

process becomes evident through a case study involving the successful revitalization of a town farmers' market (pp. 108–115). In this illustrative example, creative local partnerships are established to address practical matters and generate novel solutions that are seen to benefit the diverse stakeholders involved. I longed to read other chapters similarly written in this descriptive and engaging style.

Obviously, the authors do not claim that community engagement work is trouble-free. Their chapters are replete with examples of the extensive obstacles that emerge for members of universities and communities as they attempt to cultivate and sustain meaningful relationships with one another. These challenges include (but are not limited to) time constraints, insufficient funding, increasing governmental controls, exclusionary institutional structures, preoccupations with difference, skeptical attitudes, and narrow measures of success. My own service-related experiences tell me that these matters are often complicated as faculties may be struggling to articulate their own identities, and a sense of unity among the various units of universities (departments, centres, offices, etc.) may not always exist.

This text helps me think carefully about the importance of regional service and community engagement in the 21st century and the ways in which these activities intersect with and extend administrators', professors', and students' roles and responsibilities. As I put down the book, I take note of its fundamental messages, including the importance of valuing local knowledges and the need for respect, humility, and perseverance when building university-community partnerships. Despite some minor copyediting errors, *The Community Engagement and Service Mission of Universities* is a worthwhile and thought-provoking read.

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INNOVATIONS IN LIFELONG LEARNING: CRITICAL PERSPECTIVES ON DIVERSITY, PARTICIPATION, AND VOCATIONAL LEARNING

Sue Jackson (Ed.). Routledge, New York, 2011, 259 pages.

As the title reveals, this collection responds to the question: how do educators engage in critical discussion on lifelong learning and innovation? Fifteen scholars provide detailed theory, historical examples, and compelling stories from their lived experiences. Their authority is evident as they share examples of a lifetime of learning through their contemporary programs and practices. Policy makers, educators, researchers, practitioners, and students will benefit from these perspectives.

This text effectively explores three key elements presented in 12 chapters organized in three sections: Part I, about learning communities, reveals the complexities of social relations and cultural diversity; Part II probes how power relations impact

understandings of “participation and non-participation”; and Part III explores workplace learning and power.

Jackson sets the tone with an introduction that considers power and privilege and emphasizes that gender, class, and equality matter. She draws on Foucault’s concepts of power and knowledge, then succinctly begins from the premise that knowledge is not “neutral, objective, apolitical and value-free,” but rather “intricately bound to the power relations of class, gender, and race” (p. 4). She argues that discourses of lifelong learning institutionalize and regulate gendered and normalized understandings about what learning is and who counts as a learner, and demonstrates the gap in the literature that this collection successfully addresses: these critical factors are not always recognized in practices named as “innovative” in lifelong learning.

The authors contend that participation remains a key factor in developing lifelong learning theory and practice. Who is included or excluded in lifelong learning, and whose knowledge counts? Educators are challenged to systematically question reproduction and privilege in learning contexts and to assess how lifelong learning is socially constructed and contextualized. The four chapters in Part I provide insight into learning communities that are diverse in gender, cultural background, and age, including seniors. The scholars provide vivid examples that respond to Jackson’s initial call for a discussion of politics and power that includes race, class, and gender. In the first chapter, Guo and Jamal explore how inclusive education can be attentive to cultural diversity, equity, and social justice while acknowledging pedagogical challenges. The theme of inclusion is sustained with explorations of who participates and who is left out. By introducing each new theme and providing a concluding perspective for each set of chapters, Jackson maintains the emphasis on deconstructing power, and it is woven through the text.

Each contributing author is successful in arguing for the critical implications of adult learning. Gouthro aptly points out that participation in higher education should involve recognition of life experiences of learners. By demonstrating the non-linear orientation of women’s pathways to learning as a systemic response to multiple demands and roles of women, Gouthro deftly illustrates that these myriad roles are not limited to individual women, because challenges for women and barriers to participation are systemic (p. 107). She challenges educators to recognize that gender matters and to take a critical feminist approach for analysis. Gouthro’s example highlights adult education perspectives with emancipation at the core.

Ultimately, the authors draw attention to the life experiences of learners and challenge readers to push back against systemic barriers to participation in both formal and informal contexts. Rich examples provided by Baumgartner and Johnson-Bailey bring the issues of lifelong learning and challenges of participation to life as they share contrasting experiences in the same doctoral program in a U.S. university to examine how race and white privilege can influence participation and pathways through higher education (pp. 114–116).

The text succeeds in exploring the tension between global and local contexts and between employers and learners; it also succeeds in providing perspectives of intersected identities in lifelong learning in Africa, the U.K., Australia, New Zealand, and the U.S.

The authors provide examples to consider what counts as innovative and the best supports for broad participation. Each author demonstrates the barriers and challenges along these journeys. Critical themes of diversity and social justice anchor lifelong learning in local and global contexts and illustrate inherent tensions.

The final section focuses on increasing participation and shifting power relations in complex political times. Jackson encourages readers to re-address the balance of power and support policy and practices that are equitable and just. If the intended readers are in the field of work learning and adult education, these varied voices offer points of view that deepen understandings of the issues and current debates. These scholars and practitioners have significant insights to share as they question their own work and navigate the contested waters of lifelong learning. The final section effectively explores the necessity to shift power relations and increase equity and access to work-based learning and practice.

On a structural note, the index serves as a guide through referenced authors and topics, and will be helpful if this text is used with students. An area of further exploration is a detailed discussion of how readers might take these innovations to the next step in their own practice. What are the best approaches to balance innovation with a consistent focus on access and equality; history and context? The authors portray lifelong learning as a process and recognize that education is not neutral. From their collective wisdom, the writers challenge assumptions of how knowledge is persistently constructed and address the urgent need to challenge inequalities embedded in lifelong learning policy and practice. Most importantly, they call the reader to do the same. Jackson concludes by recognizing that the contributing authors “have been showing their own acts of resistances, demonstrating how lifelong learning can be a political act” (p. 250). She ends with a call for practices and policies that counter structural inequalities.

Ultimately, the authors view innovation and lifelong learning through a critical lens. While acknowledging the barriers and limitations of lifelong learning and multiple meanings of diversity and participation, they successfully raise consciousness. By providing examples of innovation and creativity, they examine not only “why” but “how.” The book concludes with the same refrain that sparks hope in the introduction and sustains passion throughout the text: innovation can be an act of faith and courage.

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