pp. 225–226). Perhaps most insidious, the fans in the advertisement's posters discussed above become stand-ins for the White people who enter or pass through this transit station as they move about and live in the city of Calgary.

Although there are differences between the histories of racialization in the United Kingdom, Canada, and the United States, important and interesting topics in their own rights but beyond the scope of this article, there are points of similarity and continuity. The development of racial categories and racialized identities has been informed by a history of colonization, slavery, and ongoing racism. The Black players pictured in this part of the advertisement illustrate the sought-after diversity extolled by politicians, civic leaders, and, often, educators. What is taken up as evidence of the multiculturalism platform's success is read into and circulates beyond the advertisement affectively, even as the entire advertisement restricts belonging of the minority racialized body in the sports stadium and beyond, in the wider social arena.

### **Affecting Adult Education**

In this article, I have offered a reading of one advertising text that, I have argued, reiterates long-standing, problematic discourses of gender and race that continue to circulate locally, nationally, and globally. As an advertisement for a football team, this text aims to reach an imagined audience with a promise of pleasure and belonging. The extension of that promise is a pedagogical process, and one with an important lesson, because it teaches passersby about where and how female and male, Black and White bodies are identified and belong, whether in the sports stadium or in public spaces. The pedagogy here is affectively oriented and the resultant learning likely remains unrecognized by viewers of the text, an example of incidental learning, that which is “taken for granted, tacit, or unconscious” (Marsick & Watkins, 2001, p. 26).

Taken together, the advertisement's segments suggest that joy is the prerogative of White men. Women and Black men fit into the picture, but any enjoyment that they experience arises from their role of being in service to the whims and desires of the primary figure: the White man. Like all texts, this advertisement works intertextually, in concert with other local and extra-local texts, including disparaging remarks about women and marginalized

racial groups that are increasingly made and acceptable in public arenas. The images and phrases within it draw on and draw out responses that, quite apart from generating ticket sales for football games, exhibit affect's psychodynamic and individual effects and its ideological and social effects.

The advertisement enters into what Ahmed (2004) called "cultural politics," evident in nationalized discourses of happiness, in a way that directs attention back to an earlier time of imagined good feeling and camaraderie, before feminist and critical race analyses and politics. According to her, this

crisis in happiness has not put social ideals into question, and if anything has reinvigorated their hold over both psychic and political life. The demand for happiness is increasingly articulated as a demand to return to social ideals, as if what explains the crisis of happiness is not the failure of these ideals, but our failure to follow them. What organises the "crisis of happiness" is the belief that happiness should be an effect of following social ideals, almost as if happiness is the reward for a certain loyalty. (Ahmed, 2007b, p. 122)

For the critical adult educator, the educational purpose and priority are not to replace affective responses with cognitive ones; rather, they are to bring affective responses and the politics behind them to awareness so that they can be open to critique.

In closing, I return for a moment to the advertisement that I analyzed and offer a final comment. What I found most troubling about it is not its portrayal of football's well-known sexism and racism, but its placement in the public space of a transit station. In taking over that space, part of its pedagogical message is that sexist, racist ideological tenets are legitimately infused in the social fabric of this place, in this time. If adult educators are serious about the multidimensional everydayness of learning and the commitment to adult education for social justice, such texts and their affective functions need to be taken seriously.

### References

- Ahmed, S. (2004). *The cultural politics of emotion*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Ahmed, S. (2007a). A phenomenology of whiteness. *Feminist Theory*, 8(2), 149–168. doi:10.1177/1464700107078139
- Ahmed, S. (2007b). Multiculturalism and the promise of happiness. *New Formations*, 63, 121–137.
- Ahmed, S. (2010). Happy objects. In M. Gregg & G. H. Seigworth (Eds.), *The affect theory reader* (pp. 29–51). Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
- Ahmed, S. (2014). The politics of good feeling. *Critical Race and Whiteness Studies*, 10(2). Retrieved from <https://acrawsa.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/CRAWS-Vol-10-No-2-2014.pdf>
- Anderson, B. (1991). *Imagined communities* (Rev. ed.). London, England: Verso. (Original work published 1983)
- Best, B. (2012). Raymond Williams and the structure of feeling of reality TV. *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science*, 2(7), 192–201.
- Brookfield, S. (2018). Critical adult education theory: Traditions and influence. In M. Milana, S. Webb, J. Holford, R. Waller, & P. Jarvis (Eds.), *The Palgrave international*

- handbook on adult and lifelong education and learning* (pp. 53–74). London, England: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Dhruvarajan, V. (2000). People of colour and national identity in Canada. *Journal of Canadian Studies*, 35(2), 166–175.
- Dirkx, J. M. (2001). The power of feelings: Emotion, imagination, and the construction of meaning in adult learning. *New Directions for Adult and Continuing Education*, 2001(89), 63–72.
- Dirkx, J. M. (2008). The meaning and role of emotions in adult learning. *New Directions for Adult and Continuing Education*, 2008(120), 7–18. doi:10.1002/ace.311
- Douglas, S. J. (2010). *The rise of enlightened sexism: How pop culture took us from girl power to girls gone wild*. New York, NY: St. Martin's Press.
- During, S. (2005). *Cultural studies: A critical introduction*. London, England: Routledge.
- Freire, P. (2016). *Pedagogy of indignation*. London, England: Routledge. (Original work published 2004)
- Gilroy, P. (2004). *Between camps: nations, cultures and the allure of race*. London, England: Routledge. (Original work published 2000)
- Giroux, H. A. (2000). Public pedagogy as cultural politics: Stuart Hall and the “crisis” of culture. *Cultural Studies*, 14(2), 341–360.
- Gramsci, A. (1971). *Selections from the Prison Notebooks* (Q. Hoare & G. Nowell Smith, Eds. & Trans.). New York, NY: International Publishers.
- Hall, S. (1980). Encoding/decoding. In S. Hall, D. Hobson, A. Lowe, & P. Willis (Eds.), *Culture, media, language* (pp. 128–138). Abingdon, England: Routledge.
- Huber, L. P., & Solorzano, D. G. (2015). Visualizing everyday racism: Critical race theory, visual microaggressions, and the historical image of Mexican banditry. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 21(3), 223–238. doi:10.1177/1077800414562899
- Jarvis, P. (2010). *Adult education and lifelong learning: Theory and practice* (4th ed.). Abingdon, England: Routledge.
- Jordi, R. (2011). Reframing the concept of reflection: Consciousness, experiential learning, and reflective learning practices. *Adult Education Quarterly*, 61(2), 181–197. doi:10.1177/0741713610380439
- Jubas, K. (2015). Giving substance to ghostly figures: How female nursing students respond to a cultural portrayal of “women’s work” in healthcare. In K. Jubas, N. Taber, & T. Brown (Eds.), *Popular culture as pedagogy: Research in the field of adult education* (pp. 83–101). Rotterdam, Netherlands: Sense Publishers.
- Jubas, K., Johnston, D. E. B., & Chiang, A. (2014). Living and learning across stages and places: How transitions inform audience members’ understandings pop culture and health care. *Canadian Journal for the Study of Adult Education*, 26(1), 57–75.
- Jubas, K., & Knutson, P. (2012). Seeing and be(liev)ing: How nursing and medical students understand representations of their professions. *Studies in the Education of Adults*, 44(1), 85–100.
- Kelm, M.-E. (2009). Manly contests: Rodeo masculinities at the Calgary Stampede. *Canadian Historical Review*, 90(4), 711–751. doi:10.3138/chr.90.4.711
- Knowles, C. (2003). *Race and social analysis*. London, England: Sage Publications.
- Lawrence, R. L. (2012). Intuitive knowing and embodied consciousness. *New Directions for Adult and Continuing Education*, 2012(134), 5–13. doi:10.1002/ace.20011
- Lays, R. (2011). The turn to affect: A critique. *Critical Inquiry*, 37(3), 434–472.

- Luke, C. (1996). Introduction. In C. Luke (Ed.), *Feminisms and pedagogies of everyday life* (pp. 1–27). Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.
- Marsick, V. J., & Watkins, K. E. (2001). Informal and incidental learning. *New Directions for Adult and Continuing Education*, 2001(89), 25–34.
- Massumi, B. (2002). *Parables for the virtual: Movement, affect, sensation*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
- Maudlin, J. G., & Sandlin, J. A. (2015). Pop culture pedagogies: Process and praxis. *Educational Studies*, 51(5), 368–384. doi:10.1080/00131946.2015.1075992
- McRobbie, A. (2004). Post-feminism and popular culture. *Feminist Media Studies*, 4(3), 255–264. doi:10.1080/1468077042000309937
- Merriam, S., Caffarella, R., & Baumgartner, L. (2007). *Learning in adulthood: A comprehensive guide* (3rd ed.). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Pope, S. (2014). Female football fans and gender performance. In J. Hargreaves & E. Anderson (Eds.), *Routledge handbook of sport, gender and sexuality* (pp. 245–253). Abingdon, England: Routledge.
- Probyn, E. (2005). *Blush: Faces of shame*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.
- Rice, J. E. (2008). The new “new”: Making a case for critical affect studies. *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 94(2), 200–212. doi:10.1080/00335630801975434
- Rose, G. (2007). *Visual methodologies: An introduction to researching with visual materials* (2nd ed.). London, England: Sage Publications.
- Sandlin, J. A., & Maudlin, J. G. (2017). Disney’s pedagogies of pleasure and the eternal recurrence of whiteness. *Journal of Consumer Culture*, 17(2), 397–412. doi:10.1177/1469540515602302
- Sandlin, J. A., Wright, R. R., & Clark, C. (2013). Reexamining theories of adult learning and adult development through the lens of public pedagogy. *Adult Education Quarterly*, 63(1), 3–23. doi:10.1177/0741713611415836
- Shouse, E. (2005). Feeling, emotion, affect. *M/C Journal*, 8(6). Retrieved from <http://journal.media-culture.org.au/0512/03-shouse.php>
- Tisdell, E. J. (2008a). Critical media literacy and transformative learning: Drawing on pop culture and entertainment media in teaching for diversity in adult higher education. *Journal of Transformative Education*, 6(1), 48–67.
- Tisdell, E. J. (2008b). Spirituality and adult learning. *New Directions for Adult and Continuing Education*, 2008(119), 27–36. doi:10.1002/ace.303
- Toffoletti, K. (2017). Sexy women sports fans: Femininity, sexuality, and the global sport spectacle. *Feminist Media Studies*, 17(3), 457–472. doi:10.1080/14680777.2016.1234499
- Tolia-Kelly, D. P., & Crang, M. (2010). Affect, race, and identities: Visceral, viscous theories of race after social constructivism [Guest editorial]. *Environment and Planning A*, 42(10), 2309–2314. doi:10.1068/a43300
- Wenner, J. A. (2012). Reading the commodified female sports fan: Interrogating strategic dirt and characterization in commercial narratives. In K. Toffoletti & P. Mewett (Eds.), *Sport and its female fans* (pp. 135–151). New York, NY: Routledge.
- Williams, R. (2001). *The long revolution*. Peterborough, ON: Broadview Press. (Original work published 1961)

- Winslow, L. (2014). Brawn, brains, and the dearth of NFL quarterbacks. In B. Brummett & A. W. Ishak (Eds.), *Sports and identity: New agendas in communication* (pp. 19–43). New York, NY: Routledge.
- Yorks, L., & Kasl, E. (2002). Toward a theory and practice for whole-person learning: Reconceptualizing experience and the role of affect. *Adult Education Quarterly*, 52(3), 176–192.
- Zembylas, M. (2015). Rethinking race and racism as technologies of affect: Theorizing the implications for anti-racist politics and practice in education. *Race Ethnicity and Education*, 18(2), 145–162. doi:10.1080/13613324.2014.946492