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Edited by Roula Hawa

2022 Meeting of CASAE. Conference of the Canadian Association for the Study of Adult Education(CASAE)/ Association canadienne pour l'étude de l'éducation des adults (ACÉÉA) held virtually from May 14th to May 17th, 2022.

Edited by Roula Hawa.

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About CASAE/ACÉÉA

CASAE/ACÉÉA was established in 1981 as a vibrant and energetic organization that provides a supportive network for graduate students, faculty members, researchers practitioners and policymakers who are engaged or interested in adult education scholarship.

Membership to our association is open to all individuals and institutions—both formal and informal—who are interested in the field of adult education. We hold an annual conference in May or June, often in conjunction with the Canadian Federation for the Humanities and Social Sciences' Congress.

CASAE/ACÉÉA also publishes an academic journal, The Canadian Journal for the Study of Adult Education (CJSAE). CJSAE publishes original reports of research, critical reviews of the literature of adult education, biographical and autobiographical reflections on the field and practice of adult education and book reviews. CASAE/ACÉÉA maintains active links with comparable organisations around the world, including the Adult Education Research Conference (AERC), the European Society for Research on the Education of Adults (ESREA) and the Standing Conference on University Teaching and Research in the Education of Adults (SCUTREA).

Message from the President
Cindy Hanson, PhD
**President, Canadian Association for the Study of Adult Education/
Association canadienne pour l'étude de l'éducation des adultes
(CASAE/ACÉÉA).**

I can hardly believe almost a year has gone by with me performing the role of President to CASAE. I am a professor at the University of Regina. The University of Regina's motto, dating back to the early years of extension divisions is, *as one who serves*. It has been my honour to serve CASAE and it is my hope that this year's conference will be memorable for you.

Normally when a CASAE conference ends, there is some idea about where the conference will be in the upcoming year. This year was different. It wasn't until October that the Federation of Social Science and Humanities (the folks who organize Congress) told us they were going completely online and we've been playing "hurry up and catch-up" ever since.

I would be remiss to not thank Shan Hongxia for her role as president last year in preparing me for co-hosting this conference and to Robert McGray as incoming-president for his co-leadership and collegiality in moving us to this point. Many good people, all members of CASAE, have helped pull off this conference and I'd like to especially thank the Board of Directors for their assistance and service.

Congress' theme, *Transitions*, became our own for the opening session at this conference. This theme is focused on recommitting to and advancing equity, diversity, inclusion, and decolonization which in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic laid bare long-standing inequalities. The 2022 CASAE conference team joins in Congress's efforts to "re-imagine the world we inhabit, so that together we can build a future that is more diverse, sustainable, democratic, and just" (<https://www.federationhss.ca/en/congress/congress-2022#theme>).

As you read and engage with the abstracts, papers, roundtables and poster presentation abstracts presented in this set of proceedings (edited by Dr. Roula Hawa) we ask you to consider how many of the writers engaged with the theme of transitions or to consider what transitions mean for re-imagining CASAE.

In Solidarity
Cindy Hanson (President)

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PAPERS

UNCOMFORTABLE CONVERSATIONS IN ADULT EDUCATION AND LEARNING: DEATH, SEX, & TRAUMA

Kusai Alsahanie, Jonathan Easey, Hyunok Ryu, Jude Walker

Educational Studies, University of British Columbia (CANADA)

Abstract

In this symposium, we share the ongoing and completed research of three doctoral students working at the intersection of adult education and well-being within the context of various pedagogies of discomfort. As their supervisor, I (Jude) have framed their individual work here collectively as an engagement in uncomfortable conversations which will stretch, and richly contribute to, the scholarship of adult education in Canada. Hyun's research is on death education; Jonathan's on Queer patients as educators to their doctors on HIV prevention; and, Kusai is studying war-displaced medical students and the role of trauma-informed/trauma-engaged education.

Keywords: Pedagogy of discomfort, death & dying, HIV/AIDs, trauma, medical education, queer health

INTRODUCTION

As Eduard Lindeman wrote back in 1925, adult education is intimately connected to a quest for meaning and inseparable from what it means to be human and be a society. As humans, we know that being human is hard and learning can be painful, something that adult education theorists have acknowledged for some time (e.g., Mezirow, 1975). These painful spaces are often pedagogically productive ones.

Over 20 years ago, Canadian-American educational scholar Meghan Boler (1999) articulated the idea of a "Pedagogy of Discomfort," referring to the teaching and learning that occurs when we feel uncomfortable in facing some difficult truths, particularly in the sphere of social justice education. Since this time, numerous scholars have taken up this concept to examine the intersection of discomfort and learning/education: a search on Google scholar returns around 1,900 articles that use the term, a majority from the past 5 years! Yet, even in 2022, some topics still, possibly, cause too much discomfort that they haven't been taken up substantively in the adult education literature despite our growing acknowledgment that we should be having more of these uncomfortable, inconvenient conversations.

In this symposium, we discuss three topics that are undertheorized and often uncomfortable spaces of learning yet central to being human—death, sex, and trauma—in a panel based on the research of three doctoral students which is moderated by their supervisor. These junior scholars are in different places along their research journey but all three bring their very personal stories of experiential learning to this conversation, and share insights they have gleaned so far from their research.

Like Lindeman (1925), all of us fundamentally believe that adult education is primarily about 'learning for the good life and the good society': questions surrounding death, dying, sex, homosexuality, disease, trauma, mental illness, violence, and war complicate this narrative yet are

essential for being and becoming more fully human (Freire, 1970). Each author and presenter offers their thoughts and contributions below.

REACHING DEEP & WIDE: A PEDAGOGY OF MORTALITY Hyunok Ryu

My dissertation topic is death and dying. As someone who used to lose sleep from fear of death—the daunting nothingness, I would have continued to repress any thought about death, if it had not been for the lessons from a man suffering from PTSD after his wife's sudden death: A similar thing could happen to me as well. I also realized that there was a profound subject that the field of adult education had been largely disregarding: death and dying. Learning about death and dying is important because it is something everyone will surely face, and it is becoming more important as people are dying longer (for days, weeks, months, or even years), mostly alienated from the 'normal' circle of life, behind the walls of medical or care facilities. To prevent breakdowns following a death or a terminal diagnosis, and also to live a fuller life, keeping a sense of mortality close is pivotal.

Yet, contemplating death is hard. As Becker (1973) eloquently captured, "the idea of death, the fear of it, haunts the human animal like nothing else; it is a mainspring of human activity—activity designed largely to avoid the fatality of death" (p. xvii). Death education, however, is exceptionally 'dead set' against such activity, making people sit with their mortality. How can we educate ourselves and others about death and dying then? I learned the answers from studying four established public death educators in Canada. They were educating the general public, beyond those in bereavement and whose days are numbered. In my dissertation research, I focused on understanding how these educators reach wide (across the public) and deep (engaging the public to learn about death).

I found that to reach deep, the public death educators disrupt people's common misconceptions about death and reorient them through a variety of pedagogic tools. These range from asserting that we need to thank death (as it feeds life), to showing through images how beautiful a death(care) can be, to evoking urgency by saying all that matters in the end matters now, to telling people that our heart is meant to be broken, and to draw attention to language of death and dying to disorient people.

In terms of reaching wide, the educators' reach is across the public and even beyond the borders of Canada. But I came to reconsider what it means to 'reach wide'. For instance, although the death educators are reaching wide within people that speak English, they are not reaching wide, say, among people speaking Mandarin for their first language. In that sense, their reach might not be necessarily broad. Such cultural diversity in Canada also gave birth to the notion of 'cultural inclusion'. But I argue that advocating social solidarity on the basis of cultural inclusion has a considerable limitation, due to the ambiguous nature of the term 'culture' and also because the concept of cultural inclusion divides people by their country of origin, race, ethnicity, and so on.

Instead, I propose mortality as a base for solidarity and adult education. To achieve unity, we should start from the basis that deep down we are the same and we are related. When mortality is embraced in the notion of solidarity, we can feel unity with everyone. During my research, I have experienced this first-hand and seen in others. In addition, when you engage in your own learning or educating others with the awareness that this could be your last time to do so, things transform. When you know how to die, you finally understand how to live. Thus, I would like to encourage you to join me in helping others realize how finite and precious our life is and live a

more focused life, however way you can. Embracing mortality in adult education would also change what adult education is capable of achieving.

QUEER(ING) HEALTH: A PEDAGOGY OF HIV PREVENTION Jonathan Easey

My interest in research around Queer healthcare came by way of being a Queer person embedded in the grassroots world of Queer healthcare in Vancouver - largely through my volunteer work at the HIM Health Centre, a Queer healthcare clinic and organization on Davie St. I've been the Saturday clinic coordinator for five years now and an informal peer educator around Queer sexual health longer still. In my role I get to sit on the front lines of Queer health issues, hearing directly from patients as well as doctors and nurses. My own lived experiences with healthcare and the countless stories I've heard at the clinic are a huge part of my interest in this work.

It is no secret that Queer people have long been (and largely still are) treated badly in healthcare systems (Hudak, 2019; Sharman, 2016). It seems fair to say that the current academic study of Queer health is very much in the damage-surveying phase (Wahlert, 2014). Stigma, trauma, and erasure all weigh heavily on many of us when we need help, which can have devastating health impacts.

In Vancouver, nearly 1 in every 5 GBMSM (Gay, Bi, and other Men who have Sex with Men) is living with HIV (Challacombe, 2018). Stopping the spread of HIV has been the focus of enormous efforts by governments, health agencies, physicians, CHOs, and activists for several decades. One of the most recent and promising developments in the fight against HIV is an intervention known as PrEP (pre-exposure prophylaxis). PrEP is an anti-retroviral drug regimen developed in the early 2010s and designed to be taken by HIV-negative patients to prevent infection. PrEP protocols were developed in Canada in 2015 by a network of physicians, community members, and health authorities and have since been rolled out in many provinces. BC's PrEP program began in January 2018.

Since PrEP has become available for free to eligible GBMSM in BC, at least 3300 have started on the regimen (BC Ministry of Health, 2019). However, the complex and centralized nature of BC's PrEP protocols may be impacting PrEP's uptake and, as a result, most PrEP is prescribed by specialist physicians working closely with Queer community clinics like HIM. BC's complex protocols enable PrEP's impacts to be carefully measured and studied, but they also create barriers for GBMSM who cannot access community clinics and for family doctors who are often not specialized in HIV or Queer health. "I'm here because my doctor wouldn't give me PrEP," is a phrase I hear very often at HIM. Yet there are many barriers to accessing PrEP at a clinic like HIM (e.g., proximity, stigma, fear). Furthermore, there is concern among some that BC's complex protocols end up putting unnecessary strain on community clinic resources.

At HIM, I've observed the start of efforts to arm GBMSM who want to access PrEP through their family doctor with important information. The pamphlet "Accessing PrEP Step by Step" was the result of a project done by the Community Based Research Centre. It outlines in everyday language the evidence for PrEP's effectiveness as well as BC's PrEP prescription protocols. The pamphlet is distributed to patients at HIM and other Queer CHO clinics. And while I still more often hear "my doctor wouldn't give me PrEP," I have begun to hear from GBMSM they've been prescribed PrEP by their family doctor. I have even heard some say that they were their doctor's first experience with PrEP.

There is a growing body of research that suggests that, in some cases, better outcomes result when health education can flow the other way, uncomfortable though this often feels. Research on patients with chronic conditions (e.g., Boulet, 2016), shows that these patients have much to teach physicians not only about the lived experience of chronic illness, but about treatment best practices and the latest research circulating among their communities. In fact, studies on the benefits of patient-educators have leapt from the exam room to the classroom, and now some physicians-in-training receive formal education on chronic conditions from patients with those conditions (Cheng, 2017; Towle, 2013). Research by adult and medical education scholars has also outlined different types of pedagogical 'validity' held by medical educators, which expands our notions of how physicians learn (Pratt, 2016, 2019). As I read these studies and think about my Queer community, I wonder if there is something about our lived experience and community-held knowledge that might make us effective physician educators about Queer health and HIV prevention.

In spite of the growing focus on PrEP education happening in CHO spaces, research on this topic has been thus far largely focused on health professionals' attitudes toward PrEP. Phrases like "perceptions and readiness" and "provider opinions" appear in the titles of recent studies on PrEP uptake that aim to understand what qualities in physicians, nurses, and pharmacists make them willing to engage with PrEP (Karris, 2014; Sharma, 2014; Yoong, 2016). My research, by contrast, proposes a more dynamic, education-driven approach by studying how Vancouver GBMSM who started on PrEP with their family physician educated their provider and, in turn, how those physicians learned from their GBMSM patients. My approach draws on research into patients with chronic conditions as educators, which positions lived experience and community knowledge as valuable tools in both formal and informal physician learning. The study is further grounded in broader adult and medical education research on expertise, pedagogical validity and situated learning (Edwards, 2010; Marsick, 2001; Merriam, 2001).

Ultimately the goal of my focused study (i.e., only on PrEP, only with family doctors, only with GBMSM) is to build tools and a foundation with which we can broaden our scope and understand how health providers more generally can learn from Queer patients about Queer health. I think that for the Queer community this educational flow reversal can't happen soon enough.

GOING BEYOND: A PEDAGOGY OF TRAUMA Kusai Alshanie

I am a Syrian doctor who had to endure war-displacement during medical school. Throughout my journey, I found myself by supporting other refugee medical students. I have now committed my research to examining the experiences of war-displaced medical students in order to inform change in policy and practice. Medical students' circumstance amid war-displacement is a pressing yet under-researched topic due to the absence of post-displacement tracing systems, and the limitations of research in war-torn countries (Al-Saadi et al, 2018). Furthermore, war-displaced medical students' learning trajectories amidst war is unique due to their first-hand experience in caring for war injuries throughout their training in warzones.

The Psychological Aftermath

As we can now see happening in Ukraine, healthcare professionals and medical facilities are targeted in wartimes (Physicians for Human Rights). This systematic targeting results in an acute shortage of doctors available to care for war victims. Gharib (2017) described the role of medical students who often provided war victims with care amidst doctor shortage. Medical students' involvement in managing war injuries exposes them to increased vulnerability to psychological

trauma including mental illness, psychological disorders, and emotional stress (Burnett and Peel, 2001). Sabouni (2018) concluded that war-displaced highly educated individuals like medical students are impacted more by psychological trauma in comparison to the public. A cross-sectional study among medical students at Damascus University have shown that 60% of students reported depression and over 50% reported anxiety amid the Syrian conflict (Al Saadi et al., 2017). Such traumatic events have been linked to the individual's long-term learning and cognitive ability.

Besides the psychological trauma caused by war, medical students who were involved in the care of war victims as part of their training could be impacted by experiential avoidance (Kavanagh, 1998). Experiential avoidance refers to avoiding something (feelings, experiences, thoughts, or career) regardless of the potential long-term harmful effects of this avoidance (ibid). It has been explained that memories are not under conscious control (ibid). Therefore, war-displaced medical students might avoid these unpleasant memories through avoiding any situation or circumstances that might give rise to them including professional practice of medicine (ibid). Since displaced medical students have often experienced the reality of being a physician through caring for war-injuries, experiential avoidance is highly relevant to their educational trajectory.

The Reaction & Coping Mechanisms

On the other hand, war-displaced medical students learn to apply a wide range of coping mechanisms that will shape their educational trajectories following trauma. My dissertation aims to understand the different styles of coping mechanisms that displaced students apply and their effect on their learning. The literature has been inconclusive about coping mechanisms post-traumatic events because all behavioral or cognitive actions could be recognized as a coping strategy for a given situation or difficulty (Maslow and Mittelmann, 1941). However, the literature shows that there are indeed broader categories of coping mechanisms that could eventually predict the outcome of a traumatic event. For instance, problem-oriented coping tends to allow war displaced-students to seek information and adapts based on the stressful situation. This will result in self-identity revision and restructuring according to the new information and circumstance (Berzonsky and Sullivan, 1992). On the other hand, an avoidance-orientated style of coping is more conservative in making structural revisions of self-identity which could lead to avoiding the stressful circumstance rather than adopting to it in a healthy manner (Folkman and Lazarus, 1980).

I argue that in order to propose an effective support system for war-displaced medical students, we need to understand the impact that war has on these students and their formal, non-formal, and informal learning and educational trajectories. Through such understanding, effective policies can be adopted by institutions and policy makers to help students in their post-traumatic journey. More importantly, the concept of the coping style that students apply during and following trauma is an essential factor to achieve individualized support. In my opinion, supporting students to manage traumatic events should start early during their training and even prior to the traumatic event. This involves our educators and professionals in places like Canada to directly confront the issues of trauma and learn about it themselves in becoming trauma-informed educators in certain ways. Supporting any adult learner who has experienced war to reasonably cope with trauma is an essential step in their support. I wonder how much trauma and coping training medical schools invest in their students...This is especially relevant with the increased burnout among medical students and trainees during their training. Many uncomfortable yet potentially fruitful questions arise here to encourage medical schools and educators to work towards helping building resilience in students should a traumatic event like war erupts. Such training and education could be equally

important to providing post-traumatic support especially with the current unpredictability and instability around the globe.

CONCLUSIONS

Adulthood is messy. We all have to learn into being mortal, sexual, often traumatized beings embedded within various educational, healthcare, and social institutions. As adult educators and supporters of adult learners, we also need to learn how to navigate the complexities of others' messiness. These three researchers invite us into bravery: to embrace uncomfortable conversations and to glean the pedagogical through engaging with difficult, and often taboo, issues. Adult education is a big tent with room for so many and so much. Hyun, Jonathan and Kusai show us how we can continue to enlarge the tent.

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SOCIAL NETWORKS AS POPULAR LEARNING AND EMANCIPATING SPACES: THE CASE OF THE YELLOW VESTS' MOVEMENT IN FRANCE

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Abstract

In this work, we try to discern how social networks could become a learning structure, between peers and self-taught individuals, to access the public sphere, and act politically, in the case of a social movement which was popular and particularly heterogenous. We, especially, rely on Nancy Fraser's theory of alternative discursive spaces and of counterpublics to analyse our subject, and examine the social movement of the Gilets Jaunes which took place in France, between 2018 and 2019, as it seems relevant and heuristic on this matter.

Keywords: Counterpublic, Public sphere, Social network, Social movement, Informal learning, Popular education, Emancipation

Résumé

Dans cette communication, nous souhaitons exposer comment les réseaux sociaux ont pu constituer, dans le cadre d'un mouvement social, populaire et hétérogène, un moyen d'apprentissage, entre pairs et autodidactes, pour appréhender la sphère publique et l'expression politique. Nous prenons, ici, appui sur la théorie de Nancy Fraser sur les espaces de discussion concurrentiels et des contrepublics pour analyser le cas du mouvement des Gilets Jaunes, en France, entre 2018 et 2019.

Keywords: Contrepublic, Sphère publique, Réseaux sociaux, Mouvements sociaux, Apprentissage informel, Éducation populaire, Emancipation

INTRODUCTION

The Gilets Jaunes (Yellow Vests)'s movement has arisen in France in Fall 2018 and lasted until fall 2019. It all started when the French government decided to increase the oil taxes and then the oil price for many workers depending on their car on a daily basis. This link to the oil and car issues is the source of the yellow vest dress code. Anger amongst the working people, the upper and lower popular classes, arose and spread rapidly. Soon, it became a movement, born out of any established and structured parties, unions or organizations, without any leaders or personalities, any political programme or background. This was an unprecedented phenomenon.

Considering these characteristics and relying on Nancy Fraser's theory, we can assess the Yellow Vests were a subaltern counterpublic.

Rather immediately, they were mocked and despised by the elites, altogether the politics and the media, and distrusted by the middle class. Some academics dismissed the movement as populist but others took a rather observatory stance. Indeed, the Yellow vests managed to access the public sphere and gain enough weight to set their own agenda and frames to media and politics.

So, not only did they become a subaltern counterpublic but they did become a strong counterpublic, as Nancy Fraser puts it. By that, it is meant that they were a public able to dominate the political stage and impose its topics, views and decisions. Consequently, the French government was forced, indeed, to make a social shift in its policies and to propose a bill of law for an emergency plan cancelling the tax rise on oil and favouring low incomes and small pensions. This bill, for a plan estimated at 10 billion euros, was adopted in December 2018.

Since 2006 and the movements against the bill of the first-job-contract (*Contrat première embauche — CPE*) directed to the under 26-year-old young people, no social movement in France had had the power to change the course of the public action (Bendali et al., 2019).

Our postulate, here, is that the Yellow Vests became a strong public turning Facebook into a learning device for digital and political popular education, between peers and self-taught individuals.

In the following sections, we shall focus on the learning the Yellow Vests had to make to comply with the criteria of Nancy Fraser's strong counterpublic in her theorization of the public sphere.

After recalling briefly Nancy Fraser's theory and specifying our methodology, we will examine three learning aspects they could develop.

First, we will describe how the Yellow Vests, a subaltern public deprived of access to mainstream media, used Facebook to learn and create a competing public sphere. In the second section, we will see their acquiring of the codes and skills to reach the public sphere. The third and final section will deal with their political project and their learning of becoming a strong public.

FRASER'S THEORY AND METHODOLOGY

In this communication, we refer to Nancy Fraser's theory, which states that a 'multiplicity of publics is preferable to a single public sphere' (Fraser, 1990, p. 77). This is one of her main points to sustain the critique 'of the limits of actually existing democracy in late capitalist societies' (Fraser, 1990, p. 77).

More specifically, we use the main following concepts linked to the public sphere: counterpublics, subaltern counterpublics, strong counterpublics.

According to Fraser 'the bourgeois public was never the public' (Fraser, 1990, p. 61). Indeed, a closer look into history shows that contemporaneously to the bourgeois public other publics arose such as 'nationalist publics, popular peasant publics, elite women publics, and working-class publics' (Fraser, 1990, p. 61). But as the norms of the bourgeois public tend to become hegemonic, the other publics were doomed to become competing publics, at best, and subaltern publics, at worst. Actually, they were all counterpublics. Thus the public sphere was never the idealized arena where equal citizens can debate but rather a 'public life in which multiple but unequal publics participate' (Fraser, 1990, p. 70). Besides counterpublics, Fraser makes another distinction considering strong and weak publics. Strong publics are these groups whose deliberation encompasses 'opinion formation and decision-making'. Parliaments are relevant examples of this kind of public. When groups' deliberation practices result rather in opinion formation only, they are called weak publics.

Given those definitions, the Yellow Vests' movement illustrates Fraser's concepts, both that of counterpublic and of strong public. Indeed, first, they were able to conceive themselves as a public challenging bourgeois public sphere, and secondly, they became a strong public able to impose their decisions to the French government.

The empirical data, here, are secondary data as we took ground on the quantitative and qualitative analyses provided by various research articles dealing with the subject in different fields, mainly in political science and sociology.

RESULTS

Facebook as a learning tool for the competing public sphere

Facebook was the tool mainly used by the Yellow Vest's movement to communicate and organize actions. It is surprising as Facebook seems a symbol of the less significantly educative and the most neoliberal project. Moreover, it tends now to be replaced by Instagram amongst the youth. Anyway, these social media are part of Mark Zuckerberg's Meta Platforms. Their use comes to such a point we can almost say they are 'naturalized' and part of the common life.

Quantitative statistics seem to corroborate this approach. Thus, focusing on groups with more than 100 members, researchers identified 1,548 Facebook groups accounting for 4,263,693 members, in December 2018 (Boyer *et al.*, 2020). Moreover, a similarity can be made between the Facebook network use and the geographical space occupation from local to national scope. The 1,548 Facebook groups were distributed between 834 groups at local level, 430 at a higher level and 287 at the national (Boyer *et al.*, 2020). For Lefebvre (2019), Facebook became the roundabout of the roundabouts where they erect huts or barracks so they could stay, share meals and discussions make blockades, see themselves and be seen. It did generate a non-hierarchical and yet efficient dynamic.

On the qualitative side, Jatteau (2019) makes an analogy with the printing technique, whose emergence gave the people access to reading, predicting that the internet could give the people access to writing. With the text, sound and video techniques, social media could allow those usually feeling illegitimate with writing and speaking publicly to express their views.

This feeling of illegitimacy is indeed a crucial aspect as Fraser's theory shows it. It suggests that as it is impossible to bracket social inequalities in the ideal public sphere and, thus, allow everyone to speak 'as if' all are equals. It is necessary, then, to have such competing spaces where the once stigmatized can emancipate themselves. Paradoxically enough, Facebook was used as one competing space.

Acquiring Political Codes and Skills to Reach the Public Sphere

In this competing space, people, usually distant from political public sphere, were able to build some political skills. They had to do so without the help of established organizations, such as political parties or unions. These were absent and not really welcomed. A kind of reciprocal distrust was pervasive.

These characteristics had two consequences, both making the learning more difficult and stimulating creativity.

The most difficult part was that of acquiring the knowledge of the political mechanics and codes, and the appropriate language and attitudes. For Bedock *et al.* (2019), the roundabouts were spaces where the sharing of knowledge on the political system could occur during the discussions, alongside the meetings and demonstrations. They could also take advantage of the knowledge of members of trade unions or political parties, who were participating to the movement but were in a breaking position towards their original organizations.

They acquired the gestures and attitudes that are expected from people intending to occupy the public arena, and learn to assume their commitment within their inner as well as with their outer circle of relationship (Bendali *et al.*, 2019).

An important point is that the learnings could be put into practice immediately thanks to techniques available on social media. Hence, they could produce statements, discourses, and share and broadcast them easily, organize meetings, plan actions, make deliberations within one group and between groups.

On the other hand, the lack of political experience prompted the Yellow Vests to emancipate themselves from the customary registry of collective actions. Indeed, besides the regular blockades of traffics or toll roads and the protests, the Yellow Vests showed several pieces of innovation in terms of space occupation, time sequencing and of use of non-mainstream media. Thus, they built up huts on the roundabouts and made up monuments out of wooden pallets. They adopted the theatre act as a frame for each set of actions. From November 2018 to November 2019, 52 acts took place. They turned the safety yellow vest into a new lower-middle-class and low-class symbol. In the beginning, despised and ignored by mainstream media, they resorted to alternative or independent media. Unfortunately, some of those media are far from impartiality. Amongst them, let us cite RT and Sputnik funded by the Russian government thought broadcasting in French or Thinkerview crowdfunded and claiming its belonging to the hacking trend (Bedocks *et al.*, 2019).

So, it can be said that they conceived the staging and a kind of aesthetic of their movement, but not without controversial aspects.

Nevertheless, all these strategies helped the Yellow Vests make their way through the public sphere. Curiosity arose in mainstream media, and soon members of the Yellow Vests were invited in television programmes where they could to publicize their stances.

Learning to Be a Strong Public

Managing the media codes, frame, agenda gave the Yellow Vests the means to promote and share their ideas. More than that, from a burst of anger, the movement was able to grow in numbers and in thinking. Despite the heterogenous composition of the Yellow Vests, as some were close to the far right-wing others to the far left-wing, and some others had no overt or conscious political connections, they were able to build a cohesive and coherent discourse. One dimension of this discourse deals with economic issues, the other one with the critique of the political system. Besides, they took a special attention to deepen their own democratic functioning.

The first asset of their discourse was to make visible the social suffering within parts of the French population. It allowed people, usually considered as 'subalterns', to express and share their narratives (Lefebvre, 2019). For instance, various quantitative studies show that women were very present in this movement compared to others (Bendali and Rubert, 2020). This is explained by the fact that women form a great part of the most vulnerable people, and those hit by the harder social and economic context. These women belonged to single-parent or lower-class households. So, they were in the front line facing the deteriorating of their purchasing power and seeing the worsening of the family life conditions. Besides, scanning the professional fields, the quantitative studies also show that most of the Yellow Vests were going through degrading working conditions due to the discontinuity of working periods and to the strong dependence on the car for moving. Indeed, amongst the Yellow Vests, men were craftsmen, blue-collar workers, truck drivers; women were care workers, even nurses, maids.

Thus, fighting the withdrawal of the welfare state can be seen as a first line of convergence in the Yellow Vests' claims.

Their strategies of communication and action were a success in this regard as the French government was forced to set up an emergency plan amounting to 10 billions of euros which provided :

- the cancelling of the carbon tax rise on oil,
- the cancelling of the social contribution tax on small pensions,
- the rise of the activity bonus for minimum wages,
- the exemption of tax for overtime working hours and favouring low incomes and small pensions.

This was the end of December 2018. The Yellow Vests with no mediation from any trade unions or political parties or any established organization, thanks to their organization, deliberations and actions had been able to impose their frame, their agenda and finally their propositions. In this sense, we can say they had become a strong public.

So much so, the movement did not stop with this success.

Alongside the economics' issues, the Yellow Vests had started a critical examination of the French political system. The movement had raised awareness within a very short period of time, from November to December 2018. So, it can be said that the movement was an acceleration factor for the learning of politics as well as the development of objectivity (Bedocks *et al.*, 2019). The Yellow Vests were willing to continue their action and their project was a more participative democracy. The great national discussion (*grand débat national*) proposed by the French government in January 2019 did not meet their goals.

One main critique on the representativeness was that it seemed confiscated by the elites, not connected to the basis and not transparent enough in the deliberation procedures.

In short, their claims encompassed three main points. First, safeguards had to be determined to keep the control on the representative delegates, even dismiss them if they fail their electorate. Secondly, the delegates had to act as spokespersons of their electors. Thirdly, the Citizen referendum initiative (*Référendum d'initiative citoyenne*) was also part of the propositions.

At fall 2019, after several demonstrations where, unfortunately, some violent incidents took place, none of the Yellow Vests propositions had been put on the parliament's agenda. After one year of gatherings from local to national levels and general assemblies, the movement seemed to slow down. Amongst the reasons of this slowing down, we find some disagreements regarding the future strategies. Some wanted to transform the movement in a political party, choose leaders and present candidates to national or European elections. Others, the majority, wanted to perpetuate the horizontal participative system they had settled. The first solution was rejecting what they had fought for until now. The second one was hardly feasible without permanent structures. Indeed, in April, then in June 2019, the Assembly of assemblies accounted for 700 hundred delegates, representing 235 groups throughout France (Lefebvre, 2019).

So, after the acceleration process of learning and developing, the movement seemed to enter a declining phase.

DISCUSSION

Relying on quantitative and qualitative data provided by previous research studies, Fraser's theory appears relevant to better describe and understand the learning dynamics of the Yellow Vests' movement, thanks to social media and, with its interaction with governmental and political environments.

Moreover, if most articles questioned whether this movement was good or bad, that is to say grand and connected to the French republican motto '*Liberté, Égalité, Fraternité*', or petty and linked to populism. With Fraser's theory, we can answer neither this nor that, and furthermore, this is not even the main issue.

Fraser's theory gives keys to have a better view on what the public sphere should be, one which is less transcendental, not making 'as if' inequalities could be dissolved in abstraction, as 'deliberation can serve as mask for domination' (Fraser, 1990, p. 64). In this logic, the subaltern counterpublics' specific interests become a way to shake the 'as if' order and its tendency to domination and exclusion. This is what the Yellow Vests did, urging to pay attention to their degrading life and working conditions. As the feminist movements, Fraser mentioned, they shaped a new form of communication and action, allowing them to express their needs and identities. The consideration of the specific needs of counterpublics does not mean Fraser encourages separatism. On the contrary, first, it might be a step in a process, and second, in so far as the process is bound to be public, it is 'by definition not enclaves' (Fraser, 1990, p. 67). Furthermore, for Fraser, counterpublics, even subaltern ones, are not virtuous by nature. She underlined that some of them, 'alas, are, explicitly anti-democratic and anti-egalitarian; and even those with democratic and egalitarian intentions are not always above practicing their own modes of informal exclusion and marginalization' (Fraser, 1990, p. 67). In this respect, we could see that the Yellow Vests had dubious characteristics as far right and far left trends could be noticed in their ranks. However, the competing sphere they established forced them to some objectivity, at least for a while. Besides the economic measures they obtained, their need for participatory parity, whatever the status of people, engaged them into a wider public sphere.

This is, indeed, the main issue: the path to a wider public sphere, with as many diverse counterpublics as possible, sounds like one of the best safeguards of the democratic dynamics. Moreover, we can see that however complex it is, learning processes can be structured and accelerated through social media to achieve this wider sphere. In this logic, the disintermediation process analysed by Lefebvre (2019) is not any more a disadvantage but a factor to possible counterpublics emergence.

CONCLUSION

In this study, we could see that the Yellow Vests' movement could be analysed through the lens of Nancy Fraser's theory, thus having a wider and deeper political perspective. It seems that we could both approach the learning stages and processes of the public sphere and project the movement on the wider screen of the political possible evolution.

As for the future of the Yellow Vests' movement, though some of them appear from time to time in various events, the dynamic does not seem to resume. Yet, the movement is still very vivid in the collective mind.

Meanwhile, other movements are emerging in France, such as The Popular primary, 'La *Primaire Populaire*'. It seems to follow the same pattern of disintermediation, using social media intensively, learning the public sphere. Within a few months, The Popular primary was able to gather half a million people and organize a competing vote to that of the established political parties. Whether it succeeds or not, this kind of action opens at least significant competing spheres. Citizens cannot not seize it. Established organizations cannot ignore it. This anticipates more research.

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Supporting Adult Learners Transitioning into Graduate Learning: Experiences and Theory

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INTRODUCTION

An understanding of common transition experiences for adult learners allows universities and other post-secondary institutions to create more effective academic and student services programs that better meet students' needs and with the outcome of greater success for students in their academic careers. The literature on transitions through this process have typically focused on undergraduate transitions, and one of us (Laurie) studied these transitions to support Royal Roads University (RRU) Student and Academic Services (SAS) in determining how best to support students through a new undergraduate program connected with the School of Business's Bachelor of Business Administration (BBA) program (Barnas, 2021). Understanding the transitions students take on their journey to becoming successful students with their desired degree is important work undertaken by multiple units within a university.

The student transitions described in the literature focus primarily on observations of undergraduate programs, and one of us (Laurie) studied what a student-centered approach might look like for the three stages of undergraduate student transition in the design student of support services for the BBA.

The other two of us (Niels and Catherine) are, respectively, the Program Head for the MA-Leadership program (henceforth called MA-L), and the School of Leadership Studies Director. Our focus in the second part of this paper is on how these transitions, which predominantly feature the undergraduate experience in the literature, also have application at the graduate level with successful mid-career professionals re-entering post-secondary education seeking professional upgrading.

Post-secondary institutions frequently develop Strategic Enrolment Management (SEM) plans to guide institutional planning and development efforts, in the hope they can improve their ability to meet the university's strategic priorities and support students throughout the student life cycle. Developing strategies that support students may occur through constellations of campus-wide effort. In this paper, transition pedagogy is used as the guiding framework that orients the co-design of student support activities to complement an academic program (Birbeck et al., 2021; Kift, 2015; Kift & Nelson, 2005; Nelson et al., 2012; Wilson, 2010). Positioning transition pedagogy as a collaborative method for campus-wide engagement prioritises and re-centres the student experience in larger strategic planning efforts so that student support activities better meet student needs. Following the exploration of the transitions experienced by students, variations of transition pedagogy will allow readers to consider how members of their organisation collaborate to design support activities. The assumption inherent in more advanced transition pedagogy generational models is that expanded collaboration leads to intentional and cohesive student support activities that promote student success.

Student Transition Processes

According to Gale and Parker (2014), undergraduate students experience three transition processes, starting with the transition as induction, then as development, and finally as becoming.

Transition as Induction

The induction stage marks the initial exploration of the post-secondary experience. Gale and Parker (2014) described induction as “milestones . . . and periods of adjustment” (p. 738). The guiding principle is to prepare the student for success. Orientation activities prepare students through sharing information and building social connections. Information about the campus, its history, opportunities, resources, and conduct expectations remain an essential aspect of orientation (G. M. Greenfield et al., 2013; Long, 2012; Mayhew et al., 2016; Wesley & Bolduc, 2016). Opportunities to build relationships with faculty, staff and peers create a sense of connection and purpose (Larsen et al., 2020). It requires considering multiple engagement styles and educational histories, particularly if situational or societal factors have disrupted students’ education, as is sometimes the case for Indigenous students (Restoule, 2011).

One key support RRU has developed to orient students in this transitional phase to university life, and allow presentation of informational academic program webinars, is a customised learning platform, based on the widely used Moodle Learning Management System, called, *LaunchPad*. Laurie’s research identified a number of possibilities RRU might consider, in the context of enrolling a new undergraduate demographic, including: hosting recruitment events, developing personal connections with students and families, offering campus tours, developing partnerships and creating dual-credit programs with local high schools, onboarding with provincial application services (www.educationplannerbc.ca) and offering culturally relevant supports for Indigenous students throughout the recruitment, admission and orientation processes (Britton et al., 2020; Bruce & Marlin, 2012; Long, 2012; McKeown et al., 2018; Montsion, 2018; Penn-Edwards & Donnison, 2014; Thomas, 2012; Wesley & Bolduc, 2016; Wilson, 2010).

Transition as Development

Gale and Parker (2014) described this second transition as a developmental stage. This is “a life stage . . . with distinct stages of maturation . . . and associated identity” (p. 738). Moore and Upcraft (1990) summarized thirty years of theoretical development into five categories: “personal growth and development” (p. 19), “the way we think, make meaning, and reason” (p. 19), “what we know about growing and changing” (p. 19), “campus environments” (p. 19), and “identity development [are] influenced by culture, race, ethnicity, gender, age, and sexual orientation” (p. 19). Laurie initially reviewed student transition literature and identified the guiding principles of this “transition as development” process as identity, learning, engagement, and belonging. Laurie’s research with the RRU SAS department further substantiated these principles when four similar concepts emerged from the data analysis, signalling the focus for initial efforts were best geared towards supporting the developmental process of transition. In parallel to the principles of identity, learning, engagement, and belonging the four concepts included Individual Congruence, Active Learning, Collective Advancement, and Conceptual Communities, shown in Fig 1. RRU already offers student supports for the library, writing centre, and team coaching, however possibilities to expand support services for the developmental transition phase may include peer mentorship programs, Indigenous peer mentorship programs, and diversity-inclusive engagement activities (de Lugt, 2020; Friberg et al., 2021; Gunn et al., 2017; Hunt et al., 2010; Kift et al., 2010; Loewen, 2018; Malatest & Associates Ltd., 2010; Morris, 2017; Rawana et al., 2015; Thomas, 2012).



Fig. 1: Relevance of SAS Concept Circle with Gale and Parker's (2014) "Transition as Development (p. 741) Process

Transition as Becoming

Gale and Parker (2014) described this last transition as the becoming stage, positing that "becoming" represented the "whole of life . . . [as a] perpetual series of fragmented movements . . . and subjective experience" (p. 738). The guiding principle is empowerment, supported through balancing high standards and nurturing strengths (Fairlamb, 2020; Hrabowski et al., 2019; Mathern & Toner, 2020; Peterson, 2014). RRU has developed supports for students for this transitional phase include offering career planning resources, leadership and volunteering opportunities, internships and practicums, and counselling services, however, the demands for these, and other complementary services will likely grow as enrolment expands. Possibilities found for RRU to consider for this transition process include bridging programs and pre-university level curriculum (Cull et al., 2018; E. Greenfield, 2020; McKeown et al., 2018; Rawana et al., 2015; Tinto, 2005; Wesley & Bolduc, 2016) or developmental, engaged, or integrated advising methodologies (Keston & Goodridge, 2015), or life- or performance success coaching (Cintron et al., 2017; Dalton & Crosby, 2014; Gibbs & Larcus, 2015; Griffiths, 2012).

While bridging programs and pre-university level curricula begin in earlier transition stages, "transition as becoming" (Gale & Parker, 2014, p. 741) approaches often integrate configurations of the co-curricular and academic curriculum which empower students by providing opportunities to "identify personally relevant issues and commit to personally appropriate strategies" (Wilson, 2010, p. 14). The next section of this paper introduces several transition pedagogy models which allow for student supports to be designed collaboratively both within and beyond campus structures by placing the student transition experience at the centre of student support design.

Transition Pedagogy Frameworks

Transition pedagogy frameworks incorporate intentional, complementary, and integrated supports and whole institutional experiences to support success during the first year of undergraduate study (E. Greenfield, 2020; Kift, 2015; Kift et al., 2010; Nelson et al., 2012; Schütze & Barty, 2020). The four generations are described as:

Wilson (2010) defined **first-generation transition pedagogy** as student service activities managed in “parallel to and somewhat independently of the classroom context” (p. 10), and noted examples included, “orientation days, centrally run study skills workshops and academic advising” (p. 10).

Second-generation transition pedagogy, as defined by Wilson (2010), refers to the domain of “the classroom environment and the core practices of education” (p. 10), and noted examples included, “engaging course and assessment design, formative assessment tasks, and community building in the classroom” (p. 10).

Third-generation pedagogy aims to integrate separate academic and co-curricular areas by placing the student experience as a central focus in the program design instead of working from the periphery (Kift, 2015; Kift et al., 2010; Tinto, 2005).

Penn-Edwards and Donnison (2014) proposed **fourth-generation transition pedagogy** as inclusive to the roles of social and civic community, and encompassed activities in three realms, “sectorial, institutional, and student-centered” (p. 38).

These four transition pedagogy models were examined as part of Laurie’s MA-L Thesis study (2021) to help generate strategies for collaborative design of RRU student services to meet student needs.

Graduate Student Transition Processes

Induction to Graduate Study

While Laurie identified undergraduate students’ transition processes through their first year, moving through Gale and Parker’s (2014) three transition processes of induction, development, and finally becoming, our (Niels and Catherine’s) experience designing appropriate transition supports at the graduate level mirrors these three processes. In the MA-L program at RRU, we have seen direct parallels with these transition phases in the way our mid-career professionals are inducted into becoming graduate learners, exploring phases of personal development, and finish the program through a process of “becoming.”

As we described in an earlier paper (Agger-Gupta & Etmanski, 2014), we observed then, and continue to see, prospective mid-career learners coming into the MA-L graduate program seem to be in a moment of great change in their lives, where they seek to upgrade their skills to gain greater success or advancement in their careers. Some have a desire to expand their personal awareness, while others see their return to university as a commitment to lifelong learning, which some do as an example for their children. Some mid-career applicants, who enter under RRU’s

Flexible Admission category, have bypassed undergraduate post-secondary education altogether and now see this as “unfinished business” in their life. The MA-L program attracts professionals from all occupations and enables adult learners to continue in their work roles while they pursue their studies.

The MA-L program is based on the model of adult “andragogy,” or adult learning (Knowles, 2005), which is also a central feature of the RRU Learning, Teaching, & Research Model (Harris et al., 2019). Knowles (1984) framed learning for adults as self-directed, motivated by the adult’s life circumstances creates a need for the learning in the first place. The learning, to be understood and integrated into practice, said Knowles, needs to be connected to the learner’s personal experience, which makes the link between theory and practice, and implies that learning, to be comprehended and integrated, needs to be practical and therefore needs to involve an experiential approach. Kolb (2017) took this basic idea further, describing learning as involving a repeating cycle of planning some action, experimentation and action, observation of the action, and then reflecting on the outcomes of the action and linking this with the literature, before taking this new learning from the experience into the planning for next step experimentation and action. In effect, by linking this personal constructivist experimentation with collective group social constructionist principles (Berger & Luckmann, 1967), where the cohort creates a culture and a community of learning, an approach to learning based on these principles in the induction phase helps many new students to learn how to learn.

The student’s induction phase of the MA-L program starts with a month of asynchronous online preparation followed by a two-week residency intensive, and provides a new and embodied experience of being and learning with others. The residency is structured to help students prepare for a successful graduate program, by orienting them to the university, the program, their fellow cohort colleagues, and the new responsibilities they now have as a student. The intensive residency creates an awareness of what is possible for human relationships and communication, not only in the context of a graduate learning cohort, but with colleagues in their professional contexts, family members and friends.

The first month of activities is online and sets the stage for how collaboration with other areas of campus support the induction experience for students. At this stage, the MA-L program collaborates with student service units to highlight information about resources available through the library, grants and scholarships, counselling services, and the registrar’s office, representing a third-generation transition pedagogy approach to supporting student success. MA-L program leaders complement these supports by orienting students to the responsibilities of graduate study, and how critical thinking, reflection, systems-analysis, communication skills, and academic writing and argumentation are essential for success.

Developmental Transitions

Induction in the MA-L program leads relatively quickly into developmental transitions. This is noticeable in the MA-L program design and competency framework (School of Leadership Studies, 2016). Students first focus on their own learning goals, background, and ways of thinking while connecting to literature about leadership strategy and communication. Learners look inward on their personal leadership before they seek to lead others. Students share their personal stories and are supported to learn key communication and reflection skills. We strive to help students develop greater self-awareness and to build deep and trusting relationships and communities of belonging (Page et al., 2016) among the cohort members. Since interpersonal communication has

such a large role in leadership success, giving and receiving feedback is a critical skill. Students are grouped into learning partnerships of two or three students, and subsequently work in teams on solving a strategic real-world leadership development challenge with a local non-profit organisation.

During the induction process, students are introduced to the RRU Learning, Teaching, and Research Model (LTRM), a university-wide theoretical and practical framework for the kinds of relationships and supports that exist for faculty and students (Harris et al., 2019). This introduction forms a solid foundation for further exploration of the social constructivist focus on collaboration, which helps students understand and create the culture of a learning community, and spotlighting social justice, diversity, equity, inclusive leadership, and sustainability (RRU, 2019; Harris & Agger-Gupta, 2017), which can be supported through a variety of teaching strategies and philosophies, including arts-based and collaborative leadership development (Etmanski et al, 2018).

Notably, the learning experienced at this early stage in the MA-L reflects the principles identified by Laurie as symbolic of the developmental transition stage as students gain confidence and personal mastery while building proficiency in how to work effectively with others. We find Mezirow's (1991) idea of "perspective transformation" (pp. 168-169) is relevant because MA-L is intentionally designed around the potential for students to become critically aware of how their assumptions constrain their perceptions and judgements in their interactions with others, which, in turn, influences how they understand the world. Perspective transformations are typically triggered by what Mezirow called a "disorienting dilemma," when the student recognizes their current values and assumptions inadequately explain what is happening (Mezirow, 1991, pp. 168-169). Of course, we fully accept transformation is not a necessary outcome for everyone.

One area frequently new for students is the strong focus we have on integrating Indigenous Reconciliation and supporting the United Nations...Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (2007). This shows up in the development of personal strategies for reconciliation across our curriculum (see, for example, Wilson, 2009; Truth & Reconciliation Commission, 2015). This connects to fourth-generation transition pedagogy (Penn-Edwards & Donnison, 2014) which also emerges in the MAL capstone, when students lead an action-oriented leadership project that engages the stakeholders in organisations that could be located anywhere across Canada or broader, thus connecting students' learning to their communities.

Transition to Becoming

The MA-L capstone (whether Thesis or Engaged Leadership Project) is designed for students to engage in external partnerships to create positive change with an organisational sponsor. Students are coached on their engagement with organisational sponsors, so project objectives can be clear for all stakeholders.

In the MA-L program, students and faculty have adopted an adage to *trust the process*. This expression is heard frequently in the first residency when students frequently find themselves feeling disoriented by teaching strategies unfamiliar to them. As students enter second-year residency, the adage shifts from *trusting to understanding the process*. In this case, the *process* in question is an engaged and action-oriented approach to leadership and research. As students deepen their comprehension of collaborative engagement and inquiry, they also begin designing a

capstone project or thesis to support the integration of all the leadership competencies in their program. As such, this second-year transition marks a deeper *becoming*; that is, they are becoming more engaged and values-based leaders, they are becoming more confident scholars, and a first for many, they are becoming researchers.

As students transition into their independent capstone project or thesis, students expand from *understanding*, to *becoming a leader* of the process. As students engage with their sponsoring organisations, building momentum for positive organisational change while balancing university-ethics and program-specific academic requirements, their academic supervisors adopt strategies to empower their becoming. Academic supervisors become mentors and work with students one-to-one or in small groups (Page et al., 2016), which we affectionately call pods–like orcas travelling through the waters of change together.

Since some students complete their capstones in the organisations in which they work, their professional capacity, leadership visibility, and credibility often increases. For others working in a consultative capacity with an organisation, they enhance their skills, professional network, and reputation. The *transition to becoming* is particularly evident for students who complete more inwardly focused first-person action research projects. This approach was offered to support students completing their programs during the COVID-19 pandemic. Regardless of the type of project or thesis undertaken, students emerge as more competent and confident leaders, some of whom have learned through struggle and disorienting dilemmas, and others buoyed by their successes. The process of becoming even better versions of themselves and as leaders supports the final transition out of the MA-L program, and into their professional lives in the broader community.

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ARTFUL EXPRESSIONS: THE POWER OF ART-BASED ASSIGNMENT OPTIONS FOR ADULT LEARNERS

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Abstract

Within this article, we offer short, first-person vignettes in order to share our lived experience as creative and reflective doctoral students co-facilitating a university course on critical literacy. Within the course, we sought to unhinge fixed beliefs, while guiding students to think both reflectively and critically. Since we both view critical literacy as a practice that seeks to rewrite or reframe normative narratives, it seemed only natural to offer creative options for assignments in addition to the standard scholarly essay. For the final assignment, we invited students to either construct a creative representation or write a paper synthesizing their learning and exploring the relevance of critical literacy practices to their professional and personal identities. Many students selected the creative option, and we were delighted to engage with work in the form of collage, blackout poetry, painting, and personal narratives. In this article we provide a brief introduction to the course, discuss vignettes as self-reflexive storytelling, and then offer alternating, first-person accounts of our lived experience. Through this artful exploration of our conceptualization and delivery of the course, we hope to offer something of an open-ended and generative guide for others interested in offering art-based and art-inspired assignment options to adult learners.

Keywords: Art-based; adult education; critical literacy; personal vignettes; reflective practices; self-reflexive storytelling

Openings

This paper traces our experience as first-time instructors, exploring emergent pedagogic identities, as we navigated the design and delivery of an introductory course in critical literacy for 16 elementary and secondary school teachers in rural Nova Scotia. We structured the two-week, summer intensive as nine synchronous sessions via Zoom, augmented by asynchronous reading, writing, and reflection. For the students, the course marked the halfway point in a two-year, part-time MEd program in curriculum studies. These graduate education students were also wrapping up a grueling year of part-time learning and full-time teaching throughout the COVID-19 pandemic.

The course marked our first foray into teaching. We were both PhD candidates in Educational Studies conducting dissertation research focused on, in, and through the arts. As doctoral students in the same cohort, we shared the experience of having completed an intense slate of courses in which our learning and engagement were assessed largely on written assignments—academic thought steeped in ink. This course in critical literacy had us venturing down a new path on our shared journey. The course objective was to explore critical literacy practices, first through awareness of the political, sociocultural, and power constructs inherent in a variety of text forms (e.g., fiction, poetry, news, digital, and scholarly), and then by examining how a questioning and challenging approach to texts can act to disrupt normative narratives.

At times, critical literacy necessitates difficult conversations, and we positioned the course as an opportunity to explore openings, rather than answers. The importance of reflective practices was another point of emphasis throughout the course with the aim of recognizing and examining

individual positionality in relation to texts. We centred our approach on Maxine Greene's (1995) powerful assertion that, "[t]he world perceived from one place is not the world" (p. 20). The type of thinking that seeks to unhinge fixed beliefs requires the creation of a safe space. At times, we shared our own moments of personal and professional reflection in order to create an environment for students to feel comfortable sharing their insights and lived experiences. The learning we undertook as we structured the syllabus, and planned the daily sessions, inspired a desire to offer creative representations as assignment options. Specifically, offering students this option was centred on three key factors: 1) suitability to the course topic; 2) as an expanded means to take up a reflective stance; and 3) in recognition of the intensity of the pandemic school year, allowing students time, outside of their usual busy teaching days, to explore new modes of thought and expression.

VIGNETTES AS SELF-REFLEXIVITY

We recognize self-reflection and self-reflexivity as important processes for new educators. Philippa Hunter (2012) conceptualizes self-reflexivity as "*inside* storying" (emphasis in original, p. 90), and vignettes as "a creative way to story self-reflexivity in academic writing" (p. 90). Within this article, we story our lived experience in the form of personal vignettes in order to depict the specifics behind making the choice to include creative representations as assignment options, how the option was received by the cohort, and the evaluation process we used. We also offer the following vignettes as "inside stories" (Hunter, 2012, p. 90) animating our experiences as doctoral candidates exploring emergent pedagogic identities. The self-reflective nature of each vignette aligns with the course focus on critical literacy and the emphasis we placed on reflective practices as the basis for assuming a critical approach to texts. The vignettes highlight specific aspects of this first-time teaching experience—like uncertainty—as openings for learning. We leaned on bell hooks' (1994) guidance to "think of the moment of not understanding ... as a space to learn" (p. 172). We also intend this collection of vignettes to be a practical guide to including creative, art-based, and art-inspired options for adult learners to represent their engagement with course content, as well as learning through reflective practices.

The vignettes employ first-person storying to recall past lived experience and are deliberately written in present tense to depict cognitive and affective engagement in a specific time and space. We recognize that reflection on past experience is always, in and of itself, a present moment experience. The recounting of past experience in present tense also juxtaposes the vignette voices with the academic text in APA-styled grammatical tense. Titles on each vignette, as succinct creative expressions, function as signposts on our journey.

OUR INSIDE STORIES

The four vignettes that follow alternate and weave together our individual voices to take you inside our stories as first-time instructors while describing key aspects of structuring and offering students an opportunity to represent learning in artful ways.

Conceptualizing the Course—Christina

What is critical literacy? Now that we have sketched an outline for our syllabus—and read work by Paulo Freire (1987; 2018), Allan Luke (2012), Linda Christensen (2009), Barbara Comber (2015), and others—I understand the importance of never fully answering this question. Allan Luke and Annette Woods (2009) suggest that critical literacy entails:

developmental engagement with the major texts, discourses, and modes of information in the culture. It attempts to attend to the ideological and hegemonic functions of texts, just

as in critical pedagogy models, but it augments this by providing students with technical resources for analyzing how texts work and how they might be otherwise represented by both authors and readers in a process of redesign. (p. 15)

As a self-identified arts informed researcher, it is familiar and comforting to think of critical literacy as a practice without a blueprint. I found a short YouTube video (Luke, 2015) for students; within this video, Luke is clear that, in his view, critical literacy is a disposition—or an attitude toward texts—rather than a method. I remind myself that while I have grown accustomed to rejecting step-by-step guidelines in favour of an exploratory—and playful—research process, it may take time for students to absorb the idea that we are unwilling to offer a concise and fixed definition of critical literacy.

I want them to expand their thinking when it comes to texts. One only has to consider the various texts that many of us encounter on a daily basis: social media, billboards, online news articles, books, movies, even shampoo bottles. I want to empathize the obvious—‘texts’ are not just documents containing written words. From this perspective, extending an option to submit creative assignments, rather than written essays, makes perfect sense.

In terms of our pedagogical approach, I want to mirror Sandra Styres (2018) and her “lecture-light” (p. 34), highly-reflective format. In her words:

This approach de-centers the focus on the instructor as the fount of all knowledge and pushes students to consider their own prior knowledge, positionalities, and the resulting implications of what they have learned from course material by considering the ways they may balance and harmonize this new knowledge. In effect, addressing a question I often ask them: Now that you know what you know, how will you use it to inform your personal and professional practices? (p. 34)

It's important to both Allana and I that students in this course feel inspired to incorporate their learning about critical literacy into their own classrooms, and into their own lives too.

First Class—Allana

My watch and cellphone chime in sync to signal 15 minutes to class time. Our first, first class. I sweep an excessive stack of pillows off the bed and onto the floor out of Zoom view. Pandemic prep for my home office/bedroom—the only space, besides the bathroom, in my small, open-concept living with a dedicated door to shut out the sound and motion of family life for two and a half hours every morning for the next nine weekdays. The dog sits, not so patiently, on the other side of the unusually shut door.

My computer screen populates with smiling faces and Zoom waves as greetings to two new instructors among 16 familiar colleagues who have spent the past year as part-time graduate students and full-time teachers. These students/teachers welcome us, their teachers/students, two doctoral candidates teaching this summer intensive course on critical literacy. We gather alone together in the un/common space that is Zoom—familiar by now as we, in separate togetherness, enter month 18 of the COVID-19 pandemic. I get a glimpse of the students/teachers' personal lives in the backgrounds of 16 equally-sized squares on my 15-inch screen. Is that a baby crying? A dog barking? A sense of each one as more than a student/teacher settles in.

Smiles. Introductions. Christina and I work in tandem to establish this as a space where we all can be ourselves, safely share our experiences without judgement, ask questions, respectfully challenge one another, and learn together. I am mindful of Daniel Heath Justice's (2018) assertion that “we can and must have the hard conversations if we have any hope of a better future” (p. xxi). I take a deep breath and begin to story my journey as a settler and as a researcher exploring

transformative learning in readers of Indigenous Literatures. I share my awareness that I know what I know from where I stand (Kovach, 2009), as well as my fascination with stories as a way to connect to worlds beyond our own lived experience (hooks, 2010). I hope that by sharing these reflections that it opens a welcoming space *for* reflecting and sharing.

Crafting a Sharing Space—Christina

If you collect rocks near the ocean, they will be coloured by the seawater. A bright green rock might look muddy-brown when you get home, its dragon-like jade colour disappearing as it dries. The location of the rock, therefore—whether in my classroom for a student to hold during a mindfulness exercise, or in its natural state of wetness near the ocean—creates the way it appears. It sometimes feels as if I collect words from within the pages of books and articles in this way—colouring them within the context of the course I am teaching. bell hooks, I know, would never have her students complete an exercise she was unwilling to do herself (2010, p. 20). In her words, “[w]hen we all take risks, we participate mutually in the work of creating a learning community. We discover together that we can be vulnerable in the space of shared learning, that we can take risks” (2010, p. 21). In this spirit, I extract coloured markers and craft supplies from an office cupboard to test the mini art project I have designed for one of the class sessions that I will lead. Crayola markers are exciting, even at age thirty-eight.

As co-facilitators, Allana and I decided to divide the course sessions according to our own research interests. I, therefore, will be leading the Friday session on disruptive art. It seems to me that if we want to successfully encourage students to undertake a creative rewriting of the world, we must show them examples of artworks, in various genres, with a similar aim. I have always been drawn to writers, scholars, artists, and curators who seek to disrupt, challenge, decolonize, and disobey normative narratives.

In order for creativity to flourish during a short in-class activity, I find that students require a clear structure as a starting point. When you lay the groundwork in terms of an artful activity, it is easier for their imaginings to take flight. In this case, I am going to ask each student to trace their foot on a piece of paper. From there, they will turn their footprints into a work of art that depicts challenges they’ve faced in their lives. I think fifteen minutes will do, but I’m testing on my own foot just to see!

In my notes, I have written: “These can be big challenges: like balancing being a parent and undertaking a master’s degree, or little challenges like running a 5K race. You can depict them in any way you like—with different colours, by cutting images out of magazines, with different objects glued to the tracing of your foot, by using words (but you also don’t have to use words, you could even use just shapes or silhouettes). The idea here is that we really don’t know what it’s like to walk in one another’s shoes.” I am hopeful that this may be an activity they can modify for use in their own classrooms.

I trace my own foot with a skinny blue marker, surprising myself by creating a lump filled with hearts on the outside of my foot—a representation of the challenges of having a baby six weeks before beginning my PhD program. On the other side of my foot, I draw a stick figure with a ponytail blowing behind her in the wind—me as I completed an Olympic distance triathlon. In the middle of my foot, I attach a paper label resembling a luggage tag with the word, ‘bonjour!’ scrawled on it—I didn’t know anyone when I moved to Montreal, away from home for the first time, to undertake my master’s degree. I can feel my palms beginning to heat up as I use various markers to create a pride rainbow smack in the centre of my foot. I am nervous about having to talk about my ongoing struggle for acceptance as a queer woman in the face of denial, anger, and fear from my closest family members. Can I tell the class about this without bursting into tears? Perhaps this type of exposure will be valuable for others. If I don’t cry, who will?

The Finality of Final Assignments—Allana

One by one final assignments populate my inbox waiting for me to engage. Two weeks of exploring texts in a variety of forms, of discussions, presentations, questions, and insights have challenged each of us and created a momentum that culminates in this moment. I am excited, anticipating the final assignments that will reveal how this cohort of students/teachers has taken in/on the theory and practice of critical literacy. I am met with a fascinating array of forms and formats, colours and textures, motion and sound, words and space, all supporting and reflecting deep engagement.

Christina and I had requested an artist statement to accompany each creative representation in order to illuminate the imaginative process, the reflective and reflexive synthesis of the course content, and its application to the personal and professional. Some students lace words—drawn from the course literature and from their lived experience—with space to create poignant poetic forms. Others layer colours, textures, and visual images to create compositions of critical thought as vivid collages. I listen with rapt attention to a student narrate the story of their journey as images and words play on my screen. I am struck by the tone and timbre of an emotive voice; by the sense of/for the person in the presentation. Each artist statement serves as a window on a creative process, on deep engagement with course concepts, and on reflective self-awareness. Each thoughtful explanation unlocks meaning and shapes my understanding and engagement with these final assignments creatively represented. Beth Wilson's (2014) assertion that "meaning-makers remake themselves" (p. 69) resonates.

I also find myself seeking an opening for learning in an assignment that falls shy of expectations; expectations based on the keen and thoughtful participation of the student. I am new at this, and the creative assignment option is a novel approach for all of us. Perhaps final, in this instance, should not mean a one and only shot at getting it *right*. For two weeks we had reminded one another that there is no one way to practice critical literacy. In this present-moment reflection on past experience, I would like to have considered this particular *final* submission as an opening to further dialogue, analysis, and engagement by creating an opportunity for this student/teacher to take this teacher/student *through* their work, and, perhaps, extend the learning for us both.

(UN)FINAL THOUGHTS IN/CONCLUSION

Toward the end of the course, many students shared examples of how they had already been practicing critical literacy in their classroom, for example, reading *The Three Little Pigs* from the wolf's perspective, it was simply that they lacked the language of critical literacy to describe what they were already doing. Several students also expressed gratitude for having the opportunity to construct creative representations for assignments. In being challenged to step outside of their everyday thinking throughout of the course, they were inspired to experiment with artforms—even those who told us they were not creative. We found joy in marking these assignments, not only due to the variety of artistic genres the students employed, but also because it was clear that the students found alignment between critical theory, their ongoing classroom practices, and their own personal life experience. Art always issues an invitation. In this case, art became a way for these students/teachers to challenge themselves, while also exploring new ways to challenge their students.

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FLATTENING THE CURVE: REDEFINING ADULT ONLINE LEARNING PRACTICES DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

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ABSTRACT

This paper examines the experiences of adult educators in the time of the COVID-19 pandemic from two perspectives: (a) as instructors and university staff quickly adapting courses and updating technology to fit the changing needs of students and the university at large, and (b) as observers of adult education students experiencing sudden upheaval in their daily lives that caused changes in the ways they had previously experienced and engaged with online learning. We identify several key themes: the stress of the immediate shift to online learning which lead university instructors to be highly concerned over needing to learn a “new” pedagogy, concerns about assessment and plagiarism and what we are describing as the need for pastoral care. Students, on the other hand, struggled with meeting basic needs, being pulled in multiple directions, social isolation, and disengagement. Finally, we discuss the importance of gentle teaching and self-care in a time of crisis.

Keywords: Adult Learning, COVID-19, Adult Education, Online Communities, Impact on Learning, Pandemic Teaching

INTRODUCTION

There is no doubt that there will be a plethora of journal articles that emerge on the experiences of postsecondary instructors and university staff as they shifted to online learning during the COVID-19 pandemic (Adhikari et al., 2021; Boeren et al., 2020; Dhawan, 2020; Stainstreet et al., 2021). COVID-19 lockdowns starting in March 2020 – and subsequent shifts to remote learning (alternative delivery) for the two following academic years, forced university instructors to quickly pivot from face-to-face learning and adapt to new instructional technologies. Social media was alighted with the frustrations, confusion, and eventual resignation that was to be the new reality of online learning. For some of us in adult education, this was not new. At our institution, we have been teaching online or at a distance for over 15 years. Courses are offered via a variety of methods, some asynchronously through learning management systems, others synchronously via programs like ZOOM, long before they became the urgent platform of use. Students generally found these courses to be satisfying and instructors explored a variety of methods to increase community and learning opportunities for students.

This paper reflects on the important need to have discussions about our experiences of the COVID-19 pandemic and its impact on adult education faculty and classrooms. To start these discussions, we will speak of how we became resources to our university colleagues who were facing online learning for the first time and struggling to adapt to what they saw as a different pedagogy. Secondly, we will speak to the issues faced by our students, who while accustomed to

online learning, experienced a great deal of upheaval in their personal and professional lives, changing the way they had previously experienced and engaged in online learning. These changes in circumstance required us as instructors to adapt our courses to fit our students' changing needs. As the scholarship is now starting to emerge, we asked ourselves how did the early days of COVID-19 affect adult education pedagogy and our approach to instruction? In telling our stories, we help to highlight how the pandemic has shifted perceptions of online learning and adult education. Throughout, we use the 'curve' metaphor to describe the associated stress and newness that has occurred as we grapple with pandemic teaching.

THE BEGINNING OF THE PANDEMIC CURVE

The day lockdowns were announced is a moment that has become a core memory for many. When the news broke, March 15, 2020, that New Brunswick was entering into a temporary COVID-19 lockdown circuit breaker, many of us were just coming off March Break expecting to be back in the classroom with students the following day. As faculty learned of a week of cancelled classes to allow time to pivot courses online, emails and text messages were feverishly sent between faculty, union representatives, teaching and learning support staff, information technology, and administrators as everyone grappled with what the next steps were. Faculty were forced to shift rapidly from in-person teaching to "emergency remote teaching" (ERT) with one week to pivot. Faculty did the best they could to salvage the rest of the term, which was ending in a mere month. As adult educators in the role of online educators, we became a point of reference for our colleagues who were struggling to "pull it together" to meet the pivot deadline.

The transition was fraught with challenges. There were limited resources due to pandemic-related costs (purchasing equipment, hiring additional human resources) and revenue losses. There were equipment and workspace constraints for students, faculty, and staff, and misunderstandings about the pedagogical differences between instructional modes (Costa et al., 2021). The shift to remote learning exposed a growing digital divide amongst students. Many lacked resources and capacity to continue their education online: unreliable internet access, incompatible computer hardware, inadequate space, lack of time for study, and the sharing of computers and workspace with family members.

TELLING OUR PANDEMIC STORIES

Kendra's Story: When COVID-19 became a world-wide pandemic, shutting down campus to in-person teaching in March 2020, I was facilitating two courses: an undergraduate course being delivered asynchronously through Brightspace, and a graduate course being delivered synchronously through ZOOM. Having taught in these modalities for several years, the shift to ERT did not impact how my courses were being delivered, however, it did impact how my courses proceeded through to the end of the term. While I recognized our world was turned upside down overnight, I was not prepared for my students' emotional responses to our 'new reality'. Faculty have taken on additional responsibility for the well-being and engagement of their students (Grant-Smith & Payne, 2021). To promote care, and minimize harm, I made several decisions that prioritized students' needs and limits, without sacrificing the rigour that would prepare them for the subsequent courses in the program: flexible due dates were implemented and learners could pitch alternative assessment plans replacing traditional research papers. We also collaboratively re-evaluated the rest of the course syllabus and adjusted requirements based on consensus and

student interest and moved forward with the understanding that flexibility and grace were required from all.

Amy's Story: As both a staff member and a contract academic, I donned multiple hats to help support the university community as we moved throughout the various stages of the pandemic. At the beginning, I helped support staff members with the transition to using Microsoft Teams. Prior to the pandemic, the adoption rate of Teams throughout the community was very low, but as of March 2020, the need to use Teams grew exponentially in a short period of time. This caused a level of discomfort and uneasiness in learning a new platform, on top of adjusting to conducting their work from home and in many cases supporting their children with remote schooling. As the pandemic progressed, I had to switch my hat and prepare my students for another semester of learning during a pandemic. At this point, we were 18 months into the pandemic but the stress, anxiety, potential illness, and multi-role responsibilities that we saw early in the pandemic were very much still concerns for my students. As an educator, my students needed me to be flexible in all aspects of their learning experience to ensure success. One of my students was having a difficult time and needed additional support. Even with everything they were experiencing in their life, when we entered another round of lockdowns, they took the time to reach out to me to ensure I was doing okay. This shows why creating a community is so important, regardless of which hat you are wearing, as it keeps us all connected in both a pandemic and post-pandemic world.

Amanda's Story: As a full-time faculty member on sabbatical, I raced home from Europe to be greeted by home learning and a truncated leave. Over the subsequent pandemic years, there were competing roles that I needed to fulfill, as mom, home schooler, faculty member, researcher, administrator, student advisor and educator. For many full-time faculty in adult education, these roles included what Dunn (2020) describes as a collision of professor guilt and mom guilt. Even as I sit to write, a time I am urged to protect as an academic, my child is home with a runny nose. This means several days out of school. As I write this, I have been stopped many times to discuss how to calculate cm^3 , and answer questions about when spring comes, and what time lunch will be. I step away from my desk to pick up rapid tests and help with homework. Some of these roles are all too common for full time academics. The role I did not expect was one that I describe as pastoral care. English et al. (2004) write about pastoral care as, "the everyday practice of caring and giving [that] may leave carers tired, depleted of spiritual sustenance, and without practices that nurture their spirituality (p. 34)." Teaching in the pandemic has become a form of pastoral care. At the same time, I recognize the privilege that comes with having a permanent position, a long history of teaching online, and the ability to work from home.

TEACHING AS A PANDEMIC PRACTICE

Many university educators see teaching as indelibly changed by the pandemic. As we shared our stories of teaching as pandemic practice, we were able to identify some of the concerns expressed by our colleagues as they shifted to online learning. The andragogical stumbling blocks were many. Pandemic related terms emerged to describe the newness of teaching in this mode, such as Pandemic Pedagogy (Dunn, 2020), Emergency Remote Teaching (ERT), and Alternative Distance Methods (ADM). All these terms further increased the feeling of teaching for the first time. Pandemic pedagogy was viewed as different from "normal" teaching. Boeren et al. (2020) highlighted how many of their colleagues did not feel prepared for digital education. But they warn that adult educators may have to continue to engage in online modes of working more than

ever before. We would add that, while teaching online feels new, we have not lost what we know about teaching. Teaching online is just a different mode of instruction.

Issues surrounding the assessment of learners soon became the pressing problem to solve, as educators struggled to imagine different ways to assess learning. Cutri et al.'s (2020) study about faculty readiness to teach online during the pandemic captures the concerns about assessment. Their study found that faculty felt they needed to know more about how to do summative and formative assessments online. Furthermore, online evaluation was perceived to facilitate student's unethical behaviours. As Eaton (2020) notes, "in the transition to emergency remote delivery during the coronavirus pandemic, the result was that many faculty members kept their assessment practices exactly the same as they had done in face-to-face classes" (p. 81). This was in part to avoid what they saw as the inevitable cheating that would happen if we allowed learners to be assessed in different ways. To ensure academic integrity, the use of intrusive online proctoring and textual matching systems such as Respondus and Turnitin were adopted by faculty to stifle cheating and plagiarism rather than pivot to other forms of authentic assessment. The use of these systems divided faculty and left students with feelings of a "lack of mutual trust" (Rapanta et al., 2021, p. 236) and the perception that the 'machine' was determining their grade. This moral panic took us further away from our adult education roots and the co-construction of learning with students.

Another prescient discussion being had was how teaching in the pandemic has led to an increased load in the form of caring for students. Rose and Adams (2014) remind us that studies that look at the "nature of care in online teaching and learning tend to focus on the perceptions and opinions of the cared-for (the students) rather than the prereflective or lived experiences of the ones-caring (the instructors)" (p.6). The process of supporting students in the pandemic has made the act of teaching very similar to that of pastoral care where we attend to the spiritual aspects of life. English et al. (2004) highlight how the concept of pastoral care can be used to describe this shift in teaching practice. They liken educational work to pastoral care, while often reserved for religious or caring occupations, pastoral care considers the whole person in their learning context. They suggest that "when we think of pastoral care and education as a vocation, we orientate ourselves to our relationships, our work, our selves, and the natural world" (p. 35). The pastoral care needed during the pandemic has led to a greatly increased workload. We have often found ourselves contacting students at all hours to check on wellness, adding more face-to-face meetings in online classrooms to foster connection, and changing expectations to ease the load on learners.

LEARNING THROUGH THE CURVE

From the onset of the pandemic, Maslow's (1954) hierarchy of needs became omnipresent, as students had life concerns that were much more pressing than learning. In adult education classrooms we saw the collision of student guilt, parental guilt and working person guilt. Our learners tend to be older and in various stages of adulthood with caring responsibilities. Just as Maslow (1954) had described, as the pandemic raged, learners were continuously navigating through a daily maze of mental health, personal, home and family needs. It became the instructors' responsibility to help support motivation and learning. This led instructors to need to further adjust their digital classrooms to ensure the needs of their students were being met and to protect and foster a continued sense of community and long-term success. For example, we have more children in ZOOM classrooms, looser deadlines for assignments, and greater allowance for

students who can miss weeks of learning at a time. As instructors, we are in a constant battle between our compassion for our students' struggles, their rapidly changing needs, and the level of flexibility that can be allowed under the requirements of the curriculum. This means there is a need to include a variety of interventions from frequent check-ins and emails to extra 'real time' sessions to help students feel connected.

Even as we worked on securing the sense of community in our classrooms, there continued to be struggles. There were instances where students would disappear for periods of time, making little effort to connect with us or their classmates. This meant students were essentially 'ghosting' the entire community. This not only affected the student's academic success but also their peers, as undue stress was placed on group members as deadlines quickly approached. We saw students who were further along in their studies, who had pre-pandemic experience with online learning, suddenly struggling with what they knew online learning to be – almost as though they had forgotten what they knew about online learning.

For some other learners, online communities became a safe space for students to interact and engage with their peers in a time where they may have been missing daily social interactions and a sense of belonging to a community. There was an interesting tension between those students who engaged frequently to feel connected and those who were overwhelmed by highly active members of the same community. It is important to highlight that even experienced online learners were struggling, and this was not because of the shift to new technology, but rather because the world around them was changing. As online educators we are constantly reminded that online learning has created greater access for marginalized communities, particularly those learners who have been homebound during the pandemic (Costa et al., 2021). The current pushback about online learning and getting back to normal only serves to continue to marginalize communities that found solace and access in online learning.

THE FLATTENING CURVE OF ADULT EDUCATION

As we head into the era of loosened restrictions and a narrative of returning to normal, we wonder now what teaching post pandemic will look like. James and Theriault (2020) suggest the landscape of adult education is rather gloomy now. In times of austerity, and dwindling numbers in programs that create space for traditionally marginalized learners, we worry for the future of our programs. What we do know is that we have shifted andragogically, and not just because of the acceptance that online learning is here to stay.

Our discussions with colleagues have shifted from pandemic pedagogy to the need for a new approach to thinking about engaging learners. Gentle teaching, which Kress (2017) reminds us, is a language that has been encouraged by schoolteachers and disability professionals that is meant to empower and transform models of support for learners. For Kress (2017), gentle teaching also aligns itself within Indigenous cultures, and with the teachings, ethics, and natural laws of Indigenous peoples. She argues that this shift to gentleness "is a prerequisite for conscious educational action", and a "precursor for the development of authentic, inclusive, and caring services for Indigenous peoples" (p. 38). As adult educators, there are lessons to be taken from Kress's work as this move towards gentle teaching could serve to benefit all of us who work in higher education.

As we struggle with the pressures of teaching during a pandemic, caring for our loved ones and supporting those who need it, it becomes easy to lose our sense of who we are as educators. It is important to keep a sense of our authentic self. Linkous (2021) provides some tips for adult educators to help encourage self-care, with guidance like turning off the news, advocating for yourself, and finding ways to relax. We would like to take this advice one step further and extend some tips for teaching. These include taking a gentle approach to teaching, and reconsidering our adherence to norms around deadlines, assessment, and grading. The need for flexibility has become key in our teaching practice; for both ourselves and our students. It is imperative that we become comfortable with balancing the demands of life and teaching. English et al. (2004) remind us that pastoral care should include nurturing ourselves as educators.

CONCLUSION

To conclude, we continue to ask ourselves what the new landscape of adult online learning in the COVID-19 era will entail. Our discussion highlights how the COVID-19 pandemic is changing the way our community of educators view online learning and how students are experiencing online and distance formats. While Dunn (2020) highlights how pandemic pedagogy is precarious for those of us teaching, students also experienced precarious learning. We found that students shared an emotional bond with us that comes from the loss of what we thought was normal in learning. We continue to work to flatten this curve. This month, the three of us got together to write this paper on ZOOM each week. Together we have talked of family, desires to travel, and how we are coping with teaching and how to care for the students who we are working with. Our curve is only flattened by our care for each other.

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EXPERIENCE AND TRANSITIONS: A RELATIONAL PERSPECTIVE ON MIGRATION IN ADULTHOOD

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Abstract

In this paper, I explore the movement across national boundaries from a relational 'doing transitions' and 'doing migration' perspective. Of particular interest is the engagement of individuals with 'Canadian experience' as a boundary-making challenge to be dealt with and as an interplay between discourse and subject that shapes individuals' sense of self and preconfigures opportunity spaces for belonging. Data were gathered through narrative interviews and were analyzed using the Documentary Method. Various forms of engaging with the challenges and boundaries are emerging, one of which will be highlighted and discussed here as a form of in-betweenness or hybridity.

Keywords: Migration, mobility, relationality, doing transitions, doing migration, Canadian experience

INTRODUCTION

Transitions across socially constructed boundaries are commonly accompanied by the need to reconstruct biographies and an engagement with the New. This paper explores a particular aspect of individuals' experience with the ambivalent Canadian immigration system. While Canada is seen by many as a country welcoming of immigration, there are a range of systemic barriers, challenges, and exclusionary mechanisms that individuals encounter as they arrive in this country (Nohl et al., 2014; Shan, 2013; Simmons, 2010). One such challenge is the discourse on 'Canadian experience', which newcomers are expected to possess in order to gain adequate access to the labour market. Research suggests that this phenomenon enables 'racism without racists' (Ku et al., 2018), acts as a foundation for neo-liberal nation-building (Bhuyan et al., 2017) and can be seen as a canon of implicit knowledge to be acquired (Sakamoto et al., 2010). Building on this discussion, I will center on the engagement of individuals with 'Canadian experience' as a boundary-making challenge to be dealt with and as an interplay between discourse and subject that shapes individuals' sense of self and preconfigures opportunity spaces for belonging. In doing so, I aim to contribute to a richer understanding of the ways in which adults engage with challenges as they transition across socially constructed boundaries into new spaces as they search for a better world.

THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE

Doing Transitions

In this paper I study transborder mobility from a 'doing transitions' perspective. Drawing on praxeological traditions, this approach asserts "that transitions are shaped and produced through social practices, and that transitions emerge and are constantly reproduced and transformed through the interrelation of discourses, institutional regulation [...], as well as individual processes of learning, education and coping" (Walther et al., 2022, p. 2). Transitions are thus not

presupposed but the very process of bringing about and shaping transitions through social practices are of concern.

While analytically, one can discern levels of individual coping, institutional regulation, or discursive framing, it is the relational interplay between those domains that results in the doing of transitions. At the individual level, expected pathways, discursive framing and institutional supports and constraints interact with biographies. Here “[i]ndividuals become subjects in a double sense: they are subjected under these expectations, but also turn into subjects, enfolding agency in new ways” (Settersten et al., 2022, p. 2). This ambivalence of being subjected to normative expectations as they relate to migration pathways, yet finding agency to engage with and negotiate boundaries will be of particular interest here.

Migration

The movement across national boundaries can be explored as a particular form of doing transition. Following the doing approach, ‘migration’ in this study is conceptualized as a socially embedded performative act which is reflected in practices, interactions, and relationships. As Geier and Mecheril (2021) observe, migration irritates and at once emphasizes and de-emphasizes the validity of boundaries. The authors further assert, that it is this crisis-ridden irritation of boundaries that transforms mobility into migration. Analytically, this irritation can be looked at from the individual perspective as an engagement with “all social practices that, being linked to specific categorisations and narratives of belonging, membership and deservingness (i.e., discursive knowledge), turn mobile (and often also immobile) individuals into ‘migrants’” (Amelina, 2020, p. 2).

The key tenet of a ‘doing migration’ perspective is to not objectify ‘migration’ through its study, but rather focus on the performative and relational modes of producing, shaping, and coping with transitions into new geographic spaces. This includes taking into account the agency of individuals as they engage with challenges and navigate the transition.

Taken together, the research perspectives of ‘doing transition’ and ‘doing migration’ form the analytical lens through which I study the individuals’ engagement with the boundary-making effects of the Canadian experience-discourse.

METHODOLOGY

Data were gathered through 20 interviews between February and August 2021 with individuals who moved to Canada in adulthood. As this study is interested in processes post-arrival and in the (non)transfer of previously acquired skills and experiences, participants were selected based on having moved to Canada three or more years ago and having obtained postsecondary education outside of Canada prior to initial arrival. Theoretical sampling (Glaser & Strauss, 1967, p. 45) was conducted iteratively along with the data analysis, aiming to include participants from different countries of origin, genders, and occupations.

Interviews were conducted following the approach to narrative interviews as outlined by Schütze (1983) with an intentionally open narration-generating impulse, immanent and extrinsic questions.

The data analysis follows a qualitative approach in the tradition of the reconstructive social research through the Documentary Method (DM). The DM builds on the work by Karl Mannheim, was further developed for group discussions by Bohnsack (2010), and expanded for the analysis of interviews by Nohl (2010). Applied to the reconstructive analysis of interviews, DM presupposes that “what is communicated verbally and explicitly in interview texts is not the only element of significance to the empirical analysis, but that it is above all necessary to reconstruct the meaning that underlies and is implied” (Nohl, 2010, p. 200). Thus, I am interpreting not only what is being

said but also analyse how it is being said. Following this approach, I first interpret individual cases, then conduct comparisons across cases along the different modes of shaping one's own life praxis in relation to the norms conveyed through the Canadian Experience-discourse and associated boundary-making processes.

RESULTS

In analyzing the empirical material from the 'doing migration' perspective, the aim has been to reconstruct and contrast different forms of dealing with challenges of belonging against the backdrop of boundary-making to which the Canadian experience discourse contributes. Four main types are emerging that for now I am calling "enduring in-betweenness", "finding belonging in unexpected places", "navigating boundaries" and "solidifying boundaries". There were passive elements of being stuck in a state of in-betweenness and exclusion from full participation, while at the same time individuals actively engaged with and navigated boundaries, drawing on their own biography and prior experience, and developing new practices.

To illustrate, I will share two excerpts from an interview with Madhu (pseudonym). Although he has acquired Canadian citizenship, possesses post-secondary education, and has gained Canadian experience, his experience is marked by being stuck in a place of in-betweenness, not being – quote - a "full-fledged citizen" in Canada while feeling that he can no longer return to his country of birth. Soon upon his arrival, he unsuccessfully looked for a "survival job". The absence of further explanation of what this means points to a tacit knowledge of immigrant pathways which he has acquired and follows. He discards warnings by his friends about the challenges upon arrival, such as the need for Canadian credentials and work experience. The discourse on Canadian experience enters Madhu's narration when he is specifying and emphasizing that it is "Canadian work experience" which is required, not just any work experience. He grounds his optimism in his sense of merit but encounters disappointment, rejection, and the need to lower his aspirations:

"I started looking for a survival- what we call a survival job. Uhm I was pretty optimistic I was very hopeful because [...] before I moved to Canada, I was told by my friends who had already been to Canada that it'll be- it is very tough to get a job in Canada even if you have a master's degree or whatever education you have uhm from [country of birth] or from any other country. Because you have to get the credentials from Canada (.) and you have to have work experience, Canadian work experience. But deep inside me I was very optimistic that if I have the merit (.) then I would be able to find something. But after I landed in Canada, I was wrong, it was very tough. I applied for a number of jobs I did not hear back or even if I heard back, I was downright rejected so after some time then I started looking for you know a survival job (.) and it was tough to get a survival job in Toronto. Uhm then? I decided to get a license for security guard. Then I started working as a security guard (.) for a month or so." (Madhu, 1.76-89)

Further on, he talks about a period by which he had obtained Canadian citizenship and was pursuing a PhD. Here, questions by others in Canada about his origin and possible return serve as reminders to Madhu that he does not and may never – quote - be "really accepted as (.) the typical Canadian". He shared:

"A couple of times this happened when I had a conversation- chance conversation they say 'oh what's your background?' [...] when the conversation went on, I remember one person said 'oh you're you're doing a PhD so do you want to get back to your country after your PhD or stay here?' And then (.) °aah° what does this mean 'do you want to get back to your country?' So that means this is not my country. (.) That is my country (.) but if I go back again if they know- find out that I'm a Canadian citizen now they will treat me as a traitor (.), right? Renouncing your citizenship that's equivalent to trait- traitor- being a traitor. (2) So, I wouldn't be accepted, right?

And I don't tell anybody only a few people know that I'm a Canadian citizen now. (2) But [...] I am not treated- I am not really accepted as (.) as the typical Canadian (.) right? So (2) yes, I mean there- (.) there are moments when you know this becomes really acute the sense of being split or the sense of not belonging (.) to either of these spaces right?" (Madhu, l. 305-317)

The possibility of being expelled from Canada after having renounced his prior citizenship results in a permanent sense of precarity in which neither full participation in Canada nor an honorable return to his country of birth seems possible, rendering him "not rooted anywhere" and experiencing, a sense of "being split". While the door might have been opened for him, he feels he could always be expelled again.

CONCLUSION

This glimpse at the narrative of Madhu points to the common challenge of partial and often asymmetric affiliation: while individuals may no longer self-identify as immigrants, their accents, skin colour, names, or (ostensible) lack of Canadian Experience may perpetuate an otherness and configure the degree of possible belonging, often expressed in various forms of hyphenated identities, such as Somali-Canadian, or more generally, 'New Canadian' as opposed to those who became Canadians by birth. This problem of inside/outside then, so Homi Bhabha, "must always itself be a process of hybridity" (Bhabha, 1990, p. 4). By adopting the narrative of a 'typical Canadian' and by ruling out a dishonourable return to his birth country, Madhu at once makes visible and validates the boundaries between which he remains stuck even as he continues to gain Canadian experience.

Practices of boundary negotiation can thus be seen as a relational process that constitutes migrants and within which individuals actively (re)position themselves regarding markers of differences. Further, not only is there a continued boundary between the so-called established Canadians and the immigrant 'others' – often called 'New Canadians' – but also a less visible boundary excluding those who are not even eligible for consideration of membership, "other others" as Sarah Ahmed calls them (Ahmed, 2000, p. 106). Obtaining Canadian Experience, then, may be seen as a way for the 'other' to actively pursue their path toward recognition and participation, which may never be fully realized. For the 'other others' beyond the margins – groups excluded from permanent residency such as people with a disability (Hanes, 2010) or migrant workers (Perry, 2021) – this path does not even exist.

In constructing and shaping their transition across boundaries, individuals engage with the challenges, such as the oblique requirement to possess Canadian Experience, and put into relation their individual experience, interpretation, and practices. This is manifested through new circumstances in life, image of self and practices that draw from the past and are modulated through the new present. In this process of 'doing migration', individuals are confronted with a variety of learning demands acting both as a barely escapable imposition and an opportunity space for human flourishing. For adult educators to support the latter, attention must be given to the boundary-making effects of discourses and the relationality of doing migration through which mobile individuals are turned into migrants.

While we as researchers and adult educators explore our role as contributors to decolonizing efforts, we may also need to ask: How do we study phenomena like migration without perpetuating othering and exclusion? I suggest that a relational view on adult migration prompts reflexivity and critical engagement. It illuminates how categories and processes that we might take for granted – such as migration, New Canadians, immigrants – are produced and shaped. With these perspectives, we may be better equipped to contribute to decolonizing efforts and pursue the rich emancipatory traditions of adult education.

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UBUNTU: A FRAMEWORK TO ENGAGE ELDERS IN EDUCATION

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Abstract

Ubuntu, an African philosophy, translated as 'I am because you are,' locates identity development and meaning-making within a collective. We examine the role of Elders from the African Nova Scotia community in schools as a way to shift the emphasis from teaching about local culture to teaching through the culture. We draw on the transcripts of 45 participants who we interviewed online one-to-one and in-person focus groups.

INTRODUCTION

Learning through an Ubuntu cultural perspective involves the interdependent and mutually beneficial relationship between individuals and their community (Sobel, 2004). In this paper we explore a community-based approach that draws on learning resources from within the local community, namely Elders from the African Nova Scotia (ANS) community. We believe Elders have a central place in the education of children and youth and in communities at large. Elders have a depth of knowledge about the immediate community and the community's connection to the larger world. Yet Elders are rarely invited or welcomed into schools.

METHODOLOGY

We conducted one-to-one interviews with a total of 45 African Nova Scotians consisting of: 20 self-identified community Elders and 10 professional educators and a focus group of 15 students between the ages of 15 and 18. While the focus group was conducted in person before the pandemic in 2020, all other interviews were conducted online using Microsoft Teams in 2021.

CONTEXT

The youth in ANS communities continue to face educational challenges that have resulted in significant achievement gap (Green, 1980; BLAC, 1994; Frank, 1998; Edwards, 1999; Winbush, 2008) enduring alienation, racial and cultural oppression, and inequities in their formal education experiences (BLAC, 1994; Lee & Marshall, 2009; Parris & Brigham, 2010). The challenges are largely associated with their history where injustices through slavery and racial discrimination made public education less accessible and ineffective (see BLAC, 1994). To address this problem, the Nova Scotia Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (EECD), in recent years, has introduced cultural enrichment programs in schools and encouraged culturally relevant teaching approaches. A review of these programs (see Lee & Marshall, 2009) however, seems to indicate that, in most schools, "African Nova Scotia (ANS) learners are seen as the exclusive responsibility of educators from their community" (p.10). This finding calls for a better

understanding of how schools should work with ANS communities to provide opportunities for their children to succeed.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Willis (2007) has argued that Ubuntu, when viewed as a paradigm, can serve as a framework for developing an understanding of the theoretical and systematics analysis of how the Ubuntu belief system can be incorporated into the global humanist education system. For people of African descent, rediscovering the Ubuntu paradigm in education is a critical step in the journey to reclaim the educational space needed to support an education system that is culturally and intellectually relevant (Oviawe 2016). Elders have a key role to play.

Elders are respected members of their communities and are expected to pass on traditional values and teachings. A number of researchers have argued that knowledge of Elders, when properly harnessed into the public education system can encourage the revival of the intergenerational connections and identities that have been silenced by the legacies of colonialism, capitalism, and neoliberalism (cf. Burns-Ross, 2016; Kithi, 2009). Often the teachings of Elders support the interconnectedness of life in general and promote the understanding of mutuality, and interdependence (see Weldon, Wong & McLeod, 2015; Wexler, 2011). Burns-Ross (2016) characterizes knowledge of Elders as experiential, connected to storytelling, traditional ceremonies, meditation and most importantly, lived experiences (Burns-Ross, 2016). Elders' knowledge sharing involves a range of practices such as parables, allegories, stories, and poetry (Burns-Ross, 2016).

DATA ANALYSIS

All interviews were transcribed. Author 2, using the qualitative data analysis software program MAXQDA (Version 11), developed 5 initial themes. At the same time, the other research team members individually conducted separate thematic analysis which involved going through the data and highlighting significant "words or phrases that seem to stand out, for example, nouns with impact, action-orientated verbs, evocative word choices, clever phrases, or metaphors" (Theron, 2015, p. 5). After marking each data chunk, we then clustered the chunks that related to a particular theme (Miles et al 2014). All team members then shared their themes with the whole team. In our team discussion we considered each theme and elaborated with our own insights, observations and highlighted words and phrases. For the purpose of this paper we narrow in on three themes: 1) Community-mindedness, 2), Intergenerational learning, and 3) Barriers to communication.

Below we provide the context of our study, which is followed by our findings and then a discussion and conclusion.

FINDINGS

From the transcripts we developed themes paying particular attention to the variation in the background characteristics of Elders and educators in relations with their Ubuntu mindset. Many participants noted that knowledge is best transmitted through storytelling. Yet, we also found that ageism and stereotypes of youth are barriers to communication and intergenerational learning.

Community-mindedness

The Ubuntu axiom *I am because you are* implicates an appreciation of the interconnected relationships between all people, past, and present. For the participants in our study, community represents Ubuntu. Community provides the sense of communal sharing and a sense of belonging, a place to draw strength from when life doesn't make sense, a safe space

where one is understood, not judged and challenges can be meaningfully addressed. The Elders in our study as well as professional educators pointed out the need to draw lessons from the past, to situate where we are presently in relation to where we are going. For them, the community is central to the progress and success of ANS communities. For example, 'Mandle' (all names are pseudonyms) says, 'That sense of connection is not lost on me when I think about my own community. [It is a] necessity to be able to support and co-support each other because you have a common understanding about your lived experience.' Participants indicate that individuals' success is shared success in ANS communities. The 'I' will always be understood with reference to the 'we' in racialized communities.

Intergenerational learning.

Intergenerational learning can be described as one generation sharing knowledge with another, usually older to younger (Franz & Scheunpflug, 2016), although at times the younger generation will share knowledge with the older generation such as experience with new technologies. Participants talked about intergenerational learning as multifaceted involving embodied and symbolic practices connecting with community. For example, Mildred says, "It is a responsibility for us as African Nova Scotians to be holistic and not just look at academics as the [only] way of learning." Storytelling was a commonly referred to practice. Urbi, for instance, says, "People tend to listen to people's testimonies of things that have happened to them and the lessons learned rather than just giving them facts.' Asha supports this suggestion stating, "When I went to school, I took history courses, but I would have much preferred to have an elder come in every week and tell their story." All participants highlight the role of Elders in this process, 'I think that we learn a lot about ourselves and how we are situated in the world through the teachings and storytelling of our Elders.' Lidea also touches on intergenerational learning as a way that historical knowledge could impact identity and a sense of place, "... it would just make them feel like they know a piece of themselves. Like they know a piece of themselves and their culture and their families to bring forth ...in an educational setting [through] stories."

Barriers to communication

Despite the value placed on Elders knowledge sharing, there is an age bias and some participants expressed mutual distrust between the Elder and youth participants. Melvin captures this as, "When you were younger you did not think they [Elders] anything, or you thought that they were wrong but look how you have come full circle [when you become an Elder]". Melvin adds, "I think maybe the media or ... the way the world is going has made it so that people do not acknowledge Elders' knowledge....." For Urbi, "...education has played a role in letting people believe that they know it all. And so the Elder sometimes is put down or not revered." Some of the youth participants expressed a sense that Elders underestimate how much the youth know. Mandle captures this when he explains his own experience when he was a younger man, "So, I think the Elders felt like they were giving something to the youth and the youth felt that they got something from the Elders [but] ... maybe the youth [were] very dismissive of [the Elders] and the Elders could have been of the same mind frame that these kids don't know anything and they've got it a lot better than I had."

SUMMARY

Community provides a perspective that helps to explain and situate the experiences of racialized peoples. It plays what can be called a lifelong nurturing role. Within community knowledge is constructed through relationships and within human experience (Brigham, In Press). The kind of learning referred to in our study emphasizes unity, collectivity, communality, inclusion, and collaboration. Although what we have presented here is very brief and preliminary, we assert there is value in exploring ways to incorporate intergenerational learning opportunities, especially Elder knowledge sharing in schools through for example, storytelling.

SIGNIFICANCE TO ADULT EDUCATION

We present on the complexity of the Ubuntu philosophy and the role of Elders as community teachers. Contribution to the field of Adult Education African Canadian Elders and their contributions to education are understudied in adult education and the Ubuntu philosophy has much to offer about how, where, and with whom we learn.

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TRANSFORMATIVE ADULT LEARNING IN CLIMATE/ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE MOVEMENT SPACES

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Abstract

Climate/environmental justice movements comprised of partnerships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people are on the rise and gaining momentum worldwide and must be part of the solution to address the climate crisis, resulting from racial capitalism and colonialism (Curnow & Helferty, 2018; Davis, 2010; Dhillon, 2018; 2021; Palmater, 2020). These spaces serve as sites of transformative learning as well as resistance to climate, environmental and social injustice, however, within settler colonial nation states, they can and do reinforce settler colonialism and other structural oppressions (Carlson-Manathara & Rowe, 2021; Curnow & Helferty, 2018; Davis, 2010; Gobby, 2020; Simpson, 2010). Yet, despite these conflicts and contradictions, Indigenous and settler co-organizers are finding ways to work together.

This study is framed by theories of transformative adult learning and environmental adult education in situating the environmental justice (EJ) and climate justice (CJ) movements as sites of transformative learning to address environmental dilemmas and confront epistemological change. This happens when reflective approaches are employed to challenge power and privilege and right relationships are built into social and cognitive justice educational frameworks. This study focuses on the outcomes of an online survey and literature review which seeks to understand the transformative adult learning that occurs within the CJ/EJ movement between Indigenous and white settler participants.

This study demonstrates how CJ/EJ partnerships are sites of transformative adult learning and have the potential to result in a new way of being in relation with one another and the earth in a form of cognitive, environmental justice. There were three learnings that emerged from the study related to transformative adult learning. First, learning occurred at the individual learning where white settler activists learned to challenge themselves and their own white settler epistemologies, ontologies and axiologies. Second, learning was relational, collective, and co-created, linked to attending to relationships with each other (Indigenous and white settler) and the place/local context. Third, learnings about structural shifts, that also require an epistemological shift in the CJ/EJ movement itself towards an Indigenous environmental justice framework.

Keywords: Environmental Justice, Climate Justice, Social Movements, Environmental Adult Education, Transformative Adult Learning, Settler Colonialism.

INTRODUCTION

Climate/environmental justice movements comprised of partnerships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people are on the rise and gaining momentum worldwide and must be part of the solution to address the climate crisis, resulting from racial capitalism and colonialism (Curnow & Helferty, 2018; Davis, 2010; Dhillon, 2018; 2021; Palmater, 2020). These spaces serve as sites of transformative learning as well as resistance to climate, environmental and social injustice, however, within settler colonial nation states, they can and do reinforce settler colonialism and other structural oppressions (Carlson-Manathara & Rowe, 2021; Curnow & Helferty, 2018; Davis,

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This study is framed by theories of transformative adult learning and environmental adult education in situating the environmental justice (EJ) and climate justice (CJ) movements as sites of transformative learning to address environmental dilemmas and confront epistemological change. This happens when reflective approaches are employed to challenge power and privilege and right relationships are built into social and cognitive justice educational frameworks. This study focuses on the outcomes of an online survey and literature review which seeks to understand the transformative adult learning that occurs within the CJ/EJ movement between Indigenous and white settler participants.

SUMMARY OF STUDY

This study shares the findings of the online survey that was undertaken to understand the transformative adult learning, challenges, and possibilities between Indigenous and non-Indigenous groups within the CJ/EJ movement. A short 14 question online survey was administered to selected groups or organizations within the field of study in so-called Canada and internationally. The survey was located on Survey Monkey and the data was gathered between November 2018 and May 2019. The survey was voluntary and anonymous, and included prior informed consent. Participants were recruited from well-known CJ/EJ organizations, networks, movements, alliances or struggles around the world. Of the over 100 organizations and individuals that were sent the survey, 32 responses were received, with the majority of respondents from so-called Canada who identified as non-Indigenous or white settlers. This paper outlines only some of the findings from the larger research project, that focus on the area of transformative adult learning. The question that this paper is asking and that guided my research and analysis is: What do participants/activists learn from these partnerships that demonstrates that these CJ/EJ alliances act as sites of transformative adult environment education?

This study demonstrates how CJ/EJ partnerships are sites of transformative adult learning and have the potential to result in a new way of being in relation with one another and the earth in a form of cognitive, environmental justice. There were three learnings that emerged from the study related to transformative adult learning. First, learning occurred at the individual learning where white settler activists learned to challenge themselves and their own white settler epistemologies, ontologies and axiologies. Second, learning was relational, collective, and co-created, linked to attending to relationships with each other (Indigenous and white settler) and the place/local context. Third, learnings about structural shifts, that also require an epistemological shift in the CJ/EJ movement itself towards an Indigenous environmental justice framework. The first two sets of learnings are occurring, as demonstrated by results from the survey, however, the third learning requires a more clarity and a more deliberate strategy within the movement.

BACKGROUND OF CONTEXT

Climate and Environmental Justice Movement

Many people trace the commencement of the mainstream environmentalist movement to Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring* (1962), however, in response to the movement's underlying racial and class injustices, the EJ movement emerged in the late 1960s in the United States (Hill, 2003). With influences from racial justice, religious education, farm worker campaigns, and women's resistance against toxic exposures in their communities (Hill, 2003), from the beginning, the EJ movement also included Indigenous resistance to mercury contamination in water, resource

extraction on sacred lands, uranium contamination, and dumping of toxic and nuclear waste in Indigenous territories (Hill, 2003).

However, despite attempts to include Indigenous conceptions into EJ frameworks, the absence of Indigenous sovereignty and epistemologies remains with it not enough to simply “Indigenize” existing EJ frameworks (McGregor, 2018). As the climate crisis intensifies, many in the movement are calling for a recognition and incorporation of Indigenous ways of life and worldviews into strategies to address climate change (LaDuke, 1999; Wildcat, 2009; Agyeman et al., 2016; McGregor, 2018; Dhillon, 2019; Curley, 2019). Nonetheless, the EJ/CJ movement still rarely problematizes ongoing settler colonialism or centralizes Indigenous sovereignty or epistemologies as foundational to the movement.

Recognizing different definitions of EJ, this research merges many delineations to define EJ as, “equitable protection from environmental hazards for all races, ethnicities, and socioeconomic groups”, sharing of environmental burdens and benefits, preservation and stewardship of the natural world, commitments to social, ecological and climate justice, and Indigenous sovereignty of traditional land (Holifield, 2001; Agyeman et al., 2009; Hill, 2003; McGregor, 2018). The CJ movement is a sub-movement within the EJ movement and not only focuses on the ways humans are impacted by climate change but how ecosystems are impacted, and how ecological damage results in greater vulnerabilities for some humans and more than human species (Hill, 2003; Klutzz and Walter, 2018; Crowther et al., 2012; Schlosberg & Collins, 2014).

The responses of the survey that I conducted, for the most part, reverberated a traditional CJ/EJ framework not grounded in Indigenous epistemologies, yet demonstrate that respondents believe in the integral partnering with Indigenous people for CJ/EJ. Many responses acknowledged the importance of challenging dominant worldviews and confronting settler colonialism and white supremacy, particularly because these ideologies create tensions within partnerships. Furthermore, many responses also called for Indigenous knowledge recognition, space for Indigenous voices and decision-making, and acknowledged the significance of place and territory. Yet, a grounding of the movement in Indigenous epistemologies, Indigenous sovereignty and a decolonizing framework was missing.

Settler Colonialism Within CJ/EJ

Settler colonialism exists as an ongoing structure of invasion, extermination and imaginaries (Wolfe, 2006; Veracini, 2010; Lowman & Barker, 2015). Within a settler colonial nation-state, presumed settler sovereignty, settler spatial imaginary and settler futurity are key to upholding settler dominance and logics. Settler colonial dominance and violence also extends to the environment, manifesting as environmental injustice with the disruption of human relationships from land and other-than-human ecologies (Maracle, 2015; Tuck & Yang, 2012; Whyte, 2018).

Following the work of Curnow and Helferty (2018) and Dhillon (2018), this research situates environmental activism as a white settler space. Settler colonial epistemic violence, imaginaries and futurities permeate social movement spaces, impacting relationships and collaborations between co-organizers. Settler colonial ontologies to land and nature also dominate the environmental movement (Curnow & Helferty, 2018; Davis, 2010) and impact the strategies, perspectives, goals and relationships between co-organizers and land (Carlson-Manathara & Rowe, 2021; Davis 2010; Whyte, 2018).

These notions of settler colonialism were also evident throughout survey responses by non-Indigenous identifying participants. For example, when asked about the focus of the partnerships, the majority of participants selected Environmental/Climate Justice (96%) as the focus, however, fewer chose water (78%), land (74%), Indigenous sovereignty and/or governance (74%) and traditional ecological knowledge (TEK) (39%). The fact that these latter options were prioritized

as less important or considered secondary or separate from the main concepts of CJ/EJ are consistent with settler colonial notions that separate land, Indigenous sovereignty and Indigenous knowledge from the CJ/EJ movement.

Despite these challenges, many Indigenous and non-Indigenous people believe we must still find a way to work together within the CJ/EJ movement for our collective survival and liberation (Fortier, 2017; Gobby, 2020; Palmater, 2020, Simpson, 2016). Building on Dhillon (2021; 2018), Wildcat (2009), Whyte (2018), and many others who call for a reframing of climate and environmental issues through an anti-colonial lens, this study is grounded in the belief that CJ/EJ movements can serve as sites of transformative adult learning to address oppressive frameworks that contribute to the climate crisis.

Environmental Adult Education

In many places around the world, education has been used as a tool of “coloniality”, the combined Euro-centered ideas of ‘racial’ social classification, capitalist colonialism and modernity that form a belief system of superiority by dominance that pervades systems of thought worldwide, however, education has also been used as an emancipatory tool of decoloniality, to re-educate or unlearn (Abdi, 2011; Quijano, 2007; Walsh, 2012). For transformative learning to occur, in settler colonial contexts, it means a process of being unsettled. This requires acknowledging our collective history and how it continues to impact our current reality (Palmater, 2020). Confronting “coloniality”, must be central to these movements and must employ an Indigenous-centred framework of environmental justice and Indigenous sovereignty (Quijano, 2007). Without such struggles actively dismantling ongoing colonial structures, partnerships will continue to oppress Indigenous peoples and maintain dominant settler colonial ideologies and epistemologies, undermining the movement itself. In situating the CJ/EJ movements as sites of transformative learning, an important educational framework that emerges is environmental adult education (EAE).

The EAE approach is based on Freire’s dialogic method of liberation through struggle, problem-posing, critical thinking, reflection, and resistance (Clover, 2002; Walter, 2009). True to its popular education principles, EAE links environment with social, economic, political, and cultural aspects through an engaged and participatory process of political and social learning for transformative praxis (Clover, 2003). EAE involves personal and social change, draws on local peoples’ lived experience and place as a guide to educate and transform unacceptable conditions, injustices and relations of power (Haugen, 2010; Hill, 2003; Kapoor, 2003; Walter, 2009). Many have documented that social movements, including the CJ/EJ movement, are pedagogical spaces of adult teaching and learning (Hall, 2004; Lowan-Trudeau, 2017a; 2017b). EAE draws linkages to social movement learning for personal transformation and collective change (Walter, 2007).

Drawing on the work of Kluttz and Walter (2018), transformation happens at the individual, collective/relational, and structural levels within the CJ/EJ movement. Using Mezirow’s (2006) notion of transformative learning, at the individual level, a shift in perspective of one’s own assumptions and beliefs are challenged and transformed in a decolonizing of the mind. At the collective/relational level, learning with others occurs, shaping new ways of understanding identity and belonging, facilitating collective action (Kluttz & Walter, 2018). Learning from place, land, and more than human relations also occurs as relational learning (Kluttz & Walter, 2018). Griswold (2017) contends that ecological consciousness must be central to transformative learning strategies within the EAE approach in order to recognize our interconnectedness with the human, more than human worlds, and the universe, paying close attention to relationships, reciprocity, and the co-creation of knowledge. At the structural level, shifts in learning and power occur at the societal, political, environmental and movement level (Kluttz & Walter, 2018). The findings of the survey are framed and analyzed in these levels of learning situated within an EAE framework.

FINDINGS

Individual/Personal Learning

Activism first requires protesting ourselves, self-reflexively considering our values, beliefs, and actions as they relate to societal dynamics and practices that we struggle against (Lowan-Trudeau, 2017b). Challenging oneself was evident in survey responses, with one survey respondent (SR) reflecting, on the importance of “setting aside the us/they view of partnership with different partners” (SR, 11/15/2018). Another noted the “Need to drop your ego and prior beliefs to become open to learning your partnering community’s views” (SR, 11/14/2018). Some responses centred particularly on shifting worldviews, for example, one respondent expressed learning “Understanding a different worldview from mainstream way of seeing the world. Direction coming from Indigenous people” (SR, 11/29/2018). Still another said “You must be open to learn and understanding a different world view. If you come in believing your way is the best way things will fail.” (SR, 11/14/2018). Others explained the importance of personal learnings such as “Humility, trust, and acceptance” (SR, 11/21/2018). A few felt honesty, transparency, openness, and integrity were key personal learnings, while some noted the importance of “respect, giving space, listening first” (SR, 12/12/2018). Through critical self-reflection and interactions with others in the movement with learning occurs and other worldviews are developed (Klutz & Walter, 2018).

Collective/Relational Learning

Collective learning or the co-creation of knowledge, within CJ/EJ movements was demonstrated within responses that cited learnings as mutuality, sharing of knowledge and shared vision, goals, and interests. Some noted the importance of shared learning or learning together and expressed the learning of respect for each other and an understanding of other’s beliefs. For example, some stated lessons learned as, “Respect, based on shared interests, commitments to shared goals” (SR, 11/13/2018), “Long term commitment, focus on solidarity not charity, opportunities for shared learning” (SR, 11/14/2018), and “opportunities to share knowledge creates networks... [to] understand each other better” (SR, 11/13/2018).

Respondents also demonstrated learnings that partnerships must be mutually beneficial. One respondent stated that successful partnerships required, “Clarity about the relationship, what it is and what it isn’t ... being clear that the relationship is NOT a helping relationship... but one of mutuality and friendship” (SR, 11/21/2018). Many expressed opinions about openness regarding expectations including, the “Need for shared or common aspirations and/or expectations” (SR, 11/13/2018) and the importance of “honesty and mutuality about expectations of one another” (SR, 11/21/2018). Still another stated, “common humanity while acknowledging and celebrating cultural differences” (SR, 1/15/2019). Hall (2004) explains that “Transformative learning needs to find ways to strengthen our skills in working with others.” (p. 178).

Lowan-Trudeau (2017b) outlines relationships as central tenants for learning within Indigenous/non-Indigenous environmental activism. These findings were consistent with the survey with some respondents noting learning that occurred during the partnership as a result of the interactions with Indigenous participants and learning from place. For example, one respondent said, “Learn protocol of Nation you are in partnership with.” (SR, 11/29/2018). Another stated, “not to speak for others, not to make things about yourself, learning the responsibility to learn cultural norms” (SR, 11/16/2018). One respondent also stated the importance of “Direction coming from Indigenous people” (SR, 11/29/2018).

Simpson (2010) explains the importance good relationships in order to interact in “a respectful, responsible way” (p. xiv). Many respondents expressed learning the importance of respect for and listening to Indigenous partners. Respondents noted that successful partnerships required

"Respect for Indigenous experience" (SR, 6/5/2019) and "Respectful sharing using Indigenous methods" (SR, 11/15/2018). One stated, "Listen. Don't assume you have more information than indigenous people." (SR, 11/29/2018). Finally, another explained "Mutual respect and a high respect on the side of the foreigner for the knowledge of those indigenous to the place where the project is taking place. Listening and making pathways for open communication" (SR, 11/13/2018).

How we relate to one another but particularly, how we relate to land is foundational for understanding the differences that divide Indigenous and non-Indigenous people within the CJ/EJ movement. The ontology of land of settler colonialism is drastically different from the ontology of land of Indigenous people which is based on relationality and reciprocal obligations among humans and more than humans (Burow, Brock & Dove, 2018). To this end, relationship to place and more than human relations, and the struggles for sovereignty, self-determination and land are at the heart of Indigenous understandings of environmentalism (Curley, 2019). So, while the importance of place and territory was present in responses regarding reasons why the partnership began, responses did not demonstrate a deep understanding of their significance for Indigenous CJ/EJ frameworks. There was also an absence of responses regarding the learning that occurs from place/land or from/with more than human relations and relationship to land/place. The fact that these concepts, which are embedded in Indigenous epistemologies, were omitted from all responses from non-Indigenous respondents is a clear indication of settler colonial epistemologies within the movement.

Structural/Movement Learning

Transformative adult learning at the structural level was demonstrated by responses regarding reasons for establishing partnerships and partnership objectives. For instance, they provided the space to learn about injustices, to mobilize action, for community activism, and policy as well as to challenge people in power or to have power in numbers. Participants expressed learnings regarding settler colonialism and relations of power and the need to actively confront or dismantle them within the movement and in broader societal or political contexts. For example, one respondent said lessons learned for successful partnerships require "Respect for Indigenous experience, understanding of ongoing colonial policy, acknowledgement of who benefits from colonial history, and who does not" (SR, 6/5/2019). Yet another responded that successful partnerships require "acknowledging power imbalance in society and working to counteract that within the partnership" (SR, 1/15/2019). One respondent expressed the learning of "Shared responsibility, and awareness that change must affect structural inequalities within and between groups" (SR, 11/14/2018).

Many respondents explained that settler colonialism, white privilege, and power imbalances led to a break down in the partnership process. Some respondents said partnerships require "Non-indigenous people address matters of privilege" (SR, 1/8/2019), and an "awareness of white privilege, power dynamics" (SR, 11/18/2018). Furthermore, many of the SRs identified unsuccessful features of partnerships that fall within descriptions of settler moves to innocence (Tuck & Yang, 2012), white supremacy (Leonardo, 2004) and white settler fragility (DiAngelo, 2018). Respondents noted these as "Defensiveness on the part of Settlers" (SR, 6/5/2019), "settler (majority white people) domination of process" (11/15/2018), "Imposition of interests, patronizing" (SR, 11/14/2018), "thinking and acting as though one has the answers (all) and dominating the discussion and decision making" (SR, 11/18/2018) and "personal agendas and personal insecurities and emotions" (SRs, 11/15/2018). This demonstrates the ways in which white supremacy and settler colonialism permeates the CJ/EJ movement as described by Curnow and Helferty (2018).

It is an important stride that respondents acknowledged settler colonialism and their role in confronting and actively challenging its outcomes within the movement and that responses indicated that participants were aware of the importance of structural change, however, it was not clear that there were decolonizing approaches built into the movement work or that there were EAE frameworks for transformative learning. It is not enough to acknowledge the impact and presence of settler colonialism within the CJ/EJ movement, but as Regan (2010) insists, the importance of unsettling the settler within also requires white settlers to actively be working to transform it within the society and the movement. Therefore, “any struggle within the settler colonial context will always be tied by the logics of settler colonialism unless activists work to build decolonial relationships with Indigenous peoples” (Fortier, 2017, p. 49). Wabanaki elder, gkisedtanamoogk, (2010) believes, “If this work does not transform you, you are not paying attention” (p.53).

CONCLUSIONS

In response to the rise of CJ/EJ movements comprised of partnerships between Indigenous and white settler people, this paper provides emerging learnings that determines that such partnerships serve as sites of transformative learning that could inform the CJ/EJ movement. CJ/EJ movements are sites of transformative adult learning when reflective approaches are employed to challenge power and privilege and right relationships are built into social and cognitive justice educational frameworks. This is possible if a decolonial approach is deliberately built into the framework and process. EAE has a significant purpose in this transformative education work linking environment with social, economic, political, and cultural aspects through an engaged and participatory process of political and social learning for transformative praxis.

Crucial to these processes, specifically for the CJ/EJ movement, is the centralizing of Indigenous epistemologies and Indigenous-driven initiatives with deliberately decolonizing and EAE frameworks. There is great potential for a transformative shift from Eurocentric, settler epistemologies and dominant knowledge systems through a co-creation of knowledges and transformative praxis at the personal, collective and structural levels. Nonetheless, it can't end there.... It must go further to also address the structural and systemic settler colonial oppressions, with both white settler and Indigenous peoples playing a role individually and together.

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QUEER DISCOURSE: QUEER THEATRE FESTIVALS AS PEDAGOGICAL SITES

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Abstract

This paper is based on a larger qualitative study that explored how queer theatre festivals in Canada are contributing to the production of knowledge and learning, community building, and leadership within the queer social movement. The focus of this paper is on the production of knowledge and learning that emerges at queer theatre festivals and the impact of this learning on participants. Drawing on empirical material from three Canadian queer theatre festivals, findings show that the festivals provided opportunities for festivalgoers to learn about their own queer identities and queer culture including queer histories/herstories/theirstories; queer identities and labels; queer practices such as drag; queer relationships, sex, and sexual practices; queer intersectionalities; and current and ongoing queer issues. In addition, the festivals also provided opportunities for artists to learn about theatre and performance. The impact of this learning was multifaceted and led to an increased intersectional sense of queer community, personal transformation, allyship development, therapeutic and healing benefits, and increased hope for a more inclusive and accepting society.

Keywords: Queer social movement, queer theatre festivals, informal and incidental learning, adult education, queer discourse, activism

INTRODUCTION

The queer social movement in Canada has quintessentially been categorized as an identity-based new social movement (Bernstein, 2002; Gamson, 1995), and has evolved considerably over time with the birth of many organizations and shifts in movement perspectives and goals. Previously more concerned with direct forms of activism (e.g., protests, demonstrations, political rallies, marches), the queer social movement in Canada has evolved in a more culturally focused direction largely through a festival framework. This shift has occurred simultaneously with the increased rights, acceptance, and social inclusion that queers in Canada enjoy compared to when the movement first began. This is not to suggest, however, that the queer social movement in Canada has lost energy or that queer radicals have vanished. Nor is this to suggest that organized cultural events were not happening during the beginning stages of the movement. In fact, radical organizations like Black Lives Matter (BLM) have been established in recent years and activists have used creative tactics for activism since the early days of the movement (Shepard, 2010).

Although Pride festivals have dominated the festivalization of queer culture, the cultural-producing focus of the queer social movement has continued to bring about new organizations. For example, queer youth camps (e.g., Camp Ten Oaks, Camp fYrefly), queer sporting clubs and events (e.g., Fronrunners, the Gay Games), queer film festivals (e.g., Vancouver Queer Film Festival, Inside Out), and queer theatre festivals (e.g., Rhubarb, OUTstages, the Quaint, Quirky & Queer Cabaret & Festival) have emerged on the scene. Despite the proliferation of queer social and cultural organizations and festivals, there has been limited research on them, particularly within Canada.

This article is based on a larger qualitative study that explored how queer theatre festivals in Canada are contributing to the production of knowledge and learning, community building, and leadership within the queer social movement. The focus of this paper is on the learning reported by festivalgoers at queer theatre festivals and the implications of this learning.

THEORETICAL AND ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORKS

As crucial facets of cultural and urban lives, festivals have long been used as vehicles by social movement organizations for activism and social change purposes (Li et al., 2018; Sharpe, 2008; Shepard, 2010). With the focus on constructing a collective identity (which has been an ongoing process in the queer social movement) and on social and cultural transformation, new social movements have fuelled the use of festivals and events as tools for social change (Bernstein, 1997; Buechler, 1995; Caniglia & Carmin, 2005; Eleftheriadis, 2018).

At the core of any successful social movement is learning. Social movement learning, which refers to "learning that takes place within social movements and learning about or from social movements" (Harley, 2014, p. 715), often occurs in informal or incidental ways (Foley, 1999; Hall & Clover, 2005). The nature of learning within social movements is multidimensional and various schema have been used to interpret, analyze, and explain the learning that occurs (Chovanec et al., 2008). For example, learning in social movements has been conceptualized as collective (Kilgore, 1999), social (Eyerman & Jamison, 1991), emancipatory (Welton, 1993; Seçkin, 2016), critically reflective (both individually and collectively) (Melero & Gil-Jaurena, 2019), transformative (Čubajevaitė, 2015; Freire, 1970), sociocultural (Crisfield, 2006), and embodied (Drew, 2014; Ollis, 2008).

In new social movements, social change occurs more through developing critical consciousness and individual transformation rather than mass societal transformation (Holst, 2001/2018; Finger, 1989). Finger (1989) explained that new social movements:

view the individual seriously, seeing ~~him or her~~ [them] as the basis and the only unit of social and cultural transformation. The transformation in the individual's way of living as well as in ~~his or her~~ [their] thinking is the only and the ultimate criterion against which the success of adult education will be judged. (p. 18, emphasis added)

In addition to social movement learning and new social movement theory, the larger study was also grounded in social movement leadership and activism (Barker et al., 2015; Eichler, 1977), queer theory and a queer politic (Grace, 2008; Jagose, 2005), intersectionality (Crenshaw, 1989), performance and storytelling as a tool for social change (Butterwick & Roy, 2016; Snyder-Young, 2013), performance theory (Schechner, 2013; Turner 1982), and performativity (Butler, 1999).

METHODOLOGY

There exists no definitive queer methodology to conduct queer research (Warner, 2004). Drawing on several scholars, the larger study adopted a queer(y)ing qualitative methodology that took queer theory seriously to expose alternative knowledge claims and to reveal the multilayered, messy, contradictory, invisible, and the non-normative nature of queer theatre festivals. The queer(y)ing qualitative methodology incorporated six heuristics:

1. Qualitatively accounted for subjectivity including sexual subjectivity that can occur in queer social settings (Browne & Nash, 2016; Plummer, 2003).
2. A high degree of reflexivity in the field and in the analysis of the data (Adams & Jones, 2011; Warner, 2004).
3. The stability between identity binaries, such as the researcher-researched, home and field, and insider-outsider, were challenged (Jackman, 2016; Rooke, 2016).
4. Intersectionality was taken seriously (Kumashiro, 1999; McCall, 2005).
5. Normalcy was challenged by taking an interdisciplinary approach that incorporated several theoretical lenses, research methods, and modes of data representation (Fotopoulou, 2012; Halberstam, 1988).

6. A strong ethics of care was upheld in conducting and in writing up the research (Panfil & Miller, 2015).

SITES OF ANALYSIS

Three Canadian theatre festivals held in 2018 were included in the study: The Rhubarb festival in Toronto; the Pretty, Witty and GAY (PWG) festival in Lethbridge (now known as Quaint, Quirky & Queer Cabaret & Festival); and the OUTstages festival in Victoria. The three sites were carefully selected because of their uniqueness and differences in location, size, and histories as theatre organizations. All three festivals are run by non-profit theatre organizations and are produced annually. Developed by Buddies in Bad Times Theatre, the Rhubarb festival has been produced since the inception of the organization in 1979 (the festival was initially called New Faces of '79). Buddies in Bad Times Theatre is the longest-running and largest queer theatre company in the world (Nestruck, 2015). The 2018 Rhubarb festival ran for 10 days in February and consisted of 25 unique performances and events (several which ran for more than one night), two panel discussions for artists on topics related to producing queer theatre, and two art installations.

PWG is a small festival that has been produced by Theatre Outré since the organization was founded in 2012. The 2018 festival ran from February 26 to March 4 and consisted of a mainstage performance that ran for three nights, a club night, and a cabaret event. Produced by Intrepid Theatre and launched in 2015, OUTstages is a medium-sized festival. Unlike Theatre Outré and Buddies in Bad Times Theatre, Intrepid Theatre is not a dedicated queer theatre company. Since Intrepid Theatre's inception in 1986, however, the company has a history of presenting queer work. The 2018 OUTstages festival ran for six days in June and consisted of four mainstage productions, a youth cabaret, a play reading, a festival curators talk, a festival kick-off social, and a presentation by the University of Victoria's Transgender Archives.

DATA METHODS AND ANALYSIS

The data was collected using three approaches: participant observation at 51 different festival performances and events, a postage-paid postcard questionnaire (275 distributed with 38 completed), and 70 in-depth semi-structured interviews with audience members, artists, and festival organizers. Observation was participant-based, largely overt, and semistructured (Flick, 1998). A cross-section of individuals was interviewed to ensure representation from all sexual orientations and gender identities. The semi-structured interviews were recorded and transcribed verbatim. At all three festivals, the postage-paid postcard questionnaire was distributed to festivalgoers as they were leaving randomly selected performances and events.

Thematic analysis was used to analyze the data collected from the three methods. The data for each festival was initially examined separately to identify patterns and derive codes. Codes were developed according to Creswell's (2009) suggested approach of using codes based on key topics discussed in the literature, codes not anticipated, unusual codes, and codes that addressed a greater theoretical view. Themes were then developed from these codes. After examining the data for each site separately, a cross-site comparison was conducted to develop overarching themes.

RESULTS

Queer theatre festivals, like other festivals (see Andersen, 2012; Li et al., 2017; Roy, 2016), were found to be pedagogical spaces—spaces of deep thought, meaning making, and negotiation. Learning at the festivals largely occurred from performances “bring[ing] attention to issues not currently addressed within mainstream views of society” (postcard survey, OUTstages) and of

topics absent from past, and even many current, formal education curricula. By providing opportunities for high-risk storytelling, the theatre festivals were found to be effective at opening up new spaces for discourse and listening (Butterwick & Selman, 2003). In adult education, storytelling, especially through examples of lived realities, has been found to be very effective for learning (Goldbard, 2006). Though participants indicated they primarily attended the queer theatre festivals for the entertainment and social benefits the festivals provided, participants also indicated there were significant opportunities for informal and incidental learning.

Queer Cultural Learning

The performances at the festivals generated much queer discourse, which resulted in queer cultural learning. I use the phrase *queer cultural learning* to describe learning about queer histories/herstories/theirstories; queer identities and labels; queer practices such as drag; queer relationships, sex, and sexual practices; queer intersectionalities; and current and ongoing queer issues. In what follows, I provide a discussion of several of these learnings and the impacts it had on festivalgoers.

Queer Histories/Herstories/Theirstories

Many of the performances provided insight into queer lives by exploring past personal stories (topics included bullying, sexual assault, racism, and coming out) or by addressing historical events that have shaped and impacted the queer community (e.g., the murder of Lawrence/Latisha King (OUTstages), serial killer Jeffrey Dahmer (PWG)). Several younger participants at Rhubarb indicated that the performance *Motherload* taught them about activism and the progression of rights and social acceptance for queers. Learning about past personal queer struggles and events is significant because it prevents queer erasure and provided festivalgoers with a sense of hope for queer liberation.

The telling and hearing of past personal stories from queers was also significant because the experience provided therapeutic and healing benefits. For example, a performer at Rhubarb explained that "reflecting and uncovering some memories [to create the performance] . . . was like going to therapy." Interestingly, several participants noted that in listening to the stories told by other queers that it fostered the development of more positive views about their own queer identity(ies)—helping them turn queer shame into a sense of queer pride.

Learning About Queer Identities and Labels

Many participants indicated they learned a lot about queer identities, particularly trans, two- and six-spirit identities, and other sexualities beyond gay, lesbian, and bisexual (e.g., pansexual, pomosexual). Reflecting upon the performance *Animal Medicine*, OUTstages participant Billy indicated, "a lot of my trans education has come through the trans people that have performed at OUTstages." Such learning increases understanding of others and helps bridge a gap between different queer communities. As Billy went on to explain, "I feel more connected to trans and two-spirit people because the performances have given me a perspective I didn't have. . . . It is like I can talk their language because of it."

Queer cultural labels extend beyond queer identities to labels based purely on appearance and expression (e.g., lipstick lesbian, butch lesbian, femme, daddy, boy, twink, fishy, bear) and sexual practices (e.g., bottom, top, versatile, submissive, dominant). Stereotypes also exist based on these labels. Though the performances provided opportunities for audience members to learn these labels, they also at times challenged them. For instance, the performance *Midnight Toronto* (Rhubarb) disrupted the notion of daddy and bear. Jon (Rhubarb) addressed this disruption as follows:

One of the main characters is this tall gay scruffy guy that can fit the stereotype of what a daddy or bear might be, but he doesn't see himself that way and he talks about how limiting those labels are. . . . I think in seeing *Midnight Toronto* you re-examine these labels and these titles that we give ourselves.

By calling into question such labels and by providing new frames of understanding and reference, performances such as *Midnight Toronto* caused Jon and others to re-examine the limiting prejudices attached to queer labels. Straight-identified festivalgoers I interviewed expressed similar learnings about queer identities and labels. This learning was significant in terms of fostering allyship.

Learning About Queer Intersectionalities

Whether it was Indigenous queers, two-spirit queers, queers with disabilities, queers of colour, queer women, queer Indigenous women, immigrant queers, religious queers, or queers from other cultural backgrounds (e.g., Mexico, Jamaica, Venezuela), all three of the festivals illuminated intersections in the queer community and the multiple layers of oppression these groups face. This fostered the development of what I have called *intersectional capital*, which is defined as “the awareness of—and intellectual ability to understand and recognize—the multiple structures of society (e.g., sexuality, race/ethnicity, gender, class, socioeconomic status) and their interactions that lead to oppression and injustice” (Chaffe, 2021, p. 240). For example, a White male identified participant at OUTstages indicated that the performance *Songs of Resilience* taught him about the experiences of queer people of colour.

Several participants from PWG spoke of the importance of hearing stories about the intersection of queerness and religion. Jamar explained:

I had a good friend who was raised in a Mormon household, and I know their past, but their song [at the cabaret] really shed light on the effects of religion and how it can linger. I think when we learn these things about people, we can relate to them and are more empathetic.

The increased ability to relate to others with different experiences and beliefs fostered empathy and an increased intersectional sense of queer community. As a postcard survey respondent from Rhubarb noted, “as we learn about each other and our differences, the bridges between us get a little smaller.”

Learning About Current and Ongoing Queer Issues

Several performances provided learning opportunities about current and ongoing issues facing queers, including gaining social acceptance; addressing racial, gender, and economic inequalities; tackling violence and bullying; and heteronormative and homonormative assumptions around sexuality, gender, and body- and sex-positivity. This learning was well-articulated by Jesse (Rhubarb):

We still have work to do, we still have things to overcome, we still have connections to make, we still have queer voices that need to be heard. . . . We actually don't have a lot of spaces. . . . I think Rhubarb allows for greater diversity to come in and the voices at the festival are really showing what still needs to change and the direction the [queer] movement needs to go. . . . Like gender and sexual fluidity . . . racism, violence against us . . . even racism and other inequalities.

Though the queer social movement has made remarkable progress legally, socially, and culturally, it was evident that there is additional work that still needs to be done. The queer discourse on current and ongoing struggles together with past queer stories and events, and particularly past

success stories, fostered a pedagogy of hope (Freire, 2004). The following is a found poem based on my interview with Ellias (OUTstages).

Hope

The festival increased my confidence
It opened the door for me to talk about being trans with my friends
and to share learning and knowledge
I felt like I was connecting to my culture and to my people
My tribe
I feel empowered to be more visible because my batteries are recharged. Rather than being
beaten down by being called horrible names . . . it gives me hope
Hope is incredible!
Hope is wonderful!
Hope is a powerful force!

Learning About Their Own Queer Identities

Learning about different gender identities and sexualities was significant in terms of identity development and personal transformation. This was particularly true for participants questioning their gender identity and sexuality or who were newly out. For instance, Blair (PWG), who learned about new queer identities, also learned about her own identity. She explained: "I'm starting to question my sexuality. . . . The festival has opened my eyes to other possibilities . . . and I am starting to now see myself as pansexual."

Learning About Theatre and Performance

Most performers I interviewed indicated the festivals provided significant opportunities for them to learn new technical or performance skills. For example, Jose (Rhubarb) explained:

I didn't go to theatre school, so the experience of being involved at Rhubarb [as an artist] is huge. It is an educational experience. I got to learn from other artists but also got to learn operations behind the scenes [e.g., lighting and sound].

As Jose and the majority of performers noted, the festivals provided opportunities for connection and learning from one another. These connections have led to lasting relationships; relationships that for Luna (OUTstages) and many other artists have "helped with the ongoing development" of their work.

IMPLICATIONS AND CONCLUSION

This research fills a gap in the literature, as Canadian queer theatre festivals have yet to be investigated by adult educators and there is limited research on Canadian queer organizations. By positioning queer theatre festivals in the context of the wider queer social movement, the study sheds light on the importance of the festivals beyond their aesthetic and entertainment benefits and toward a deeper understanding of their transformative abilities. The queer theatre festivals are social and cultural practices with profound pedagogical powers. Festivalgoers had opportunities to learn about queer culture, their own queer identities, and theatre and performance. The impact of this learning was multifaceted and included an increased intersectional sense of queer community, personal transformation, allyship development, healing, and increased hope for a more inclusive and accepting society. For queer cultural-producing organizations, the findings are useful for articulating the benefits of their events to funding and

granting agencies. For policy makers and governments who value education, the findings make apparent the worthiness of investments in queer cultural-producing events.

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EXAMINATION OF REASONS FOR WORKPLACE TRAINING PARTICIPATION/NON-PARTICIPATION OF BLACK ADMINISTRATIVE EMPLOYEES IN CANADIAN UNIVERSITIES

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Abstract

This paper draws from PhD research in progress which examines Black Visible Minority (BVM) administrative employees' workplace training participation (WTP)/non-participation in Canadian universities. While there is a plethora of research on the determinants of WTP, what is rarely measured is which racial group is gaining or not gaining access to these training opportunities, the reasons and the implications for those who do not receive training. Specific emphasis is placed on Stephen Billett's conceptualization of affordance and access to identify gaps in the workplace training literature, especially as it pertains to BVM administrative employees in Canadian universities. The result of this research is important to policy and decision makers as they examine their practices to ensure equity, diversity and inclusion lens are embedded.

Keywords: Visible minorities, Black visible minorities, workplace learning, workplace training, training participation, access, affordance.

INTRODUCTION

Traditionally, university environments have been implicitly associated with a place/space for learning. There is a perception that employees within this space might have heightened access to various opportunities, including Workplace Training Participation (WTP). Support for this is evidenced by the provision of various WTP opportunities delivered through learning and development departments in most of the larger universities in Canada. Not everything, however, may be as it seems in this regard. Over the past three decades there has been increased significance and plethora of information on workplace learning (Fenwick, 2008), some of which have focused on employee participation in formal, informal, and non-formal learning. Additionally, while research in academia has sometimes focused on faculty (Dua, 2009; Garvey & Rankin, 2018) and students (Lombardi et al., 2018; Pitcher et al., 2018), indeed my review has unearthed a particularly pronounced dearth of literature on the determinants of administrative employee participation within university settings in Canada. Moreover, although determinants of WTP have been identified in the literature, what is rarely measured is which racial group is afforded/not afforded access to these training opportunities, whether those employees who are in need are really receiving the training or the implications (wages and career advancement) for those who are not afforded access. As such, the implications of these employees', specifically Black Visible Minority (BVM) participation/non-participation, patterns and dynamics as they may be applicable to those in university settings will be explored. Additionally, although universities, in some ways, like other large organizations within Canada, have been examining their workplace culture to determine equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI) practices, the focus has mainly been on areas such as "diversity hiring" of faculty and staff (Banerjee et al., 2018, p. 10). The main intent is to determine the racial composition of its employees, especially in relation to its student population. However, for BVM (non-white and identify as Black) employees, there continues to be "questions about identity, belonging, and knowledge organized around complex and contradictory ideas about exclusion and inclusion" (Henry and Tator, 2009, p. 7).

With specific emphasis on Stephen Billett's conceptualization of affordance and access, this paper will identify the gaps in the workplace training literature, specifically as it pertains to BVM administrative employees' participation/non-participation in workplace training, the reasons, and impact and how this identification can assist with understanding this employee group's participation patterns in universities, and the need for further investigation to close these gaps.

This paper is relevant as it seeks to address issues of inclusion/non-inclusion, equity and workplace diversity in a space where a dearth of literature exists. The significance of this paper is important as it addresses an important gap in the literature on adult learning. Additionally, the findings are useful to EDI practices within the university environment and nationally for policy makers.

OVERVIEW OF THE RELEVANCE OF WTP IN CANADIAN SOCIETY

For this paper, workplace training is defined as "the process of developing knowledge, skills and efficiency in [an employee's] job" (Indeed, 2020), which is important in the knowledge economy as the learning assists employees in "develop[ing] skills and abilities essential for success" (CCL, 2008, p. 4). Although there is significant, general support for workplace training, there are indeed significant gaps which do not address whether or not all employee racial groups have equal access. While workplace learning is still a priority item to increase organizations global competitiveness, how WTP is measured to determine which employee groups have access still remains under researched, especially as it relates to BVM workers. Although Costley (2011) identified "continual professional development" as "part of a university's learning and development framework" (p. 395), research indicates that higher education is no exception with regards to lack of information on access as there is limited data "on the effects on participation in workplace learning programmes and the backgrounds of workplace learners" (p. 403). This is further substantiated by Weaver and Habibov (2015) when they mention that one of the gaps in WTP is being able to identify "the demographic characteristics of those who engage in training and what factors enhance the likelihood of participating in training" (p. 72). Furthermore, researching who actually participates in workplace training is critical as the lack of participation by BVM groups may continue to impact their gaps in wages (Samuel and Basavarajappa, 2006; Jackson, 2017; Dujay, 2020) and career advancement (Giscombe and Jenner, 2009). This is particularly problematic given that in 2016, visible minorities comprised 22.3% of the Canadian population (Statistics Canada, 2017), of which, those who identify as BVM account for 15.6%, which is more than half of the total for visible minorities.

STEPHEN BILLETT'S WORK ON AFFORDANCE AND ACCESS

While there are a number of determinants of WTP, the use of Stephen Billett's work on affordance and access is used in this paper to seek to uncover and address a gap in the BVM WTP in university settings. This is with specific emphasis on two key areas: contestations of race, gender and invitational qualities in addition to specific factors under Billett's (2001) scheme of activities and interdependencies. Under activities, WTP accessibility will be explored in relation to forms of interdependence, namely: working with others, engagement and artefacts. However, although affordances and access are fundamental to this research, the limitations of Billett's work as it pertains to BVM groups will also be highlighted due to the latter's importance with regards to WTP patterns in university environments.

Activities

Billett (2001) describes activities as goal directed and serve two purposes: how individuals engage in work and how they participate in learning that they might afford. One important component of

this is accessibilities, which Billett (2001) describes as the knowledge that workers obtain by their participation in work activities. An example of this may be evident in companies, such as universities, that engage in activities that are highly specific to their particular operations. In these instances, the learning is very organic and cannot be obtained elsewhere (e.g. through education and books). Hence, the transference of knowledge among individuals within the specific organizations becomes highly important. Thus, limiting employees' ability to obtain the specific knowledge may act as a barrier to these employees achieving their deliverables. For BVM employees, there are implications if goal specific learning is not transferred but rather hidden from them (Billett drawing on his earlier work) resulting in the uneven distribution of opportunity to engage in these activities, which can impede the progress of their upward mobility.

Contestations

Contestations are affiliations, race, gender and invitational qualities of the work environment and are closely intertwined. Both affiliations and invitational qualities are controlled by those in positions of authority or power while race and gender can be viewed as the means by which workers are either invited in or become part of the particular group. It must be noted that affiliations (e.g. unions, employee network groups) is one of the often overlooked bases for contestation. On the surface, these affiliations may be perceived as important in the workplace, however, in actuality, their operation may be counterproductive or negative to some employee groups. This is because affiliations may gradually evolve into "[w]orkplace cliques" with the power "to distribute [training] opportunities to participate and learn" (Billett, 2002, p. 29). The result is that these cliques can gain control of access to opportunities under the auspices of "protecting and promoting the particular interests and affiliations of groups and individuals in the workplace" (p. 29). This action can be interpreted as a form of "power and control" (Harris, 2000, p. 27) "in power relations during learning" (Hayes and Flannery, 2000, p. 18). Hence, when viewed in the context of BVM administrative employees, it is important to uncover if these workplace affiliations in fact act as a barrier to their WTP as the implications of this can be problematic, especially if, for example, unions – or cliques for that matter – in these universities are an affiliation that is denying BVM's access to training.

Two other significant bases for contestation are race and gender. Examined through the lens of BVM workers, these bases can be problematic, especially when workplaces are viewed as "social institutions" that "mirror the power structures and forces in society" (Bierema, 2001, p. 57), it provides additional disadvantages for BVM workers that could impact their ability to gain upward mobility. Literature has revealed that an employees' race sometimes act as a factor hindering their career progression. Johnson (2011) notes that ethnic minorities are "less likely to be approved for training" (p. 462) and experience "barriers to career advancement" (p. 462). Race, as a contributing factor that hinders employees WTP is also noted by Billett, 2001; Hull, 1997; Jacob et al., 1996. Of great concern is that those employees, who identify as [Black] visible minorities (Drewes, 2008) may receive less workplace training than their white counterparts. An example of this is in Jacob et al.'s (1996) research that posits that Blacks receive less training than their white counterparts.

Although research has demonstrated conflicting views on the role of gender as a contributing factor to WTP, Billett (2004) has provided evidence when he states that "individuals or cohorts of individuals may experience different kinds and degrees of affordances, depending on" bases such as "gender" (p. 319). This is fueled by the "exploitative and discriminatory practices" (Billett, 2002, p. 40) that exists in the workplaces which produces "inequities and distortions of women development" (Bierema, 2001, p. 53), but may equally apply to those in the BVM group; which Billett's own research has not effectively addressed. Although Gluszynski et al.'s (2014) research noted that "3.2% more females being engaged in learning activities" (p. 4), Betcherman et al. (1997) note that workplace training "is greater for men than women" (p. viii). On the other hand,

Cook et al. (2009) paint a slightly different picture when they note that although “recent studies had yielded mixed results” (p. 22), “training access for women would be poorer than for men” (p. 22) as women “would be less likely to receive” workplace training (p. 22) and “were roughly one-quarter less likely than comparable men to receive training” (p. 22). In light of the argument on gender as a determining factor, of interest is Fitzenberger and Muehler’s (2015) observation, and which may not always be considered as part of the discussion, is the gender of the supervisor which may impact which employees receive workplace training. They note that “[i]f positions of supervisors are predominantly filled by males, this would not only result in initial differences but also contribute to a widening of the gender training gap as workers age in their job” (p. 401).

As universities implement policies that try to encourage EDI in their daily operations, these two contestations are very important to the discussion, especially if they impact BVM WTP. It is integral to understand whether these employees are denied or not afforded access to participate in workplace training and the resulting impacts on their career development, including their ability to progress into senior positions and if there are disparities in salary when compared with other groups. Moreover, it is also important to examine if the intersection of gender and race (for example, BVM/female) also impacts this groups’ WTP affordance.

Turning our attention to invitational qualities: Billett (2006) notes that workplaces “invite workers to engage and learn, insofar as that participation serves its goals and/or the interests of those within it” (p. 33). This contestation is similar to accessibility, in that it also affords access based on the goals of the organization. However, whereas accessibility emphasized affordance based on the lack of transference and knowledge remaining hidden by some workers, this invitational quality shifts the lens to that of the leaders’ role in the lack of access and affordance. By either “deliberately support[ing] or restrict[ing]” (p. 39) access and by extension the development of these workers (p. 40), these actions can be perceived as perpetuating discriminatory practices by these leaders. One of the contributing factors to this is that leaders have the perception that if workers are allowed to participate in workplace training, they (the leaders) fear employee turnover (Johnson, 2011) or loss of control.

Cooke et al. (2009) note an area which needs attention is that “an employer’s perception of the ‘talent’ of a worker could affect the likelihood of training” (p. 16). This then can have an impact on the “supervisor recommendations” (Katz and Keefe, 1993, p. 7) as this plays an integral role in employees WTP. With specific reference to BVM employees, Bell and Nkomo’s (2001) study note that Black women employees gain “less collegial support than did the white women managers” (p. 139). This is very problematic in university environments where, in most cases, employees need approval from their managers for WTP. Hence, as noted by Cooke et al. (2009), “more research into the management decision-making process would be beneficial to clarify how and why employers allocate training resources among [BVM] workers” (p. 23).

Interdependencies

Interdependencies “is a key defining basis for understanding not only performance at work but also learning and how individuals are able to access practice, participate and know how to perform in the role” (Billett, 1999, p. 5). It “identif[ies] how access to the activities and guidance is mediated in workplace settings” (Billett, 2001, p. 24). The factors include working with others, engagement and artefacts or external tools (Billett, 2001).

Billett views working with others as “the ways work activity is premised on interaction with others” (p. 23) and includes “formali[z]ed hierarchies”, “demarcation” and “collaboration” (p. 25). These “determine how individuals are treated and afforded tasks” (p. 25). More importantly, it is also argued that individuals WTP may also be impacted by the presence or historical lack of support in those three areas (Billett, 2001). It is important to understand, what/if any support is afforded to

BVM employees from leaders, the invitational qualities of the work environment and the effects of existing affiliations.

Engagement is also important because it includes the highly contended areas for BVM workers: employment basis, status of employment and access to participation (Billett, 2001). Administrative employees in universities can be full-time, part-time, contingent or contractual (p. 26). The latter three are important, especially if BVM workers are the majority that comprises these groups, then if they are denied access to workplace training due to their employment status when compared with their full-time counterparts, it would also impact their ability to progress or even attain full-time status. Turcotte et al. (2003), whose findings were based on the Workplace Employee Survey conducted by Statistics Canada in 1999, note that employees in permanent positions are more likely to receive employer training than those in part-time positions. This is because permanent employees are more "likely to recover their [employer] investment in training" (p. 68). They also note that companies "are less likely to recover their investment in training for temporary workers, [hence] they will be less inclined to support training for these workers" (p. 68). This is problematic given that "part-time and term employees – [are] a growing segment of the workforce" (Kapalis, 1996, p. 72), universities being no exception. As such, it would be of interest to identify the racial composition of these employees based on employment status and map out whether those in contractual positions for example, are in fact not receiving workplace training that may assist in their employment prospects.

Another factor is artefacts, which include tools and technologies (Billett, 2001), both of which have significant impact on employees' performance and service levels provided. Billett uses the example of hairdressers to explain how the use of tools impact their performance, the variation of tools used based on the service provided and the difference between hairdressing tools and those of barbers, all of which inform their practice. This can also be applied to BVM workers and the necessity of the correct tools that are needed for their effective performance in their roles and the implications that can result if these are not available.

Additionally, technology can also impact employees' performance, though somewhat differently from artefacts. This is because when organizations introduce new technologies, it can lead to unconsciously "restricting their [workers] access, de-skilling, conversely, requiring high levels of symbolic knowledge" (Billett, 2001, p. 29), which can "significantly change the relations within practice" (p. 29). Technology can also lead to reversal of roles between "old-timers" and new employees as the latter may be either more competent in the use of the new technology or more willing to learn the new way of doing the task as compared to their counterparts who have been in the organization longer. When viewed in a university context, it is important to determine if BVM gain access to and participates in training when new technologies are introduced, especially as witnessed during the COVID-19 pandemic.

CONCLUSIONS

In conclusion, research on BVM WTP within Canada using Billett's work on affordance and access though from non-university environments, are very applicable to universities. However, while the Canadian government strongly supports building its citizens knowledge-base, initial research demonstrates that employees race also have to be built into any approach to understand the determinants of WTP. Although universities are traditionally considered as the area through which knowledge is attained to assist in a knowledge-based society, research on WTP of administrative employees in this sector is very low to almost non-existent. As policy-makers within Ontario reduce funding that impacts the future existence of these institutions (Spooner, 2019), it is imperative that focus be placed on how these organizations can better utilize its diverse human resources to ensure its continued existence. By understanding these gaps, and

establishing a framework for understanding the participation patterns of administrative employees within universities, will be a starting point for further discussion. However, there has to be further research to identify if in fact the root causes for non-participation includes race, and determine strategic initiatives to address these. This would allow for application of results into not only universities but other industries. It will also be useful for policy makers in achieving a truly knowledge-based economy.

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DIALOGUE, POWER AND ADULT LIFELONG EDUCATION: THE PLACE OF A RESEARCH CIRCLE

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ABSTRACT

Research circles offer a form of collaborative practice and dialogue between higher education, community practitioners and partners in adult lifelong education. This paper reflects on a circle on 'fostering community, democracy and dialogue', which emerged from a key chapter in the Centenary Commission Report on Adult Education (2019) on the importance of community-based, 'popular' adult education and social activism. It took as its inspiration and starting point the Swedish circle model which emerged from "the struggle of social movements in the late 1900s and early 2000s popular education in Sweden", and developed into "educational practices, such as study circles...with a unique level of participation" (Laginder, Nordvall, and Crowther, 2013,p.3).

The paper will look at the Research Circle's collaborative practices and ways of theorising, which resulted in a series of national and regional events. At these online events, which took place between May and September 2021, speakers were invited to ask why and how adult education needs to be radically reshaped, especially in the Covid era. How does adult education link with and foster our democracy? Why are our shared histories, memories, and instances of managing previous struggles all-important? The writers of the 1919 Report on Adult Education faced these questions head on - they recognised that our democracy and spaces for debate and dissent need to be defended and constantly fought for. This has, arguably, never been truer than at the current juncture in the UK, in countering a sense of despair and impotence, particularly in the communities hardest hit by the exigencies of the past four decades and the continuing impact of the Covid-19 pandemic. At these events we sought to meet, listen and work together to place our explorations of different forms of adult education and lifelong learning in their social, economic, political, and cultural contexts. We asked how we can find ways of building inclusive forms of adult education, to engage all communities, through historic and contemporary forms.

In our paper, we ask what implications this research circle approach may have for reimagining particular forms of democratic adult lifelong education - within and outside higher education. We focus on two contemporary questions - with a historical and contemporary resonance. We ask who has the power to speak and how we can collectivise to build our voice and resources for a journey of hope. We also explore why the work of Raymond Williams, and his concept of the 'democratic educator', should continue to enrich and inform debates about 'the democratisation of knowledge'. Williams argued that adult education should not be about remedying educational 'deficit' or as a simple response to social change but should be "part of the process of social change itself" (Williams, 1989, p. 157) and that the ultimate objective of adult education should be its support for "an educated and participating democracy" (Williams, 1961, p.178). This paper will critically examine the role, pedagogy, and function of those of us seeking to be democratic educators at this critical juncture in adult education's history.

Keywords: Research circles, voice, dialogue, power, collective action, resources of hope

INTRODUCTION

In 1919, as Britain recovered from the devastating effects of the First World War and the Spanish Flu Pandemic, the Ministry of Reconstruction published an extraordinarily powerful report, visionary in its scope and practical in its detail, on the key role adult education had to play in fostering an active democracy, enriching communities, and nourishing curiosity and a love of learning. Adult education, it argued, was 'a permanent national necessity'. The authors of the 1919 Report were drawn from a spectrum of those with an interest in rejuvenating the economy and society after the devastation of world war, along with those with experience in delivering adult education.

In 2018, a group of adult educators, recognising the historic importance of the 1919 Ministry of Reconstruction Adult Education Committee's Final Report, set up the Adult Education 100 campaign. The campaign sought to encourage a programme of activities, centred on the centenary of the 1919 Report, which would both recover and re-evaluate the twentieth-century history of adult education, and set out a vision for life-wide adult lifelong education for the 21st century through their report in the face of ongoing cuts to adult and community education, across the board. This impact is starkly exemplified by the number of part-time and mature students aged 17–60 in England who previously attended Higher Education institutions, many through extra mural and continuing education routes, having halved in a decade: from 96,575 in 2006/07 to 44,110 in 2016/17 (Department for Education, 2017, p.7). Participation rates in adult learning and education have fallen across all levels of education and across the entire UK: with ongoing decline in government-funded part-time educational provision, fewer opportunities are available in particular for the most disadvantaged adults. In FE, a refocussing of budgets towards apprenticeships means that adult education relating to basic skills, school level qualifications, vocational courses delivered by colleges and personal and social learning (community education and learning for interest) is becoming much less prevalent in England. Government cutbacks following the economic downturn have led to a drop in training four times greater than in any other European country, according to the Institute for Public Policy Research (IPPR, 18/2/17). According to Association of Colleges data analysis (May 2017), one million adult education and training places have been lost in the 10 years from 2005–2006 to 2015–2016 with total numbers outside apprenticeships falling from 2.7 million to 1.6 million.

The Centenary Commission on Adult Education Report: *Adult Education and Lifelong Learning for 21st Century Britain* was published in pre-pandemic times. But, like its predecessor, we are now at a critical time, as we face a series of social, political, economic, health, technological and demographic challenges, alongside the deepening impact of austerity and a narrowing vision of education. The report, and the more recent work of the Commission, has aimed to be visionary in scope and practical in its detail, for the good of our democracy, society, economy, and for the health and wellbeing of our citizens. A core chapter in the Report was entitled 'Fostering community, democracy and dialogue through adult lifelong education' (Centenary Commission, 2019, pp. 19 – 28). The chapter begins with the following quotation from the 1919 Report – "An uneducated democracy cannot be other than a failure".

On July 9th, 2020, the Commission held an event, 'Reconstructing Society: Research Circles', hosted by the Co-operative College. The event focused on developing self-directed groups/study circles and examined these issues:

- What has been learned from the COVID-19 experience that is of lasting value?
- How can learning take place online and still be embedded in local contexts?
- What kinds of learning will be needed after the lockdown? For what purposes, and for whom?

Of all the themes emerging from the 2019 Report, 'Fostering community, democracy and dialogue' caught people's imagination, practitioners and academics alike, and the Research Circle on this theme began to meet from September 2020 onwards. The Circle is made up of around 10 active members, drawn from backgrounds in adult, further and higher education, the voluntary and community sector and trade union education. We all have a deep commitment to social purpose education and our objective has been the sharing of experience and critical engagement, designed to explore and generate new and existing forms of practice in the generation of hope. The group has worked on a range of activities, including collecting resources/documents to support our Research Circle and the creation of background papers for events in 2021 and 2022.

The focus of the Research Circle has been to consider the current state of HE/FE/adult education, and particularly education with a social purpose and its emancipatory dimensions. It has asked the crucial political question - why does adult education need to be radically reshaped? We recognise, for instance, that provision in the past has not always been as good at overcoming inequality as we would like- but we seek to look back at a century of effort, experimentation and achievement, in building inclusive forms of adult education to engage communities and practitioners but with a focus on criticality and reshaping.

On May 7th, July 2nd and September 17th 2021, we held the first series of three online events, all predicated on Raymond Williams' concept of 'Resources for a Journey of Hope', entitled, 'Fostering community, democracy and dialogue through adult lifelong education: Celebrating resources of hope: a creative exchange'. Our aim was to reach out to a wider audience and to collectively explore how we build on inclusive forms of adult education, so often found in relationships, shared history and community. We believe that this shared history, our memories and instances of managing previous struggles, are all-important in countering a sense of despair and impotence, particularly in the face of continuing cuts, political hostility and the exigencies of the Covid-19 pandemic. We sought to meet, listen, and work together to place our exploration of adult education in its social, economic, political, and cultural context, both historically and now, and to find ways forward for the future.

We argued that so much of the legacy of adult education – and those aspects of it that endure, even if tenuously, is found in relationships, shared history and community. It is also political. As Andrew Sanchez points out, class and constructions of class can be grossly over-simplified and individualised: "conceptual models of the precariat fail to grasp class as a dynamic historical object that intersects with experiences of struggle, decline, hope, and fatalism" (Sanchez, 2018, p.303). For Sanchez, our concepts of ourselves as belonging to a particular class – not just a group of individuals living precariously - with a shared history, memories, and instances of

managing previous struggles, is all-important in countering a sense of despair and impotence, particularly in the communities hardest hit by the exigencies of the past four decades and the more recent Covid-19 pandemic. This is why we chose to frame our Research Circle activities through the lens of life histories rather than life stories. As Goodson and Sikes succinctly asserted: "Life story individualises and personalises, the life history contextualises and politicizes" (Goodson and Sikes, 2001, pp. 87-88).

In our paper and roundtable, we now firstly review the origins and wider histories of research circles in adult lifelong education and ask how these relate to our collaborative work. We then argue why our contemporary collaborative practices, shaped by the specific contexts of our work, may offer a distinctive form that relates to and builds on other research circles. Finally, we ask what implications the research circle approach may have for reimagining particular forms of democratic adult lifelong education - within and outside higher education. We pose two contemporary questions - with a historical and contemporary resonance. Who has the power to speak and, if, these experiences are marginalised and minimised, how can we work collectively - as democratic educators - to build our voice inspired by William's resources for a journey of hope and concept of the 'democratic educator' ? (Williams, 1961).

THE ORIGINS OF RESEARCH CIRCLES IN ADULT LIFELONG EDUCATION

The wider histories, origin, and characteristics of research circles (see, for example, Bergman, 2014; Harnsten, 1994; Holmstrand and Harnsten, 1992; Holmstrand, Harnsten and Lowstedt, 2008), relate to our own collaborative work in two ways. Earlier research reported that the context of each circle varied; ranging from studying a specific problem - and the needs of a particular group of workers in a single setting - to a national crisis of the public sector (Harnsten, 1994; Holmstrand and Harnsten, 1992). We also began from an explicit position: a sense that dominant forms of lifelong learning were an impoverished response to local, national, and international crises. Our political imperative reflects Harnsten's emphasis on the place of research circles in Sweden as part of a 'collective counterattack' (1994, p.9) against the practices of a Swedish conservative government who threatened the achievements of the welfare state. Similarly, before our first event in May 2021, Clancy (2021) argued that the overall purpose of our Research Circle was to ask why adult education needs to be radically reshaped and how can inclusive forms of adult education, that engage marginalised communities, be re-built?

Secondly, a series of 'epistemological issues', and the potential of the research circle approach (RCA) for developing democratic forms of collaborative research, also relate to our work (Bergman, 2014; Harnsten, 1994 and Holmstrand, Harnsten and Lowstedt, 2008). In their original form, participants in research circles combined the tacit knowledge of union members and different expertise of researchers. The interchanges between the knowledges of researcher and practitioner, and the potential for dialogue, begin from the premise that there is value in the knowledge and experience of each participant. In their review of how to design a research circle Holmstrand and Harnsten highlighted the characteristics of the circle and nature of participation: developing 'trust' ('to get to know one another'), the importance of 'voice' ('listening to different perspectives on a problem') and 'time' (to 'define and describe the problem') (1992, p. 232). Their later analysis of "knowledgeable action" emphasises that our own knowledge of the problems we

are working to understand may be emergent, diffuse and situated – but “democratic knowledge processes” embody potential for innovative thinking within each context (Holmstrand, Harnsten and Lowstedt, 2008, p.185). It is in these processes of work that research circles may offer potential for change and development (Bergman, 2014) – through collaboration.

These pedagogical functions were first recognised in research on early forms of research circles in Sweden (Harnsten, 1994; Holmstrand and Harnsten,1992). The first phase of our work has also

- Enabled a wide range of participants to disseminate their practice and research
- Identified the scope for distinctive forms of adult education
- Provided starting points for new research.

In the following section of the paper, we ask how our own contemporary collaborative work, within the Research Circle, relates to and builds on these practices and functions.

RESEARCH CIRCLES: VOICE AND DIALOGUE

As convenors of the Research Circle, we occupy different positions within higher education. One of us has a full-time post at a UK Russell Group University, with an emphasis on teaching and marginal spaces for research, whilst the other retired from a full-time teaching post in a UK university (with an institutional history of teacher education) in August 2020 and now combines two part-time posts and supporting the development of the Circle. However, for both of us, the collective act of developing work is bound up with finding spaces for recovering policy memories that have not been lost – but have been marginalised by dominant forms of lifelong learning within, and outside, higher education.

In an echo of Harnsten’s emphasis on the place of earlier research circles in Sweden, as part of a ‘collective counterattack’ (1994, p.9), our blog post (Clancy and Jones, 2021) after the first event in May 2021, highlighted the power and richness of each presentation. One of the Research Circle members summed up this vital role in his reflections after the event: “I felt all the presenters, in their different ways, were saying something similar: [we need] spaces in which dialogue, cooperative learning, democracy and community can begin to thrive”. Another participant emphasised: “Today has sown some seeds and demonstrated a collective impetus, for which I’m grateful”. This impetus can draw on Williams’ resources of hope and continually remind us that “to be truly radical is to make hope possible rather than despair convincing” (Williams, 1989, p.118). A further speaker also highlighted that through our collective action we can create a place for “remembering, not forgetting, past practices”, enabling us to store and share our memories of creative policy responses and practice.

We are increasingly having to do this work outside the state, as well as within it, after swathes of funding cuts to adult/community education infrastructure and a new neo-liberal onslaught within some universities on the humanities, targeting budgets for art, music, theatre, literature, sociology and music. In July 2021 it was confirmed that Government cuts to funding for English universities would halve the subsidy for creative and arts subjects whilst increasing investment in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM), medicine and healthcare, following the government’s priorities. But simultaneously, this future is not only marked by cuts to institutional

and departmental funding. These conditions, in turn, re-produce compulsive working. Gornall and Salisbury (2012), in their earlier study of academic 'Working Lives', characterise this as a form of 'hyper-professionality'. In our collaborative work with other members of the Research Circle we have continued to nurture spaces for self-directed and self-managed fragments of time (2012, p.138)- but these moments of 'slowing down' have contrasted sharply with a catalogue of other competing demands.

However, in a further reminder of Harnsten (1994), we seek to keep alive these conversations which focus on making learning "part of the process of social change itself" (Williams, 1983) and continue to develop ourselves within this process as brokers, advocates and critical thinkers. As Williams said,

There are ideas, and ways of thinking, with the seeds of life in them, and there are others, perhaps deep in our minds, with the seeds of a general death. Our measure of success in recognizing these kinds, and in naming them making possible their common recognition, may be literally the measure of our future (Williams, 1993, p.338).

CONCLUSION

"Resources for a Journey of Hope" was Raymond Williams' description of these communal means by which we seek emancipation in the last chapter of *Towards 2000* (1983). Linden West echoed Williams's cry for an enduring need for resources for hope in his 2016 book, *Distress in the City: Racism, Fundamentalism and a Democratic Education*. West suggested that these can be found in the best traditions of adult education and informal learning - education of an "informal, life-wide kind", which allows people to challenge the "taken-for-granted without experiencing paralysing anxiety", and in the cultivation of "relationships in which individuals feel legitimate" and can restore resilience (West, 2016, p.13). "Resources for a journey of hope" sought to examine how awareness of community history, labour struggles and community activism have provided continuity and resilience in times of escalating turbulence.

The Research Circle echoes and seeks to amplify Jim McGuigan's use of Williams' phrase - 'a short counter-revolution' - in his updated chapter in the 2015 reissue of *Towards 2000*, in which he describes William's portent about the relentless push of neoliberalism and "the drift of history", with neoliberalism ascendant in "its nihilistic purpose, as a new hegemonic principle in the world" (McGuigan, 2015, xiv). This attempt at annihilation of community histories and collectivism has struck at the heart of adult education provision across the UK, including that provided by universities, institutions of further education, Trade Unions, community bodies and NGOs, vocational training centres and the local government sector. The Research Circles have begun to counter this. We acknowledge that we are at an early stage in our development. But, by celebrating what we are learning together in the democratic education space of the Research Circle, as well as what is being learnt when we turn to sites of community activism, we are "... persisting with what may seem like mundane, everyday, acts of resistance that are based on seeing and seizing opportunities to do and say things differently" (Tett and Hamilton, 2019, p. 253), and engaging in our own small act of counter-revolution.

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RESILIENCE IN COMMUNITY-BASED PRIMARY HEALTH CARE TEAMS DURING THE FIRST WAVE OF COVID-19: AN EXPLORATORY CASE STUDY

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Abstract

Resilience—the ability to adapt well in response to adversity—is a key concern for adult educators as we face unprecedented global challenges such as COVID-19. Nowhere is this more apparent than in our educational work with health professionals who experience numerous stressors in their work, now amplified during COVID-19. Focus groups were conducted with rural community-based collaborative primary healthcare teams in the fall of 2021, in one health zone in Nova Scotia. The purpose was to understand their experience during the first year of COVID-19. Preliminary findings reveal recognized stressors unique to COVID-19, as well as resilience factors such as collaborative structures and relationships that functioned to enable teams to adapt dynamically to rapidly changing conditions and protocols, and to innovate to generate locally responsive solutions.

Keywords: Adult education, Resilience, burnout, primary healthcare, collaborative practice.

INTRODUCTION

It has long been recognized that health professions face numerous stressors within their clinical practice, including time pressures, workload demands, multiple roles, and emotional issues (including compassion fatigue)(Skovolt & Trotter-Mathison, 2016). Continued exposure to environmental stressors can seriously impact their physical and mental wellbeing, resulting in burnout and, in some cases, traumatic stress-like symptoms. These outcomes can contribute to health professionals' experiencing a disproportionately high level of stress related illnesses (Arrogante & Zaldivar, 2017; Tisdell & Palmer, 2018). Not only is the wellbeing of the health professional impacted, but also their ability to practice effectively in caring for others. (Arrogante & Zaldivar, 2017). Although pervasive across all health professions, there is evidence that primary healthcare providers are most vulnerable because of their prolonged exposure to stress. (Gayton & Lovell, 2012; Gomez et al., 2013).

COVID-19 has amplified this stress in healthcare environments. Recognized COVID related stressors include adapting to rapid change and new protocols and making difficult choices to ensure urgent ongoing public health problems are addressed, while minimizing risk to health professionals' and their families and communities (Lu et al., 2020). While prior to COVID-19 in the spring of 2020, the prevalence of severe burnout was 30%-40%, by spring 2021, rates were greater than 60% among Canadian physicians, nurses, and other Canadian health care professionals (Maunder et al., 2021). Clearly the health and wellbeing of healthcare workforce is a critical issue in healthcare.

Current COVID research examines resilience in acute care settings (i.e., emergency departments, intensive care), but less is known about the experience in rural community-based collaborative practices where interprofessional collaboration is crucial and where formal (system-level) opportunities to share information, and ongoing educational support is often more challenging (O'Sullivan, et al., 2020). Collaboration in healthcare is defined as healthcare professionals assuming complementary roles and cooperatively working together, sharing responsibility for

problem-solving and making decisions to formulate and carry out plans for patient care (WHO, 2010). In 2008 the Province of Nova Scotia adopted a Collaborative Care model of service delivery, and collaborative teams were launched across the province to improve access to primary healthcare, particular in rural areas.

Resilience thinking recognizes that for sustainable change, action must be taken at several levels (individual, professional, organizational) to understand, assess, and address the risks associated with professional practice and their contribution to individual and collective wellbeing (Skovholt & Trotter-Mathison, 2016). An exploration of barriers and enablers in this context can support building the foundation for professional resilience through policy and protocol changes at the system level, and pre-service and continuing professional education supports. This small exploratory case study is an initial step in a) understanding the lived experience of rural community-based primary healthcare teams (also referred to here as collaborative practice teams) across the 'first wave' of the COVID pandemic (March 2020–October 2021). This experience provides a basis for considering b) broad enabling supports with the potential to sustain resilience in this primary healthcare workforce. In the longer term, research into enabling conditions for these teams can inform system level resilience strategies and interventions that foster improved individual and team wellbeing within primary healthcare.

METHODOLOGY

An exploratory case study provided the methodology for orienting this study. Data collection involved three focus group interviews with rural community-based collaborative practice teams across the pandemic in fall of 2021. Each focus group had five or more participants. Teams were physician-led, and populated by allied health professionals (e.g., nurses, dieticians, physiotherapists, administrators, etc.). An additional focus group was conducted with the primary healthcare leadership team, of the health zone to gain a system level perspective. The interview guide focused on individual and team experience with COVID, including constraints, and enabling conditions, for individual and collective wellbeing within teams. This research focuses on the first year of COVID-19, often referred to as the 'first wave' of the pandemic, when Nova Scotia had experienced very low case counts due to strict provincial public health measures, and a COVID-Zero strategy in the Atlantic Canada, which kept the virus under control. The findings reported in this paper are preliminary and summative across all three focus groups. The system-level perspective provided by the leadership team (4th focus group) is not included in this preliminary paper.

PRELIMINARY RESULTS

The accounts of the three collaborative practice teams in this study while distinctive, reveal many shared and interrelated experiences and responses, which are the focus of this paper. A framework developed by Grailey Lound & Brett (2021) is adapted here to discuss some emergent and commonly shared themes of a) changes in workplace stressors, b) changes in psychological safety c) changes in team dynamics and innovation. The analysis of data here is preliminary, revealing initial overarching themes and sub themes from the team accounts of their COVID-19 experience, and a sampling of related very batum quotes.

Changes in Workplace Stressors

New COVID-19 workplace stressors were universally highlighted by all participants. These included those widely recognized in other health settings, namely, a dramatically increased

workload, and rapidly changing protocols and policies (often daily), as well as staff shortages and technological change and related challenges (Lu et al., 2020). Susan's account highlights her team's experience navigating these new interrelated workplace challenges, and implications for the team and their patients:

First, we moved to the phone, then to virtual visits, and this was expanded to X-ray and even access to blood work, which patients needed to go online for. These changes were often overwhelming for our patients... and that was only one thing in this never-ending change that we had to respond to, creating a lot more work and stress for us behind the scenes... For example, switching to virtual care there was a lot more steps added because we now had to educate patients on all this technology, and then screen and clean our facilities when we started to see people.

Isolation, challenge, and mistrust associated with system-level communication around changing protocols, and related expectations of rapid (and unsupported) learning, were vividly described by some team members. Paul highlights his frustration with the lack of communication related to new workplace challenges he was facing:

Across this time, we have had very little debriefing and limited feedback or communication from our leadership. So, it's like... less about meeting patient needs, and more "did you read what your supposed to read, this is the change now go and do it". We would just get something sorted and we were told to change it...there might be a plan... it's just not communicated well, and I wonder if they [Leadership] are taking advantage of the timeline to implement things that would normally be implemented more slowly.

Such changes, and the need to respond immediately to them, and the lack of familiarity with these changes created stress and uncertainty, and in some cases risks to psychological safety.

Changes in Psychological Safety

Mental strain and risk of psychological distress for health professionals during COVID-19 is associated with providing direct care to patients with COVID-19, knowing someone who has contracted or died of the disease, or being required to undergo quarantine or isolation themselves (Wu et al., 2020). However, while this may be the case in acute and emergency care, this kind of strain was less apparent in the accounts of these teams. This may have been due to feelings of security created by protective measures in Nova Scotia during this first wave of COVID-19, which had assured low case counts, and few if any deaths in rural areas across Nova Scotia in the first year. However, other factors such as fear associated with adequately treating patients due to a lack of prior experience, and not having answers to potential problems, as well as uncertainty about the future of COVID-19, were identified by teams as sources of stress, which contributed to enduring exhaustion. This level of strain is evident in Kia's words, which vividly convey distress she observed in her team associated with their chaotic working environment.

Demands on us were more complex, and ever changing, and new procedures were unfamiliar. We were also down one admin person for periods of time, and there was uncertainty around being re-deployed as others in my team had been, and for how long. As a team we were able to provide a bit of self-care to ourselves, but it was challenging in an environment where you had to do what you must do, sleep, go back and repeat, all the

time not knowing how long we would have to keep this pace up. In the worst of it in April to early May [2020] there was a lot of fear and mental exhaustion, and more frustration and tears than we'd like to admit.

In addition to exhaustion from work, Jean commented on how COVID stressors outside of her workplace added to mental strain of she and team members who were parents with school age children:

We were exhausted from working, but in addition to showing up for work, taking care of our kids who were at home and learning virtually, and everything shut down from family, everyone isolated from us because we were healthcare providers ... so we were exhausted and isolated in those first few months, and we had no help from anyone else other than our team, we had no self-care, you were just surviving with no idea how the pandemic would develop.

Psychological safety, defined as 'an environment safe for inter-personal risk taking' (Edmonson, 1999) was, however described as being somewhat restored over time, when adapting to rapid change became normalized within teams. At this point, a more accepting environment to share concerns was noted by Julia, and collegial and community support critical lifelines:

The support of team colleagues was critical....initially we didn't talk about our fears but over time....we just learned how to adapt, and we leaned on each other a lot. Things changed so quickly from day-to-day you had to be aware that something could/would change, and you just had to adapt to it... and gestures like the little hearts on people's doorsteps were encouraging as evidence that we had community support for our efforts.

As the next section highlights, normalization of the pandemic in the lives of teams opened spaces for creativity and opportunities for collaborative risk taking.

Changes in Team Dynamics and Innovation

As three of the 50 collaborative primary healthcare teams operating in Nova Scotia during COVID-19, members of these collaborative teams shared responsibly for problem-solving and making decisions for patient care. As is highlighted by Dr. L., the collaborative relationships created by working in the team structure, was a significant resource and advantage in navigating the pandemic:

While we had many new and unsettling challenges, but we had a history of working together as a collaborative team, and we knew our patients and community very well, so we could strategize and prioritize resources and responses pretty quickly....this was a usual way of working for us, and so there was less stress in the team because of this, and we were able to just move forward.

As is highlighted by Valerie, in circumstances where no team members had unique insights into the pathology of COVID-19, the expertise and efforts of all team members was equally valued, and critical staying safe:

We had to develop new ways of working and communicating, and we've often had to step into roles outside our normal job description to help each other ...and so we found this

experience helped us think more creatively about what was possible and needed and who could do what... each our roles was critical in assuring overall safety.

All three teams reported greater team cohesion, and appreciation of each other's expertise as they innovated their practice and developed new modes of communication such as the launch of a 'flu train' offering drive by flu shorts, the production and distribution of educational videos on local television, and community education campaigns on local radio to simplify and safely distribute important pandemic information. As Patricia highlights, the limits placed on her team during the pandemic had opened space for new ways of thinking/working to emerge:

We didn't have a frame of reference for all of this, so we had to think 'outside of the box' and yet within the boxes of the protocols.It was new ground... but we are a small facility, and we know our community very well, so we could anticipate what might work for them, and in the process realized some new ways of working and that worked well for everyone, that we will maintain. Telephone consults now mean diabetics don't need to get in their car and come in for a five-minute conversation on how their sugars were over the last few weeks. This means we can see more people who need to be seen, when they need to be seen, and more quickly.

Clearly, as this statement suggests, in these spaces the opportunity existed for teams to evaluate assumptions guiding their traditional ways of working and to change them in ways that were more responsive, while at the same time creating greater efficiencies. Whether these innovations were sustained over the remainder of the pandemic is uncertain, given the subsequent increases in cases and deaths in Nova Scotia, and the reality that this research focused on the first year only.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The aim of this small case study was to explore the experience of collaborative primary health care teams in rural Nova Scotia in response to COVID-19, and to consider barriers and enabling conditions to resilience, unique to their rural team context. Although many other healthcare professionals work in rural contexts in Nova Scotia (family practice physicians, pharmacists, nurses, dieticians etc.), these collaborative primary care teams are of particular interest. They are a hallmark of the Collaborative Care model of service delivery launched in Nova Scotia in 2008. In this approach, collaborative teams were launched to strengthen and increase access to primary health care, and to provide the highest level of integrative care, particularly in rural areas of Nova Scotia where challenges in accessing healthcare (demographics, geography, access to providers, etc.) have long been recognized (Primary Health Care, 2017).

While these teams experienced most of the recognized COVID-19 barriers across the 'first wave' of the pandemic, and initial psychological distress, their accounts also reveal a significant resilient capacity restored over this time, which can be strongly linked with their collaborative structure and a history of working together. The team structure and their history of dialogue and collaboration, and their capacity to value each other's expertise, flattened any pre-existing hierarchy, and enabled them to leverage their collective resources and shared vision, and to work creatively to solve problems, and to respond in ways that were locally appropriate. Traditionally, rural communities are more aware of and connected to their neighbours than their urban counterparts and actively look out for one another (Ford, 2016). Given their history in these rural communities, it is likely that such local traditions were being leveraged by these teams as resources in their overall response to COVID-19. With respect to these collaborative teams, this

small study reinforces the overall value of these interprofessional work structure in rural communities. As it relates to their accounts, this study reinforces the importance of and dialogue and communication in limiting or enabling an overall ability to adapt and to work with uncertainty and confusion in unexpected adverse conditions.

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TEACHING AND LEADING COMMUNITY-BASED RESEARCH: OPPORTUNITIES AND CONSTRAINTS FOR GRADUATE STUDENTS

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Abstract

The methodology of community-based research (CBR) is sometimes described as an umbrella “term for various action-oriented and participatory approaches to research” with, by, and for communities (Etmanski, Hall, & Dawson, 2014, p. 5). When introduced to CBR and its methodological cousins, graduate students, particularly those oriented to critical adult education, are often inspired by the call for community-based researchers to respond to societal shifts affecting the communities they work. Community-based researchers of all stages of their careers are interested in supporting a just transition through the climate crisis, building back better from the enduring COVID-19 pandemic, and addressing the urgent need to decolonize and increase equity within academic institutions and processes, as but a few examples.

Ideally, in CBR, “the intended beneficiaries (i.e., community members) have significant control over some if not all parts of the research process: from problem definition to research design, data collection, representation, and dissemination of findings” (Etmanski, Hall, & Dawson, 2014, p. 8). However, this ideal is not always achievable and, as Israel et al. (2003) suggested, not everyone can always be involved in all parts of the research. Moreover, Ball (2014) described how community-based researchers—including students—often find themselves “on thin ice” (p. 34) during CBR due to the indeterminate processes, outcomes, and dissemination inherent to community-led processes.

This paper draws from lessons learned during a recently completed CBR doctoral study (Daether, 2021b). Authored by a recent doctoral graduate and an adult educator who teaches CBR in a university context, this paper reflects on the mistakes, lessons learned, and moments of inspiration that emerged from this project and outlines the student’s and supervisor’s subsequent recommendations for teaching. Specifically, in recognizing the unique barriers that graduate students face in fully implementing CBR, the authors look to how universities can centre their CBR teachings around student-community research practices.

Although the literature guides how scholars and community collaborators can improve community-university research and knowledge mobilization practices (see Jansson et al., 2010; Lewis et al., 2015; Shore, 2007; Travers et al., 2013; Warren et al., 2018), few sources (see Coghlan, 2007; Klocker, 2012; Nogeste, 2008; Zuber-Skerritt & Perry, 2002) address how the academic processes experienced by graduate students, such as the need to publish original works, academic timelines, or funding priorities, can limit their (and the community’s) meaningful adoption or experience of CBR. Accordingly, this paper argues that although many universities now support graduate students in pursuing participatory approaches to research, there is an opportunity for educators in the post-secondary environment to better prepare students for the unique challenges they are likely to face and ensure students have the resources and guidance to prioritize their community partner’s needs.

Keywords: Community-based research; community-engaged research; pedagogy; participatory research

INTRODUCTION

A doctoral degree can be a solitary and isolating undertaking. From enrolment, candidacy, and the dissertation stages, doctoral work is often independent and time-consuming, with few opportunities for collaboration outside the student-supervisor relationship. However, for students whose research applies CBR, a methodology that centres the research within a context of co-operation and relationship building, the sense of isolation may be eased as students and community partners work together to conduct research on a topic of mutual interest or need.

As a recent doctoral graduate, I (Vanessa) reflect on my experience and acknowledge how fortunate I was to work with a supervisor and academic committee that valued collaboration. They fostered space for peer-to-peer mentorship through routine networking conference calls and introduced me to fellow students in my field of research. Their support helped ease the sense of isolation I felt as they created opportunities for me to connect with colleagues simultaneously conducting research and writing their dissertations at the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. Our experiences were relatable, as was the advice shared.

Equally, my supervisor and committee supported my interest in participatory research methodologies and offered continued guidance and resources, in addition to my coursework, to help me understand the complexities of this umbrella of research methodologies. With their support, I successfully partnered with two organizations operating within central Vancouver Island to design and complete a CBR study. Our research analyzed how organizations that operate community food initiatives, such as community gardens, grass-roots cooking programs, and farmer training projects, could evaluate the impacts of their work on their local food systems. The research findings led to the development of a food systems-focused evaluation toolkit designed to support and improve my CBR partners' internal evaluation and project planning practices.

Throughout our research, we collaborated over the study's design, data collection processes (semi-structured interviews, a document analysis, and an analysis of definitions used within food studies literature and practice), resulting evaluation toolkit, and knowledge mobilization activities. However, with time now to look back on this experience, it has become clear how my role conducting CBR as a student restricted their engagement in numerous stages of our research, including the ethics application, data analysis, and theoretical framework (food regime analysis and food sovereignty). As a result, I grapple with questions over how I could have better served my research partners through our study's design and chosen methodology, what methodological knowledge gaps I held and why, and how I might have amended those limitations.

REFLECTION

CBR is a challenging methodology, and intentionally so. As a doctoral student who arrived at Royal Roads University from my place of work in the not-for-profit sector, I was keen to take up CBR as the structure echoed the approach my colleagues and I took in working with and for our community. I dove into the literature, inspired by scholar-practitioners of participatory research (see Borda 2001; Hall 2014 & 2005) and the expanding role of CBR, and its related methodologies, in my professional and academic fields (see Andrée et al., 2014; Ochocka & Janzen, 2014; Rojas et al., 2017), and worked with my research partners to define how our CBR process would dispel "research hierarchies and the notion that the academy is the custodian of knowledge" (Daether, 2021a, p. 5).

In alignment with our methodology, we defined the specifics of our research partnership with a memorandum of understanding (MOU). The drafting of this document, while time-consuming to

generate for the partner organizations who were keen to conduct timely research, ensured we took the time to denote our individual and mutual responsibilities to each other and the project clearly, including the study's scope, research ethics, intellectual property, conflicts of interest, and more. The MOU also "served as a reference point to steer decision-making protocols" when we encountered challenges to our research and partnership (Daether, 2021b, p. 114). However, it was not until data collection commenced that we began to appreciate the complexities of a student-community CBR relationship, nor how our experience applying CBR differed from literature published by faculty-community research teams.

For example, as Klocker (2012) similarly observed in their article on participatory action research PhDs, by default, my role as a student engaged in CBR prioritized my needs ahead of the research collaboration. Although I aspired to overcome such hurdles using CBR, my academic timeline, the technical nature of the ethics application and our theoretical framework, and my need to publish original work distanced my research partners from significant elements of the study. Further, these demands required more of my time spent on my academic outputs over the research partners' desired evaluation toolkit.

As countermeasures, we identified strategies to shift this uneven balance of power. Further outlined in Daether 2021a and 2021b, we carefully defined our working norms pertinent to participation expectations, meetings schedules and agendas, and project deliverables within the MOU. Further, with the consent of my research partners, I authored my dissertation in first-person voice and through collective pronouns to give credit to their contribution to this study and, ultimately, my dissertation. These small decisions, and others, required me to evaluate how my demands as a student elevated my needs over those of the partners' and engage with my team to identify solutions.

While these measures were adequate for our research process, I concluded my doctoral research by asking how academic institutions might extend the peer-to-peer mentorship model offered by my supervisor and academic committee to CBR instruction in the classroom. For example, what would happen if educators were to center their CBR, or other participatory research methodological teachings, within literature and media generated by and for graduate students? Could this shift in focus from faculty-led to student-led examples help illuminate the distinct nuances and challenges associated with student-community CBR research projects and, accordingly, prepare all parties to define realistic expectations that, ultimately, serve the best interests of community research partners?

CONCLUSION

How do we envision supporting more students to publish or publicly share on their CBR/community-engaged/AR/PAR research projects? Aside from publishing dissertations and thesis, how do we encourage or create space for new academics to create methodological papers, publications, workshops, etcetera, or have them engage with their peers on their methodological findings and experiences?

As a full-time professor and educator who teaches action-oriented and participatory approaches to research, I (Catherine) have learned from Vanessa's acute observation about the literature we choose to include as resources for students. I agree with Vanessa's suggestion that—especially for students at the doctoral level—it is important for educators to communicate the constraints students face due to the enduring need to publish original work. There are at least two ways to address this challenge: the first is, of course, to intentionally include these conversations as part of the curriculum. The other, more long-term strategy, is to expand the options available for

students completing their graduate (especially doctoral) studies to more accurately reflect the reality of engaged, applied, and community-based approaches to research. As the field of CBR grows, it pushes the boundaries of what counts as excellence in tenure and promotion applications. I hope the questions of what constitutes a demonstration of original scholarship among doctoral students could also be expanded.

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AUTHOETHNOGRAPHIE DU PRINTEMPS ÉRABLE: REVISITING STRIKE NARRATIVES 10 YEARS LATER

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INTRODUCTION

Ten years ago, Québec witnessed the Printemps érable, a general student strike that emerged in early 2012 and transformed into a social movement with broad mobilization throughout the summer. This paper is based on 2 narratives written by the authors about our experience in what is known today as the biggest student strike in Canada. Using autoethnography, we go back to our 2012 writings to reflect on our past and present learning. This reflection brings us to discuss the interconnection between the personal and the political and how analyzing the personal embodiment of knowledge could develop our understanding of learning about solidarity.

METHODOLOGY

S'appuyant sur plusieurs écrits à propos de l'autoethnographie (Bochner, 2001; Ellis, 1997, 1995; Jago, 2002; Spry, 2001), Holman Jones nous rappelle qu'il s'agit d'une méthodologie dans laquelle les émotions sont d'une grande importance pour comprendre et théoriser les relations entre le soi, le pouvoir et la culture. Les textes autoethnographiques nous permettent de créer une expérience d'émotions palpables en nous connectant tout en nous séparant d'autres façons de savoir, d'être et d'agir sur le monde (2005, p.267). Pour Tedlock (2011), les récits sont fondamentaux, ils nous permettent d'imposer un ordre dans ce qui serait autrement un amalgame d'événements et d'expériences déconnectés les uns des autres. Ils nous permettent de faire sens et donner forme à nos expériences tout en faisant ressortir de quelle façon le soi est symboliquement intégré dans le cours du récit.

C'est en revisitant deux récits écrits quelques semaines après la fin de la grève étudiante: I am going to meet Audrey et L'accident démocratique que nous nous sommes demandées: What comes to mind now, 10 years later, looking back on these texts? Nous avons séparément écrit nos réflexions, les avons échangées et en avons discutées. Ensuite, nous avons répertorié des thèmes et sélectionné ceux qui seraient approfondis pour faire l'objet de cet article.

THE ORIGINAL TEXTS

We present these texts as intertwined with each voice commenting on key moments. Nothing has been rewritten, though the following excerpts have been shortened for the context of this paper, and some parts have been left out.

L'accident démocratique

Le 6 mars 2012, j'étais dans l'autobus Chicoutimi – Montréal dans un drôle d'état d'esprit. J'étais inquiète et me demandais si j'étais au bon endroit au bon moment. J'avais quitté Montréal en urgence à la nouvelle de l'accident de patinage artistique de ma mère et je devais rentrer précipitamment à Montréal pour le premier vote de grève du département d'éducation de l'Université Concordia. J'étais inquiète de quitter Chicoutimi où ma mère y était clouée à un lit se remettant lentement d'un traumatisme crânien, mais j'étais aussi inquiète que l'assemblée que j'avais initiée ne se déroule pas bien. Ma mère était dans un état stable et mon département était en grande carence démocratique. Il s'agissait de la première assemblée générale à laquelle j'avais été conviée depuis que j'étudiais dans ce département, soit depuis 2007. Y en avait-il eu d'autres avant? Mon ambition n'était pas tellement d'obtenir un « oui » à la grève, mais plutôt d'encourager les étudiants de mon département à se prononcer sur la hausse des frais de scolarité. Après tout, nous étions des étudiants en éducation. Pardon, des étudiants des cycles supérieurs en éducation! J'étais quand même optimiste quant à l'échange que nous aurions entre nous dans cette assemblée. Quand j'arrivai dans la classe qui nous servait de lieu de rassemblement, il y avait foule. Mes collègues avaient en mon absence tout organisé et tout semblait rouler comme sur des roulettes.

I am going to meet Audrey.

The chance occurrence of a student strike during my PhD studies was extremely revealing. Before the strike my colleagues, my department, my professors, all wore cloaks that I hadn't even noticed were there. The strike stripped off the cloaks, and what lurked beneath was surprising. The strike became my bigger-than-a-class in the absence of class.

The first general assembly brought together 63 students. Many of whom I had never laid eyes on. So the first reveal came in the form of droves of colleagues. We came up with 2 statements, one regarding our position of disapproval regarding the tuition hike, and the second that we agreed to strike, until such a time as the tuition hikes were cancelled. We easily met quorum during this first meeting. We voted to strike by just over 50%. I remember thinking at the time that I would have been embarrassed had we, as an education department, decided not to strike. I hadn't imagined it would be this close. Reveal #2.

Oui, le vote de grève passa. J'étais abasourdie et heureuse. Je n'étais plus inquiète, ma mère sortirait de l'hôpital et à l'avenir porterait un casque pour patiner, et moi, et mon département, nous prendrions part à un mouvement social qui marquerait à jamais la face du Québec. L'euphorie ne dura qu'un bref moment. Ce que j'étais loin de me douter, c'est que moi aussi je venais d'être impliquée dans un accident. Un accident démocratique où même un casque n'aurait pas su me protéger de ma conscience collective qui se retourna contre moi. Le 8 mars, alors que j'invitai naïvement mes collègues doctorants à une réflexion collective sur le visage de notre grève, je me retrouvai dans un imbroglio de courriels où on parlait de vote de boycott de cours, de respect des choix personnels de grève ou de non-grève, de peur d'avoir l'air paresseux si nous ne reproduisions pas la classe en d'autres lieux, de liberté citoyenne, de solidarité individuelle, d'individu démocratique, de démontrer de la solidarité de façon confortable, de citoyen autonome qui exerce leur liberté démocratique selon leur zone de confort, de respect du jugement des individus, etc. Tous ces concepts et ces idées interprétés et ré-interprétés me donnaient comme message, que mes collègues avaient une tout autre compréhension de ce qu'était une grève étudiante, qu'ils n'étaient pas prêts à se regrouper pour autre chose qu'un

cours et surtout, que mon insistance à vouloir collaborer dans ce que je croyais être une aventure éducative était perçue comme un non-respect des choix individuels. Je regrette qu'en ce 8 mars, je ne pus constater dans la bouche de mes pairs doctorants, le triomphe de la rhétorique capitaliste des libertés individuelles sur le pouvoir collectif de changement social, grâce à qui, femme ou homme, nous parlions en cette journée commémorative du droit des femmes, d'égal à égal. Si j'avais eu une telle présence d'esprit, peut-être aurais-je pu rappeler que ce gain pour les femmes ne s'était pas fait en préservant l'ordre normal des choses. Et que leur lutte n'avait rien eu de confortable. J'aurais aussi pu répondre à mon collègue masculin qui affirmait avec une touche de mépris que marcher dans les rues n'était pas un moyen très créatif de prendre position, que si j'étais en train d'échanger avec lui, c'était bien parce que des femmes, avant moi, avaient marché dans la rue. Mais non, je n'y pensai pas sur le moment, mais ces idées eurent bien le temps de me venir à l'esprit dans les mois qui suivirent, puisque cet accident démocratique dura plusieurs mois.

Following this strike decision, between the PhD students in my cohort, the idea surfaced that in place of going to class, we should meet informally during class time somewhere near the university, and invite our professor. At the time I thought this was a good idea. When the invite was sent out, an extensive conversation ensued. My friend Audrey, whom at the time I knew I really liked but hadn't yet forged a full friendship, suggested that meeting during class time, outside of class, wasn't so dissimilar from actually having class, and that being on strike meant investing time in the strike. She suggested we come up with creative ways of protesting. Audrey is a Francophone. Her email was direct – a clear invitation to fight tuition hikes. In response to her, the conversation turned very quickly to themes of autonomy, individual choice, and democratic freedom. Banding together to plan and protest was an idea that only Audrey ever brought up. All other colleagues (there were 7 + us) involved in the conversation defended their individual right to approach the strike in any way that felt right to them... this seemed to be the definition of democracy that everybody else adhered to. Audrey responded to every email in detail. Her voice was clearly alternative to the rest. Audrey explained that striking meant sacrificing something and working together on the cause.

Colleagues pointed out that emotions were running high, and Audrey responded that of course emotions were running high, getting to the point of a strike meant that serious things were happening, and that there would be something wrong if emotions weren't running high. Other colleagues grabbed on to the idea being spread by the universities and media that it was not a real strike (a collective democratic decision to cease regular daily endeavors) but a boycott (individual choice to stop buying a product). And that a student strike was illegal, and we had no "power to withhold any resources from our institution" because we are not tied to the labour code.

Audrey's final email informed the class that perhaps it would be better to continue discussions in person, and that the next day she would be heading to our graduate student house to roundup markers, poster boards and supplies, and then would head to our department to prepare for a first action. Audrey's ideas were very clear to me. A strike means that we are not going to class, and instead will replace class time with strike action. I felt that this was my duty. It seemed straightforward, yet all of the email noise was a clear indication that it wasn't so clear. In all of it, Audrey seemed to be standing alone. Up to this point I hadn't joined in the conversation, but now I was ready. I very consciously decided to keep my response simple:

"I am going to meet Audrey at the FRC at 12h on Monday"

The best poetry offers the universe in a beholdable size. If the emails were a blizzard, I wanted my statement to be a steal pole. I distilled everything I was feeling into this statement. I am standing beside Audrey. You're either going or not going, in or out. I am going to meet Audrey. And I did. And I was the only one. Reveal #3.

Ces échanges entre mes collègues doctorants ne furent pas les pires incompréhensions auxquelles nous fûmes face. Je dis « nous » parce qu'une étudiante répondit à mon invitation et nous fûmes finalement trois à mener un combat contre l'ignorance, l'apathie et les choix individuels.

À trois (Renée, Roxanne, une étudiante à la maîtrise, et moi) avec quelques supporters satellites, nous n'avions pas le courage de piquer nos cours et il aurait été impossible de piquer plus que deux classes à la fois. Alors il ne nous restait qu'à être visibles dans notre département. Tous les cours en éducation pour les étudiants de maîtrise et de doctorats se donnent sur le même plancher, ce qui nous permettait de nous promener avec différents slogans et tactiques pour informer les étudiants. Toute la journée nous tentions d'écrire des prises de position et de les faire signer par nos collègues. Plusieurs étaient inconfortables et certains demandaient de faire retirer leur signature avant les envois aux professeurs. Nous demandâmes à nos professeurs de notre département de prendre position. Après un long silence, nous les relançâmes et apprîmes qu'un des cinq programmes du département nous enverrait une lettre de support. Une joie mitigée nous servi quand même à entrer dans les classes, dont les professeurs avaient publiquement manifesté leur appui, pour distribuer la lettre aux étudiants qui continuaient à assister à leurs cours malgré le mandat de grève renouvelé deux fois. J'eus avec des étudiants mécontents de tout ce dérangement des conversations qui me semblaient pour le moins surréalistes :

Me : -Ello, this is to inform you that you don't have to attend class, you're on strike. And here a letter signed by your professor who said that he supports us and you will not be academically penalized for participating in this action for accessible education.

A student : -Read animal farm!

Me: -What?

A student : -Animal Farm, George Orwell wrote this.

Me: -I know the book, I just don't understand why you're telling me this.

A student : -Read it!

Me: -Ok, I will, but could you tell me what's the relationship you're seeing here.

No further answer.

It became immediately apparent that Anglophones had no idea how to strike, (me included) or what it really meant to strike. Though our vote was close, we had collectively voted to strike. The mandate of the strike was to cease going to class. Without solidarity, the power of the striking students was obviously compromised. I soon realized that this extreme individualism that had first reared its head in our emails, was widespread. Everyone was concerned first and foremost with their own situations. The striking French universities and CEGEPs were really on strike. They were picketing, and making noise, everyday. They were letting the government know what they were thinking. Concordia's soundtrack became "what about me?" I was

shocked that an education department could be so disconnected and self-focused during a strike about accessible education. Reveal # 4.

The students of one particular professor felt they had no choice but to go to class. In order to work on this problem with the students, we decided that we would ask this professor if during break-time, we could briefly address the students, in order to be sure that they were well informed and could have the opportunity to voice their opinion by voting on the strike mandate. During their break time, we saw the professor. I approached him by politely saying hello and introducing myself, and, mid-sentence, I was met with complete dismissal. Not a conversation, not an "I would prefer you didn't", but a complete decapitation of my question, with the swipe of a hand followed by the wake of the speed-walking away from me. I was shocked that a professor in education, could be so rude and close-minded. Reveal # 6. I explained to Audrey what had taken place and immediately followed in his wake, entering the classroom. As I stepped in I heard a student say, "have you seen those hippy people outside protesting?" To which I replied "I am one of those people. If you are not interested in continuing the strike, then you are in need of the information required to vote at your next general assembly. If you disagree with the strike, this will be your chance to say so." And I started writing the information on the board while Audrey started to tell people that if they felt afraid not to come to class but wanted to express their support of the strike, then they should come to our strike headquarters for a red square to wear to class. And, would you believe, some people did drop by. They had questions about our position, and about the strike in general. Many great conversations ensued. The office was actually buzzing, Roxanne, Audrey and I all engaged in conversations with different people. One man, unsure at first about the strike, left with a red square. This was one of my favorite moments. Sometimes, people actually do want to engage in conversation, and are affected. Reveal # 7.

Quand dehors, 200 000 étudiants se battaient pour l'éducation contre les politiques néolibérales de notre gouvernement, nous, au cinquième étage dans un corridor de tapis gris, nous nous battions contre nous-mêmes, les étudiants en éducation. Résultat: la plupart des cours eulieu avec une bonne assistance, notre grève devint un boycott, je m'aliénaï une bonne partie des étudiants et des professeurs de mon département, je fus menacée d'être coulée par celui qui fut mon directeur de maîtrise et je dus ravalier tous mes principes et me retrouvai en classe à la session d'automne, face à mes collègues scabs malgré un mandat de grève jamais défait.

ANALYSIS

The Strike as an Expansive, Complex Learning Space

The unfolding of the strike itself created a spatio-temporal pedagogical space that has continued to expand into the present. Deep, transformative learning (Mezirow, 1994) requires time, and this notion is counter-intuitive to the institutional, neoliberal structures within which we find ourselves. Looking back at our writing from a decade ago, it is obvious that some serious embodied learning was taking place. We borrow Pico's idea of the pedagogy of the strike (1982, in Gerónimo-López & Tormos-Aponte, 2021) and conceive the strike as a pedagogical space that reorganized social relations (Tormos-Aponte, 2019 in Gerónimo-López & Tormos-Aponte, 2021). As pointed out by Gerónimo-López & Tormos-Aponte who engaged

in, and theorized about the Puerto Rican student movement: the strike “becomes a commoning act when it produces new practices of sharing, knowledge production, and the development of solidarities that capitalism must constrain in order to reproduce itself” (2021, p.16). We can draw a parallel with our own experience where the means of production and sharing of knowledge were transformed, passing from the class with professor and students to the interactions with professors, administration and students in such physical spaces as department hallways, strike headquarters, streets, and in virtual/written spaces through emails, administration directives, social and mass media. The encounter between Renée and Audrey and the schism with the PhD student cohort was also a reorganization of social relations.

Lifelong Learning from a Radical Adult Education Perspective

We see the reorganization of social relations as a controversial notion. It happened at an interpersonal level where new friendships and solidarities were forged and others broken. However, our social positioning remained, and the tense climate created by the strike, exacerbated positions and nourished polarization. In a pedagogical space such as the strike, complex learning takes place, however, social relations between the personal and the political are not necessarily addressed with the same critical view. What was not so evident at the time was our own privilege as white graduate students with Canadian citizenship. We felt that everyone should join this cause without giving specific consideration to the situation of students of color, and international students who may have been in more precarious situations on a variety of fronts. Racism, colonialism and sexism were components of the discourse within the strike movement but didn't constitute embodied learning for all, while being harsh realities for many. Although power and identity are embedded in our narratives, privilege and inequality are absent.

This being said, we think the pedagogy of the strike has the potential to develop and deepen critical consciousness about fundamental issues. Learning to resist the commodification of education and neoliberalism comes with learning about repression, contempt of political elites, and dynamics of power. In the microcosm of our department, we were dismissed, and depicted negatively which echoed the broader picture represented by mass media: students are violent spoiled brats, and a threat to democracy. The rhetoric of individualism opposed our reality. We were coming together and learning about democracy in student assemblies. We learned about solidarity in the streets, established relationships with other social struggles and thereby began to recognize and address colonialism, sexism and racism. Democracy and solidarity are the fundamental basis of social movements. Our experiences taught us that solidarity has to be part of democracy because it played a key role in transforming our perspectives (Mezirow, 1994). This is needed to unlearn certain things related to different kinds of oppression, and a necessary ongoing shift for white female graduate students who wish to take part in social transformation for social justice. The pedagogy of the strike enables a radical adult education perspective through the understanding that solidarity is a lifelong learning journey.

CONCLUSION

Autoethnography allowed us to dig into our representations of reality in our given context. Like a soul archive, this practice can bring understanding of actions, feelings, and consciousness.

From a radical adult education standpoint, a better understanding of the development of critical consciousness (Freire, 2000) from a strike experience could make an important contribution towards nurturing future mobilization.

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AN EDUCATOR'S QUEST: UNDERSTANDING STUDENT INVESTMENT THROUGH ACTION RESEARCH

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Abstract

When noticeable changes in student behaviour within my business communication classrooms arose, including: increased absenteeism, reduced completion of homework tasks and submission of assignments, waning participation in classroom discussions and activities, and an overall decline in course and program completion, I set out on a quest to learn more. Through the use of an action research methodology and a social constructivist lens, I conducted a study to answer the research questions: (1) What aspects promote and increase student investment in my business communication classroom? and (2) How can I positively impact student investment? This study provided an opportunity for students and myself to grow in understanding what factors encourage students to invest in the practices of the classroom. There were three phases of action research in this study where I utilized the methods of student journaling, my personal reflection journaling, and my lesson plans as data sources. The classroom and the study were interrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic, which affected the findings of the study. Active learning, teaching style, and the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic were identified as the aspects that most impacted student investment in my business communications classroom, and the aspects of active learning and teaching style were predominantly within my control as the instructor to influence and thereby impact student investment in a positive manner. The significance of this study rested in the co-construction of an understanding of investment in this specific adult learning context. Investment has the potential to bring understanding and meaning to the actions of individuals beyond the reach of the language learning context from which it originated, thereby adding value to a multiplicity of disciplines.

Keywords: Investment, Action Research, Active Learning, COVID-19, Adult Learning, Polytechnic.

INTRODUCTION

After teaching at The Northern Alberta Institute of Technology for 5 years in Business related courses, I began to see certain changes in the classroom including: increased absenteeism, reduced completion of homework tasks and submission of assignments, waning engagement in classroom discussions and activities, and an overall decline in course and program completion. Some researchers describe these behaviours as *resistance* or *non-participation* on the part of students (Norton, 2001; Canagarajah, 1993; Brookfield; 2015; Norton, 2013). I became curious to learn more and after conducting informal research in my classrooms, which provided some insight, I started to feel that the issues I was noticing were partially attributable to what I understood to be motivation. I felt the behaviours mentioned were symptomatic of something

greater, and my goal was not to solve these problems, but to understand why students seemed disengaged and what I could do about it. This quest propelled me to doctoral studies, where the focus of my research was structured to delve more deeply into this issue. With my topic in mind, I began to explore the literature which led me in a new direction. This paper explores the quest to understand student investment through action research and reports on the empirical work completed, including findings, implication, and recommendations.

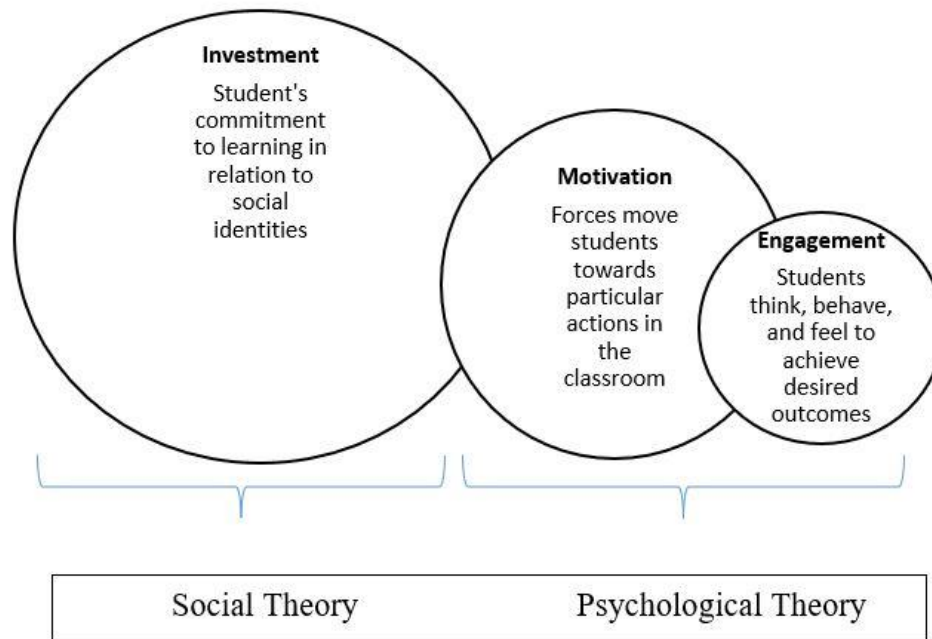


Figure 1. Conceptualization of Investment, Motivation, and Engagement

LITERATURE REVIEW

I entered my doctoral journal fixed on the word motivation as an anchor for my study, but was challenged by motivation theories as I worked through my literature review. I was introduced to the framework of engagement and the construct of investment. I developed the conceptualization in Fig. 1 to make clear the distinctions between engagement, motivation, and investment, and determine how best to situate my study. In the framework of engagement, according to Fredricks et al. (2004), a student's behaviours, actions, and emotions are signs of a student being involved in the classroom that leads to a student achieving their desired outcomes. In many motivational theories, students are moved towards particular actions in the classroom as a result of directional forces (Ryan & Deci, 2000; Jenkins & Demaray, 2015; Alkaabi, Alkaabi, & Vyver, 2017; Cigan, 2014). This creates a binary of motivated and unmotivated learners. Both motivation and engagement rest within the psychological dimension of understanding a learner's actions.

Norton's (1995) construct of Investment offers an alternative way to look at the root behaviours of individuals because of its focus on social identities (Bilash, 2009). Investment is informed by social theory (Norton, 1995; Norton & Toohey, 2011) and encompasses a learner's commitment

to learning in relation to the social identities they construct for themselves in the present and future (Norton, 2013; Chang, 2011). Engagement and motivation complement investment, but are less encompassing of a learners' past, present, and future social constructions of themselves. Therefore, investment provided a more encompassing foundation through which to approach my study.

With the anchor of investment in place I was able to frame my purpose and research questions. The purpose of my study was to identify the aspects that promoted and increased student investment in my business communications class, and to positively impact the investment of my students. To this end, the research questions for the study were: what aspects promote and increase student investment in my business communication classroom, and how can I positively impact student investment? Through the exploration of literature, the construct of Investment emerged as the appropriate underpinning for the study. Next, the methodology and methods selected lead to the results of the quest.

METHODOLOGY

To locate the methodological approach for this study, I first explored my philosophical paradigm. My ontological understanding is that humans are best understood as existing in a group social system, which leads to a relativist worldview. My epistemological belief is interpretivist; meaning I believe people develop knowledge based upon perceptions and experiences and that individuals can create meaning when they interact with each other and with the environment around them (Amineh & Asl, 2015; Moser, 2002). This philosophical paradigm aligned with the learning theory of social-constructivism, which focuses on the collaborative nature of learning that develops from how people interact with each other, their culture, and society at large (Bélanger, 2011). Based on my problem of practice, the methodological approach that seemed most fitting for me was action research with the methods of student journaling and personal reflection journaling to collect data.

To answer the research questions, an action research study was conducted in one section of a business communication class that I taught. A total of 18 out of 24 students consented to participate in the study and I was also a co-participant in this study. The study was divided into three phases of action research and a pre study phase. During the pre-study phase, three weeks of lessons, activities, and assignments took place in the class and built a baseline, for students and myself, from which to move forward with changes.

Phase 1 included a large group discussion and open-ended anonymous poll, from which changes were made to the classroom environment. After a few weeks, students reflected on the impact of the changes on their investment in our classroom practices through journaling. This cycle continued in Phase 2 with another a large group discussion and open-ended anonymous poll, from which changes were made to the classroom environment. During Phase 2, COVID-19 hit, which interrupted the study and as a result, Phase 3 was modified and journaling alone took place.

In the study, I relied on McNiff's (2013) basic steps of an action research process that included:

1. Identifying what I wanted to investigate (student investment)

2. Imagining a way forward, after reviewing current practices (this was accomplished by conducting large group discussions and anonymous open-ended polls to hear from the students about which practices needed to be reviewed)
3. Then I tried it out, and I modified what I did in the light of what I found (in other words, I made changes based on the poll results).
4. After a period of reflecting on those changes, I took stock of what happened (this was done by inviting students to journal about the impact of the changes on their investment in our classroom practices.)
5. Then I started the cycle all over again in a new phase, reflecting the iterative cycles of action research

Through an interpretivist and social-constructivist lens, I set out to better understand student investment through the use of action research. After jointly participating with my students in a three-phased study that utilized McNiff's (2013) basic steps of action research, I gathered significant data that lead to the results of the study.

RESULTS

I conducted a process of analysis through hand coding and utilizing a qualitative data analysis software program. The three major themes that emerged were active learning, teaching style, and pandemic impact.

The active learning theme answers the first research question; what aspects promote and increase student investment in my business communication classroom? The aspects that comprise the active learning theme included games, group work, having a comfortable work and classroom environment, and having dynamic classes. Gamification in the learning environment can make activities more exciting and attractive. Games can help clarify concepts and dive deeper into the content being covered to help students make connections on their own. According to Brookfield (1986) and Knowles (1977), active learning practices in the classroom invite students into learning experiences characterized by the elements of andragogy, including collaboration, self-direction, participative decision making, support, and varied activities; all of which can be applied to the processes seen in the experiential learning theory of Dewey (1938) and model of Kolb and Kolb (2005).

The teaching style theme answers the second research question; how can I positively impact student investment? Teaching style relates to an educator's responsiveness to student needs, the ability to design dynamic classes, being an encouraging and supportive educator, and building relationships with students. While these qualities are helpful to all higher education students, my study revealed the weight and importance of cultivating a high-quality learning environment through teaching style to positively impact student investment. These elements are within the control of the educator. Norton (2013; 2016), Anderman (2004), and Pintrich (2003) also identified the importance of such factors.

Pandemic impact was a theme that emerged due to the unexpected disruption of the semester by COVID-19; this reality featured heavily in the findings. The general upheaval due to the sudden shift to online learning, stress, anxiety, concern for one's own health and health of family members was conveyed through the student journals in Phase 2. This is a response that

was common among post-secondary students at that time, according to (Fawaz & Samaha, 2020). This in turn had a negative impact on students' investment in classroom practices. By Phase 3, there was a shift to a more settled and determined stance taken by students to complete the term well, although the concerns raised in Phase 2 had not fully dissipated, students were invested in their future identities to a degree that propelled many to completion. The three themes that emerged from the data have implications for students and educators where understanding and positively impacting student investment is concerned.

Implications of Findings and Recommendations

The first implication is the importance of getting active. The pedagogical implications of active learning, including electronic and non-electronic gamification, include boosting the confidence of students who get the opportunity to improve their critical thinking, comprehension, oral communication, and social skills. Active learning can also aid students in building connections and community which can link to a student's social identity and imagined future identities (Norton, 2013; Norton, 2016). It is recommended that educators and practitioners incorporate active learning into their classrooms to positively impact student investment.

The second implication is that educators can co-construct investment with students. This can be achieved through the seemingly simple act of asking students questions about their investment. Students were better able to speak in their journals about how investment was operating in their lives when they were asked to intentionally think and reflect upon the construct. The theoretical implication of this finding is that previous studies have not done a co-construction of investment. The recommendation for educators is to ask students about their investment practices as this in turn can lead to a personal process for the student that can result in increased investment in classroom practices.

The third implication is that times of crisis can propel students to invest in classroom practices, whether the crisis or emergency is personal and local, or corporate and global. The third critical finding of the study demonstrated the close connection between a learner's commitment to learn given their hopes for the future and one's ability to persist towards a goal, particularly during a time of crisis (Norton, 2013; Norton, 2016; Duckworth, 2016). A review of literature that emerged on the health of postsecondary students as the pandemic progressed, shows the negative effects that the prolonged crisis has had on the mental health, anxiety levels, and coping strategies of students (Bozkurt & Sharma, 2020; Darling-Hammond and Hyler (2020); Almusharraf and Bailey (2021). I infer that, beyond the study I completed, prolonged anxiety and an inability to cope can negatively impact student investment in classroom practices. Additionally, I believe that educators and policymakers must determine how best to support students academically, socially, and emotionally to positively impact student investment in classroom practices as the pandemic progresses. A longitudinal study beyond the early timeframe of the pandemic would be helpful in identifying how student's cope with prolonged crisis and how investment is impacted as a result.

CONCLUSIONS

The quest to better understand student investment, and what I could do about it in my own classroom, led me on journey of discovery. Through an action research study, with students and myself as co-participants, I collected journal data during three phases of the study to answer the research questions: what aspects promote and increase student investment in my

business communication classroom, and how can I positively impact student investment. The results of the study showed the links between active learning and teaching style that can impact student investment in classroom practices. Additionally, the unexpected interruption of the COVID-19 pandemic demonstrated student's abilities to persevere towards a particular goal in a time of crisis. The practical contributions of the study rest in the identification of tangible ways to positively impact student investment and in so doing, address a problem of practice in a real-life organizational setting.

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EXPLORING INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS' CRITICAL CONSCIOUSNESS IN SOCIAL JUSTICE ISSUES THROUGH ADULT EDUCATION AND LEARNING USING THE ARTS — PRELIMINARY FINDINGS

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Abstract

This paper shares the preliminary findings of my doctoral study in exploring international students' critical consciousness about social justice issues through their formal and nonformal education, and informal learning at the University of Victoria, Canada. The study was participatory by utilising arts-based methods in allowing the international student participants to think and reflect critically and creatively about their awareness on social justice issues in Canada.

Keywords: Critical consciousness, social justice, international students, art-based research

INTRODUCTION

In 2019, international students make up about 642,000 students in Canada making the nation the third biggest host of international students worldwide (El-Assal, 2020). In 2021, Canada saw "nearly 450,000 new study permits take effect" indicating its recovery in international student populations since the initial hit of the global COVID pandemic in 2020 (El-Assal, 2022, para. 1). With the steady growth of international student mobility, there have been many studies that highlight the challenges international students endure as a result of living and studying abroad such as navigating plagiarism, overcoming language barriers and paying exorbitant amounts of tuition fees (e.g., Adhikari, 2018; Meng Xiao, 2021; Schmidt, 2020). While these studies are important to emphasise the reality of being international students, there is a dearth of research regarding international students' critical consciousness or awareness on social justice issues.

As adult education scholars and researchers highlight, learning happens everywhere and, in every moment, (e.g., Milana, 2018) and thus, it is imperative to look into the different forms of education and learning that international students may encounter and experience while they are pursuing their education abroad. As an international student, I was curious to find this out. In using the lifelong principles and pedagogy of adult education and learning, my doctoral study sought to explore how international students at the University of Victoria come to their critical consciousness regarding social justice issues in their formal and nonformal education as well as informal learning. I also explored how they might have contributed to the social change in their own countries when/if they return or later in life. In this paper, I will share the framework of adult education and critical consciousness used for this study. Then I will discuss the arts-based methodology and method that I used in this study. Next, I will share some preliminary findings that emerged from this study. Lastly, I will offer some reflections to conclude the paper.

It is important to note that I am currently still in the midst of writing my doctoral dissertation, and so the findings that I share in this paper are not necessarily conclusive.

ADULT EDUCATION AND CRITICAL CONSCIOUSNESS

Critical consciousness or *conscientização* as Freire (2000) calls it, plays an essential role in education and learning. He describes critical consciousness as “learning to perceive social, political and economic contradictions, and to take action against the oppressive elements of reality” (p. 36). Kumagai et al. (2009) states that “critical consciousness involves a reflective awareness of the differences in power and privilege and the inequities that are embedded in social relationships ... and the fostering of a reorientation of perspective towards a commitment to social justice” (p. 783). Critical consciousness thus highlights the knowing or awareness of injustices in this world and the contribution to its betterment through actions. However, for one to achieve critical consciousness, they must participate actively in dialogues with others and cannot simply consume ideas by others. This is because dialogue promotes reflection and action, also known as praxis (Freire, 2000). As Freire notes, “dialogue is the encounter in which the united reflection and action of dialoguers are addressed to the world which is to be transformed and humanized” (p. 88).

This practice of dialogue is one of the approaches in adult education pedagogy where learners are encouraged to engage in conversational exchanges through debates and group discussions, for example (e.g., Armstrong & Hyslop-Margison, 2013; Kaufmann, 2010; Rule, 2007), thus making the process to be student-centred. Having the learning to be student-centred is important as it recognises that students are not merely empty vessels. They do in fact have their own knowledge that is informed by their experiences in life. Further, Freire (2000) highlights that “true humanists ... cannot use banking educational methods in the pursuit of liberation” (p. 78). He adds that “banking education anesthetizes and inhibits creative power, [when] problem-posing education involves a constant unveiling of reality” (p. 81). In her study, Kaufmann (2010) found that “the on-going small group provided a space for ... students to develop a sense of solidarity with each other as well as an opportunity to engage ... in critical dialogue” (p. 468). In their study, Armstrong & Hyslop-Margison (2013) highlighted the importance of being able to participate fully in dialogues and conversations, stating that “[s]ilence marginalizes voices whereas dialogue opens new possibilities, invites critique, and encourages shifting perspectives. When all learners participate fully, power and control shifts from the teacher to the students, thinking expands, and social expectations begin to change” (para. 25). Thus, the practice of dialogue in adult education as a way to develop praxis and to achieve critical consciousness is crucial for students in becoming agents of change.

USING ARTS IN RESEARCH

For my doctoral study, I used the arts as my primary research method. I chose to use the arts for my doctoral research because it “embraces the aesthetics of experience while at the same time also embracing pedagogical knowledge and concepts of learning and critical thinking” (Mulvihill & Swaminathan, 2020, p. 21). Leavy (2020) defines arts-based research practices as a “set of methodological tools used by researchers across the disciplines during any or all phases

of research ... These emerging tools adapt the tenets of the creative arts in order to address research questions in holistic and engaged ways" (p. 4). McNiff (2013) argues that "art-based research may be used by any academic discipline where artistic enquiry can contribute to the generation of knowledge" (p. 6). He describes arts-based research as "involving the researcher in some form of direct art-making as a primary mode of systematic inquiry" (McNiff, 2011, p. 385).

As noted above, the objective of my study is to explore international students' coming to critical consciousness regarding social (in)justice issues through the combination of their formal and nonformal education and informal learning using the arts. I organised a three-day participatory arts-based workshop and recruited five other international students at the University of Victoria (UVic), in addition to myself as participants. In total, there were six of us who were engaged in this study. All of us were from different parts and countries in the world, and were in different stages of our tertiary education. Two of us were in our undergraduate studies while four of us were in our graduate studies. However, all of us have been international students at UVic for at least a year and have been engaging in our formal and nonformal education and informal learning.

During each day of the workshop, we used different arts-based methods, namely images, collage and photovoice in exploring the coming to our critical consciousness through the combination of the three types of education and learning. In the workshop, we also explored and discussed different social (in)justice issues we learned and/or encountered as international students who were studying, working and living in Victoria and at UVic using the arts-based methods I mentioned above.

Through the processes of creating these aesthetic pieces, we as the participants were able to have deeper conversations with one another regarding the social (in)justice issues we identified which I share in the next section of my preliminary findings. These in-depth conversations and discussion prompted by the processes of art-making as well as the art itself allowed us to create new knowledge and insights as the arts "embrace the idea of multiple realities and plural voices...as way[s] to disrupt taken for granted ways of understanding" (Mulvihill & Swaminathan, 2020, p. 4). The use of arts also allowed us as participants to reflect on the roles that we played both in contributing to the betterment of social (in)justice issues as well as in perpetuating some of these injustices consciously or subconsciously. The discussions and reflections we had while conversing about (in)justice issues using arts-based methods noticeably allowed us to shift our thinking and perspective to achieving critical consciousness.

PRELIMINARY FINDINGS: CO-CREATING NEW KNOWLEDGE

Several themes emerged through the discussions and aesthetic processes we had during the three-day workshop that I share below. However, as I noted above, the findings that I share in this paper are not necessarily final as I am still in the process of writing my doctoral dissertation.

Awareness on the Indigenous communities

One theme that emerged in this study was the participants' awareness of the Indigenous communities in Canada and the struggles they continue to face. All of the participants shared that prior to coming to Canada they were clueless about the Indigenous communities in Canada. Through the different formal and nonformal education and informal learning they experienced as international students at UVic and in Victoria, they were shocked and perturbed to learn about the horrific stories of the abduction and genocide of Indigenous children through the Residential School systems. While most of the international graduate students had the opportunity to learn and discuss this issue in their classrooms, the international undergraduate students did not. They mentioned that they had only learned about the stories of the Indigenous communities through their nonformal education and informal learning such as through seminars, friends, their curiosity of the Indigenous poles around campus, visits to the First Peoples House on campus, volunteering and/or other nonformal and informal opportunities.

While the last Residential School closed in the mid-1990s, the participants acknowledged that the Indigenous communities here in Canada are still facing the many different struggles in their day-to-day lives. We learned that some Indigenous communities still had no access to clean drinking water. We also learned about the gender-based violence of the missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls.

We saw the similarities of the struggles between the Indigenous communities in Canada, and the Indigenous communities and other small ethnic groups in their home countries. For example, one participant shared about the struggles of the Indigenous ethnic groups in China where she was from and how they were facing discriminatory treatments from their government. Our awareness of the stories and struggles of the Indigenous communities here in Canada was definitely a new issue that we learned through our formal and nonformal education and/or informal opportunities as international students.

Awareness on the housing crisis and the unhoused community

The next theme that emerged from this study was the participants' awareness of the unhoused community, and the limited access to housing in Victoria. Some of the participants' awareness of this issue occurred before they even stepped foot in Canada because of their own experience. As international students, they realised how hard it was for them to find housing for their move to Victoria, Canada while still in their home country. Some of them had to book temporary accommodations for their arrival in Canada and continue with their search for long-term housing once they arrived. However, they realised that it was equally as difficult for them to find suitable long-term housing while they were in Canada too. They came to the consciousness of the housing crisis in Victoria from this personal experience.

While their initial consciousness of the housing crisis in Victoria was due to their own experience, their awareness was deepened through their different engagements in their formal and nonformal education, and informal learning. Some of the participants mentioned how they were surprised to see the overwhelming number of unhoused populations in downtown Victoria. One participant connected this observation to the discussions he had in the graduate courses in his programme. He shared how they had discussions about the disconnect between the

unhoused population's needs and the government's housing programmes. He explained that most of the unhoused population's struggle with substance abuse, however, in exchange for the government's subsidised housing, they must stop using substances altogether. While this might sound reasonable, he learned that the addiction to substances was far more complicated than just to quit at once.

His reflection showed a deep sense of awareness regarding the complexity of the unhoused community and the housing crisis in Victoria.

Importance of taking actions

Another theme that emerged from this study was the importance of contributing to the positive progress of these social (in)justice issues. As a group we discussed the kinds of actions that we could take as ways to help improve some of these issues. We noted that the first change that needed to happen was within us. We must be aware of our habits so as to not perpetuate some of these social issues. For example, we could start by buying and supporting local products and vendors instead of supporting big corporations.

However, through our discussions and reflections following the arts-based activities, we recognised that we had been contributing to the betterment of some of the social (in)justice issues through our involvement in the activities that we participated in on- or off-campus. For example, most of us were volunteers in the different on-campus initiatives such as the Human Rights Club, and some of us held student leadership roles on-campus by being on the Global Community Student Advisory Council.

While all of us had the plans and intentions to contribute to social change in big ways that would directly impact policies, we also recognised that the actions we could contribute can be 'small' and personal. For example, we can donate to organisations that work towards improving the climate crisis, or have conversations with friends and family about the importance of learning from and listening to Indigenous communities. Prior to the COVID pandemic, one thing that I had been doing consistently since learning about the missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls was to participate in the annual march in February, hosted by the local Indigenous communities in Victoria. This is another example of taking actions and showing our support to the cause we believe in.

CONCLUSIONS

Adult education plays a role in encouraging critical consciousness among students. Through the combination of formal and nonformal education and informal learnings, the international student participants became critically aware of the different social issues in Canada such as the genocide and struggles that Indigenous communities faced and the housing crisis that manifested in Victoria. Through the use of arts, the participants were able to have more in-depth discussions regarding social justice issues they identified, and to gain new insights to understand the complexity of these issues. The participants were also able to identify the similarities between some of these issues with the ones in their countries.

However, being aware of these issues alone is not sufficient. The participants recognized that in order to make social change, they must exercise informed actions as ways to tackle these issues. These actions can range from more attainable means such as volunteering, joining a march or donating to bigger plans and goals of having direct impacts in policy writing and decision making.

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MARY PARKER FOLLETT, POWER AND ADULT EDUCATION: ENGAGING HER THEORY

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ABSTRACT

This paper engages the theory of power created by Mary Parker Follett in the early 20th century. Though her ideas have been taken up by management theorists they are mostly ignored by adult educators. The paper discusses her key ideas on power and the connections to the field of adult education for citizenship.

Keywords: power, adult learning and education, feminism, theory

INTRODUCTION

When Mary Parker Follett (1968-1933) came of age in Quincy, Massachusetts, the world was not quite ready for her, and likely is still not. Follett was an intellectual, as well as a feminist, life partner of Isobel Briggs, and relentless analyzer of ideas about management, community development, and use of power. Her theories and texts have become important resources for management thinkers, but have not often been used in adult learning and education. This paper brings forward Follett's critical theoretical framework from her own writing and research in the early 20th century, to further an understanding of power in adult learning and education.

Adult education has consistently directed its attention to the great men such as Freire, Foucault, Marx, Habermas, Bourdieu, Bhabha and others for much of its inspiration about structures and power, not to mention civil society. Foucauldian theory, for instance, has provided fodder for learning about power, resistance to power, self-surveillance, bio-power, discourse analysis, etc. Foucault has certainly helped me understand learning and leadership in women's nonprofits, and the conditions that affect participants (English, 2005, 2006). Part of the reason I did not turn to Follett much earlier was that she was basically unknown to me, and she was not part of the feminist lexicon, though she could have provided the intellectual feminist perspective that I so needed. This paper sheds light on Parker's theories to claim her for our field (see also English, 2020). Follett's writing, which was considerable (e.g., 1924, 1941) and the secondary literature is used to analyze her contributions and to bring her into conversation with current conversations in the field of adult education and community development, and to suggest ways that her theorizing be used today.

Let it be said that critical social theories are very important to adult education discussions and analysis, though perhaps they are not as prevalent in use as they might be. European theorists and their insights have helped inform adult education studies and practices, leading to a deeper understanding of our field and its research base. We have not had a field strong on developing its own theoretical base, but we have had many who have worked intersectorally to deepen our

conversations by bringing in male theorists. Strangely enough, female theorists such as the American-born Mary Parker Follett, who was both a community-based educator and writer, has not been adequately taken up by adult education theorists, save for Vivian Mott (2015) who wrote about Follett in the *Handbook of North American Early Women Adult Educators*. In her chapter, Mott brought Follett into conversation with other historical women adding to the depth and complexity of that *Handbook* which contained many other unknown s/heroines.

Following a private school education, Follett graduated late from the women's college, Radcliffe, sister school of Harvard University, having taken on caring duties for her mother after her father died young. In addition to Harvard, she spent time studying overseas at Cambridge University and she was to return often to the UK to speak and write, and later to live. Her college education was in government, politics, and economics, and it took her 10 years to complete her degree, graduating in 1898, but her preparation was supreme. Her college thesis was published as a book: *The Speaker of the House of Representatives* (1896), providing an in-depth understanding of the speaker's role and position in government. Following graduation, she became engaged in community development/social work and was responsible for organizing community members in the Roxbury area of Boston. This intense period of hands-on work in a very difficult set of socio-economic circumstances was to inform all her writing and thinking in management theory. Her books include: *The Speaker of the House of Representatives* (1896), *The New State: Group Organization the Solution of Popular Government* (1918), *Dynamic Administration: The Collected Papers of Mary Parker Follett* (1941), *The Illusion of Final Authority: Freedom and Co-Ordination: Lectures in Business Organization* (1954).

Like her contemporary John Dewey and her close colleague Edward Lindeman (Konopka, 1958, p. 28), Follett had a high regard for experience, and questioning, which seem to have been part of the adult education lexicon for all time. Indeed, despite all her own formal education, she placed a very high emphasis on learning through living. For her, citizenship

is to be acquired only through those modes of living and acting which shall teach us how to grow the social consciousness. This should be the object of all day school education, of all night school education, of all our supervised recreation, of all our family life, of our club life, of our civic life. (Follett, 1918, p. 363)

At the same time as she was working in Roxbury, the Antigonish Movement in Nova Scotia was coming on stream with its own strong understanding of working *with* people and creating change *with* them. Difficult circumstances in each arena—Boston and Nova Scotia—were being approached in a somewhat similar manner; the Antigonish Movement, for instance, had a strong institutional base in St. Francis Xavier University. In Roxbury, Follett partnered with schools, local organizations and community leaders to motivate and facilitate change. Yet, there is no indication that one knew anything of the other.

Independently wealthy, Follett was free to work in a community and also devote time to writing and speaking, which she did a great deal of. Key in her thinking was her deep formative childhood in the Quaker tradition, which emphasized peaceful, consensus-based solutions to complex problems. The community centre movement, used extensively by the Canadian Association for Adult Education in the 1940s (see Loosley, 1943), was a centrepiece of Follett's early work. Its premise was simple: let's use empty public schools as places to gather, and they

did. She believed that these public spaces needed to be used by the larger community, so citizens could gather to be heard and to hear. At the heart of her thinking was a commitment to the democratic process and a vibrant civil society, though her language was community, democracy and working with and in groups. Her theories are focused on people and interactions. In her view, much could be accomplished if people worked together and not against or over one another. Follett believed that managers need to work with employees to accomplish objectives. In *The New State* (1918) she first began developing her focus on people (not organizations) and worked to explain how they could work together. This understanding is very consistent with adult education practices and beliefs.

Over time, Follett began to more deeply understand that community work and, by extension, business and management work, involved people (not institutions) at the most basic level. Her theory of power, which she developed and lectured on extensively was developed from what she witnessed and engaged in in the community. She saw that power was everywhere and that we need to work with it, not use it to control people. This idea was as novel then as it is now, as it says a great deal about how we negotiate the theory /practice tension and how we work together in groups and in the larger society. Her beliefs about power were to define her life's work.

POWER WITH, NOT POWER OVER

Even a cursory view of her work, especially her 1924 book, *Creative Experience*, which was and is her best-known publication, shows that she was interested in group work and team work, and power, which are central ideas in adult education. She believed that group process brought people to important collective and democratic decisions, which are the only truly effective ones. In making decisions, we involve power, but we must make sure we are not trying to "place or transfer power" but rather "developing it" collectively. In Follett's (1924) words:

Our task is not to learn where to place power; it is how to develop power.... Genuine power can only be grown, it will slip from every arbitrary hand that grasps it; for genuine power is not coercive control, but coactive control. Coercive power is the curse of the universe; coactive power, the enrichment and advancement of every human soul.
(p. xii)

The growth or development of power intrigued Follett greatly. This development notion challenges the theory that power is passed effectively and efficiently from generation to generation, as in the case of regal power of kings and queens, or in the case of churches that consecrate bishops in the line of Peter. In her view, we do not and cannot pass on power as it grows collectively. Rather, we ought to create conditions where power is nurtured and grown, and cultivated, so we can have a new social world.

Follett's robust theory of *power with* and not *power over* supports most of our feminist thinking on cohesion and community, and also challenges a more masculinist and top-down approach to learning and leading. She could see people working together and the movement of power between them. Follett, a Quaker and community developer through and through, was interested in collaboration for effectiveness. Speaking of a situation in a factory where a worker is controlled by his boss, Follett (1941) says:

What happens to a man, *in* a man, when an order is given in a disagreeable manner by a foreman, head of department, his immediate superior in store, bank or factory? The man addressed feels that his self-respect is attacked, that one of his most inner sanctuaries is invaded. He loses his temper or becomes sullen or is on the defensive; he begins thinking of his 'rights' – a fatal attitude for any of us. (cited in Tonn, 2013, p. 400)

Follett could see clearly that the lack of respect created issues of dignity and resistance that did not have to happen. In thinking of the worker, she could find alternatives to the foreman's position and she offered them to the reader and the many people who came out to hear her lecture. In her thinking, the solution is not in telling people what to do or controlling people, but having people work together to find a solution that they can all participate in and control the situation, not the people. Perhaps her own situation as a gay women in a conservative age and conservative country likely influenced her understanding of the need for citizen's dignity. She understood that the individual had to matter and that the state could not have all the control.

INEVITABILITY OF POWER

Follett's ideas might be said to coalesce around power, authority and the giving of orders, with power being the central focus. Presaging Foucault, Follett understood the inevitability of power in all social relations: she could see that it was at the center of all discussions and actions. Whether at the state level, organizational level or the interpersonal level, power was an integral element, and she knew this well from her organizing in the community. Like Foucault, she saw power as operating everywhere as an implicit dimension of human relationships and especially group process. This insight, which took many years to infiltrate adult education, shows how she understood power to operate: not in a linear, top-down way, but in a more dynamic and fluid way. Follett (1924) describes it this way:

Power begins... with the organization of reflex arcs. Then these are organized into a system – more power. Then the organization of these systems comprise the organism – more power. On the level of personality I gain more and more control over myself as I unite various tendencies. In social relations power is a centripetal self-developing. Power is the legitimate, the inevitable, outcome of the life-process. We can always test the validity of power by asking whether it is integral to the process of outside the process. (p. 193)

For Follett, this growth and development of power calls for careful scrutiny and examination. Given its "live" properties, she could see that it was able to grow and develop, a hopeful sign of its dynamic essence.

CIRCULARITY OF POWER

For Follett, there is circularity in power. In any exchange among humans, there is a giving and taking, and in the process new ideas and ways of being are created which are then responded to by others, and so on. Power is in motion in the group and all members are affected by the change in thinking that is happening in this circular exchange of thinking. Collectively, people create new power, and it is always in motion, building and strengthening in all its interchanges. This is clearly an idea that applies to any social science, as we understand that human

interaction makes us all different and changed. In *Creative Experience*, Follett (1924) said clearly that: "We can never understand the total situation without taking into account the evolving situation. And when a situation changes, we have not a new variation under the old fact, but a new fact." (p. 69). Even a focus group will have that effect on participants, though this effect took a fair bit of time to be recognized by social scientists.

DEALING WITH CONFLICT

The notion that dignity and power are intricately connected is a seemingly novel idea today. Follett could see from her work in the community that conflict was an inevitable component of relationship and that exercising control over people was not an effective way for individuals, groups or organizations to work. To negotiate power, Follett advocated the idea of putting people in conflict together so they could work it out. This suggestion has implications for feminist work which can indeed be painful, given the typical lack of resources in working for and with women. Her ideas on working it out helped advance the notion of collective bargaining, quite common now, but in that time less so. Bringing people together from opposing sides was her way of dealing with the pain and the problems of working together to create new solutions from the pain, struggle and dialogue. Follett was not working on an idea of "win-win", which has taken on mythic proportions in organizational life, but rather on the notion that citizens can work together to create something new.

Follett's theories are very important to adult education for several reasons. One is that her understanding of power is neither about winning nor increasing the bottom line. It shares with Habermas the notion of civil society and of contributing to the global commons, rather than finding winners and losers. Her political background had imbued in her the need to work for a democratic society—her vision was much larger than the needs of an immediate workplace or business, as important as these were. Her vision of democracy involves engaged citizens in public spaces working on creating ideas and practices. This democratic process engages productive notions of power and authority so that people working collectively become a community. That is a decidedly adult education notion and project in her work. Her theory is also important because it speaks to the tension between the collective and the individual, which is a central tension for adult education. In individuals coming together, hope is generated in the creation of new ideas and solutions; the group process moves this forward, less to find the holy grail than to create it. In her words on the group, "The measure of individuality is the depth and breadth of true relation. I am an individual not as far as I am apart from, but as far as I am a part of other men. Evil is non-relation." (Follett, 1918, p. 62). This process is potentially transformative and allows for change in one's beliefs and ways of thinking because of the process and the encounter.

Follett's theory is also important because it advances an alternate theory of power to inform our work. Reliant as we have been on mostly white, male European theorists, we now can claim a feminist approach to power, though Follett never declared herself a feminist. Yet, everything about her suggests she abided by its tenets: justice, equality of rights, cooperation. She brings also an analysis of power that is imbued with concerns about democracy which are at the core of contemporary feminism. We are not acting for the good of the organization, but for the larger social order and for civil society, which includes men and women. And, we are doing it

based on our experience; her own experience included community work, writing, and even fighting for a just minimum wage (see Smith, 2002/2020). Hers is “really useful adult education work” and we need to hear more about it as a way to build a robust theoretical basis for the field.

QUESTIONS

Yet, for all her ideas and her insights, there are questions remaining. First of these, as noted by Nohria (1996), is why Follett’s ideas have not had sticking power. She has been reinvented and reacknowledged for close to a hundred years, yet she and her insights go into hiding, time and again. Nohria observes that a key issue is the nature of organizations and people: there will always be those who do not want to work *with* others; they would prefer to work *over*. Further, Follett’s ideas are somewhat more idealistic than practical and are hard to implement or use in a real life situation which is changing and complex. For adult education, we might ask why her ideas have not been taken up seriously at all. I suppose that is true of all women’s work in adult education. We can credit our lack of historical scholarship, our seeming disinterest in theory, and our fascination with European intellectuals, even now. One of our field’s major projects ought to be recovery, reclaiming the incredible lives and thinking of so many women, and of re-reading texts such as Follett’s for what they might say to our field. In contrast to Follett, Lindeman is much better known, in part because he held academic posts, but more likely because of his gender. Even Lindeman acknowledged that Follett had helped connect him to *The New Republic* when a posting in Greensboro, North Carolina, was untenable for him and his family (Konopka, 1958, p.32). He acknowledged her intellectual influence on him, yet it is Lindeman who is a commonplace in adult education from that time. That is certainly something to think about.

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CRITICAL ADULT LEARNING THROUGH A VIRTUAL FIELD SCHOOL IN INDIA

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Abstract

When the COVID-19 pandemic thwarted plans to take students on a field study experience to India, Participatory Research in Asia (PRIA), a grassroots non-profit organisation designed a virtual field school to meet the needs of students in two universities: Royal Roads University (RRU in Canada) and University of Glasgow (in Scotland).

RRU has been offering a Global Leadership masters' program since 2015 (Rowe et al., 2015). Part of the program requirement is to create opportunities for the students to learn from and in diverse cultural contexts. Previous field excursions have included trips to Ecuador. In collaboration with this grassroots organisation, RRU co-designed a seven-week online course that enabled mid-career professional adult learners (Agger-Gupta & Etmanski, 2014) to virtually visit with various community partners.

The BA (Hons) Community Development program at University of Glasgow offers a second-year course titled, "Connecting Local and Global Contexts." This course enables students to participate in and experience community development in several geographical contexts. The students explore and immerse themselves in a local, national, and international community setting. These trips have included study trips to Belfast (Northern Ireland) and more recently an international trip both physically and virtually was with PRIA in India. The virtual field study co-designed with University of Glasgow was a five-week experience.

The overall purpose of these virtual courses was to learn leadership development from below, focusing on learning about how the Indian partnering organisations have been supporting new leaders to evolve from the most marginalised communities in India using participatory methodologies. These Indian partners seek to facilitate community mobilisation through participatory research, interfacing with governance institutions to support rights-based advocacy. Students from both universities participated in site visits to community groups in India working on global leadership and community development topics.

Upon hearing and reading students' responses to these virtual site visits, we know they enhanced their understanding of participatory citizen engagement, community development, arts-based learning; democracy; and leadership in some of the world's most vulnerable communities. This symposium will present perspectives from the Indian community organisation and both Universities, including student perspectives. We will also describe how the institutions worked together to design and deliver a rich, meaningful, and ultimately transformative learning experience—even at a distance through online tools and platforms. Finally, we will discuss some of the questions and challenges that emerged, including (a) how to foster critical consciousness among students (Freire, 2003; Mezirow, 1991) and (b) how to create reciprocal relationships

with community partners, seeking to ensure we do not follow an extractive model that draws upon their knowledge without offering much in return.

Keywords: Intercultural learning, Field School, Online Learning, Cross-Cultural Collaboration, Community-University Engagement, Participatory Research, Grassroots Leadership, Global Leadership

INTRODUCTION

Participatory Research in Asia (PRIA) has a network of partners from all sectors worldwide, including partnerships with Royal Roads University (RRU) and the University of Glasgow. As one example, members of PRIA and Royal Roads University (RRU) have a long-established relationship and have been collaborating on a range of curricular projects and internship exchanges since 2005. Most recently, these two organisations were preparing to take Canadian students enrolled in a Master of Arts in Global Leadership (MAGL) on a field experience to India. Since 1982, PRIA—a civil society organisation (CSO) based in India that pioneered participatory research and learning—has been supporting leadership to evolve from the most marginalised communities in Asia (Tandon, 1988; 2002; Tandon & Mohanty, 2002). PRIA contributed to the development of MAGL, which launched in 2015 and has included intercultural learning opportunities from its inception. As a New Delhi-based organisation celebrating 40 years, PRIA's reach also extends support to parents/guardians, siblings, teachers, and coaches in its work with youth. PRIA and its affiliates: the Martha Farrell Foundation (MFF) and sport-for-development organisations, encourage informed advocacy among those directly participating in their programs, resulting in their messages and actions fanning out and up to shift norms and behaviours to ones that contribute to healthy, safe, and productive lives, in which democracy is for all.

When international travel restrictions—necessitated by a surge in the COVID-19 pandemic—thwarted plans for an in-person field study, PRIA and RRU pivoted to design a seven-week virtual field school using the digital platforms of Moodle and Zoom. The purpose of this field study was to demonstrate leadership development from below through creating opportunities for students to engage with the work of PRIA and its partners.

From August 31 to October 17, 2021, students participated in weekly virtual site visits to community groups in India working on topics such as:

- Strengthening women's leadership in local governance, using the progressive provision in Indian constitution for reserved seats for women in local governments;
- Building leadership of Women Domestic Workers for demanding dignity of their labour (Bibi, 2020; Domestic Workers' Action Network, 2020; Farrell, 2014);
- Building leadership in urban Informal communities by organising them into settlement improvement committees for accessing basic public services like water and sanitation; and
- Encouraging youth leadership to promote safety of girls and women in public spaces and using sport for development (S4D) to support gender equality.

Following each site visit, students engaged in dialogue with representatives of PRIA who had expertise in the areas above and could deepen students' learning with context and examples drawn from their experience (see Etmanski et al., under review, for more information).

The following sections offer reflections from Kaustuv Bandyopadhyay (as a representative from PRIA), Wanda Krause (as the Program Head from RRU), and Susan Cline (as one of the RRU students who participated in the virtual field school).

KAUSTUV'S REFLECTIONS

The students who participated have mostly lived and worked in Canada and have had very little direct exposure to Indian culture, governance, and development initiatives particularly with the Indian communities from disadvantaged background. The purpose of learning was therefore defined to explore and learn how these communities built their own organisations and fostered leadership with support from the partner CSOs in India for amplifying their voices and demanding rights and entitlements. The course thus was aptly titled "Leadership from Below". To implement the pedagogy, the faculty members from RRU and PRIA brainstormed together and co-designed a seven-week course structured as seven modules, with PRIA taking the lead on organizing the site visits and debrief conversations and RRU taking the lead on the Moodle site design, asynchronous activities, and assignments, which were adapted from previous face-to-face field studies.

The first module focussed on developing an appreciation of Indian cultural diversity and an overview of governance system so as to situate leadership development efforts within the context of marginalised communities. Additionally, it provided an overview of PRIA's learning approach and theory of change with a short introduction to Participatory Research as practised by PRIA. Five other modules in the course focused on the leadership and organisation-building by women domestic workers towards prevention of sexual harassment at workplace, the role of women elected representatives to make the local governance institutions gender inclusive, the mobilisation and leadership development with the urban poor, residing in urban informal settlements and engaged in informal economic activities, for accessing sanitation and other basic services, and the how adolescent and youth from the marginalised communities used sport as a tool for achieving gender justice in the community. The last module focussed on consolidation of learning with regard to strategies for leadership development within the marginalised communities.

Each module started with online reading (on Moodle Platform) of relevant literatures on the topic either published in established journals or documents produced by the partner organisations in the form of project reports, working papers, audio-visual stories mostly explaining the intervention methods as well as stories of change in the community. These background readings gave the learners adequate information about the context and actors involved in various community led interventions and the roles that partner organisations played. A cornerstone in each module were the synchronous online interactions (90–120 minutes) with the community leadership in a semi-structured format. The community leaders were briefed about the purpose of the interactions prior to the actual interactions with the learners. This helped them to organise and share their experience, thoughts, and reflections in a systematic manner. The students and RRU faculty members also actively asked questions and sought additional information from the community leaders. The facilitators from the partner

organisations not only played the role of interpreter but also added useful narratives and explanations to understand the context better. Listening to the voices of the community—the challenges they faced in demanding rights and entitlements as equal citizens, their mobilisation against this denial from the authorities, and the strategies to hold the authorities accountable—all these narratives provided an emotive learning experience to each learner.

The interaction with the community and the intervention strategies and activities were further discussed between the facilitators and students the following day in another 90-minute online sessions. This was another opportunity for the students to seek additional explanations as well as to draw lessons from the experience. The time gap between these two interactions helped the learner to process the experience and distil out key lessons. In addition, exchanges of ideas and reflections on the experience continued regularly through an online discussion forum both among the learners and between the learners and the facilitators. As part of the course, the students were also engaged in three assignments. The first assignment was an individual exercise, and the second assignment was a group exercise where each learner prepared multimedia presentations focusing on one of the topics covered by the course and chosen by the students. In both the occasions, the learners made presentations reflecting on their individual and collective learning. The third assignment was a reflexive paper that helped students to reveal their own unconscious biases. Discussion with the faculty members as well as facilitators followed by each presentation helped deepen the understanding about partner organisations' theory of change, methods of interventions, and results in terms of community empowerment. (Note: this section was adapted from Etmanski et al., under review.)

WANDA'S REFLECTIONS

Despite the COVID-19 pandemic impacting the ability of our international excursion to take place in-country, we pivoted quickly to imagine a means through which students could continue to gain the related capacities. As an elective in the MAGL program, the international excursion aims to enhance global leadership capacities through exposure to multi-faceted global issues illustrating examples of Global South challenges and activism that would allow for such important learning. As described above, this seven-week online course created an opportunity for MAGL students to virtually visit with various community partners in partnership with PRIA.

For self-reflective practice, the course seeks to support capacities to a) critically and reflexively explore new knowledge, theory, perspectives, and b) enhance awareness of privilege, power, and intersectionality. Students interacted with community partners and were introduced to community development challenges and human rights struggles, for example, related to violence among domestic female workers. It became apparent how much growth was involved through the intersectional lens students were able to gain by being immersed in the challenges narrated by the women and youth. Growth was supported by the design of the weekly interaction, whereby students had a lecture by different scholarly perspectives, planned excursions, the ability to ask questions to community partners and participants, and then on a subsequent day having another opportunity to engage with PRIA scholars to go deeper into the learnings through Q&A. Among the community, stories narrated by powerful women demonstrated how they participated together to create change, whereby students gained critical insight into how individually and collectively they learned to adapt and change through self-awareness and self-management. Students, further, learned how youth leadership promotes gender equality and safety of girls and women in public spaces using a sport for

development (S4D) by not only hearing the strategies the coaches narrated but being able to connect to and ask the youth questions around their own learning. The course assignments further deepened the critical consciousness among students (Freire, 2003; Mezirow, 1991) through working to understand how they can enhance their own capacities through such exposure.

Through such interactions, it was evident that students developed another critical learning supported through the course: the capacity to develop supportive and productive relationships with those of different backgrounds. This capacity was enhanced mostly through learning how activists applied action-oriented participatory research strategies in the different localities made up of different challenges and groups. Through the excursion into urban informal communities with PRIA's partners, for example, students were introduced to grassroots activism from below by hearing the strategies of youth to support the co-develop plans for safety of girls and women with the engagement of school leaders and community leaders. It was observed how students advanced in the capacities, culture-general and specific knowledge, Intercultural Interaction and Communication, and intercultural group facilitation.

SUSAN'S REFLECTIONS

Over a seven-week period in the fall of 2021, I participated in this transformative International Cultural Leadership Fieldtrip, co-designed by RRU and PRIA, and with the involvement of PRIA partners including (MFF). I was one of six graduate students of RRU's MAGL program who virtually connected to community groups in India to engage with them, learn from them, and—more broadly—to explore the workings of development occurring within and sustained by communities, identified as marginalised or invisibilised (MFF, 2021). Through weekly site visits, followed by debriefs with Indian partners, the power of democratised knowledge and capacitated leadership fostered through PRIA, and its partners, was evident. Their methodologies included ongoing arts- and sports-based approaches, work to empower poorer populations, many of them informal, migrant workers, and youth. Along with cultivating bottom-up democracy, PRIA raises awareness among governments of pervasive issues, e.g., sexual harassment and violence against women and girls, gender inequality, lack of basic services for informal settlements, and patriarchal mindsets that dissuade women from participating in local governments.

The program experienced by Canadian learners was integrative of the models used by PRIA and the MFF in development undertakings, hence our way of engagement with the Indian participants was imbued with participatory, collectivist qualities that opened our eyes to the need for democracy at all levels, and the constructiveness of leadership, and advocacy from the bottom up. My ability to lead grew exponentially through this short period of time, as I witnessed the effects of participatory approaches, in which dialogue, critical observation, research and action are promoted among people deemed to be powerless. The creation of art is used to draw out accounts of trauma, and to visually demonstrate calls for change, while participation in sports provides access to physical fitness and a gender-equal environment.

Our virtual site visit to meet the domestic workers gathered in a community centre was a powerful tribute to what can occur under a non-extractive partnership, where there is a balance of benefits between the parties' exchanges. Our social interactions, supported through live visual streaming, were mediated in such a way as to encourage connection and open

communication, and from that emerged a social intimacy and co-presence even though we were distanced by approximately 10,000 kilometres. Information and accounts being shared by the Indian communities were at the centre of our meetings, and as we heard from young women who are new to local governance, domestic workers advocating for their rights, and youth who are working to break down gender inequality through artmaking, poetry, and song—and on the soccer pitch—our digitally connected lives merged, heart and mind. Through technology, and a deep foundation of participatory community-based approaches, the Canadian cohort was invited into the Indian communities to virtually sit at their kitchen tables, to sense familial relations within their homes, to feel the strength of solidarity within community centres, and on soccer/football pitches. Perhaps the challenge following the program is to maintain the connections formed. Once the eyes of our digital devices are turned off, and a course comes to its scheduled end, how do we remain connected, virtually or otherwise?

CONCLUSIONS

Susan's final question raises a critical issue the course organisers have been contemplating as we move forward. It is linked to the question of how we can become more pedagogically aligned with what we are teaching? Several participants in host community indicated that they too were touched through engagement with the Canadian students. In particular, both the female politicians and domestic workers indicated that their understanding of the universality of gender discrimination and violence was enhanced through conversation with female Canadian students who identified that they too had shared experiences of oppression, discrimination, and violence under patriarchy. We know that transformative learning among students is "both a possibility and a frequently recounted experience" (Agger-Gupta & Etmanski, 2014, p. 37) in response to intercultural experiences (Taylor, 1994). In future iterations of the course, we will endeavour to increase opportunities for mutually transformative learning, thus reducing the potential for extractive approaches to pedagogy while teaching about grassroots empowerment and participatory engagement.

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RELATIONSHIPS, POWER, AND CARE IN FEMINIST PEDAGOGY: OUR THEORY UNDER CONSTRUCTION

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Abstract

This paper presents a collective project with doing a 'creative literature review' about relationships, power, and care in feminist pedagogies, conducted with a feminist approach. Feminist pedagogies are based on reciprocity, shared responsibility, community building, individual voice, respect for diversity, and challenging fixed ways of doing or thinking (Webb, Allen & Walker, 2002). These principles are implemented through concrete and vital relationships involving 'subjects of difference' in material and symbolic spaces, where relationships and relationality are central to knowledge production. By working together in groups of peers, or in pairs, starting from our own experience and using cooperative and creative methods, we can investigate the social reality and flourish as adult subjects. These relationships are complex, never given for granted, challenging and always presenting asymmetries - themes of power and care - due to gender, age, class, social roles, profession, and previous learning.

In our *creative* literature review, we used other scholars' texts to illuminate our positions and their interplay in the learning process, using an ecosystemic framework that defines feminist pedagogy as a reciprocal circular process based on *transforming differences* (Bateson, 1979). More specifically, we focus the feminist notion of 'entrustment' or *affidamento* (Cavarero, 2000), a relationship thriving on the embodied encounter and dialogue of subjects of difference. Our method is duoethnography (Sawyer & Norris, 2013), based on different interpretations, writing as a collective form of research, and photographs as an iconic tool that enhances the role of materiality and body communication in learning, care and power.

Keywords: Relationship, power, care, duoethnography, embodiment

INTRODUCTION

We are three Italian adult educators and researchers engaged in practising 'entrustment', or *affidamento* (Cavarero, 2000), a term created in the Seventies at the Women's Bookstore in Milan; we re-interpret this cooperative practice as a pedagogy of care, power and self in relationships. *Affidamento* describes a relationship between two or more women, where each entrusts herself to the other(s), so that they can bring their talents, competences, and desires within a new political space for each and everyone (Martinis Roe, 2018).

In *Relating Narratives: Storytelling and Selfhood*, Cavarero (2000) writes how the Other can be necessary to listen to our own story, taking care of it, and answering the question of 'who' we are. This contrasts the common attitude to categorise and objectivise people for 'what' they are: narratives have a power to embody and celebrate uniqueness, yet they bridge individual

lives and highlight the rhizomatic interconnections of women's experiences. Cavarero tells the compelling story of Amalia and Emilia, an educated woman and a housewife in adult education classes in the Seventies, invited to write about their lives. Emilia feels unable to do it, but Amalia knows her story because of the many times she has listened to her friend; so, she writes it down. Until that moment, Emilia's story was silenced due to "the lack of a true political space" (Cavarero, 2000, p. 57) for women's experience. Amalia's gesture creates such a space, and Emilia will keep these few sheets of paper always with her, reading and re-reading them with unending emotion.

This story suggests us to take a distance from mere identification, or empathy. A relationship based on difference and open to otherness is crucial, and we have tried to practise it since the beginning of our collaboration. In our first article (Formenti, Luraschi & Del Negro, 2019), Gaia selected a photo from a catalogue of Italian female photographers, *L'Altro Sguardo* (Perna, 2016), where the editorial staff of *Woman Daily* were sitting in a circle on the floor, in front of a standing woman. The embodied relationship between her and the group interrogated Gaia (Formenti, Luraschi & Del Negro 2019, p. 134):

The newspaper was a direct expression of women's collectives and made a claim for anti-authoritarian communication. The group in the picture, however, looks up to the woman on the left. Who is she? What kind of leadership does she exert?

The picture evoked in me a fantasy of the group of peers being led with care, and knowledge shared and personal, even embodied, whilst in our culture personal life, body and emotion are usually severed from rational thinking (Belenky et al. 1986). [...] Italian feminism challenged this way of thinking in the 1970s, as women not only invented alternative forms of organisation and peer-to-peer relationships [...] but they theorised on this, in order to develop a relational philosophy of difference.

More recently, Silvia and Laura have been writing on their relationship with their female mentors (Luraschi, 2022; Formenti, 2022). Laura has been Silvia's and Gaia's mentor. In writing about her own relationship with Donata Fabbri, she became more aware of the power games that shaped it and haunted her struggles to become. The pedagogic relationship may be imbued with power as well as care, intertwined and not separable. How can this awareness be shared and used?

Feminists are expected to work side by side and fight for their rights (Cavarero & Restaino, 2002; Woolf, 1938; Cavarero, 2020); however, collaboration and leadership are complex relationships, requiring time and specific spaces. This is not new. Afro-american and post-colonial feminists (Lewis & Mills, 2003) have focused power, intersectionality, and positionality (Davis, 1981), forwarding the need for new concepts and methods to identify differences and power issues among women.

Wary of the possible double binds (Bateson, 1972) - *be autonomous but learn from me* - we explore the pedagogical implications of *entrustment* in thinking and doing relationality. Looking for constraints and possibilities, dilemmas, and even paradoxes. *Entrustment* is a generative

lens to illuminate our becoming, the becoming of our relationships, and the struggles we experience(d) with power, identity, and care.

In the next paragraphs we introduce our methodology, present our writings and images, then reflect on what we have learned about entrustment by doing this and its relevance for a feminist pedagogy.

A COMPOSITIONAL METHODOLOGY

Our methodology combines writing as a practice of 'mineralogy' (Melandri, 2006), 'evocative objects' (Bollas 2009), and duoethnography as a collective form of searching and thinking (Sawyer & Norris, 2013; Formenti & Luraschi, 2017; Formenti, Luraschi & Del Negro 2019, 2020, 2022).

In the Seventies, groups of women intellectuals, housewives, workers, artists, activists explored new relational pedagogies as ways to support changes in their lives and challenge interiorized patriarchy. Women invented new narratives, methods, and epistemologies, using creative languages to represent life and gender in disruptive ways. Writing was essential: there is no freedom without an alphabet, so feminist adult educators in new spaces for adult learning, such as the 150 hours courses, invited women to write about sexuality, intimacy, feelings, and the private spaces where they had been confined. These were legitimised as political topics to be explored, problematized, and de-constructed. Among the leading figures, Lea Melandri (2006, 2017) devised a practice, named "mineralogy of thought" after Asor Rosa (1985), to overcome thinking as head work, and search its roots in the sediments of experience unconsciously shaping our lives. Influenced by psychoanalysis, Melandri explores passions, dreams, imagination, and the stratified representations of the world, including masculine and feminine. She invites a personal/collective exploration of texts (usually, a collection of different authors' pages on a relevant topic); the reader appropriates (fragments of) the text following personal resonances, then highlighting and hand-copying the selected parts. Each fragment is incorporated by the writer, who then re-composes them in a new, original text.

"Differently from autobiography, that works on *memories*, and gives them a form within a meaning-full narrative, this writing wants to push 'at the boundaries of the body', in the proximity of the most hidden areas to consciousness, and entrusts itself to *fragments*, splinters of thought, emotions, that show up just when a loss of meaning is operated". (Melandri, 2006, *our translation*)

Here, *entrustment* goes beyond relying on another person; it is an exercise of trust on the Other inside us, as parts of our mind that may be silenced and blinded by hegemonic ideas. Body, emotions, uncertainty, disorder, nature, and the power of presentational knowledge are key for a feminist pedagogy. Reworking existing texts, recomposing them in personal ways, has aesthetical, cognitive, formative, and healing effects. It *must* be a collective inquiry, since the Other's eyesight is there to reveal our blindness, contradictions, prejudices, and interiorized models. So, entrustment is not about consolation or encouragement; it entails conflict and struggles to find meaning in contradictory and messy landscapes, as Melandri wrote:

"learning the hybrid language of the inner world, dispel its myths, dissuade its silence, recognize the 'culture treasures' it hides, naming those 'things that we have not yet been able to name'" (2006, *our translation*)

In the Seventies, women photographers also started to emerge, proposing unprecedented ways to mirror, witness, and criticise (Casero, 2021) current representations of gender, women's body, and the dominant masculine eyesight. Their images convey 'another eyesight', challenge stereotypes and trigger resonances. Images open up to the plural: along with writing, they illuminate lessons learnt, hidden values, and future dreams and hopes. As 'evocative objects' (Bollas, 2009) they say what words can't say.

OUR FEMINIST CREATIVE LITERATURE REVIEWS

We decided to do a creative literature review on entrustment, power, care, and relationships to disrupt standardised methods and dialogue with other women's texts. Each of us started her selection process based on personal interests and resonances; then, she chose one paper and:

- read it, underlying sentences,
- hand-copied those sentences one after the other,
- re-composed them into a new text,
- added an image by free association.

In presenting our mineralogies and evocative objects, we use normal type for the original words and *italics* for ours. This is not plagiarism but it is how the human mind works, combining elements and creating connections to produce the new (Corballis, 2016). We added infos about the author and searched for commonalities as well as differences. We wondered: what moves my interest for this paper?

Silvia: Becoming a feminist

"Feminism is a movement in many senses. I am moved to become feminist, but becoming a feminist was not just a project of the intellect. Feminist ideas have landed on my body and have earned my attention because of material condition. They have made sense to me and are giving me grief or a new way of moving forward because of bodily experiences and resonances.

Luckily, I have worked with women that have supported me to challenge disembodied academic conventions in my own research and writing, to bring my embodied self into my work and urge others (women and men) away from camouflage and conformity. The most powerful opening from feminism have come from these embodied encounters with people. I have particularly enjoyed *conferences where we had long conversations in front of a cup of coffee or, in the evening, a glass of wine. We have shared stories and emotions.* Some of them have shown me that our bodies and body parts (tongues, arms, ears) are often less compliant than our mind, enabling us to resist and protest what society says we should do.

I was wondering what I could do. How can bodies, embodied experiences, and feelings, be recognized as a central element of *becoming and being a researcher in Adult Education?*

I learned I could speak about unpopular and unamendable things. If I was present in my body when I speak to people, I could be heard even though, *to be honest*, it is very hard to be heard from power.”

(Transcription of Silvia’s mineralogy, Milan 31th January 2022)

I selected Amanda Sinclair’s paper “Five movements in a embodied feminist: A memoir” (Sinclair, 2019), attracted by the word ‘movements’ that has called my interest on the role of perception and awareness in education (Luraschi, 2020, 2021). The term is used by Amanda to describe her path to becoming a feminist in five phases over three decades. She is professor at the Business School of the University of Melbourne, recognised as a pioneer in diversity and women’s leadership, and explorer of mindfulness in leadership. I didn’t know her work and her focus on mindfulness surprised me. Mindfulness, the ability to be present in your doing, is connected with my studies and practice of somatic movement as a practitioner of the Feldenkrais Method (Feldenkrais, 1985, 1990, 2010). Amanda writes in the first person, “as a memoir” (Sinclair, 2019, p. 144), aiming at evoking “in the reader memories and experiences that highlight their own embodied feminism” (Sinclair, 2019, p. 144). In fact, this is what happened to me when reading a short sentence in brackets:

“(We have also shared baby clothes and recipes)” (Sinclair, 2019, p. 154).

It evoked by difference a dinner in Portugal with a group of feminist scholars (Figure 1) attending the Connections Workshop “Feminists and feminisms in museums and art galleries: International knowledge exchange and engagement with common research issues”, where I shared for the first time in my life, and ironically, my struggle to not be a mother in a traditional and patriarchal society.



Figure 1 - Lisbon, January 2019: Feminist researchers at dinner, Laura is the second on the right, Silvia the fourth

Gaia: Performativity is not an explanatory concept

“Performativity is not an explanatory concept so much as itself part of an intervention... it will imagine and articulate the possibility of things being “otherwise” (hooks 2007, p. 5) - *oh, good to hear that! What’s the point of researching, otherwise?*”

These are 'troubling' enterprises, associated with the work of Judith Butler, who through her own experiences of identifying as a butch lesbian and observing drag performances of femininity in a gay bar was inspired to analyse camp as a practice which drew attention to the enactive process of gender (Segal 2008). We are always in excess of ourselves (Manning 2007). "If the relations that have had to be denied emerge to floor us, the competent and useful subject unravels a little" (bell 2007, p.23) - *enough of 'hiding and performing' the good girl!*

Performance of amnesia focuses on how embodied forms of performance (in this case Cambodian dance) allow bodies to "speak what they can't" (Pollack 2005, p. 76). *Is this what brings me to dance? What did I perceive living in Cambodia?*

The family that Hamera attempts to interview has been displaced through forced migration to Los Angeles following the genocides carried out by the Khmer Rouge in the 1960s in Cambodia. *During my sabbatical in 2012 I lived 100 metres from Tuol Sleng ex-school now genocide museum (see photo)*. The Sems talked about the voices they heard whilst dancing who communicated the traditional Khmer dance movement to them.

Thus Tango enacts a form of affective symbiosis characterised by a reaching-toward the unknown and unknowable. The film follows the relationship of two gay Hong Kong men, Lai-Yu Fai and Ho-Po-Wing and their travels to Buenos Aires in order to 'start over'. Argentine Tango, Manning suggests, demands "a learned desire to be aware, awake, attentive to another as another" (2007, p. 29). *So, Is this desire? (P.J.Harvey)?'*

(Transcription of Gaia's mineralogy, Milan 17th February 2022)



Figure 2 - 2012, Gaia's first room in Phnom Penh, 100 m from Tuol Sleng genocide museum.



Figure 3 - Nina's pin from a drag queens' theatre company is permanently on Gaia's coat.

I engaged with Lisa Blackman's paper "Affect, performance and queer subjectivities" (2011). She is a Professor in Media and Communications at Goldsmith University and her research focuses upon affect, subjectivity, and embodiment in connection with mental health, activism, and recently post-truth communication. Her work made me think about Virginia Woolf's immense sensitivity and wit that made her literary and political writing so unique and her life fragile. How can we be open to otherness in ourselves?

During a meeting of an art-based project about multimodal translation, I found out that our colleague Noèlia Díaz Vicedo, poet, translator and researcher of women's literature, did her PhD on entrustment and uses the spiral symbol like Laura. These unexpected resonances and variations make me eager to keep dancing.

Laura: Am I a badass?

I present my work on Kivijärvi (2021) "*Stop whining and be a badass*": A postfeminist analysis of university students' responses to gender themes. Marke Kivijärvi has a postdoc fellowship at Eastern Finland University, working on gender and equality in male-dominated contexts, management and leadership. She studied how female students understand gender in management; their learning logs illuminate interiorized neoliberal and postfeminist discourses. Reading fragments from these students' writings started a fictional dialogue with them, making me reflexive about their professional narrative and mine.

"Are men and women different facts of nature?"

I resonate with other women's experiences, but I do not feel discriminated against, maybe because I am used to it, and I reject female (my own) vulnerability and the nurturing role.

Family or career? Consider alternative views.

Grand structural changes *were implemented but* equality policies remain impractical.

Iron ladies reproduce empowered senses of themselves, “as long as you work hard enough”
and “stop complaining”

Should we (*I*) aim to change women’s (*my*) aims and personalities?

They are free to enact traditional femininity. *Am I?*

A competitive scene requires qualities, ambition, and arrogance. Women lack arrogance (*when I talked back, I was defined arrogant indeed*)

Women are free to make their own choices. *Do I feel free?*

(Transcription of Laura’s mineralogy, Toirano 17 March 2022)



Figure 4 - Laura’s headless torso

I feel strong when I wear a leather jacket. My headless selfie (Figure 4) suggests that it is not only about me. Besides, taking out the head I brought attention to my chest, hence a new poem:

breasts, breathing, bra, brave, broooooommm!, bringing a broader theory embracing more than head and thoughts - (to be read aloud)

THE EMERGENCE OF “US”

We read our writings aloud and presented our objects to each other. Our papers are different: a memoir, a theoretical text, and a classic research paper. This practice seems to work whatever the text, it depends on what we do with it. After sharing, Laura talked about feeling a “badass”

and her struggles with enacting leadership in academia. Gaia and Silvia told stories of the university as a hierarchical institution crawling with toxic narcissism and competitive violence. How can we build trust in such an environment, where some leaders feel seduced or forced to 'cut heads'? We shared our happiness in allowing ourselves to be vulnerable and supportive to each other. It was possible to talk more openly and ironically about the asymmetry of power among us. Our social roles are different: Laura is the professor, older, a mother and wife, established in her job. Silvia and Gaia, as freelancers, live in precarious working situations. Laura has been supervisor of both and she leads a research network where we all belong. We are adult educators and researchers; when we work together, each brings her own expertise. We were uncertain about who has more power.

In formal education, leadership and entrustment are ambiguously connected. Drawing on hooks (1994), Vanessa Roghi (2017), historian, independent researcher and teacher, writes about collective writing to challenge power relationships in the classroom. Feminism is a radical practice of reciprocal education and empowerment. Laura knows the paradox of asking students to be authentic and tell their own truths. Her deontic power cannot be denied, so the path to 'jointly created authority' is a long one. Entrustment is a challenging practice of reciprocal listening, a circular movement to be constantly enacted and checked, recognizing our positionality and keeping on with interrogating power, among us and with others. This entails meta-communication, humour and the creative management of unavoidable conflicts (Sclavi, 2003).

CONCLUSIONS

What contribution does this method bring to research? It disrupts falsely objective literature reviews: paradoxically, feminist publications may present the 'state of the art' hiding the subjectivity of the researcher behind established procedures that make serendipity impossible. Secondly, it may enhance differences and fuel a process of entrustment based on self-disclosure. New topics can emerge from the process. Finally, it sustains a relevant feminist practice: the emergence of a collective that transcends individual personalities and biographies. This may heal the competition and narcissism of contemporary academia.

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LIMIT-SITUATION, LIMIT-ACT AND UNTESTED FEASIBILITY: THE SEARCH FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE IN QUILOMBOLAS COMMUNITIES IN BRAZIL

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Abstract

We have been living through tough times with the increase of extremism, intolerance, and threats against democratic processes. It is crucial that we understand these current challenges and create actions to fight against ignorance, misinformation, and preservation of our democracies. Critical pedagogy in a Freirean tradition provides us with a theoretical framework that improves our understanding of these issues. The concepts of limit-situation, limit-act and untested feasibility enhance our comprehension of these new realities. Quilombola communities in Brazil are threatened by increasing racism and intolerance in an era of extremism. In this article, we will use critical pedagogy to understand how Quilombola adult education has always been neglected and the lack of policies have been undermining Quilombola knowledge and memory. We will use this framework to discuss the current challenges faced by adult education in Quilombola communities in Brazil and how they resist ongoing violence.

Keywords: Critical pedagogy, limit-situation, limit-act, untested feasibility, Quilombolas, Freire

INTRODUCTION

In 2021, while celebrating the 100th birth anniversary of Paulo Freire, author of celebrated book *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* and important figure of Critical Pedagogy tradition in Adult Education worldwide, we were driven to reflect on his legacy. During these pandemic times, we have repeatedly seen the increase of extremism, fanaticism, intolerance (Roberts, 2020), appearing of neofascist and extreme right movements (Giroux, 2020), increase of false information that weakens electoral processes and undermine democracy around the world (Brisola & Boyle, 2019). We have also watched the ongoing attacks against the legacy of Paulo Freire (Accioly, 2020), the persecution of social movements in Brazil (Sanches & Gomes, 2019), and how neoliberalism has increased inequality (Macrine, 2020).

For that reason, it is crucial to develop a deep understanding and a strong praxis in Critical Pedagogy to face such challenges. Education is essential to fight ignorance and to protect our democratic processes because citizens who are informed and critical participate more actively and make better decisions in democratic processes (Sanches, 2021). The critical awareness (*conscientização*) that comes out of a participative pedagogical praxis strengthens our democracy (Dahl, 2018).

This article starts with a brief theoretical discussion of the concepts limit-situation, limit-act, and untested feasibility. Then we will discuss the case of Quilombola adult education in Brazil and how these concepts of limit-situation, limit-act, and untested feasibility may help us develop a

better sense of the challenges that Quilombola adult education faces nowadays. We will finish this presentation with a call for action so that we develop deeper understandings of critical pedagogy in a Freirean tradition with the purpose of dreaming a possible and more just world by unearthing limit-situations that hinder our humanity and creating limit-acts to overcome them.

METHODOLOGY

This is a conceptual paper as defined by McGregor (2018), "a conceptual paper identifies and defines concepts, constructs, and their relationship to a specific topic or phenomenon... conceptual papers tend to be discursive, meaning they involve reasoning and argumentation" (p. 784). We made a thorough and systematically organized review of literature of the major authors in the field.

CONCEPTS OF LIMIT-SITUATION, LIMIT-ACTS AND UNTESTED FEASIBILITY

Limit-Situation

The concept of the limit-situation is crucial to get a good understanding of our current challenges. With the ongoing global COVID pandemic and the exacerbated growth of neoliberalism and neo-fascism (Giroux, 2020), we encounter limit-situations that challenge our worldviews and our humanity daily. But what are limit-situations? A concept initially developed by Álvaro Viera Pinto (Freire, 1970), limit-situations are brakes and barriers that are imposed on people's lives and can be surmounted (Alvez & Muniz, 2019). According to Souza and Carvalho (2018, p. 1294), limit-situations can be characterized as obstacles that prevent us from obtaining greater degrees of humanization. These barriers are raised by oppressive and dehumanizing systems. Their intention is to make us believe that our possibilities of being more end there. Limit-situations prevent us from becoming fully and truly human (Freire, 1970). Freire teaches us that when we internalize the consciousness of the oppressors, we dehumanize ourselves. To humanize ourselves, we need to develop our own consciousness and stop being hosts of the oppressor's conscience and for that to happen, we need to overcome the limit-situations (Shudak & Avoseh, 2015).

However, the oppressor is interested in the fact that the oppressed perceive limit-situations as "insurmountable" (FREIRE, 1970, p. 99) and that they must see them as insurmountable barriers, beyond which nothing exists (p. 57). For Freire (1970), it is essential that we abandon a fatalistic perspective of reality and instead of adapting and believing that we have reached the end, we must have a critical stance that helps us to imagine and act to overcome these barriers. Petruzzi (1998) explains that for Freire, by not confronting limit-situations, the individual loses their authenticity. On the contrary, in confronting limit-situations, human beings encounter their own humanity. Thus, Zitkoski (2008) encourages us to strive to surmount the limit-situations that involve us in our current historical and cultural world. He also adds that this struggle is the reason for our existence and the strength for our humanization and liberation.

Nita Freire (2008, p. 398) adds that limit-situations imply, therefore, the existence of those who directly or indirectly benefit from them, the dominant; and those to whom all things are 'denied and restrained', the oppressed. The challenge according to Freire was not to teach men and women formulas on how to free themselves, but to invite men and women to know their

realities (Freire, 1970). In Freire's culture circles, participants found it very difficult to express themselves and to find topics that were related to their daily lives. Osowski (2008, p. 656) explains that this would happen because participants lacked awareness of the limits and barriers imposed on them by these situations and also lacked awareness of the authoritarian demands they carried. Osowski explains that participants even felt crushed and oppressed by these limit-situations; however, they thought they could not change them (...) and ended up being silent. Nothing is more tragic than silence in the face of oppression. Osowski (2008) warns us that it is difficult for students to perceive limit-situations. These barriers are often part of the cultural forms that are accepted as natural in society, in the community and in everyone's lives. Freire (1987) proposes the denunciation of these limit situations and through a critical analysis, to reflect on another reality, free from oppression (untested feasibility) and then, to develop, create and recreate limit-acts that aim to break oppression in the quest for the untested feasibility.

Limit-Acts

Souza and Carvalho (2018, p. 1295) warn us that as we seek to overcome obstacles, instead of passively accepting them, we generate limit-acts. Limit-acts are actions and reflections aiming to overcome limit-situations, which are historical situations to which human beings are subjected. However, limit-acts are perceived from the understanding of the totality of the situations that oppress them. From this totalized perspective, oppressed subjects must isolate the significant parts and create limit-acts. And in this way, get to the full comprehension of the limit situation (Freitas & Freitas, 2017). In other words, Alves and Muniz (2019) say that limit-acts aim to combat conflicting situations. They are strategies for overcoming obstacles that arise during the resolution of problems and challenges in the journey in the quest for the untested feasibility, that is, the triumph over limit-situations.

As we become aware that we are cultural, historical, and ethical beings, we come to understand our concrete situation as a challenge to be conquered, allowing the global development of critical thinking to perceive new challenges (Noël, 2011). In practical terms, there are often limit-situations that need to be overcome before reaching the untested feasibility. For this, we use our individual and collective creativity to act, seek, and develop as many limit-acts as are necessary for this achievement. Each limit-situation requires the creation of different limit-acts for each specific context. The set of these limit-acts enhances social transformation.

Untested Feasibility

Freitas (2005) defines untested feasibility as:

the historically possible materialization of the desired dream. It is a practical proposal to overcome, at least in part, the oppressive aspects perceived in the knowledge development process that takes as its starting point the critical analysis of reality. The risk of taking on the struggle for the untested feasibility is, therefore, a consequence of the utopian nature of critical consciousness, and it contains a methodological perspective, since it makes the act of collectively dreaming a transforming movement. (p. 6)

According to Alves and Muniz (2019, p. 81), we do not think of a dream that cannot come true, nor of possibilities that are not mediated by a dream. Souza and Carvalho (2018, p. 1295) tell

us that “untested feasibilities are possible and, above all, collective dreams; the personal and the collective perspective struggle towards social justice, based on democratic ideals and the search for ‘being more’. To dream collectively is to dream a common dream. It is to dream that it is possible to surmount extreme situations. To believe that we must adapt to extreme situations is to stop dreaming collectively (Freitas, 2005). There are two implications when we dream collectively: the first is the denunciation of limit-situations and the second is the announcement of an untested feasibility that can be built through limit-acts (Freitas, 2005). From this perspective, Sousa (2012) explains that the untested feasibility is:

a mobilizing concept that helps us critically understand the contradictions that come from the lived experiences in the educational and pedagogical field in both formal and non-formal spaces, helping us in the elaboration of a project of change and transformation of reality. (p. 565)

It is important to note that for Alves and Muniz (2019), the untested feasibility is not just a capricious idea to put two words together. In fact, it is word-action, praxis, as the possibility of not adapting, but of transforming the world...it is the intrinsic duty to change ourselves by dialectically changing the world and being changed by it, in a utopian becoming by an emancipatory education (Alves & Muniz, 2019, p. 82).

Freitas (2005) proposes a reflection on the experience of the untested feasibility through the action of making bread. She indicates four fundamental actions of this experience that can be extended to other situations. The first moment is the proposition of the untested. Aware of the limit-situation, we are invited to reflect on how we will ‘get our hands dirty’ while preparing the dough, what ingredients are needed to make bread, who will be the actors involved in this practice, and what kind of bread we are imagining together. The second moment is literally to get your hands dirty. Collectively, we gather the ingredients, knead the dough, shape the bread, and let it rise. The third moment is the systematization of the reflection, it refers to the proposition of enhancing the moments of waiting and care – while waiting for the dough to rise and bake until the bread is ready (Freitas, 2005, p. 8). We wait collectively. However, waiting is not a moment of inaction. We are checking the proper time to put the bread in the oven. Sometimes we will need to knead a little more and we monitor the oven to take it out at the correct time. Finally, the fourth moment is the moment of sharing and tasting. The sharing of bread is the realization of the untested feasibility that was dreamed and planned collectively and, finally, is celebrated collectively. Freitas (2005, p. 8) reminds us that this moment of sharing consists of the collective moment of on reflection in action – generated in and from experience.

Nita Freire (2008) says that the untested feasibility is nourished by human incompleteness, it does not have an end or a definitive arrival. When a possible dream comes true, new untested feasibilities arise in our praxis. Finally, Freire says that the untested feasibility is the future that we have to create by transforming what exists today. This pedagogical praxis is a collective search for humanization, for being more, for beautifulness, for a better world for all.

ADULT EDUCATION IN BRAZIL

Similar to many other countries that have undergone colonization, education already existed before the arrival of the colonizer. However, the existing knowledge in the colonized lands was not considered education by the colonizer. In Brazil, Indigenous knowledge was developed in

groups and it was the oldest person who taught it (Munduruku, 2000, p. 92). It was non-formal education where all situations become learning situations, because for the native people of Brazil, everyone educated each other collectively, including in the act of playing (Quaresma & Ferreira, 2013).

When the Portuguese arrived in Brazil, they brought with them the Jesuit priests who were responsible for the education of the Indigenous peoples who inhabited the country. This gave rise to an education based on religious principles led by the Jesuits (Strelhow, 2010). The history of adult education in Brazil as a real public policy program was only solidified in 1940. Tragically, in 1535, the Portuguese enslaved African people and took them to Brazil. However, they were denied access to formal education (Acciolly, 2020). The African people who were kidnapped from Africa and sent to Brazil as slaves did not accept the violence of slavery and escaped their slave owners and fled to organize themselves into *quilombos* (territory where they resisted slavery). Therefore, these people are called *Quilombolas*. (Campos & Callinari, 2017).

QUILOMBOLA'S ADULT EDUCATION

Adult education in Brazil was neglected for years. It was only after 1940 that effective initiatives were created, including the creation of the Lei Orgânica do Ensino Primário (Primary Education Law) in 1946, and the Serviço de Educação de Adultos - SEA (Service of adult education) established in 1947 (Strelhow, 2010). According to the law, everyone could study, including black Quilombolas. However, there were no regulated Quilombola schools.

In 2012 census, it was indicated that people who live in Quilombos, over 60 years old, did not attend any kind of formal education, and the few who went to school did not pass beyond the initial grades. Some learned how to read and write through bible teachings while others were educated to work as servants in elite's homes (Cunha, Nunes, & Haerter, 2013). These were serious limit-situations kept Quilombola community from participating actively in civic life and having a more prosperous life.

Recently, some of these limit-situations were addressed by progressive governments, for example, Quilombola schools only came into existence on November 20th, 2012, when President Dilma Rousseff created policies determining that Quilombola education should take place in Quilombola schools and that they should have their own curriculum related to their culture and their own needs (Campos & Gallinari, 2017). These new policies that supported Quilombola education indicated that it was necessary to build an open, flexible and interdisciplinary school curriculum, designed to articulate school knowledge and the knowledge built by Quilombola communities (Brasil, 2012).

However, Quilombola communities have resisted historically and developed many limit-acts to face and overcome limit-situations that oppressed them. Despite not having access to formal education, adult education has always taken place in Quilombola communities and it continues today in different situations. As an example of some of these limit-acts, we have *capoeira*, which mixes martial arts, sports, music and popular culture (Santos, 2018). *Jongo* is another dance taught during the period of enslavement that was recognized as an Afro-Brazilian Cultural Heritage by the Instituto do Patrimônio Histórico e Artístico Nacional (IPHAN). It mixes singing, circular dancing, drum percussion and the practice of magic. *Jongo* is found in every corner of the Southeast region of Brazil (Andrade & Assis Xavier, 2020). These limit-acts have kept Quilombola culture alive up to our days.

Surrounded by discrimination, religions of African origins are also part of the cultural heritage of Quilombola communities. However, they have resisted over the years and continue to be taught and exercised despite being seen as inferior and suffering attacks by the Brazilian society (Petter, 2005; Ferreira, 2016).

Another example of resistance, Brazil inherited the *Cafundó* language, a language spoken in the rural areas of the state of São Paulo, also called *Cafundó*. This language and others have many words from African languages that were incorporated in Brazilian Portuguese (Petter, 2005; Dudcoschi, 2021). According to Megenney (1978):

Those African linguistic characteristics which became an integral part of Bahian (from the state of Bahia) Portuguese in particular and of Brazilian Portuguese in general, had to filter upward from the lower to the higher classes. As a linguistic phenomenon this infiltration of languages which were considered culturally and socially inferior to the conquering language, represents somewhat of a victory of the 'inferior' language over the dominant one. (p.166).

Quilombola adult education is also present in the creation of rhythms in all styles of Brazilian music. Styles, such as afoxé, congada, lundu, maxixe, circle samba, and even bossa nova are examples of it (Vasseberg, 1976; Batalha & Silva, 2015). Vasseberg (1976) explained that "besides their cult music, black slaves and their descendants maintained other elements of their African musical heritage. One of the most important, prominent in all forms of Afro- Brazilian music, was the use of African and African-influenced instruments" (p.40).

Brazilian Quilombola agriculture is part of ancestral education, an education based on people's relationship with the land. According to Fidelis (2011), Quilombola agriculture is the typical traditional agriculture, because it uses African agriculture techniques brought by people who were enslaved. These are associated with the techniques and management of agriculture of the Indigenous peoples who inhabited Brazil. For these communities, education and territory are interrelated and cannot be separated. A kind of education that it is not separate from the struggle for territory, quite the contrary, for traditional populations, to talk about territory is that same as to talk about education. The traditional Quilombola peoples have never seen the land as a space for economic exploitation. For them, the Earth is the mother and it is not there to make money, it is there for them to live with (Dos Santos, 2018). This concept of education persists to this day and is passed on from generation to generation through formal and non-formal forms of education.

RACISM AND EPISTEMICIDE AS LIMIT-SITUATIONS AND LIMIT-ACTS TO COUNTER THEM

According to Bacheti et al. (2020), Brazilian Afro-descendants are part of one of the populations most affected by the effects of social inequalities, since they have always been prevented from accessing human dignity. Limit situations are part of their history and of their present. Being enslaved for almost four hundred years in Brazil have prevented them from getting formal education and after formal abolition, which in practice was unreal liberation, they remained without rights. They had to struggle and resist to stay in their lands and even today they are in risk of losing their territories by mining corporations and agrobusinesses. In their territories, normally, there are no formal schools, and when there is organized schooling, they have

standardized curricula that does not take into consideration Quilombola knowledge, rights or needs. Their stories are not included in the history books.

Quilombola peoples have always understood that in the face of limit-situations, limit-acts were necessary to resist and overcome them. According to Moura (1981), wherever there was slavery, resistance was also present. Quilombolas were able to educate themselves because they created their own schools (Cruz, 2005) and then created movements to be able to continue education (Gomes, 2011).

In fact, Quilombos are currently experiencing new limit-situations, as they are frequently threatened by the current Brazilian government, including the loss of rights of their territories, which requires new limit-acts for the possibility of new untested feasibilities.

In 2015, the UN announced that between 2015 and 2014 actions were needed to repair the damage caused to Africans and Afro-descendants for having been denied the right to humanity (Bacheti et al., 2020). It is necessary to demand reparations and recognition from society and justice system, thus guaranteeing the social inclusion of groups that have had their rights denied (Carril, 2017).

CONCLUSION

Researching about limit-situations experienced by Quilombolas after almost four hundred years showed us that Quilombola resistance required many limit-acts on their part. In fact, the current challenges demonstrated that it is important that Quilombola adult education contributes to unravel limit-situations, address them by providing tools to create limit-acts, so that Quilombola communities can imagine and dream new untested feasibilities. Therefore, critical pedagogy has a crucial role in providing a framework to understand these challenges.

Preserving Quilombola memory is essential to expose past violence, address them in the present so that we do not repeat them in the future. It is necessary to value Quilombola knowledge to preserve culture and resistance space. We should advocate for adult education that values the oral sphere and actively listen to Quilombola community leaders, elders, African religious representatives, elderly people, and others who hold Quilombola popular knowledge and wisdom.

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PREPARING TO COME ALONGSIDE: ADULT LEARNING CONSIDERATIONS IN A SPIRITUAL DIRECTOR FORMATION

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Abstract

The emergence of spiritual direction, outside what was practiced in the early centuries of the Christian Church, is a relatively recent phenomenon. Now women and men from a broad range of religious and spiritual traditions have trained and practice as spiritual directors. Drawing on her own reflective writings of her experiences in one spiritual direction program in Canada, the author probes the processes associated with the formation, or identity making, of spiritual directors, through holistic and integrative adult learning theories.

Keywords: spiritual direction program, identity formation, holistic learning.

INTRODUCTION

Okay, that's it. Time to sign-up or stop staring at the same website repeatedly. This quest to explore the possibility of becoming of spiritual director has become impossible to ignore. I apply to the two-year program, and a few months later I am notified that I have been accepted. Even though I wonder how I am going to do this, while juggling my work as a professor and as an Associate Dean, I still decide to go for it. The alternative – not saying yes – was not an option.

In our journey as adult learners, we may experience multiple shifts in our roles and responsibilities. In these shifts, we often seek to re-story who we are; revisiting and revising our life history to enfold new experiences, and to make meaning of them. Clark and Dirkx (2000) provided helpful insight into this storied notion of self, drawing on the Jungian notion of self that “really reflects multiple persons that represent different, hidden but powerful agendas. Each seeks to be expressed or to be actualized and work in ways to make that happen” (p. 111). It is in this deep work of uncovering what is often hidden and unconscious that an increasing number of adults are calling on the support of a spiritual director to come alongside; not to be a therapist, but to offer guidance and support as they, as a directee, move through a “deep learning ... Teaching, *or spiritual companionship* [italized addition mine], with this view of the learner demands of kind of radical presence, remaining patiently in and attending to the present, to each other, and the plurality of selves that make up who each of us are” (p. 112). It is in the notion of deep learning that I create the bridge to spirituality, particularly as I see the link between spirituality and learning as manifested in some of the following qualities: “being aware and honouring the wholeness and interconnectedness of all things ... seeking a

sense of purpose and ultimately making meaning in one's life; [and] it values the construction of knowledge through symbolic processes" (Groen & Kawalilak, 2014, p. 169).

To describe the role of spiritual director, I turn to a definition offered by the Jubilee National Association, a program in Canada that offers a two-year experiential learning program in the art of spiritual direction. "Spiritual direction is a process of accompanying people on their spiritual journey, listening for what gives them meaning, and helping them grow closer to Divine Mystery, which goes by many names: God/Love/the Holy/the Sacred/Higher Power" (<https://www.canadianjubilee.ca/what-is-spiritual-direction>). The emergence of spiritual direction, outside what was practiced in the early centuries of the Christian Church, is a relatively recent phenomenon. To elaborate, until the Second Vatican Council in the 1960s, spiritual directors were mostly male clergy within the Catholic or Orthodox churches (Bentley & Buchanan, 2015). Now women and men from a broad range of Christian denominations and spiritual traditions have trained and practice as spiritual directors. As a result, there has been a proliferation of programs, created to train or form spiritual directors. An organization, *Spiritual Directors International*, serves as a professional association, offering a yearly conference and publishing a peer reviewed journal.

Drawing on my own reflective writings of my experiences in one spiritual direction program in Canada, I probe the processes associated with the formation, or identity making, of spiritual directors, through holistic and integrative adult learning theories.

PROGRAM OVERVIEW AND LOCATING MYSELF

It is day one of the first residency, held in a beautiful retreat centre. Almost 30 people, including a mix of students and a team of teachers, have come together in circle. It has been a while since I have assumed the role of learner and I'm finding it hard to fully step into that role without some resistance. While I chose to sign-up for this, seeing it as the next obvious step in my journey, that doesn't mean I absolutely thrilled to be here. I suspect this program will push me into areas of exploration that might be a challenge to address.

The program, occurring over two years, consists of five week-long residencies, as well as inter-residency engagement between each gathering: a) through individual by-monthly reflective projects and monthly journal reflections and b) in small group monthly meetings focused on the cultivation of skills and qualities associated with becoming a spiritual director. In the second year of the program, the students, under direct supervision of a program mentor, also begin to take on a few of their own spiritual directees, meeting with them once a month. The progression of content within the program resonates with an integrative approach to being in the world, as described by Palmer (1990) and Tisdell (2011) as *contemplation-and-action* or *developing inner and outer wisdom*. To elaborate, during the first of three program phases, the students engage in learning more about their inner being (contemplation/inner wisdom), described by Bourgault (2003) as "a way of knowing that goes beyond one's mind, one's rational understanding, and embraces the whole of a person: mind, heart, and body" (p. 27). The second phase of the program begins to expand outward; exploring our web of relationships through the multiple lens, such as gender, race, religious, and spiritual traditions. Finally, the program completes the outward turn into lived wisdom, delving into the work of becoming a

contemplative in the world, described by Jarvis (2011) as “cultivating intelligence to enhance the common good”.

As I considered taking this program, it seemed to be a natural fit for me. In previous academic articles (see Groen, 2018) I have written about my own desire to seek integration or congruency in my work as an adult educator who has had a deep and abiding interest in processes of learning, particularly in the areas of spirituality, transformative learning, and more recently, eco-spirituality. Over the past decades, I have gone on spiritual retreats, engaged in spiritual practices, and continued my quest to lead an undivided life “where meaning and purpose are tightly interwoven with intellect and action, where compassion and care are infused with insights and knowledge” (Palmer & Zajonc, 2010, p. 56). I have intuitively been drawn to this work of being a spiritual companion over the years; noticing it in my appreciation for deepening conversations with students and with friends who wished to explore their spiritual journeys. Finally, the draw into this program was its expansive and inclusive nature; while being rooted in the Christian tradition, it was intentional in drawing upon the wisdom other spiritual traditions as evidenced by attracting students from a range of spiritual and religious backgrounds.

THEORETICAL GROUNDING

I've been an adult educator now in a variety of roles and contexts for almost thirty years. But this is something totally different. I am called on, in this meeting with a spiritual directee, to be without agenda or aspirational learning outcomes. How is this supposed to work? Releasing my identity as an educator, to move into the role of spiritual director is harder than I thought. I am called to be totally present to what directee is saying, almost moving in a dance like fashion toward the goal of supporting and being fully present for the person in front of me. I'm starting to realize that part of my task of learning to become a spiritual director is to unlearn being an educator.

I've been intrigued by the inclusion of the word 'formation' in programs that focus on developing spiritual directors. *Spiritual director formation* is an interesting phrase, and the word formation calls on me to consider the notion of developing or forming a particular identity. Indeed, in professional degrees, such as nursing and teaching, there are processes and skills associated with learning to teach or learning to nurse. Underlying this is a deeper goal; that the learner ultimately begins to take on the identity of the profession. They see themselves as a nurse or as an educator. Similarly in this program, there is an aspirational hope that, through the processes of learning undertaken in this program, one will gradually be formed into taking on the identity of a spiritual director. I'm fully aware, as I consider the identity of a spiritual director, that this is an elusive idea. Indeed, Guenther (1992) began by describing what spiritual direction is not. Spiritual direction is not psychotherapy, and it is not pastoral counselling; nor is it to be confused with deep mutual friendship. Resonating with the description of spiritual direction I offered in the introduction, Guenther portrayed spiritual direction as moving into a covenanted relationship whereby the director has agreed to put himself or herself aside so their total attention can be placed upon the directee. She then described it as holy listening, presence, and attentiveness. It is a space that allows the directee to delve into their own spiritual journey, whatever that means for them. This still sounds

elusive, but ultimately the director's quest is "to put themselves aside so their total attention can be focused on the person sitting in the other chair. What a gift to bring to another, the gift of disinterested, loving attention!" (Guenther, 1992, p. 3).

Turning then to identity and learning processes associated with its cultivation, I have found the work of Illieris (2018) and Wenger (1998) to be helpful. Wenger suggested that a particular identity is developed through negotiated experience with others on a similar pathway, as a community of practice, by generating meaning of our learning experiences. However, Illeris (2018) is more expansive in his approach to developing a particular identity, arguing the social or outward aspect of learning illuminated by Wenger is only part of the process; that the individual's internal work is also a critical component of the learning. In addition, Illeris (2014) indicated that identity, or in this instance, formation as a spiritual director is a holistic learning process that involves three components: a cognitive dimension, an affective dimension, and a social dimension. In this holistic process I would also add a fourth component: an embodied dimension. In embodied learning (Freiler, 2008), the body itself is a site of learning, conveying important information about a situation at hand or perhaps prompting us to take the next step (Lawrence, 2012). In addition, if we include tacit knowledge into the process of holistic learning, we recognize that tacit knowledge begins with the body: "Every time we make sense of the world, we rely on our tacit knowledge of impacts made by the world on our body and complex responses of our body to these impacts" (Polyani, 1969, pp. 147-148). Drawing on these dimensions of learning offered by Illeris, along with embodied learning, I now briefly return to the three phases of this spiritual direction program, with a particular focus on the practice components.

Phase 1

In the unfolding stories shared by each person in the small group, we are called upon to focus on two things: to listen to what is said by each person so that we can offer back a phrase to speaker and secondly to attend to what is being evoked in us, as the story is offered. Holding a listening stance, while also attending to triggering emotions associated with my own story isn't easy. And yet I am appreciative of the vulnerability of each person in my group; readily sharing pieces of their own story, based on the catalyst questions, and describing what is evoked because of each other's stories. In this shared experience, within this sacred container, we are doing important inner work.

In this first phase of the program, we are called on to engage in our own inner work; to deeply know our own stories and the associated emotions and trigger points that come with these personal narratives. It is hoped, that in doing this preparatory work with our own history, we are then able to fully be present to the stories of others, especially our potential directee. Indeed, the stance of the program is that in doing this inner work and attending to the embodied and emotional responses that arise from our own stories, that we are illuminating potential pitfalls that would remove us from the ability to be truly present to the directee. While it would be impossible to attend to all the evocations, or emotions, that would arise in hearing another's story, during this phase of the program, it does provide us with the awareness and skills to be able to hold onto our ability to be truly present to the person in front

of us. In doing this work, I can see the holistic dimensions of learning at work. We are each doing the cognitive work of recalling and being able to examine our stories. In this process, there is often a disjuncture (Jarvis, 2006), where the our prior understanding of self and our world no longer fits, calling on us to do the work of releasing and reforming. "Our biographical repertoire is no longer sufficient to cope automatically with our situation, so that our unthinking harmony with our world is disturbed and we feel unease" (Jarvis, 2006, p. 16). In turn, this disjuncture can evoke painful emotions, as well as physical dis-ease. Maiese (2011) indicated that the affective domain works with the cognitive domain to interpret our changing environment and how we are situated in this context.

Phase 2

It is my third meeting with my directee. It feels like there has been a significant shift in our conversation. It seems as if trust has developed, and she is opening up and moving into her story and concerns in ways that are new. My job is to offer a listening container so she can tell her own story and do her own work. I just need to stay out of the way.

As mentioned earlier, mid-way through the program, we begin to take on two directees who volunteer to work with us. As the program does not assign us directees, we need to network in our own communities to make this happen. The work we have done in phase one, delving in our own stories and learning to hold a container for the stories of others, is now moving outward into the social dimension as we reach begin to interact with another – to begin the practice of being a spiritual director. In the process of serving as a practice directee, we engage in three activities: holding a session with a directee, writing a report summarizing the session as well as questions arising about the process of spiritual direction, and a supervision meeting with a program mentor. Briefly returning to the holistic learning processes associated with our practice of offering spiritual direction, the cognitive dimension is heightened through the deepening of the knowledge, understanding, and skills associated with engaging in the practice. In turn, a range of emotions, and associated embodied responses, can be triggered during these session causing the director, with the help of their supervision, to further explore their own evocations, along with feelings of insecurity and uneasiness in assuming this new role.

Phase 3

I have truly enjoyed these peer mentoring sessions. In our small group, we have become a community of practice. As newly forming spiritual directors, we take turns offering an overview of a session recently held with a directee, providing a question we wish to explore about our practice with the group. Having five people, along with a program mentor, working together to help each of us deepen into understanding the challenges and joys in becoming a spiritual director has really served as a powerful way to integrate the learning experienced over these past two years.

In this final phase, the work of Wegner comes to the forefront, with its emphasis on the social dimension of learning. Recognizing that the social dimension focuses on the outer world,

sharing our practice as spiritual directors with our own directees, comes to be the central focus. And, in recalling these peer mentoring sessions, I remember there was still ongoing inner work for each of us. Listening to the stories of our directees continued to illuminate aspects of our own stories and triggering emotions that could potentially cloud our respective abilities to truly listen and attend to the needs of our directees. Indeed, it became apparent that we were still being called to create and recreate meanings in our own lives; recognizing that our lives are still in motion, calling on each of us to attend to our own shifting narratives.

CLOSING COMMENTS

In following with program alumni two years after graduation, one realizes that not everyone goes onto become a spiritual director. And, without fail, in conversations I have with my follow graduates, there are reflections of the impact this program has had on their lives, as parents, as educators, as friends and as work colleagues. I return to this description of a spiritual director by Guenter (1992) and realize how the benefits of such a program certainly spill beyond the identity of a spiritual director. "To put themselves aside so their total attention can be focused on the person sitting in the other chair. What a gift to bring to another, the gift of disinterested, loving attention!" (p.3).

Drawing on my own reflective writings of my experiences in one spiritual direction program in Canada, I illuminated the processes associated with the formation, or identity making, of spiritual directors, through holistic (Illeris, 2018, 2015 & Wenger, 1998) and integrative (Palmer, 1990) adult learning theories. This is an area that requires further exploration, as I realize that my own observations serve only as a preliminary analysis of a program that is drawing increasing interest as demonstrated in increasing enrollment numbers.

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PEDAGOGICAL DISCOURSES OF DANGEROUSNESS AND RESILIENCE: RACE AND GENDER IN PORTRAYALS OF PRISONERS IN THE CANADIAN WAR MUSEUM AND THE CANADIAN MUSEUM FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to explore how pedagogical discourses of imprisonment, gendered militarism, and imperialism intersect and diverge in displays of prisoners at the Canadian War Museum (CWM) and the Canadian Museum of Human Rights (CMHR). Through analyzing several different exhibits which focused on prisoners of war, internment camps, and conjugal enslavement, we identified two main discursive framings which operated in the displays discussed, employing contrasting images of dangerousness and resilience, in our exploration of gendered and racialized representations of prisoners against the backdrop of war. We argue that such framings have the capacity to either reproduce or disrupt imperialist discourses of war and domination, depending on the narratives present within each framing.

Keywords: war, museums, feminist discourse analysis, prisoners, militarism, imperialism, learning, race, and gender.

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this study is to explore how pedagogical discourses of imprisonment, gendered militarism, and imperialism intersect and diverge in displays on prisoners at the Canadian War Museum (CWM) and the Canadian Museum of Human Rights (CMHR). Through analyzing several different exhibits which focused on prisoners of war, internment camps, as well as conjugal enslavement, we identified two main discursive framings which operated in the displays discussed, employing contrasting images of dangerousness and resilience, in our exploration of gendered and racialized representations of prisoners against the backdrop of war. We argue that such framings have the capacity to either reproduce or disrupt imperialist discourses of war and domination, depending on the narratives present within each framing.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK: FEMINIST ANTIMILITARISM AND MUSEUM PUBLIC PEDAGOGIES

Our theoretical framework for this research is based on Enloe's (2016) conceptualization of feminist antimilitarism, which critiques the ways in which patriarchy, capitalism, colonialism, and racism are interconnected with militarism. Militarism is present when an individual, organization,

and/or society strives to emulate the military values of obedience, hierarchy, and discipline; with binary thinking that views conflict as a zero-sum game, men as hegemonically masculine protectors, women as traditionally feminine protected, and others as the enemy; and, jingoistic patriotism wherein critiquing the military is viewed as disloyal and unacceptable. With respect to adult education and public pedagogies, feminist antimilitarism can be used to understand if and how these values are present in learning contexts, as well as explore how they can be challenged and changed.

Public institutions such as zoos, heritage sites, gardens, museums, libraries, and parks are sites that teach visitors through experience and interaction. These places “focus on collecting, preserving, and/or presenting a body of knowledge . . . that is socially and culturally valued by a particular community” (Taylor, 2010, p. 5), and are “repositories of what counts as ‘official knowledge’ and what does not” (Borg & Mayo, 2010, p. 35). In short, cultural institutions shape the way society learns and thinks, where museums are given educational precedence by the public for their perceived fact-giving nature.

Although these places are important sites of adult learning (Barr, 2016) which tell stories to understand a culture (Kawalilak & Groen, 2016), they also have the power to teach hegemonic knowledge as that which is natural. For example, with regards to heritage sites, Smith (2006) argues that “heritage is gendered, in that it is too often ‘masculine,’ and tells a predominantly male-centered story, promoting a masculine, and in particular an elite-Anglo-masculine, vision of the past and present” (p. 159). Sandlin et al. (2011) note that “who we are with regard to race, class, gender, sexuality, and so on . . . are portrayed to us and perpetuated through various public pedagogies” (p. 5). Thus, it remains imperative that adult educators engage with the discourses reproduced by public pedagogical sites to offer meaningful insights into the potential learning of visitors.

As sites of public pedagogy that are often federally funded, museums are not neutral and objective knowledge producers, but are often intricately linked to patriarchy, imperialism, and colonialism (Sanford et al, 2020; Clover et al, 2016; Taber, 2015). Clover, Taber, and Sanford (2018) claim that museums “are the most trusted knowledge-legitimizing institutions in society today and this status makes them powerful educators” (p. 12). When considering war museums in particular, these places “magnify gendered stereotypes, reinforce dichotomies of good vs. bad, and present hostile action as inevitable” (Taber & Grover, 2021). The ways in which stories and information are presented to visitors in museums that deal with war need to be questioned and thought about critically.

In this paper we focus our feminist antimilitarist analysis on the dichotomization between dangerousness and resilience, as well their connection to gendered and racialized stereotypes, in displays of prisoners within the Canadian War Museum and the Canadian Museum of Human Rights.

RESEARCH DESIGN: COMBINING FEMINIST DISCOURSE ANALYSIS AND VISUAL ANALYSIS

This research uses feminist critical discourse analysis (FCDA) (Lazar, 2007) and visual analysis (Rose, 2001) to examine pedagogical discourses of imprisonment, gendered militarism, and imperialism in two museums’ visual and textual displays. The overall research questions are:

What gendered and racialized discourses are present in portrayals of prisoners? What are the implications of these discourses in cultural institutions of public pedagogy?

According to Lazar (2007), the goal of FCDA “is to show up the complex, subtle, and sometimes not so subtle, ways in which frequently taken-for-granted gendered assumptions and hegemonic power relations are discursively produced, sustained, negotiated, and challenged in different contexts and communities” (p 142). Rose (2016) describes discourse as referring “to groups of statements that structure the way a thing is thought, and the way we act on the basis of that thinking” (p. 187). There are two main types of discourse analysis according to Rose (2016): type I focuses on text, intertextuality, and context; type II is primarily focused on “the social production and effects of visual images and objects” rather than the various ways of seeing an image itself (p. 250). This paper focuses on type I discourse analysis, exploring the use of language in certain displays, intertextuality between exhibits, and the context of discourses within the overall framework of the museums themselves.

The authors chose these two museums due to their location and framing as Canadian museums which centre on stories of war, imperialism, and human rights violations. The decision to discuss discourses on prisoners arose during the first author’s review of a previous set of data from the CWM. In her analysis, she found that discussion on “foreign” (i.e., not allied) prisoners of war (POWs) were overwhelmingly absent from the exhibits, while POW allied troops were displayed as resilient and innovative survivors, despite the unlivable conditions of Japanese POW camps. The author found the lack of displays that included prisons run by Allied countries to be an interesting omission in the CWM, as it skews public perceptions of prisons and war. As the research progressed, and as discussed below, it became apparent that the overall framing of foreign prisoners within the CWM justified their imprisonment, and the second author suggested bringing in relevant data from the CMHR as a possible contrast. After inviting the third author to join the research, all three explored pedagogical discourses of imprisonment, gendered militarism, and imperialism within the photographic data collected from each site. Because the photo sets were drawn from previous visits to each site, the research was limited to those exhibits for which we had detailed photographic records.

Ultimately, we chose to focus on the contrasting discourses present between the WWII exhibits focused on experiences of Allied POWs and a display on Japanese internment camps at the CWM and the *Ododo wa: Stories of war* exhibit from the CMHR, which concentrates on the stories of Ugandan women who were forced into conjugal enslavement by the Lord’s Resistance Army (LRA). The authors found that while each exhibit focused on the varying stories of imprisonment and war, they differed in their approach to discursively framing the prisoners in each situation as either dangerous, resilient, or both. We believe that this has significant implications in the learning which takes place in such crucial and widely visited sites of public pedagogy, specifically regarding the connection between war, imprisonment, and imperialism.

FINDINGS: DISCOURSES OF DANGEROUSNESS AND RESILIENCE

Upon reviewing our photos from our selected exhibits at both the CWM and the CMHR, themes began to emerge regarding a complicated gendered and racialized dichotomizing of dangerousness and resilience. Barton and Brown (2011) emphasize that “When a discourse of dangerousness is used to represent prisoners, it creates a public and official indifference to their mistreatment” (p. 485). Furthermore, the social distance fostered by this indifference may allow

members of the public “to conceive of prisoners as somehow foreign or alien and prisons as necessary to contain them” (Walby & Piche, 2015, p. 480).

Bimm and Feldman (2020) view resilience through a trauma-informed lens. Rather than asking trauma survivors to “persist despite,” trauma-informed practice holds a survivor’s community accountable for rebuilding resilience, which Haines (2019) defines as “the ability to regain a sense of hope and imagine a positive future” (p. 195) through re-establishing one’s safety, dignity, and belonging.

We found that discourses of resilience were present in displays that included themes of imprisonment and military power, but within the CWM they were reserved for allied white men where foreign racialized men were discursively framed as dangerous, reproducing the overall discourse of war as necessary. At the CMHR, racialized Ugandan women survivors were discursively framed as resilient, though there were echoes of dangerousness as a result of their experiences.

Imprisonment in Canadian War Museum (CWM)

The Canadian War Museum (Ottawa, Ontario, Canada) looms large with its rugged concrete exterior. The museum is spread out across two expansive floors, typically running two special exhibitions and seven consistent exhibitions including such themes as “Early Wars in Canada,” “The South African and First World Wars,” “The Second World War,” and “From the Cold War to the Present,” which are sub-titled “The Canadian Experience Gallery 1, 2, 3, and 4” respectively. The website for the CWM describes it as “Canada’s national museum of military history and one of the world’s most respected museums for the study and understanding of armed conflict” (CWM: About the Museum, 2022, para. 1).

In the first author’s analysis of the technologies of layout and discursive framing within the WWII exhibition, specifically in those exhibits centered on prisoners of war and internment camps in the Canadian War Museum, there was a clear dichotomy between allied and foreign troops regarding resilience. Through emphasizing the various methods that allied soldiers used to keep themselves occupied and maintain spirits in POW camps, the CWM discursively frames the allied soldier as resilient in times of suffering. For example, one display shows the underside of a soldier’s shoe, with a cribbage board carved into it, illuminating how the soldiers would find ways to play card games in secret, to pass the time without being caught. In contrast, there is no mention of the allied-run POW camps, or the treatment of/resilience of enemy soldiers in such camps.

However, there is a display within the exhibition which showcases a Japanese soldier, and the attached text describes the “dreadful brutality” of the Japanese soldiers. The wording employed within the exhibit produces a discourse that implies that Japanese soldiers are more brutal than allied troops, effectively linking the representation of brutality to a specific race of soldier. Combined with the harsh features of the mannequin who is in an offensive battle pose, these technologies of display work to discursively frame Japanese soldiers as unnecessarily brutal and dangerous, even for war. Of note, this display is located directly across from the display on Internment camps titled “forced relocation,” which uses softened language to describe Canada’s imprisonment of Japanese families during WWII. Rather than describing the lived experiences of internment (imprisonment), or the conditions under which Japanese Canadians were forced

to live during this time, the display centers on success stories of imprisoned individuals after the war was over (their resilience), as well as the settlements paid to the families decades later. In analyzing the technologies of display in this exhibit, it became apparent that situating a discursive representation of the Japanese soldier as unnecessarily violent directly across from a display which describes, in regret, the distrust and imprisonment of Japanese Canadians, works to reproduce the overall discourse of war that some lives are more valuable than others. In other words, processes of racialization and discursive framing of Japanese soldiers as dangerous, may work to frame the Japanese Canadian population as dangerous in the unconscious of museum visitors, therefore circumventing some of the responsibility for the internment camps.

Conjugal Slavery and Terrorism in Canadian Museum of Human Rights (CMHR)

The mandate of the CMHR (Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada) is "to explore the subject of human rights . . . in order to enhance the public's understanding of human rights, to promote respect for others, and to encourage reflection and dialogue" (CMHR, n.d., a). It aims to be "a credible and balanced learning resource" (CMHR, n.d., b). The building was constructed with the purpose of housing the museum and is described as "world-class piece of architecture" (Architecture 49, 2016, para. 2). It is glass-encased with open alabaster switchback ramps leading from the first to seventh floor, with the aim of "invit[ing] guests to participate in a human rights journey of their own, in a building significant for its architectural symbolism of human rights advancement" (CMHR, 2020c). Our discussion here centres on the temporary exhibit (2019-2021), "Ododo wa: Stories of girls in war," on Level 5, in the *Rights today* gallery.

The exhibit focuses on the stories of two Ugandan women, Grace Acan and Evelyn Amony who, as explained in a beginning panel, were "forced into conjugal slavery" (from 1996 and 1994 to 2005 respectively) by the LRA. The background of the exhibit is "illustrated with pictures created by women survivors as they worked through their trauma in storytelling circles" (CMHR, 2022a). Among other elements of the exhibit is the green skirt worn by Evelyn, torn by a bullet hole when she was "captured in a military ambush" (CMHR, n.d. c) and the blue sweater worn by Grace when she was taken from her school by soldiers. A grinding stone signifies the forced labour thrust upon them. Two animated videos, narrated by the women, explain their experiences, with its images linked blue thread, with each thread "made stronger by other threads, representing the survivors who joined together to form an advocacy organization," the Ugandan Women's Advocacy Network in 2008 (CMHR, n.d, d).

When the second and third authors first came upon the exhibit, they were struck by the whimsical, child-like drawings and animated videos. The colours and images provided a feeling of lightness and hope, in sharp contrast to the content of the exhibit with respect to captivity and conjugal slavery. We later learned that the:

goal in selecting images and artifacts, writing exhibit text and creating films...[was] to let their [the women's] hopes and dreams, courage, strength, voice and agency shine through. Bright colours and hand made drawings evoke these meanings and shape a story that is ultimately one of healing and advocacy for justice (CMHR, n.d., d).

It was no wonder that the concept of resilience came to mind during the authors' visit.

Community support amidst stigma, violence, and pain can assist with healing (Bimm & Feldman, 2020), and the “Ododo wa” exhibit highlights the power of women in supporting one another and working for societal change. At the same time as a discourse of resilience is at the heart of the exhibit, there is also an underlying discourse of dangerousness, in that the women were earmarked as dangerous because they were deemed as having joined the LRA. This discourse is represented in the exhibit in three main ways: the bullet hole in Evelyn’s skirt as a result of being shot at by the Ugandan military; a copy of a certificate of amnesty that the women forced into conjugal slavery were required to obtain, even though they were unwillingly with the LRA; and, a discussion in one of the videos as to how they were ostracized by some members (men and women) of their community because they were “viewed as former rebels.”

The presence of these two intersecting discourses demonstrates how, in war, the binary of male protectors and female protected, with clear lines of foe and friend, is much more complicated, as we discuss further in our implications section.

IMPLICATIONS FOR ADULT EDUCATION THEORY AND PRACTICE

The exhibits discussed in this paper were in two different museums, with different foci, layout, and permanence. Therefore, our aim is not to compare so much as to contrast, so museum educators and scholars could (re)think the ways in which similar exhibits are conceptualized, curated, and experienced. Rose (2016) asserts that “a specific visuality will make certain things visible in particular ways, and other things unseeable, for example, and subjects will be produced and act within that field of vision” (p. 188). In this research we elucidate how the discursive formations (Foucault as cited by Rose, 2016) of prisoners in these two Canadian museums operate on gendered and racialized discourses of resilience and dangerousness, in order to reinforce and challenge patriarchal and imperialist notions of superiority and domination, with regards to war.

The above analysis highlights how highlighting the subjectivity and resilience of prisoners can work to disrupt the overall narrative of imprisonment as a necessary side effect of war. We believe that by employing a trauma-informed pedagogical lens to the curation and technologies of display in museum sites, there will be more possibilities for the disruption of dominant ideologies surrounding militarism, gender, and race, particularly as they relate to public conceptions of dangerousness and resilience.

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A CASE FOR MOBILITY JUSTICE IN CRITICAL ADULT EDUCATION

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Abstract

There are many forms of social justice considered in adult education, but mobility justice is usually not one. Mobility, however, shapes the conditions and lived experiences of gender, poverty, disabilities, and older-age; it either restricts or enables citizen participation. Such justice includes a recognition of place-based justice, and of community engaged and decolonizing methodologies. If active citizen participation and engagement is at the core of adult education and lifelong learning then how do mobility rights impact on health and well-being, human capabilities, education, climate change, and sustainable development?

Taken together, vulnerability and transportation disadvantage structure unequal mobility and this determines the ability of individuals and communities to achieve a sustainable livelihood, to participate socially, to achieve personal and collective safety, and to access services, resources, opportunities, and rights, including, education.

Mobility- and transportation-linked possibilities and vulnerabilities are not experienced equally. An intersectional approach recognizes how individuals' circumstances are shaped, constructed, and constrained by systems and structures over which they have little control. For example, people living in rural or remote locations or living with disabilities might experience systemic oppression in a way not considered by those who are able-bodied or live in a privileged geography. Currently the literature reveals a bias toward those who have auto-mobility. Neoliberal restructuring, further reveals how the systematic removal of public transportation alongside increasing, near-exclusive emphasis on automobility, is implicated in the production and exacerbation of vulnerabilities for certain persons, communities, and regions of Canada and how inequalities get structured and exacerbated.

Drawing on a SSHRC-funded knowledge synthesis grant findings about how vulnerabilities are constructed through the absence or presence of transportation in rural and remote Canada, this paper will explain how mobility rights are, and can be, considered in the conceptualization and delivery of adult education programs. Further the paper will draw on intersectional approaches to analyzing structural inequality in order to demonstrate how mobility rights are foundational to a more holistic and inclusive social justice perspective. The paper argues that a mobility justice perspective infused into critical adult education can be part of the interdisciplinary response to unequal mobilities that is much needed.

Keywords: Mobility justice; mobility rights, (im)mobility; auto-mobility; knowledge synthesis; social movements

INTRODUCTION

There are many forms of justice considered in adult education – social justice, gender justice, climate justice, to name a few. From limited searches however, I learned that mobility justice has not been considered despite the fact that mobility justice is “a common denominator of [the] parallel crises of climate, urbanization, and migration in that [teay] all revolve around questions of mobility and immobility, and together they bring into focus the unjust power relations of uneven mobility.” (Sheller, 2018a, p. 1). Mobility justice draws attention to uneven relations of power and uneven capabilities for movement – experienced in and through bodies, streets, transportation systems, infrastructures, borders and wider global issues (Sheller, 2018a). The politics of mobility justice ask us to examine how we inhabit, construct and transform contexts, spaces and (im)mobilities – both in terms of the body (gender, race, age, etc) and the structures of transportation and movement.

This paper draws on our recent Social Science and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC)-funded knowledge synthesis grant¹ regarding how vulnerabilities are constructed through the absence or presence of transportation in rural and remote Canada. I engaged with this paper exploring more deeply what mobility rights are, how they can be considered in the field of adult education, and the politics of space and place, and climate/environmental justice. Like the study, this paper uses an intersectional approach, as it demonstrates how structural inequality, power relations and mobility rights are foundational to a more holistic and inclusive social justice perspective.

Mobility, shapes the conditions and lived experiences of gender, poverty, disabilities, and older-age; it either restricts or enables movement and citizen participation or limits it. How then does it link to adult education? If active citizen participation and community engagement are at the core of adult education and lifelong learning then how do mobility rights impact on health and well-being, human capabilities, education, climate change, and sustainable development? Similarly, how does participation in democracy and community engagement lead to mobility rights and mobility justice? This paper argues that a mobility justice perspective infused into critical adult education can be part of the interdisciplinary response to unequal mobilities that is much needed.

Defining Mobility Justice and Mobility Rights

Mimi Sheller (2018a) states mobility justice is about processes that regulate movement – i.e. racial and classed processes, gender practices, and the social shaping of disabilities and sexualities. She states:

“We must consider how to combine the struggles for accessibility and bodily freedom of movement, for equitable infrastructures and spatial designs that support rights to

¹ Hanson et.al. (2021). *Here today, Gone tomorrow* was a knowledge synthesis grant funded by the Social Science and Humanities Research Council of Canada and Infrastructure Canada. Links to the full study are referenced at the end of this paper.

movement, for fair and just forms of sustainable transport and ecological urbanism that reduce environmental harms and burdens, and for the equitable global distribution of natural resources and rights to move or dwell.” (Sheller, 2018b, p. 20)

A group in Los Angeles, People for Mobility Justice, conducted research aimed at building a framework that could reduce traffic fatalities. They focused on the transportation needs of BIPOC communities. Using popular education processes and community-based work they addressed the research question “What are the ways mobility justice is defined under the threshold of 5 D’s; Decolonization, Decongest, Decriminalize, Dignify, and Dream?” (Juarez, 2020, p. 12). Sheller’s analysis of the complex movement of people, objects and information, and the power relations behind the governance of mobility and immobility, informed the study (Juarez 2020). They found that mobility- and transportation-linked issues are not experienced equally in their case it was BIPOC communities in Los Angeles.

Similarly people living in rural or remote locations or living with disabilities might experience systemic oppression in a way not considered by those who are able-bodied or living in a privileged geography (that is, primarily urban). In other words, mobility justice is concerned with how place and inequalities in particular spaces limit or control movement. Power relations in these spaces; for example hierarchies of power that exist between men and women, racialized groups, classes, etc. determine mobilities or immobility in the space. Movement in the space is therefore, socially constructed and creates or limits access to land, resources and citizenship and mobility is therefore, “crucial to politics, power and resistance” (Juarez, 2020, p. 16).

Recognition for how transportation can potentially further social cohesion, capabilities, and autonomy is required to address immobility experienced by a lack of mobility justice. This includes efforts at policy-making and infrastructure decisions which will centre relationships between places and people. Current literature reveals a bias toward those who have *automobility*. In our study we recognized that auto-mobility (frequently promoted by neoliberalism) has led to a two-tiered citizenship that disenfranchises those without a car or private transportation. In this system, cars become a form of “social capital,” (Bowler, Bryant, and Conklin, 2002, Epp, 2011; Joseph, 2002) which promotes new forms of exclusion and social risks, and creates an environment that forces different social groups to draw up private, unequal strategies (Hanson, et al 2021).

Rather than freedom and individuation, mobility becomes a process “linked to class, gender and generational subcultures” (Camarero & Oliva, 2008, p. 2). The social groups most affected by automobility are the elderly and school-aged children, women who don't work outside the home or who live in one-car households where their partner uses the car during the day, non-car owning households, people with disabilities, and low-income groups (O’Leary , 2008). Furthermore, anyone outside of the auto-centric system is further less able to access educational opportunities – formal or nonformal.

Mobility justice initiatives call for “participation, deliberation, and procedural fairness” to be discussed openly, and systems to be adjusted accordingly (Sheller, 2018b). These initiatives are

central to community engaged learning and action. Such justice includes a recognition of place-based justice, and of community engaged and decolonizing methodologies. It recognizes that (im)mobilities are not created equally and the industries (for example oil and gas or military) that construct and reinforce the inequities are also responsible for moving us out of them – in other words, climate change is not just the responsibility of the people who had little to do with creating it; it is also those who created the damages and harms.

METHODOLOGY

Knowledge synthesis (KS) is a process of gathering existing materials on a given topic or question and using the gathered documents to assess gaps or to learn about what's already known on a given topic. Accordingly, our methodology for the knowledge synthesis grant involved a phased, iterative approach beginning with stakeholder conversations to identify key issues and develop frameworks to assess and integrate knowledge from different locations (local, national and global), worldviews and methodologies. Working with a team of 5 research assistants/associates, the project systematically scoped 5 databases using keywords and subject headings that corresponded to each of the subtopics of the KS study. Then, in addition to peer-reviewed work, searches were conducted for theses, grey literature, news articles, policy briefs, websites and blogs. We identified over 2000 sources and incorporated over 400 into the study. The report was written and results disseminated through two webinars – one with stakeholders and one for SSHRC. The bilingual report was made freely accessible by housing it on the web-site of the Canadian Research Institute for the Advancement of Women (CRIAW),² a collaborator in the study.

The researchers identified key topics to be used to illustrate the context of key issues explored and wrote these into case studies. The case studies made the research more easily accessible. Below I include one of the case studies to illustrate how the issue of mobility justice including public transportation access, impacts the lived experience and safety of Indigenous women. The case study below (copied from the report) further illustrates how mobility is a complex issue which can also be understood through decolonizing approaches and a critical adult education lens.

Case Study: Mobility and Safety in Remote Communities³

Mona and Emily were two young, Indigenous women from a northern Cree community. They both fought drug addictions and had recently started regular methadone treatments. Their hopes were that the treatments would help them end their addictions. The problem was that the methadone had to be given to them daily by a licensed

² <https://www.criaw-icref.ca/updates/here-today-gone-tomorrow-project/>

³ *This case study was developed for the study Here today, Gone Tomorrow (Hanson et al, 2021, p. 36). It includes a personal experience of the researcher (Hanson) after picking up Indigenous hitchhikers on a remote highway.*

medical provider and the nearest place for them to access it was in a town 40 km from their community. Determined to end their addictions, but without access to transportation, Mona and Emily began to hitchhike daily to town.

Their home community did have a van it used for transporting local people to town, for example, to appointments, however because of the social stigmatization of drug users, Mona and Emily said they were not allowed to get rides using this service. At one point there had also been a bus along the stretch of highway they had to travel, but it too had been shut down by a provincial government. Without clear options, hitchhiking down the remote highway daily became their routine.

According to Morton (2016) the way transportation is constructed, with automobility being the norm, makes hitchhiking a *contentious mobility* that is stigmatized or treated as undesirable. As hitchhiking becomes undesirable, so too does the deserted highway or the space in which it happens. "Women without cars hitchhike as a means to access the privileged sphere of automobility. Until the systemic issues of access to mobility and services are eased, women will continue to assume risk" (Sodero & Scott, 2016, p. 265). This is particularly a reality for Indigenous women in remote areas of Canada "Indigenous women frequently move along the highway in order to access social services including women's shelters, employment services, health services and education" (Morton, 2016, p. 305).

Clearly Mona and Emily had multiple experiences of vulnerability that put their safety at risk; it made the physical stakes of their mobility high, including a potential for injury, death or the possibility that they could become statistics as missing Indigenous women (Sodero & Scott, 2016). Their situation as drug users, as young Indigenous women and without a vehicle further excluded them socially and disenfranchised them from decision-making (Sheller & Urry 2000). Mona and Emily knew they were stigmatized. They understood from life's experiences that they had been constructed as "willing victims" who deserved violence because of their "lifestyle choices" (Comack & Balfour, 2004), but the colonial and racist attitudes and social inequalities that fueled the violence against them and other Indigenous women remained absent from the story (Morton, 2016).

The ways in which safety and security connect to markers of identity such as gender, race, class, age and geography all contribute to the vulnerability of missing and murdered women and girls in remote locations (Tallman, 2014). The situation for Mona and Emily was similar to that of other women and girls along the Highway of Tears – the name given to a remote stretch of highway in Northern British Columbia where dozens of women, mainly Indigenous, went missing or were found dead. The lack of services along that remote stretch of highway is well documented and so too are the many lives lost by people who tried to hitchhike along it.

After over a decade of campaigns, studies, a symposium held by six BC first nation groups (2013) and the Report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women (2012), and the closure of Greyhound Canada, a bus service was launched by the BC government in 2021 (Martens, 2020). Meanwhile, for Emily and Mona it was too little, too late.

Using the case studies helped to illustrate the complex ways that people and issues of (im)mobility are intertwined. It also demonstrated that although “freedom of mobility may be considered a universal human right, in practice it exists [only] in relation to class, race, sexuality, gender, and ability exclusions from public space, from national citizenship, from access to resources, and from the means of mobility on all scales” (Sheller, 2018a, p. 20). The literature in our study (Hanson et al, 2021) demonstrated how exclusion is structural, societal, and cultural, and that it will take a multi-disciplinary effort to address the mobility needs associated with positions of exclusion.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Our report (Hanson et al 2021) further made recommendations for policy-making and infrastructure change. Some of these recommendations have important links to adult education. One was that the process of community engagement which is often ignored in discussions of transportation policy and mobility needs should be given greater attention. All too often public engagement to assess, develop or evaluate transportation policy or infrastructure uses hegemonic practices of treating communities as homogenous instead of taking into account differential impacts across gender, age, ability, income, and migration background.

We also made recommendations to include the community – as place and diverse groups of people – in policy, planning, evaluation, and monitoring of public transportation in order to ensure that transportation policy addresses the actual concerns and needs of the community. This could include participatory process so that disenfranchised people, for example, people with disabilities, are included. Then in the process of establishing platforms and/or citizen advisory boards diverse communities of individuals and communities can voice concerns and express their transportation needs.

CONCLUSIONS

At the beginning of the paper, I asked whether active citizen participation and engagement are at the core of adult education. Critical adult education serves to create conditions for individual and social transportation when people come to understand how their circumstances construct or reinforce inequalities. Similarly, mobility justice and mobility rights can be further understood through a process that critiques dominant knowledge structures and practices. Application of critical pedagogies and community engagement can both benefit the process of achieving mobility justice. Adult education that pays attention to mobility rights might help to develop further benefits to health and well-being, human capabilities, education, climate change, and sustainable development.

I also asked how mobility rights and mobility justice can benefit from adult education's push for participation in democracy and community engagement. As long as adult education continues to be a field that has a social justice and more recently, multiple, intersecting justice pathways (for example gender justice, climate justice, etc), there is a strong argument that mobility rights and mobility justice which are embedded into other forms of justice are likely already operating in our midst. Mobility justice is, however, a theory and a practice that is not fixed (Sheller, 2018a) and it requires attention directed at the way a phenomenon operates in context, materiality and in particular spaces. This suggests that further endeavours to understand it within context or as situated knowledge are required.

Critical adult education explores the complexity of institutional structures and hierarchies of powers operating in social systems in an attempt to address the injustices within a particular situation. It disrupts dominant patterns and homogeneity. Mobility justice screams for this kind of praxis and also, for a process that is both creative and facilitative. Adult educators with critical perspectives and community engagement facilitation experience are well positioned to engage in this kind of process. Conceptually and theoretically, there is a gap in understanding mobility justice, and how, when addressed as a paradigm, it can shift the way we see the world. Further efforts to bridge these gaps deserve attention.

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OLD METHODOLOGIES NEVER DIE, THEY JUST FADE AWAY: OR, WHATEVER HAPPENED TO VOCATIONAL ESL?

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Abstract

Vocational language teaching is a form of adult education that combines language instruction with preparation for a particular vocation (Ketzenberg, 2010). These programs are often a collaboration between a language school and a company, professional organization, or union and are often held at a workplace that employs newcomers or other adult language learners (Center for Applied Linguistics, 1983). They can offer significant advantages for language learners, companies, and educators: they offer a context-rich, highly relevant learning environment for learners, can reduce barriers to participation by offering a schedule and location that are compatible with work demands, and can respond to the particular communicative needs of particular workplaces (Norton, 2013; Center for Applied Linguistics, 1983). Vocational language programs are a promising option, particularly given the strong connection that policymakers draw between newcomer education and workforce integration (OECD, 2020). Nevertheless, vocational language programs are less common today than general language programs such as those offered through, for example, Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada (LINC) and Cours de langue pour immigrants au Canada (CLIC) (Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants, 2020; CLIC en ligne, 2016).

This presentation will describe a corpus study and literature review that sought to explore the potential of vocational language teaching and to understand why such programs are not more common in North America today. It addresses the following research questions:

- (1) What factors can explain the development of vocational language training and its scarcity today?
- (2) What are the affordances of offering vocational language training as part of newcomer support initiatives?

The presentation will begin by describing a corpus study that traces the trajectory of vocational English as a Second Language (VESL) programs from their inception in the mid-1970s to the present. It will demonstrate that these programs enjoyed a brief period of popularity before suddenly disappearing in the mid-1990s. In order to explain this disappearance, the presentation will then draw on second language acquisition research and relevant policy documents to demonstrate that the disappearance of VESL in the United States was an unintended—and largely unacknowledged—consequence of welfare and adult education policy changes. Finally, the presentation will conclude with an argument for the relevance of vocational language programs today and the pedagogical benefits that such an approach offers.

Keywords: language education, vocational education, education policy

INTRODUCTION

Recent decades have seen record rates of transnational migration. A major task for national governments is promoting the integration of newcomers into the communities that welcome them. The United States and Canada both rely heavily on immigration and are invested in developing newcomers' language skills, as this is seen as an important component of cultural and economic integration (IRCC, 2020; Hawthorne, 2014; Masny & Waterhouse, 2016)

However, newcomers have diverse needs, and language programs may struggle to meet them. To address this challenge, most adult language instruction in the United States and Canada is offered through a distributed network of community centres, educational institutions, and non-governmental organizations. However, while newcomer language programs in the United States and Canada vary widely, they tend to feature an emphasis on preparing newcomers for employment and curricula that take a general, one-size-fits-all approach to language instruction (IRCC, 2020; Spruck-Wrigely, 2013). As a result, these programs, paradoxically, can be simultaneously too broad (by trying to be relevant to all learners at once) and too specific (by foregrounding economic/professional language objectives above others). There have, however, been efforts to develop more tailored approaches to adult language teaching. One of these approaches, vocational language instruction, allows learners to develop their language skills while preparing for a particular vocation (Ketzenberg, 2010). This approach has many potential advantages, yet it is relatively uncommon today.

This paper will describe a corpus study and literature review that sought to explore the potential of vocational language teaching and to understand the historical development of this approach. Using the United States as a case study, it addresses the following research questions:

1. What factors can explain the development of vocational language training and its scarcity today?
2. What are the affordances of offering vocational language training as part of newcomer support initiatives?

Drawing on research and policy documents related to immigration and adult second language education, I will demonstrate the influence that political pressures can have on educational practice. As education systems become increasingly standardized and centralized, I will argue for the continued relevance of a tailored approach that embeds language training in the places where adults already spend their time. While this analysis focuses on the United States as a case study, I will conclude by highlighting its relevance for adult language educators in Canada and beyond. This will necessitate some variation in terminology: The term "vocational English as a Second Language" (VESL) is most common in the United States and will be used in US-specific contexts; however, when discussing other contexts, I use the more inclusive terms "vocational language training" or "vocational language programs."

THEORETICAL AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORKS

Human capital

Human capital refers to the “knowledge, skills, competencies, and attributes embodied in individuals that facilitate the creation of personal, social, and economic well-being” (Keeley, 2007, p. 29). Accordingly, a human capital model of education holds that the marginalization of some individuals or groups can be best combatted by teaching them knowledge and skills that will allow them to compete on the job market and contribute to the economy (Levitan, 2020). While newcomer language and integration programs are couched in language of social inclusion and full participation in society, it is often economic markers of integration that are foregrounded (Bonikowska et al., 2008). Many government-funded language programs in the United States and Canada employ a human capital approach, closely tying individuals’ success to their employability (Hawthorne, 2014, p. 6).

Critical pedagogy

This analysis is grounded in critical pedagogy, which education as an inherently political act (Giroux, 2004; Freire, 1970). Critical pedagogues question the dehumanizing, neoliberal foundations of the modern education infrastructure, promoting a model of education that empowers students who are silenced or marginalized to confront injustices and oppressive power relations (Steinberg & Down, 2020). This analysis engages with the practical implications of a critical orientation, building on the theoretical work of Giroux, Freire and others in order to maximize the emancipatory potential of education even within educational frameworks that may, at first glance, seem decidedly non-emancipatory.

CASE STUDY: VESL IN THE UNITED STATES

Methodology

I performed a corpus study to trace the trajectory of VESL through appearances of the term “vocational ESL;” this term was used because it is the most common name for this category of language programs in the United States. Other search terms, including “VESL,” “workplace language training,” and “vocational language training” were also searched. These terms, which are less common or less specific than “vocational ESL,” returned too few relevant results to be included in this analysis. However, the results of all searches were suggestive of the same trend that is reported below. I searched three corpora: Google NGrams, which catalogs published books; the Education Resources Information Center (ERIC), a research database maintained by the US Department of Education; and Proquest News & Newspapers, a database of newspapers and periodicals. The results from each search were filtered and manually cleaned to eliminate publications from outside the United States.

Corpus study findings

The corpus study revealed a striking trend (see Fig. 1). Across the various genres and types of media, VESL was introduced in the late 1970s and was relatively widely discussed over the next twenty years. However, in the mid-1990s its popularity began to diminish rapidly, and by the end of the first decade of the 21st century, it had all but disappeared from popular and academic publications.

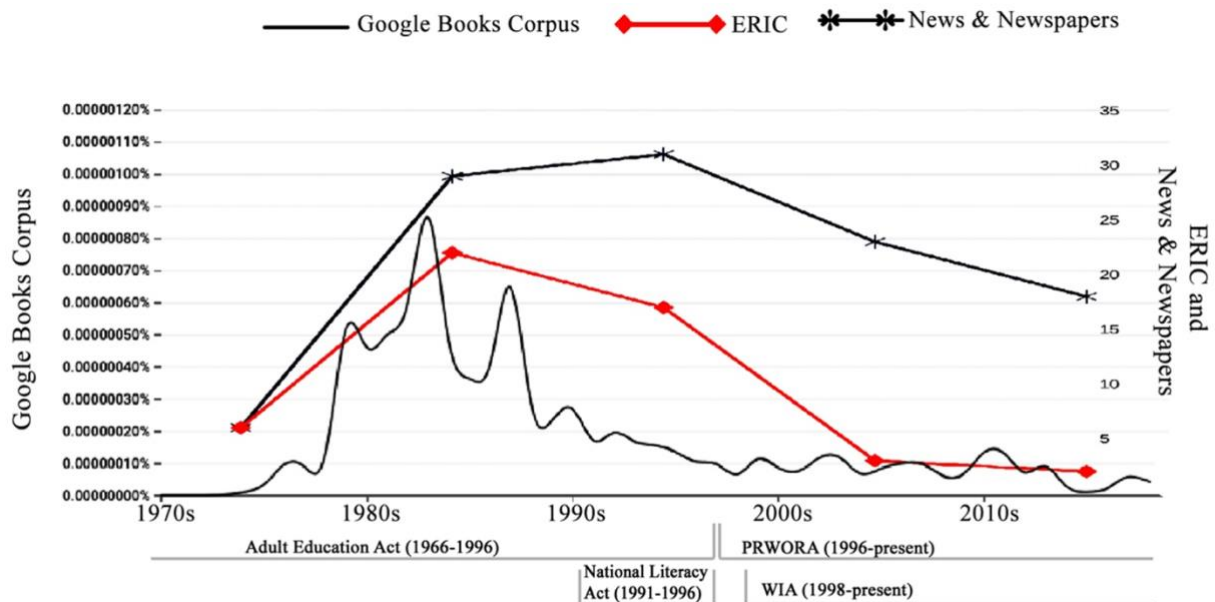


Figure 2. Corpus search results for "Vocational ESL" and timeline of relevant adult education-related policies. Note that Google Books results are expressed as percentage of the corpus (left y-axis); ERIC and News & Newspapers are expressed in real numbers (right y-axis). These results show VESL appearing in the late 1970s and swiftly gaining popularity over the next two decades before an equally rapid decline in the mid-1990s.

Next, I analyzed the publications in the corpus in order to understand how this remarkable trajectory developed. These publications offered insight into the conditions that led to the development of VESL; however, they did not shed light on why it disappeared. To understand this disappearance, I analyzed other research and policy documents relevant to adult education.

Literature review findings

The rise of VESL

The 1970s were a time of significant changes both in immigration patterns and in understandings of second language acquisition, both of which paved the way for the development of VESL. In that decade, an increasing number of new immigrants to the United States had less formal educational experience than those of previous years, and the jobs that

had previously welcomed these workers, particularly agriculture, were beginning to dry up (Buchanan, 1990). As a result, newcomers increasingly needed to find work in industries that required greater communication skills, such as hospitality, manufacturing, and clerical work (Crandall, 1985; Fortuny & Chaudry, 2011; Friedenborg, 1987; Buchanan, 1990). The federal government began pouring resources into developing language programs that would facilitate newcomers' integration into these industries. These initiatives fell under the mandate of the *Adult Education Act* (1966). In effect for three decades, this federal law positioned basic skill development as an essential component of workforce development, indicating a strong human capital orientation toward adult education nation-wide (Cruikshank, 2002; U.S. Department of Education, 2013). Over the 30-year lifespan of the Adult Education Act, participation in adult education increased by nearly 900% (U.S. Department of Education, 1991).

At the same time, communicative approaches to language teaching were beginning to replace structuralist approaches that viewed language learning as the rote memorization of patterns (Crandall, 1985). Together with the framing of immigration as a human capital issue, the communicative turn helped to bring about the creation of programs that tailored instruction to participants' needs in the specific industries where they worked or sought employment. The federal government funded demonstration classes, research reports, and resources supporting the development of VESL programs (Averitt, 1993; Bradley et al., 1990; Buchanan, 1990; Center for Applied Linguistics, 1983; Crandall, 1985; Stapp, 1998; Weinberg, 1992).

A shift in policy

These VESL programs flourished for several decades, and the responses to them were overwhelmingly positive (Levitan & Mangum, 1981, p. 41; Lozada, 1998; Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages, 1995). However, the mid-1990s saw several major changes in policy. First, the United States introduced sweeping welfare reforms through the *Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act* (PRWORA, 1996). Due to the strong human capital orientation of the adult education sector, these changes had a significant impact on the makeup of the programs offered. This shift was solidified in 1998, when the Adult Education Act was repealed and replaced with the *Workforce Investment Act* (WIA). While the former had framed long-term education as necessary for individuals to develop basic language and literacy skills, an approach known as the *human capital development approach*, PRWORA and WIA reflected a shift toward a *labour force attachment approach* (note that despite the name, both the human capital development approach and the labour force attachment approach conform to the logic of *human capital* as described in this analysis; that is, they both promote individual employment and competitiveness as solutions to economic inequality). The new policies aimed to minimize the time and money invested in education and to encourage individuals to seek employment as quickly as possible, even if this prevented them from developing the skills that would give them long-term job security or allow them to further advance their careers (Bok, 2004; Baldwin, 1998).

As a result of these new policies, adult education programs that were tied to welfare, including many adult ESL programs, were streamlined into a one-size-fits-all network of work readiness

and basic skill development activities; additionally, strict limits on participation in education and training were introduced (Ben-Ishai, 2010; Tumlin & Zimmermann, 2003). This new system made it difficult or impossible for many small, industry-specific programs to survive (D'Amico, 1997). Similarly, the significant federal investment in research and development of vocational programming came to an end. While VESL programs were not explicitly addressed in these policies, the indirect result was that they became much less common, and communication and coordination across programs became more limited (Bok, 2004; Wrigley, 2013).

DISCUSSION

Policy and Practice: A false dichotomy

Taken on its own, the disappearance of VESL is not shocking. Pedagogical approaches go in and out of fashion, and methodologies develop and change over time. However, this analysis demonstrates that VESL did not fall out of favour due to concerns about its effectiveness, feasibility, or consistency with broader policy goals. Indeed, the practical and methodological advantages of the method are easy to identify, and practitioners, researchers, and policymakers all spoke of VESL in overwhelmingly positive terms (Center for Applied Linguistics, 1983; Lozada, 1998; Pharness, 1991). Additionally, the approach seems uniquely positioned to leverage the human capital orientation of US adult education policy. These facts make its sudden decline all the more striking. VESL remains a promising approach that fell victim to seemingly unrelated policy changes, a process that happened rapidly and with virtually no comment from education policymakers and researchers.

This analysis should serve as a call for adult educators to be mindful of the profound impact that policy changes can have on their programs. For any educator with a critical orientation, it is imperative to understand how deeply political and institutional demands—in this case, the framing of education as primarily a question of human capital or labour force development—can shape program structure and content. Only with this awareness will educators be able to identify (and, where needed, resist) policies and power structures that hold their students back. This awareness is essential for educators seeking new opportunities to support their learners and develop an emancipatory educational practice.

Extending to the Canadian context

The landscape of adult education in Canada differs significantly from that of the United States; still, this analysis offers useful lessons for the Canadian context. In Canada, vocational language programs flourished concurrently with those in the United States (see for example Pharness, 1991). While the Canadian system was, of course, not subject to the policy changes that contributed to the demise of VESL in the United States, some of the same political forces may have informed the shift. For example, in 1992, LINC (Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada) and CLIC (Cours de langue pour les immigrants au Canada) were introduced, a move motivated at least partly by the prioritization of cost-effectiveness and standardization (framed in policy documents as “consistency” and “cooperation” among different levels of organizations; Derwing, 2017, p. 88). Today, these programs offer a wide-ranging and highly-centralized form of newcomer language instruction through the Language Training Services arm of Immigration,

Refugees, and Citizenship Canada (IRCC). They aim to “improve newcomers’ official language abilities and help newcomers acquire the knowledge and skills necessary to integrate into Canadian society” (IRCC, 2020, p. 21). Like their US counterparts, they employ a human capital orientation that focuses on general language skills and work readiness.

In 2020, an evaluation of these programs noted a number of successes and areas for improvement, including the need to develop clearer guidance and assessment of employment-related programs and to reduce barriers to participation. Alternative pedagogical offerings such as VESL could address these shortcomings and empower a wider range of newcomers to develop their skills in official languages.

Reducing barriers

Most language training programs that fall under the mandate of the IRCC are offered at community organizations or educational institutions (IRCC, 2020). This can raise barriers for students who need childcare, transportation support, or who have irregular work schedules (IRCC, 2020, p. 26). This may contribute to the fact that only 26% of LINC participants complete more than one level (IRCC, 2010), and less than 10% of participants in *francisation* reach the program’s target proficiency level (Gouvernement du Québec, 2017). One possible explanation is that newcomers find it difficult to balance work and studies; an IRCC evaluation of its language training services found that currently-enrolled clients were less likely to be employed than former clients, which suggests that individuals may stop participating in language training once they are able to get a job (p. 58). Offering vocational language training at workplaces could eliminate some of these barriers, allowing individuals to continue their language training longer and attain greater language proficiency.

Increasing relevance of curriculum

The language training programs funded by the IRCC were originally designed to allow local centres to act independently to respond to learners’ diverse needs, but over time the centralized curricula and resources caused program designs to converge (Cleghorn, 2000, p. 52, cited Derwing, 2017, p. 88). As a result, today these programs, like their US counterparts, tend to employ a one-size-fits-all approach that does not holistically develop newcomers’ communicative competency and may operate under a limited (work-oriented) conceptualization of integration (OECD, 2020; Fleming, 2015). This particularly concerns the over 90% of LTS programs that focus on general language development. However, even the 5% of programs offering “employment-related training” are more likely to focus on generic work readiness skills, such as job searching and business writing, than industry-specific language that promotes individuals’ long-term professional and financial prospects (IRCC, 2020). This has both practical and ethical implications.

On a practical note, participants in employment-related classes are more likely to improve their proficiency than their counterparts in general language classes (IRCC, 2020). This reinforces the consensus in the literature that vocational language training may be more conducive to language acquisition because it is more adapted to students’ everyday communicative needs. In

addition, this model can maximize individuals' opportunity to put new language into practice. Focusing on the environment where individuals spend thirty to forty hours per week can increase learners' opportunities to develop their language confidence and competence.

On an ethical note, newcomer language programs in Canada and elsewhere have been criticized for promoting an image of the ideal citizen as an "obedient and cooperative worker and a good consumer" (Fleming, 2015, p. 47) and "socializing [immigrants] into passive acceptance of subservient roles" (Long, 1996, p. 127; see also Ng, 1981). The subordinated identities that this process creates can be personally harmful and limit individuals' learning opportunities both within and outside the classroom. Norton's (2013) seminal study on the language experiences of five newcomers to Canada highlighted the importance of the workplace in shaping individuals' language-learning experiences and their construction of their identity as users of the language. She describes how one participant "felt that she could not claim the right to speak to her coworkers," a fact that prevented her both from developing social connections and from defending herself when she was exploited at work (Norton, 2013, p. 99). Auerbach and Wallerstein's (2004) *Problem-Posing at Work* demonstrates the potential for workplace language training to support learners in resisting exploitation and discrimination. It offers an example of a Freirean approach to teaching English that empowers learners to understand and transform their work conditions.

CONCLUSION

Vocational language training is a promising method that all but died out in the United States due to policies emphasizing efficiency and standardization. While the specifics of these policies are unique to the United States, the underlying mechanisms are relevant across borders. Similarly, the potential of workplace-based vocational language training to improve newcomers' access to education is worth greater attention in any society that welcomes newcomers. This analysis supports the IRCC's call to identify and monitor the performance of employment-related language training programs (IRCC, 2020). At the same time, it suggests that vocational language programs could build on existing educational and immigration structures to offer a more relevant and empowering form of language education for newcomer adults.

This is not only (or even primarily) a question of improving individuals' employability. Rather, the workplace is an important site where newcomers negotiate their identities as language users and their relationships to the culture(s) of the welcoming society. The workplace offers significant potential to reinforce or transform inequitable power relations. Locating critically-oriented language training in the workplace could be an essential step toward allowing newcomers to claim their right to speak at work and beyond.

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FORGING CRITICAL CONNECTIONS THROUGH COMMUNITY-UNIVERSITY PARTNERSHIP: ADDRESSING HOUSING ISSUES FOR WOMEN EXPERIENCING VIOLENCE IN LONDON, ONTARIO

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Abstract

Introduction: This participatory action research project came to light out of a real community need, resulting in a partnership between a family studies program at Brescia University College at Western University, housing services, and community leaders working in the local violence against women (VAW) sector in London, Ontario. **Research Questions:** (1) How does the housing system meet the needs of women and girls fleeing violence? and (2) what special support should be put in place to help women and girls fleeing violence access / retain housing in response? **Methods:** In groups, students conducted an environmental scan for programs and services, gap analysis, and in-depth interviews with twelve (12) community leaders who work within the violence against women sector. **Findings:** The housing system is not currently meeting the needs of women and girls who are fleeing violence. This is demonstrated in the lack of housing stock, lack of robust funding, and a shortage of overall space for this population. **Recommendations:** A set of actionable recommendations is provided by VAW sector leaders to help improve the current housing system for women facing gender-based violence. This study provides evidence and tools to inform practice of adult educators in engaging undergraduate university students in participatory action research.

Key Words: Action research; community-university partnership; violence against women; housing for women impacted by gender-based violence; impact of COVID-19.

STUDY BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVES

Results from the second nationally coordinated point-in-time count of homelessness in Canadian communities indicate that there are fewer women-specific emergency shelter beds across Canada – 68% of shelter beds are co-ed or dedicated to men, compared to 13% dedicated to women (Employment and Social Development Canada, 2019). Lack of women-specific housing and supports drive women into emergency shelters and services that may not recognize them as homeless, are not designed to respond to their needs, and are often underfunded and overwhelmed. As a result, many women remain trapped in traumatizing situations of homelessness and violence (Schwan et al., 2020).

When considering violence against women (VAW), the COVID-19 pandemic has brought about new challenges to providing support and keeping individuals safe (Evans, Lindauer & Farrell, 2020). COVID-19 has intensified existing harms for women experiencing domestic violence and presented new challenges for service providers. Lockdowns and stay-at-home measures increase risk for women and children in abusive homes and impact their ability to access shelters (Canadian Women's Foundation, 2020). Pandemic impacts have been described as a 'perfect storm' for domestic violence against women and children (Maher, 2020), including isolation from support networks, heightened stress, pressures to "sacrifice" or "persevere", loss of employment, and uncertainties over what services remain open and safe (Allen and Jaffray, 2020; Nonomura et al., 2020). Furthermore, the pandemic produces conditions that may impede reporting and delay survivors' access to support (Nonomura et al., 2020).

Undergraduate students in the Family Studies and Human Development program at Brescia University College at Western University in London, Ontario, Canada were engaged in a research project in Winter/Spring 2021 under the supervision of the first author. This research was built on a partnership with CityStudio London, a community innovation hub launched in 2019 in the City of London, London Community Recovery Network (LCRN), City Planning, Housing Services in the City of London, as well as community leaders working in the local VAW sector. Based on London's Strategic Plan 2019-23, the LCRN recognized the need for an urgent action on homelessness, with a focus on more accessible and safer housing options for women and girls as a priority. In addition, a need to maintain or increase the number of shelter beds available to abused women and their children, and to homeless women and girls in the City of London was highlighted.

The purpose of this project is to address the concerns of people in London & Middlesex area who are experiencing homelessness, specifically women and girls fleeing violence during the COVID-19 pandemic who need access to safe and affordable housing.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. How does the housing system meet the needs of women and girls fleeing violence? More specifically, what special support should be put in place to help women and girls fleeing violence access / retain housing in response?
2. How has the COVID-19 pandemic impacted the risk for family violence and access to needed housing services?

THEORETICAL UNDERPINNINGS

This community-university partnership came to light out of a real need identified by the community and the community was organically engaged in all steps of the research. Participatory action research (PAR) recognizes and engages expertise in diverse forms by addressing real-world problems in local contexts and identifying and pursuing multiple avenues for dissemination driven by goals of social transformation (Brydon-Miller & Damons, 2019; Kemmis, McTaggart, & Nixon 2014; Torre, Fine, Stoudt, & Fox, 2012). PAR is a critical inquiry method that engages groups in the process of collaborative research and knowledge

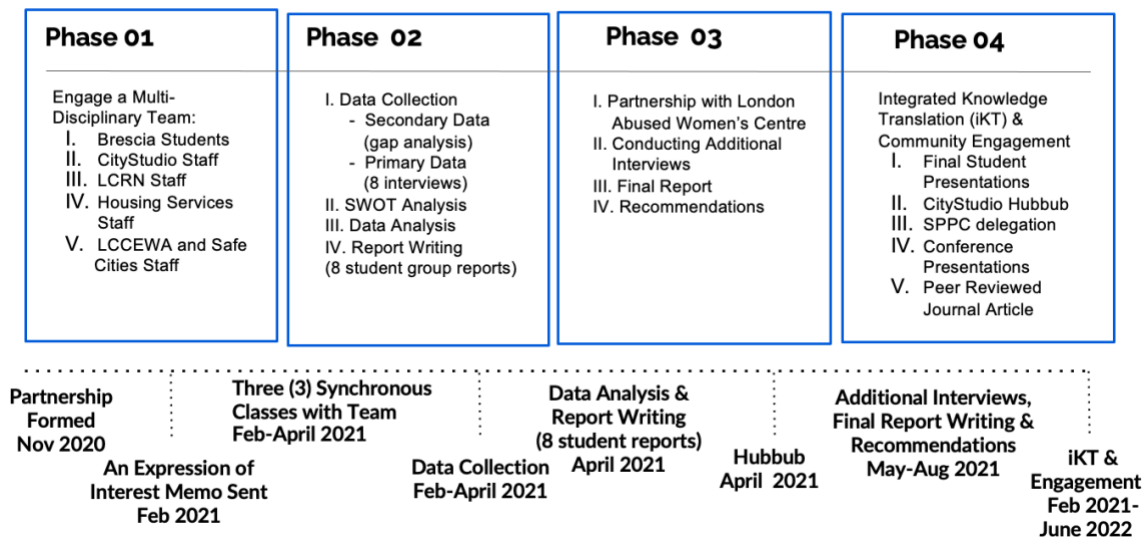
construction (Brydon-Miller et al., 2011; O’Neil, LeBer, Kteily-Hawa, 2022; Torre & Fine, 2006). PAR allows participants to describe how their experiences are shaped and impacted by political, economic, and cultural structures and how they can navigate these structures to create change (O’Neil, LeBer, Kteily-Hawa, 2022; Kemmis & McTaggart, 2005). As participants gather to discuss issues that impact their lives, it is important to capture the entire group process that the participants undergo and the discourse between participants and the researchers (Park, 2001). In PAR, knowledge is relative (Reason, 1994) and is produced when participants engage in the entire research process (Brydon-Miller et al., 2011; O’Neil, LeBer, Kteily-Hawa, 2022).

PAR has the potential to democratize and decolonize knowledge production, resulting in transformative learning (Freire 1985; O’Neil, LeBer, Kteily-Hawa, 2022). Engaging participants in the research process as collaborators breaks down traditional barriers between researchers and participants and results in knowledge generation that provides more clarity in terms of the participants’ needs (O’Neil, LeBer, Kteily-Hawa, 2022), and enhances validity for future interventions (Torre & Fine, 2006).

METHODS

Full ethics approval was received from Brescia University College Research Ethics Board for this project. A series of steps were taken in order to complete this research and gain a better understanding of the issues of housing facing women and young girls affected by family violence (Fig.1). Students worked in groups to coordinate an environmental scan for programs and services, conducted a gap analysis and needs assessment, and engaged in in-depth interviews with community leaders who work within the VAW sector to discuss the homeless prevention and housing system in London-Middlesex. Integrated knowledge translation (iKT) was also a key component of this research (see Fig. 1).

Fig. 1: Project Timelines and Deliverables



Data Collection

Secondary Data: Situational Analysis (assessing services and programming)

Research was conducted using a situational analysis of secondary data, which involved scanning of websites of programs or organizations that provide services using the London Community Services Directory for London and Middlesex as a source of information:

<https://www.informationlondon.ca>. This comprised a total of 91 programs: 42 programs for domestic violence and sexual assault; 18 programs for shelters, transitional housing and drop-in centres for women; 10 programs for victim services; 10 programs for shelters, drop-ins and outreach for youth; and 11 programs for COVID-19 resources.

Programs were analyzed through their eligibility, accessibility, if they are impacted by COVID-19 restrictions, hours of services, housing options, and services offered to the community. Data was extracted from websites and then charted. Issues that are important based on existing programs in London/Middlesex area were listed. A gap analysis was conducted by determining the analyzed needs.

Primary Data: Qualitative data analysis

Trained students who conducted the interviews completed core ethics Tri-Council Policy Statement (TCPS) 2, offered by the Government of Canada's Panel on Research Ethics and received certificates of completion. Twelve (12) in-depth interviews were conducted with leaders from the VAW sector in London/Middlesex virtually via Zoom web conference. Interviews lasted for approximately an hour and were recorded and transcribed with the interviewee's consent. Using a semi-structured interview guide, each community leader shed light on the housing issues affecting women and girls in London/Middlesex, resulting in a better understanding of the services for women and girls affected by or fleeing family violence. The leaders also provided a set of actionable recommendations to help improve the current housing system for women facing gender-based violence.

FINDINGS

Results from the gap analysis confirm that there are many programs geared towards emergency shelter and short-term solutions. However, many of these services are only offered in English, and some which do offer multiple languages make no mention of this online, which can discourage people in need from seeking them out. Another glaring problem is timing; although the average wait periods for permanent, affordable housing are in excess of five years, transitional housing is offered only up to one year. There are also few shelters available that are specifically for youth, although most shelters do accept youth. Some young people may have associated trauma with adults which would prevent them from feeling safe in a space that is mostly adults.

Many of the findings in the gap analysis were validated in the analysis for the primary data. Collaboration and support were noted as being an important part of many of the organizations serving women and girls fleeing violence. A key aspect of the success of organizations is their approach to services which follows a feminist and trauma-informed lens. This allows the

service providers to better understand the women they are serving and properly meet their needs.

Many community leaders echoed the problem with timelines for transitional housing: *"women are staying at second-stage for years now, instead of just one year. So it's supposed to be transitional but it's not"*. More housing stock is another piece mentioned in both the interviews and in London's Strategic Plan (2019). This causes another problem, which is the housing of choice initiative becomes more difficult. An important opportunity brought up by some of the interviewed community leaders is improving the requirements to be considered special priority status.

We've had many conversations about some of the more problematic ways that they interpret it. And some of the more challenging pieces around that legislation. So for instance, one of the things that is required to get special priority status is you need to prove cohabitation.

Because these provincial guidelines are open to interpretation at the municipal level, there is room for London to make changes to what is required to grant this status. How agencies and services view domestic violence and women also impacts the comfort and level of care women receive. Some of the leaders indicated that few organizations operate from a feminist lens, which may lead to intentionally or unintentionally impacting women negatively: *"...it comes out in really more subtle, some subversive passive aggressive kind of ways, that kind of reinforce rape myths and stereotypes."*

COVID-19 Impact

The impact of COVID-19 on services has been detrimental in a number of ways. Although emergency shelters remained open, many other services have moved away from in-person and taken on a virtual or over the phone model. This could impact the accessibility for many women and youth who are currently living with domestic violence, whose abusers may be home now due to quarantine restrictions and limiting their ability to find a private moment to make a call or get online for help. Additionally, some women and youth may not have at-home access to a phone or computer and as public spaces are closed, they may have lost their only point of access.

Ease of ascertaining what services were still running or what changes had been made was a common issue faced when visiting many of the service websites. If women only have a short time to be online or are not overly familiar with sites, it may be difficult for them to easily get information they require about services. One of the community leaders stressed that although it is difficult to say whether violence has increased, violence has become more intense, *"So yeah, so I don't know if we can say that there's, there's more violence happening it's just seems to be that the intensity of the violence is increasing."*

This is important when it comes to the mental preparation that workers in community organizations are faced with as they think about an eventual end to the pandemic, that women coming into the shelter will have faced more intense violence.

SUMMARY, RECOMMENDATIONS AND LIMITATIONS

Summary

The data suggests that the housing system is not currently meeting the needs of women and girls who are fleeing violence in London, Ontario. This is demonstrated in the lack of housing stock, lack of robust funding, and a shortage of overall space for this population. The housing system continues to fail meeting the needs of women and girls fleeing violence and has become a major systemic issue, one that has not been given the status and priority that it needs in the City of London. Additionally, COVID-19 has impacted the access to needed housing services, as many women felt unsafe reaching out. This can in-part be explained by the pandemic's impact on the risk of violence, leaving women isolated at home with their abusers.

Project Recommendations

Informed by the community leaders themselves who were interviewed for this research, a set of nine (9) actionable recommendations with detailed suggestions for implementation was put together. A summary of these recommendations is listed in Table 1 below.

Table 1. Summary of Project Recommendations

Ongoing opportunities to be provided by the city to engage with women and girls with lived experiences	Funding be provided by the City of London for priority access to housing, shelter and community services for women and girls fleeing violence	Prioritizing funding immediate access to longer-term, trauma-informed counselling, safety planning and emotional support
Proactive policies, planning and development for better housing infrastructure be implemented	An investment be made for a public relations campaign	Provide emergency shelter specific to the needs of women and girls escaping violence
Increased safety and affordability of long-term housing	Addressing lack of services for male perpetrators of abuse and violence against women and girls	Provide training on being trauma-informed to housing and homeless prevention staff

Limitations

A number of limitations were encountered due to the nature of performing research during a pandemic. Most of the housing services offered in London/Middlesex have been moved online which made it more difficult to gather information about services offered. Many websites specified that services had discontinued or changed due to COVID-related restrictions but not all websites were transparent in addressing what changes had been made or how it affected certain services. Because of these changes, conducting our gap analysis was more difficult as changes in service delivery may have impacted what services were offered and what gaps we uncovered.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE PROJECT

Implications for Adult Education Theory and Practice

This participatory action research came to light out of a real need identified by the community and the community was organically engaged in all steps of the research. Forging a community-university partnership has promoted an understanding of housing needs for women and girls affected by gender-based violence in London, Ontario. Our study provides evidence and tools to inform practice of adult educators in engaging undergraduate university students in participatory action research.

Mobilizing Change

A short report with project overview and a detailed account of all the collated recommendations with suggestions for action was sent to the Strategic Priorities and Policy Committee (SPPC) at the City of London. A delegation status was granted and three co-authors on this paper presented the recommendations in front of City councilors end of July, 2021. We asked that the SPPC refer the recommendations shared to strategic planning staff for an assessment and timeline for implementation. We also requested that a copy of that report be sent to us.

The project addressed challenges facing Londoners, including the issue of housing and homelessness as it impacts women and girls affected by or fleeing family violence. Findings and resulting recommendations will be taken into consideration by leaders of the City of London in order to improve the housing services for women and girls experiencing domestic violence.

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WORKING TOGETHER PROFESSIONALLY – ON THE COORDINATION AMONGST DIFFERENT STAFF GROUPS IN ADULT EDUCATION

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Abstract

What do adult education organisations do to commit the teaching staff to the overarching organisational goal (providing “good learning opportunities for adults”) given freelancing conditions, which fundamentally limit hierarchical directives as a central means of coordinating action? To answer this question, we re-analyse interview data from a qualitative, contrastive case study of adult education organisations in Germany. The findings indicate that adult education organisations seem to be willing to make an effort to coordinate their teaching staff, albeit in a different manner. While some of the organisations we studied indirectly reintroduce forms of hierarchical instruction, one organisation primarily focuses on the participation of the teaching staff in the organisation and the strengthening of informal collegial talks.

Keywords: staff groups, internal coordination in adult education organisations, qualitative case study

INTRODUCTION

Across national borders, a central feature for enabling learning offers in adult education organisations is the interplay and distribution of activities among different staff groups. This basic principle of division of labor (Clegg et al., 2006) requires continuous coordination of all organisation members’ activities to ensure cooperation regarding overarching organisational goals. However, adult education research has not yet focussed intensely on how coordination amongst the different staff groups occurs (Goeze & Stodolka, 2019). Only recently, this topic has started to gain attention (Franz & Scheffel, 2017; Herbrechter, 2018; Yelich-Biniecki & Schmidt, 2021).

Although we claim that intra-organisational coordination of different staff groups is a cross-border challenge, there are certainly country-specific differences (Ioannidou & Jenner, 2021). As an example, we outline basic characteristics of adult education in Germany, since we also refer to adult education in Germany in the empirical part of the paper.

Adult education in Germany is characterised by institutional heterogeneity. To describe this heterogeneity, we draw on a model presented by Schrader (2014). Following this “Model of Reproduction Contexts”, adult education organisations ensure their existence by concluding contracts or accepting assignments in order to obtain resources. Furthermore, they maintain their social legitimacy by appealing to either public or private interests. Along these two basic dimensions of securing resources and legitimacy, Schrader (2014) distinguishes four contexts (Fig. 1), each of which generates its own institutional conditions.

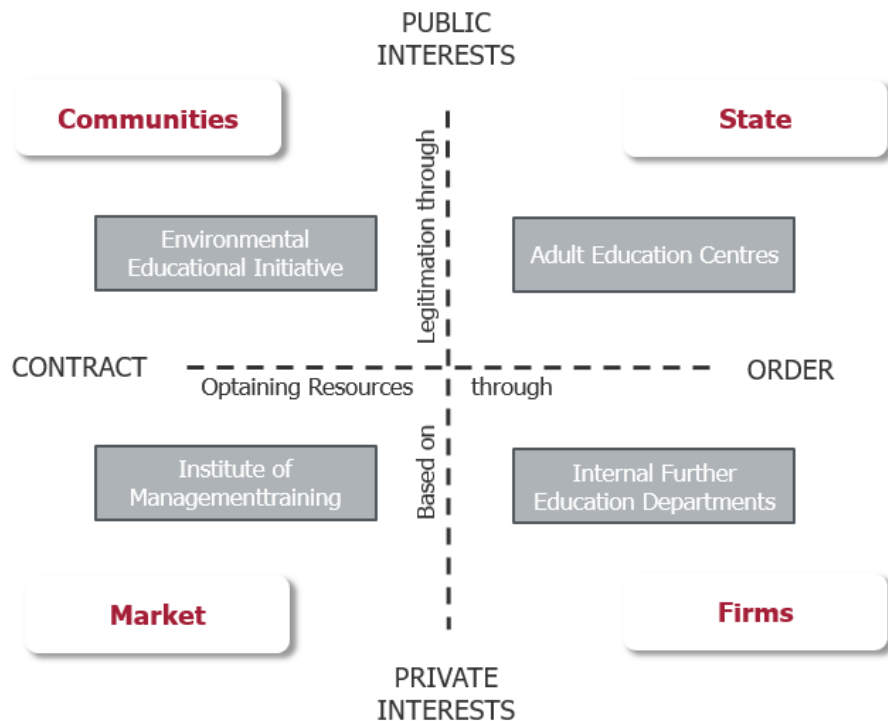


Figure 1. Model of Reproduction Contexts

(Schrader, 2014; own illustration based on Kaufmann-Kuchta et al., 2021, p. 617)

In the empirical part of this paper, we refer to this model again as a general heuristic for the selection of adult education organisations.

In addition to this institutional heterogeneity, a second structural feature is typical for adult education in Germany. In contrast to leading, pedagogical or administrative staff, teaching staff is predominantly freelance or work part-time on a honorary basis, thus their contracts bind them only loosely to one (or more) organisation(s) (Autorengruppe wb-personalmonitor, 2016).

For teaching staff, this implies a high degree of professional self-determination and autonomy. Also, they are more self-reliant, as they must provide for their own financial security, work resources and professional development. Furthermore, they usually have no access to a permanent team and have only limited opportunities to participate in internal meetings (Jambon, 2015; Kosubek et al., 2009).

Freelance teaching also offers advantages and disadvantages for organisations. For one thing, adult education organisations incur lower costs and obligations compared to a regular employment. Moreover, the organisation can react flexibly to social developments with its learning offers because it can exchange the needed personnel short-term (Autorengruppe Bildungsberichterstattung, 2016). Then again, these fragile employment relationships are also associated with challenges for the organisations. From the perspective of the participants, the teaching staff represents the organisation. It depends crucially on them whether the participants are satisfied with the learning offers. Thus, although the teaching staff is central to achieving the organisational purpose, the organisation has only limited influence on them formally. This is due to their freelance work, which officially does not give hierarchical powers to

the organisation. Even though hierarchy is a central means for organisations (Schimank, 2005) to align their members with the organisational goal, organisations also have other coordination instruments at their disposal. These include for example (1.) procedural rules, (2.) key performance indicators or (3.) shared norms and (professional) values (Kieser & Walgenbach, 2010, pp. 100-101). However, whether and in which manner these coordination instruments apply for adult education organisations, especially regarding the relation of (managerial/pedagogical) leading and teaching staff, has not yet been systematically researched.

Against this background, our paper focuses on the question: What do adult education organisations do to commit the teaching staff to the overarching organisational goal given freelancing conditions, which fundamentally limit hierarchical directives as a central means of coordinating action?

To answer this question, we re-analyse interview data from a qualitative, contrastive case study. This data basis refers to guided interviews with managerial leading staff, pedagogical leading staff and teaching staff members of four case organisations in adult education. This explorative approach is based on basic assumptions of neoinstitutionalist organisational theory and general organisational theoretical assumptions on instruments of coordination. In the following, we first outline our theoretical framework. Then we introduce the case-study design. Afterwards, we show first empirical findings and, finally, discuss the limitations of our approach and points of reference for further research.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Following neoinstitutionalist theory, organisations are shaped by a social environment characterised by diverse institutionalised expectations, rules and ideas about the desirable functioning of organisations (Meyer & Rowan, 1977). To ensure their long-term survival, organisations not only have to provide themselves with resources. Rather, organisations are at least as much dependent on gaining recognition as a legitimate organisation acting in accordance with existing social rules (Hasse & Krücken, 2005).

Although the analytical interest of neoinstitutionalism in principle refers to the macro, meso and micro levels, empirical studies examining the adaptation or diffusion of institutional guidelines (e.g. the existence of a quality management system as an expectation of the organisational environment) by an organisation, or in an organisational field, still predominate (Bonazzi, 2008, pp. 368-369; Senge, 2011). For a long time out of focus were organisational processes of dealing with institutional requirements and their meaning to and adoption by individual actors within the organisations (Mense-Petermann, 2006). It is only in recent years that micro-sociological approaches get more attention. They focus on how these institutional guidelines "become alive" within organisations and what meaning is internally attributed to them (Gehman et al., 2017; Powell & Colyvas, 2013; Powell & Rerup, 2017; Zilber, 2013).

We follow this micro-sociological neoinstitutionalist perspective by focusing on the perceptions of organisational members. As mentioned above, adult education organisations are also characterised by division of labour (e.g. Goeze & Stodolka, 2019), which creates a need for coordination between different staff groups. For this purpose, adult education organisations have various coordination instruments at their disposal, which can be understood in a neoinstitutionalist sense as rationality ideas about an appropriate organisational design.

However, due to the freelance nature of teaching staff, not all coordination instruments are equally applicable. Therefore, in our analysis, we focus on the meaning that management, pedagogical leadership and teaching staff attach to these coordination tools when describing their interaction.

In addition to this neoinstitutionalist basic assumptions, we refer to more general considerations of social-scientific organisation theory to analyse specific coordination instruments in the empirical data. Recent contributions to organisational research assume organisations use several coordination instruments to make successful interaction between different staff groups more likely (e.g., Kieser & Walgenbach, 2010). However, there is still little consensus about which coordination instruments these are in detail. In the following, we refer to a classification developed by Kieser and Walgenbach (2010), which is supposed to be viable for empirical analysis. Their distinction (ibid.) is based on the media with the help of which coordination takes place (Fig. 2).



Figure 2.
Instruments of Organisational Coordination
(own illustration based on Kieser & Walgenbach, 2010, pp. 100-101, 126-127)

In the context of our case study, the above distinction serves as a theoretical basis for the data analysis. For all of the coordination instruments listed in Fig. 2, we created deductive codes and correspondingly differentiated coding definitions. As regards the instrument "coordination by self-coordination", this comprises formalised decision-making bodies as well as more flexible forms of participation. As the teaching staff is loosely connected to the organisation, our analytical interest focuses on grasping whether and how the organisation provides possibilities for participation in a wide sense. Therefore, in the following we refer to this coordination form as *participation* and term it accordingly. As regards the supra-organisational coordination instrument "coordination by role standardisation", it is of special relevance for adult education in Germany. In contrast to the school sector, professional requirements and access to adult education as a profession are hardly institutionally regulated (Nittel, 2000). This is related to the lack of standardised training programmes that convey professional knowledge, skills and roles in a uniform manner. Against this background, in-service training is of particular importance for conveying or deepening professional standards and understandings of teaching staffs' roles

(Nittel, 2006). Therefore, when we mention the instrument of “coordination by role standardisation” in the following, we refer to in-service measures and trainings that support the orientation of teaching staff members towards professional standards and the transmission of pedagogical knowledge and skills (Jenner, forthcoming).

METHODOLOGY

The research we present in our paper is based on a broader main study dealing with the implementation of professional learning communities in adult education (Herbrechter et al., 2018). Thus, the research question of this paper is one of several questions that we explore in the context of this case study as a re-analysis.

Guided interviews ($N=23$) were conducted with leading staff members who either held the position of organisational head or head of a language department, as well as with language teaching staff of the respective adult education organisations. The interviews were analysed using deductive and inductive categories within qualitative content analysis (Kuckartz & Rädiker, 2020).

In total, the sample consists of four case organisations. In qualitative research, opening minimal and maximal contrastive comparisons is considered central to gaining knowledge (Kruse, 2015; Strauss & Corbin, 1996). With reference to the model of reproduction contexts explained in the introduction, we first selected publicly funded organisations for minimal contrastive comparisons. We made this decision as these adult education organisations in the state context frequently employ teaching staff in large numbers and on a honorary basis (Autorengruppe wb-personalmonitor, 2016; case organisations: OS2, OS3, OS4). For a maximum contrastive comparison, we chose another case organisation that also offers language courses but conducts them under market conditions (OM2).

RESULTS

Our findings indicate that a large part of the coordination instruments described above is applied in the organisations. However, the interview data shows no indications for the coordination instrument "internal markets". In addition, the coordination instruments “programmes”, "plans", "organisational culture" and "personal instruction" are discussed relatively little or not in detail by the leading and teaching staff compared to the other coordination instruments.

However, as far as *coordination by personal instruction* is in fact referred to, forms of hierarchy are most likely to be addressed by those leading staff members directly responsible for recruiting and supervising teaching staff members. In the publicly funded organisations (OS2, OS3, OS4), it seems to be used mainly when teaching staff's evaluation results are below a tolerance level, i.e., when the quality of the educational offer is seriously endangered. Thus, personal instruction is mainly used as "Management by Exception" (Bass et al., 2003) and can also be linked to the employment conditions of the teaching staff: this management principle is mainly based on self-organisation and a high degree of staff autonomy that is only restricted in the case of insufficient work performance (Bass & Avoli, 1990). In the privately funded OM2, also little evidence exists of coordination by personal instruction. Here, management by

exception seems less relevant, whilst personal instruction occurs more in regular monitoring meetings, especially for newly hired teaching staff.

Overall, *coordination by participation and role standardisation* predominate in all four case organisations. Case OM2 (maximum-contrast case) shows that the interviewed leading and teaching staff refer in a significantly more differentiated way to coordination by role standardisation, whereas coordination by participation opportunities for teaching staff members seems to be of less importance. In the interviews, initial training as an onboarding strategy, regular internal workshops, teaching observations and the sharing of evaluation results are highlighted as particularly central. With regard to the three publicly funded organisations, the opposite occurs at least in two of the three case organisations (minimal-contrast case comparison). Thus, compared with OM2, the leading and teaching staff of OS3 and OS4 refer more frequently to forms of coordination by participation. Here, particular emphasis is on the participation of teaching staff members in the development of learning offers as well as their participation in internal conferences. In addition, three of the four organisations seem to have a relatively differentiated use of the two coordination instruments under consideration (OS3, OS4, OM2), while the leading and teaching staff of OS2 refers to only a few different forms (Fig. 3).

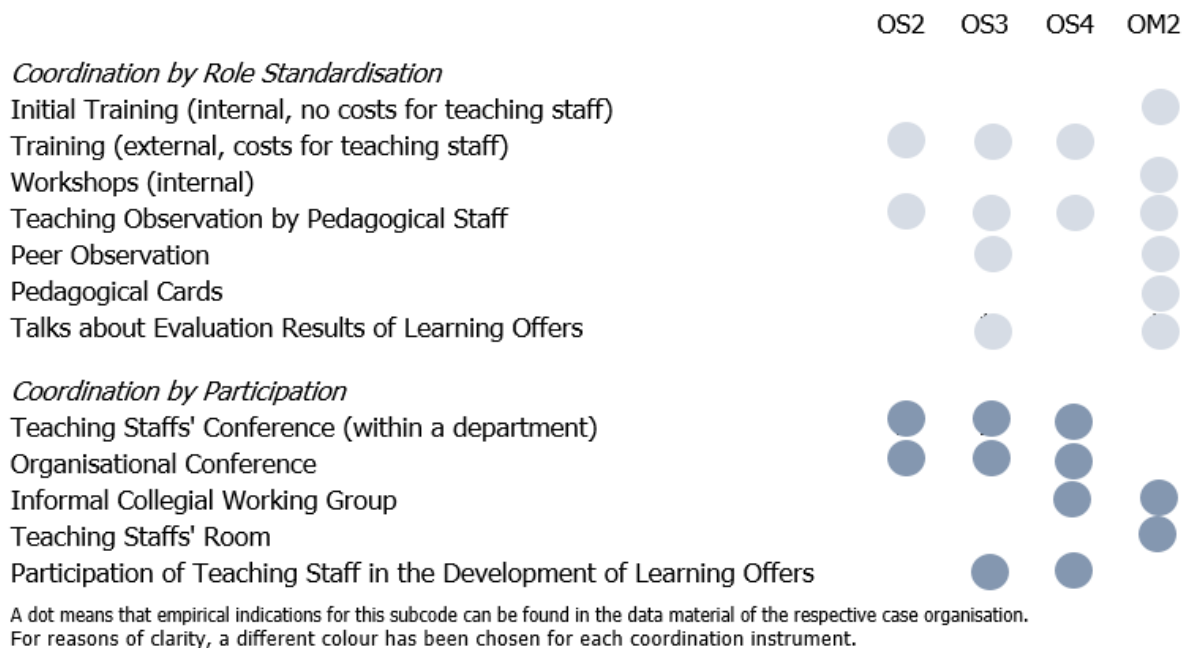


Figure 3.
 Subcodes of the Coordination Instruments
 "Role Standardisation" and "Participation" (own illustration)

The inductive coding analysis also points out that the four case organisations legitimise the respective forms of coordination by role standardisation or by participation in different ways. The leading staff of the publicly financed OS2 and OS3 in particular justify talks about results of learning offer evaluations and teaching observations by given *quality management requirements*. However, in both cases the sample includes leading staff that also is responsible

for quality management. This leaves open to which extent references to quality management are related to the interviewees' specific position. In contrast, for OS 4 no corresponding justifications can be found. Here, talks about learning offer evaluations and teaching observations are perceived as self-evident – which, from a neoinstitutionalist perspective, can be interpreted as an empirical indication of the high institutionalisation of these two coordination measures in OS4 (Herbrechter, forthcoming). Instead, the interviewed leading staff emphasises the initiation of *collegial talks* among teaching staff members and their *regular involvement* in conferences, planning meetings and working groups as especially relevant for achieving good learning offers. In the private organisation OM2, coordination by role standardisation is most pronounced. However, this is not justified by quality management requirements as in the case of OS2 and OS3. Interestingly, this occurs despite the sample of OM2 includes a leading staff member with responsibility for quality matters. Rather, the leading staff refers to the *established management practice*. This can be described primarily as "Management by Objectives" (Rogers & Hunter, 1991), which is realised in the OM2 organisation primarily through the fact that the number of teaching observations carried out serves as a key performance indicator for the pedagogical leading staff.

Overall, the inductive codings also draw attention to the fact that especially the organisations OS2, OS3 and OM2 *indirectly re-establish forms of hierarchy* in the coordination of teaching staff members via teaching observations and talks about offer evaluation results. As soon as teaching staffs' evaluation results are below a tolerance mark, the leading staff suggests further trainings to the teaching staff, initiates monitoring meetings or even notice of dismissal if the teaching performance does not improve noticeably over time. The fact that these forms of reintroducing hierarchical instructions are not emphasized in the case of OS4 does not necessarily mean that they do not exist. But even if they were to be applied, however, it does not seem to be of central importance to the leading staff, as their focus (unlike especially in the case of OS2 and OM2) is rather on *promoting diverse communication and participation opportunities* for the teaching staff.

CONCLUSIONS

The paper focused on the question of what adult education organisations do to commit the teaching staff to the organisational goal under freelancing conditions. As expected, the initial findings of our case study indicate that adult education organisations hardly make use of personal instruction for the coordination of the teaching staff. Instead, the staff groups primarily refer to coordination by role standardisation and by participation, but certainly with different weighting. Turning to how the interviewees legitimate the internal coordination instruments it shows that, regardless of the respective context, three of the four organisations attach particular importance to the use of teaching observations and talks about the evaluation results (measures of coordination by role standardisation). This is structurally legitimised with reference to quality management requirements (OS2, OS3) or to the established management (by objectives) approach (OM2). In contrast, the reference to coordination by participation predominates in only one of the four case organisations (OS4). Furthermore, the findings indicate that adult education organisations deal differently with the common task of coordinating teaching staff. The inductive coding points out that especially those case organisations that emphasise teaching observations and talks about evaluation results indirectly reintroduce forms of hierarchy through these coordination measures. The fact that the case organisation OS4 does not address such forms of reintroducing indirect hierarchy does not mean that they are not used. In contrast to the other

case organisations, however, the OS4 leading staff seems to deal with the task of coordinating the teaching staff in such a way that they try to foster participation by encouraging opportunities for informal collegial talks for the teaching staff as well as their involvement in internal conferences and planning meetings.

With regard to the findings, several limitations should be noticed. Firstly, our analysis focuses on a topic that has gained our attention within the context of a broader study primarily dedicated to professional learning communities in adult education. Thus, further understanding of internal coordination amongst the different staff groups calls for research that deepens our exploratory approach. Secondly, a more differentiated data basis is needed to be able to examine internal coordination in depth. For instance, the fact that we found only few indications of coordination by organisational culture in our data is certainly also due to the fact that we did not conduct any participant observation in the case organisations. Also, our sample partially includes leading staff members with responsibility for quality management, however, not all of them refer to it primarily when legitimising the coordination instruments in use. Thus, there is need to further specify in how far legitimisation of coordination instruments is related to the specific role somebody has within the organisation. Thirdly, the sample would also have to be differentiated for the market context as well as for the other contexts of adult education. The extent to which our findings can be generalised to other adult education organisations is difficult to assess at present. Further research is needed to investigate forms of coordination of teaching staff on the basis of a larger sample. However, the coordination mechanisms we inductively specified for coordination by participation and by role standardisation may provide initial starting points. Especially, because the empirical findings indicate all four case organisations seem willing to put effort into coordinating their teaching staff despite formal limitations.

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ENTERTAINING PEDAGOGY IN PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION: WHY AND HOW INSTRUCTORS INSERT POPULAR CULTURE TEXTS INTO CURRICULUM

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Abstract

Drawing on interview data with instructors who use popular culture in their courses, we present a series of vignettes to suggest the breadth of cultural texts and their pedagogical application, especially to support theoretically and critically oriented teaching.

Keywords: Critical pedagogy, professional education, popular culture, public pedagogy, theoretically oriented teaching, curiosity

INTRODUCTION

In this paper, we discuss an ongoing study about incorporating popular culture in professional education. Experimenting with analytical options, we present a series of short vignettes drawn from course outlines and interview conversations with instructors about their pedagogical uses of popular culture texts. More particularly, we entertain questions about how popular culture texts can support two sorts of learning: critically oriented learning and learning related to core concepts and theories.

THEORETICAL FRAMING

By *critically oriented*, we refer to learning focused on social relations and problems. Such learning connects to the first theoretical influence, evident Freire's (1998) writing about "epistemological curiosity," without which it is not possible to obtain a complete grasp of the object of our knowledge" (p. 32). We concur that theory helps students become practitioners who can "look at the world differently, using theory as intervention" (hooks, 1994, p. 59) and is "a vital component of sustaining a robust field of practice" (Gouthro, 2019, p. 70). A second theoretical influence is *public pedagogy* (Giroux, 2000; Luke, 1996), a term that recognizes the educational function of cultural texts. *Popular culture* is found on a range of platforms and in a range of *texts*, which include "any artifact or experience that we can read [or interpret] to produce meaning" (Maudlin & Sandlin 2015, p. 369).

LITERATURE REVIEW

Acknowledging the common reluctance of students in professional programs to engage intensively with theory and controversial issues (Bohonos et al., 2019; Gouthro, 2019; Love et al., 2016; Wright & Wright, 2015), as adult educators we remain committed to covering theory and sensitive issues in our teaching. As well, we recognize tensions produced by the pressure in neoliberal institutions to emphasize entrepreneurialism, individual achievement, and technical

competencies, and the (con)fused association of education with entertainment in institutions caught up with student satisfaction (Marquis et al., 2020; Peacock et al., 2018).

Although some survey research has been done (Peacock et al., 2018; Tisdell, 2007), literature on the use of popular culture in professional education typically amounts to instructors' accounts of their practices and observations (Darbyshire & Baker, 2012), across disciplines and topics (Peacock et al., 2018). In diversity and critical media literacy education courses, instructors have used films such as *Crash* and *Educating Rita* (Guy, 2007; Tisdell, 2008; Trier, 2009) or hip hop (Hanley, 2007). Medical, nursing, and teacher education instructors have explored representations of addiction, mental health, empathy, family relations, and body image (Abidi et al., 2017; Jones & Hughes-Decatur, 2012; McAllister et al., 2015). In organizational studies, links have been made to "employment relations and broader societal issues of power relations, inequality and discrimination" (Lafferty, 2016, p. 10). In grounding our study, we concur with Lafferty that popular fiction offers "the potential to open up multiple perspectives, through which students [can] identify and empathise with characters and situations which they may never have encountered previously" (p. 10).

METHODOLOGY AND PARTICIPANTS

Instructors participating in this ongoing qualitative multi-case study (Stake, 1995) complete an interview lasting 45 to 60 minutes. Like all participants, they may opt to do a brief, unstructured follow-up interview. Student-participants are recruited from instructors' courses; their contributions are discussed elsewhere (Jubas et al., 2020a, 2020b). Course syllabi are collected and, if possible, an in-class observation is done to illustrate how popular culture is incorporated into course activities.

The seven instructor-participants to date were based in education, social work, psychology, and nursing, employed in permanent or long-term positions for varying periods and at varied ranks. Six courses were offered at the University of Calgary; recently, Donna joined the study as collaborator and we have sought participants, including Emma, at University of Technology Sydney. Although most instructors delivered one course, there are two exceptions: First, although no students from Dr. Anderson's course volunteered for the study, he was keen to participate. Knowing that students from his current course would not be participating, he spoke more generally than other instructors about his teaching experience. Second, Kaela is the study's principal investigator and taught three of the case courses. Except for Kaela, consistent with ethics protocols, participants are referred to with pseudonyms that they chose or were assigned.

VIGNETTES

In this analysis, we depart from case study's common coding process and borrow from narrative inquiry. Generating short vignettes from interviews, we suggest nuances in considerations and approaches instructors brought to their classrooms and how they understood and explained their pedagogical and curricular paths.

Dr. Anderson recalled a workshop whose facilitator employed popular culture effectively. He began using Hollywood texts to complement or replace written cases in on-campus graduate counselling courses on clinical assessment, treatment or trauma. Although some cultural texts

"are just stereotypes," he thought *Stand by Me, Beaches, Silver Linings Playbook, Leaving Las Vegas*, and other films "do a phenomenal job depicting the experience of somebody who has a particular condition." Sharing scenes in class, he would ask students about what they saw and heard:

Did you notice this behaviour? Did you notice that language? The way the person's talking? Did you see their body language? ... What do you think's going on here? What's the relationship [between the characters]? ... How do you get at ... [crucial] information through interview or other things?

He contrasted filmic representations with more realistic, fuller descriptions of real-life encounters or commented on gender differences in how issues might present.

For him, popular culture can spur curiosity and reflection, as students "start asking questions about their own use of a particular skill or their own understanding of a particular concept." Engaging, memorable, multidimensional illustrations can help students recognize practice-related cues. In-class viewing fosters "emotional infectiousness" and shared "processing of what ... [was] experienced in the group. So you get multiple perspectives on that experience you just had." It is fiction's emotional power that produces two risks, though: Some students might find a vivid representation "extremely triggering" and texts designed to entertain might distract some from the educational purpose and process.

Dan began his undergraduate practice-based family counselling course by asking students to watch the film *Fences* on their own. Centred on an African American family in 1950s' Pittsburgh, it was the only assigned text. Dan identified "probably 20 different ... concepts" represented in the film, including "triangulation," "boundaries," "multipartiality," "first and second order change," and "circular causality." He used the film as a starting point for developing "genograms and ecomaps," visual displays of "a family structure and family interaction ... in the larger world of context." Although scholarly articles found by Dan or the students were became complementary resources, the film remained "the touchstone to talk about things throughout the rest of the semester" and was the basis for a final paper "conceptualizing the family dynamics in the movie."

Pedagogically, Dan was convinced that seeing and hearing examples of a concept in the film or in video clips students found online "increase[d] the chance that they'll remember it" and "feel a sense of competence." Another advantage to *Fences*, Dan explained, was that it represents "discrimination, poverty, marginalization, family dynamic problems, racism ... [because], ... as social workers, ... our approach to working with people is not to isolate problems. ... [W]e deal with people's problems *in situ*, in their complexity." The film, he believed, helped students abandon an inclination to blame individuals for their circumstances and accept that they would have to work with people who do "disgusting things." Although *Fences* is fiction, for him "this is real-life." He was excited about being able to help students "set their sights on the ways of working with the family" and to use *Fences* as a "vehicle with which to make this come alive" by "de-mystifying" concepts and "help[ing] students become better social work practitioners."

Based in nursing, **Martin** was introduced to the idea of using popular culture when he participated in a study with nursing students who read a novel set in a long-term care home and discussed it at the end of their placement in a care home. Using the novel as an entry-point to discussion about the placement experience and consider professionally relevant complex issues presented in the story, especially assisted suicide, offered "a nice soft end to the course."

His co-taught masters and doctoral elective attracted students from various faculties. Held during the Covid-19 pandemic, it ran online rather than on-campus. According to the syllabus, the course introduced students to “hermeneutic and phenomenological philosophical traditions and practices” and asked them to consider “issues related to the integrity, rigour, scholarship, and ethical commitments of hermeneutic research.” For the major assignment, students were asked to watch one of five films listed in the course outline—*Dogville* (an international co-production), *Life as a House* (US), *Beasts of the Southern Wild* (US), *Departures* (Japan), and *My Life as a Dog* (Sweden)—and “write interpretively” about it. Martin gave, as one example, work by a social work student whose analysis of *Beasts* “was very much through ... a critical theory lens, a social justice lens. ... as you might expect a social worker to bring to it. ... [T]he hermeneutic term would be ... *horizon of understanding*.” On top of enabling students to apply hermeneutic processes and concepts in ways related to their professional fields, Martin hoped the assignment would teach “them to write in a ... freer, more creative way, and ... value their own sort of abilities to interpret the material and make connections between things.”

Samantha noted that student teachers in her literacy education course “want[ed] practical examples” and were often “excited or encouraged” to learn how they could incorporate popular culture into their practice after observing the process in class activities and assignments. The syllabus explicitly inserted popular culture into curriculum, including it as one topic available to students for a group research and presentation assignment. In addition, Samantha regularly brought graphic novels, online trailers, children’s picture books, and YouTube videos into her instructor-led discussions of concepts such as “the four resource framework,” “multi-literacies,” and “multi-modalities” as “a way of taking something that’s quite conceptual and illustrating it.” Students were expected to follow her lead throughout the first half of the course. In that way, Samantha “scaffolded it [bringing in popular culture and other non-scholarly texts] ... but then what they brought in was up to them.”

Samantha noted that students were often “surprised” by “how complex and how rich” the cultural texts were when she began making connections with the texts and engaging with them critically. She saw that in-class activities helped students make “conceptual connections,” which translated into awareness of how cultural texts appeared and could be used in what would become their professional context of the classroom. She also observed students becoming critical about the lack of diverse cultural narratives and representations in school libraries and class reading lists as they were exposed in this course to non-mainstream cultural texts.

A mandatory inclusion in the teacher education program, **Leanne’s** diversity course, delivered online during the Covid-19 pandemic, positioned criticality centrally. Its syllabus noted that students would use “a critical social justice perspective” to examine how diversity is understood and taken up in education. The reality of social stratification, commitments to alleviate social injustices, and reliance on “critical social theories” were articulated explicitly.

Although she had intended to use popular culture extensively, Leanne found that students were experiencing “Zoom fatigue,” anxious about upcoming in-school placements, and quite disengaged from course content. Time planned for discussion activities was often reappropriated to provide support and reiterate key ideas. Still, Leanne recalled using segments from the comedy series *Baroness von Sketch*. One time, after sharing a land acknowledgement, she played a clip in which such an acknowledgement is made for a theatre audience. In the clip, one person questions the acknowledgement’s purpose, wondering if she and other audience members should leave the land they have occupied or whether proceeds from the play will go

to the occupied community. For Leanne, “it kind of problematizes” practice and policy, using humour to allow “people to feel uncomfortable, ... to unpack things critically ... in terms of genderism, of privilege.” She chose skits “because they were short” and “they pack a punch.” The comedic element is helpful because, “I’ve learned ... that you need to sprinkle the heaviness with opportunities for humour. But this is not the humour that ignores the issue but it’s the humour that brings you in.” Leanne also noticed that, on their own, students used popular culture texts to illustrate theoretical, conceptual or sensitive points that they made in their group presentation assignment.

Based in adult learning, whose distance programs generally attract mid-career students from varied backgrounds, **Kaela** delivered three mandatory courses over two-week on-campus sessions, with time afterward for assignment completion. One was a survey course for incoming doctoral students, where the films *Salmon Fishing in the Yemen* and *Moonlight* complemented scholarly articles for group presentations on topics and concepts including public pedagogy, workplace learning, transformative learning, identity and intersectionality, and social justice and action. In a course on community for incoming master’s students, she used the film *Chocolat* to illustrate concepts such as community of practice, the “dark side of community,” mobility, and closed or open systems. For a second-year master’s work and learning course, she used episodes from the sit-com *Scrubs* to illustrate Bourdieusian concepts and explore gender, race, and class relations in the workplace. These popular culture texts were shared in class.

Kaela has used film, television, and radio in “pretty much everything” she has taught. She has found that using popular culture texts helps students “start to understand how ... concepts and theories actually pop up in their *own* workplace contexts.” A “tricky” concept can be “important for practice. ... [I]t matters for ... helping people develop as practitioners who really think about things ... and why things are going on the way they are.”

Although generally well-received by students, Kaela admitted that, occasionally, a powerful popular culture text conjured a “negative visceral, emotional response” for some students. Kaela also recognized “that a lot of students are caught off-guard [by her critical orientation] and that some students remain resistant” to covering contentious theories and topics. Knowing something about the students and their educational expectations is helpful in priming students for the material and associated activities.

Emma’s master’s course in design innovation is the only UTS course and the only intentionally online, largely asynchronous course. Like all the courses in that program, Emma’s mandatory course was delivered in a compressed term. Links to theory were suggested in the syllabus expectation that students “critically and creatively reflect on complex relationships between theory and professional practice using highly developed analytical skills.”

Deciding to incorporate popular culture was easy for Emma because of her familiarity with the strategy from her corporate training work. Students began by selecting an “innovative” song, to broaden ideas about where innovation is apparent. Reference to the 1985-vision of 2015 in the film *Back to the Future 2* introduced a module on the future of work and helped students explore “how the seeds of the future are in today.” For the module on objective-setting, Emma used a scene from *The Karate Kid*, where Daniel is frustrated at his teacher Mr. Miyagi’s insistence that he perfect a “wax on/wax off” car-polishing technique. As Mr. Miyagi’s demonstration clarifies, that exercise is really instruction in the karate that Daniel came to learn.

For their discussion on evaluation, students chose a Eurovision contender and explained “what criteria they used and why it's important to have ... common criteria.”

Although she was trying to move away from standard pedagogical methods and resources, working online meant Emma had to use “teacher talk to give it a bit of context”: “Okay, you're now going to watch a clip from this movie from 1985 ... and as you watch, think about X, Y, and Z. And then they would watch it and then it'd be some sort of reflective activity.” On top of helping students connect material “to their own experience,” she recognized the emotional connection people had to popular culture, especially “feelings they might have had watching something” when they were younger. Knowing something about the ages and backgrounds of the students informed her selection of texts.

CLOSING THOUGHTS

Instructor-participants were based in varied disciplines and delivered vastly different courses. Courses included in the study were delivered on-campus or online, largely synchronously or mostly asynchronously. The instructors employed a range of popular culture texts and used those texts in a range of ways: They chose films, songs or television shows, viewed an entire feature-length film or watched snippets, took time in class or asked students to view or listen to texts on their own. Sometimes, they selected texts and sometimes they invited students to find appropriate selections. Popular culture texts could be used in discussion-starter questions or exercises or as the basis of a major assignment.

Aside from those differences, there were notable similarities. Having a sense of students’ backgrounds and expectations was helpful in selecting and using popular culture texts. All participants used popular culture to ease students into an exploration of core theories and concepts, which they saw as vital for professional learning. Although most described a general alignment with critical pedagogy, a critical perspective was not necessarily apparent. In particular, Emma’s orientation was less attentive to social relations and issues than that of the other instructors. That distinction might reflect pedagogical preferences or course, programmatic, and even institutional priorities, or some combination of those things. It might also reflect challenges in designing a critically inflected asynchronous course—something that instructors might need to become attuned to as institutions turn increasingly to online delivery and, even more particularly, short courses and micro-credentials.

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WE DO NOT COME INTO THE WORLD WITH A BEST-BEFORE DATE: STORIES OF WOMEN WHO PURSUED A PHD LATER IN LIFE

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Abstract

Demographics point to the greying of Canada's population. However, there is a paucity of scholarly literature on the experiences of older women learners in higher education generally and in doctoral programs specifically. My exploratory analysis of the experiences of seven women over 55 years of age who returned to an Ontario university to pursue a PhD in early to mid-2000 contributes to filling that gap. Using a life course perspective with a feminist theory, political economy, social reproduction, and autoethnographic lens, I examined the socio-cultural, economic, and aging factors that pulled me and seven other women over 55 years of age back into university. I showed through our success, that age is not necessarily a barrier to pursuing a rigorous academic degree.

Keywords: doctoral student, older women learners, post-secondary education, higher education, feminist theory, political economy, critical feminist gerontology, autoethnography

INTRODUCTION

A new market for higher education has opened up. Statistics Canada (2015) reported, "for the first time, the number of women and men aged 65 years and older exceeded the number of children aged 0 to 14 years" (para. 1). They are better educated and in the paid work force longer (Carrière & Galarneau, 2011; Looker, 2015, 2018). There is as well, for this demographic, an emphasis on enhancing mental capital and promoting well-being in later life through a range of learning opportunities including a return to post-secondary degree programs (Green, 2015). This is especially the case for older women whose education and career were interrupted at various points due to caregiving responsibilities. When presented with the time and material means, some women in later life will choose to return to university to pursue graduate education (Brownie, 2014; Lauzon, 2011; Thompson & Foth, 2003; Wendover, 2006).

To date, however, research on the doctoral student experience has largely focused on learners under the age of 50. There is a paucity of scholarly literature on the doctoral experiences of older women learners in higher education generally and in doctoral programs specifically (Jones, 2013; McAlpine et al., 2012; Wall, 2008). Such a gap in the scholarly literature poses a problem for government decision-makers, university decision-makers, faculty, and current and future doctoral students, all of whom rely on research to inform institutional policy, graduate program supports for older women doctoral students, graduate supervision practices, teaching, and learning.

My study has the potential to bring about change for older women pursuing doctoral degrees. As well, it has implications for younger doctoral students, and it has the potential to lead to further studies, all with a view to transforming societal structures and relationships. And while the relationship between demographics and culture is complex, Canadian educators and education researchers must take up the challenge and address the increased need for research on older adult learners (Carrière & Galarneau, 2011; Statistics Canada, 2015; Thompson & Foth, 2003). My reasons for doing so are theoretical, methodological, practical, and personal.

TAKING UP THE CHALLENGE

Theoretically, critical gerontology literature has largely ignored older women. Gender as socially constructed remains an important focus of academic work, yet scholars in general and feminist scholars in particular, have largely neglected to address gender and old age and explicitly feminist research in higher education (Calasanti et al., 2006; Cruikshank, 2013; Freixas et al., 2012; Rosenthal, 1990). Moreover, what little literature there is on older women often treats them as homogeneous, neglecting to consider the ways that their learning careers are shaped by age, class, race, ethnicity, (dis)ability, sexual orientation, and gender identity (Calasanti & King, 2015). And once in school, our educational career paths are influenced by, and intersect with, larger socio-political and socio-cultural norms and expectations around family obligations, gendered achievement, financial concerns, and appropriate age pursuits. Individual experiences are inherently political and deeply embedded in power and privilege (Deutsch & Schmertz, 2011; Frances, 2009; Gouthro, 2009, 2010; Hesse-Biber, 2013; Hesse-Biber & Piatelli, 2007; Mandell et al., 2008; Oakley, 1981; Rosenthal, 1990; Van Rhijn et al., 2016; Van Rhijn et al., 2015; Yamagishi, 2002). By documenting the stories women tell about their return to university, I positioned women's stories as "legitimate sources of knowledge" (Campbell & Wasco, 2000, p. 783). I shed light on the intersection of larger structural forces and women's individual agency by demonstrating the ways in which women use their agency in later life to grapple with systemic and structural forces.

The second reason for my study was methodological. It arose from a review of the scholarly literature in gerontology, ageing studies, women's studies, lifelong learning, and higher education, specifically doctoral education. In my review of the scholarly gerontology literature, it was apparent that studies continue to privilege quantitative, "positivist approaches" to research (Van den Hoonaard, 2018, p. 1). My choice of foregrounding older women's stories and acknowledging them as co-creators of knowledge contributed to "address[ing] past oversights" in gerontology (Kivnick & Pruchno, 2011, p. 144). It also contributed to a shift in the conversation on ageing away from a deficit model of ageing. Research on women and higher education tends to focus on younger students in their 20s up to their late 40s (Davey, 2002; Erikson, 1996; Hoult, 2012; Lauzon, 2011; Maher et al., 2004; Pyhältö et al., 2012; Wendover, 2006). My research on older women enrolled in Canadian doctoral programs contributed to filling that gap.

Practically, post-graduate students, faculty, and staff study and work under pressures and tensions brought on by neoliberalism, "human capital formation to serve market needs" (Lauzon, 2011, p. 290), and globalization, which have structural, socio-cultural, and personal implications (Bakker, 2007; Bezanson & Luxton, 2006; Canaan & Shumar, 2008; Fallis, 2007;

Fisher et al., 2014; Lynch, 2010; Metcalfe, 2010; Mies, 2014a, 2014b; Phillipson, 2006; Sissel et al., 2001). From the university as a site of “liberal education” to the university as an “institution of the economy,” much has changed (Fallis, 2007, p. 341).

And finally, the fourth reason was personal. It arose from attempts I have made to understand my own learning journey. As a researcher and part of the “silver tsunami” to which Cruce and Hillman (2012) refer, I was in a unique position to examine the socio-cultural, economic, and ageing factors that pull women back into university and how these factors shape their accomplishments, sense of self, personal identities, and life goals.

Now in my 76th year I feel I have arrived, albeit more than a little late, for a life I once could only dream about. It is never too late colleagues and friends told me, and while it does not always feel that way, they were correct. We do not come into the world with a best-before date. The personal stories I share, both my story and the stories of the participants in my study, are the stories of many older women who, in the words of Marge Piercy (1990), participate in a process of “unlearning to not speak” (p. 147). Central to my examination of the doctoral experiences of older women learners was a critique of age, gender, and class discrimination and the social, institutional, economic, and political factors influencing older women’s position in society generally and in institutions of higher learning specifically. I showed, through the accomplishments of the seven women I interviewed and indirectly through my own dissertation, that age is not necessarily a barrier to the pursuit of a rigorous academic degree. The barriers are institutional and societal and reflect a gendered, classist, and ageist society (Bakker, 2015; Biggs et al., 2003; Brown & Brown, 2015; Law Commission of Ontario, 2012; & Rich, 2001; Morganroth Gullette, 2013; Shanahan et al., 2015; Statistics Canada, 2020; Thompson, 2018).

RESEARCH QUESTION

My focal research question was: How did women 55 years of age and older experience their participation in PhD study. From this broad inquiry, I sought answers to several other questions. Why do women enter a doctoral program later in life? What do they learn from their experiences, and based on what they learn, how do they think current and future late-life doctoral students could be supported and encouraged? What do they hope to achieve with their PhDs? And what does their successful completion of a rigorous academic degree tell us about later-life learning and the frequent depictions of old age as a time primarily of loss and decline?

METHODOLOGY

Methodologically grounding my study in a life course framework viewed through a feminist theory, feminist political economy, social reproduction, and autoethnographic lens lent itself well to recognizing the importance of women’s lived experiences (Chang, 2007; Elder & Giele, 2009; Elder et al., 2006; Ellis & Bochner, 2005; Ellis et al., 2011; Reinharz & Davidman, 1992).

After receiving ethics approval, recruitment was initiated through snowball sampling and purposeful sampling to ensure diversity in a small geographic area (the Province of Ontario) (Gouthro, 2009, p. 101; Johnson & Christensen, 2012, pp. 230–235). In addition, I sought

representation from several universities and doctoral programs since the cultures of departments, faculties, and universities differ.

As a reflective researcher—"an instrument of inquiry" (McCracken, 1988, p. 32)—there were ethical and methodological considerations that I had to think through. How I bounded and located myself bore on my approach. I decided not to draw any of my participants from York University in order not to implicate any student, staff, or faculty, even indirectly, who was in the same university and/or faculty with which I was affiliated. I also considered the comfort level of participants who might not feel free to discuss their student experience knowing I was at the same university as they were. I further limited my presence in the data by discussing my own learning trajectory only up to the point where I accepted an offer to enter a doctoral program. It was, after all, the participants' stories I wanted to hear.

I conducted semi-structured, in-depth interviews, 1.5–2+ hours in length over a three-month period from July to September 2019. I recorded each interview, and they were then transcribed using an online software program. Because of the small number of participants, manual coding of the data was efficient. Coding was an iterative process consisting of repeated rounds of analysis. What emerged from the third round of coding was change—change over the life course; how structural conditions have changed over the past 70 to 80 years resulting in changes in family, gender, economics, learning, and how we conceptualize age, ageing, and old age.

SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS

All participants expressed satisfaction with their doctoral student experience. As to why a doctoral degree late in life, six of the seven participants stated that they did not pursue a PhD for career reasons although they did plan to continue researching, writing, and teaching. All participants shared their inner journey as they considered a return to university: why they chose to pursue a PhD in the second half of life, what pursuing a PhD meant to them, and what their success said about late-life learning, age, and ageism. They spoke of their life-long love of learning, their hopes for a post-secondary education after high school, self-fulfillment, leaving a legacy, and contributing their accumulated knowledge and their new knowledge to the university and society.

The barriers that could have derailed their studies included insufficient individual or family support for post-secondary education, limited finances, child and adult family care obligations, long gaps between university degrees, the "leap into the middle class" when participants first entered university, the wage gap, the cumulative disadvantage experienced by women over their life course, a shift in the university culture that speaks to an underlying shift in values from the university as a social good to the university as market driven, and an income model of saving when earnings are high/living on savings post retirement, which is gendered and not relevant today for many except high earners.

The women in my study came from modest beginnings and grew up at a time when opportunities for girls and women were limited. Rose Marie and Jean (pseudonyms) had this to say.

My mother was a hairdresser with a grade 8 education; my father a lumber jack with a grade 4 education. Both had to work early in life. Both were intelligent problem-solvers with whip-smart senses of humour. Education wasn't an option for them. . . . And when I asked my parents if I could go to university and being completely ignorant about funding, my parents said, what do you think we are the Rockefellers? (Rose Marie)

I'd been carefully saving money for my tuition and I was accepted in, you know, at McGill and U of T in medicine which was not easy then [1968] for a woman. And um, and all that and working too. And, and they, my parents, didn't want me to go and I had the money in the bank, but they said if I moved away from home before I got married, they'd never speak to me again. (Jean)

Gender figured prominently in the women's stories. The "60s shift," as one participant called it, meant changes, with more to come in the decades that followed. But in their early adulthood the women who participated in my study still felt bound by the "old" expectations for girls and women insofar as education and family life were concerned. New ideas take time to germinate. The women drew comparisons between how things were for them in the past and how they are for them today. *"We come with ideas from the 60s shift. . . . Society isn't going to define now who I am as a woman"* (Gini).

That the women I interviewed graduated with a PhD speaks to their resilience and ability to use individual and collective agency to successfully navigate around the barriers that stood in their way. What facilitated their progress and what participants spoke most positively about was the support they received from their husbands, partners, and children. What facilitated their progress as well was the waiver of tuition fees for seniors by some universities, fellowship packages and scholarships, their social support network of friends, colleagues, coworkers, and acquaintances, opportunities to collaborate with faculty, transparency about processes and expectations, clarity about "the road to success," timely and constructive feedback from supervisors and committee members, and opportunities to share their expertise.

Regarding what participants shared about what I call the "nitty gritty" of PhD study, some participants expressed concern about their lack of familiarity with academic theory, language, and writing; the stress they experienced because of the requirements set for academic writing; their choice of dissertation subject matter; and their desire to make their work readable for the public, something that was met with questions about academic rigor. All highlighted the importance of receiving support from their supervisor(s) and committee members.

And finally, while age was not seen as a barrier to their return to university nor their progress through their doctoral program, they saw it as a barrier in society. Some participants were critical of the admission criteria and the application process that they saw as designed for young adult learners who did not have their extensive career and personal life experience, nor their decades-long gap between university degrees.

WHAT MEANING DID I DRAW FROM THE PARTICIPANTS' STORIES?

Each woman's doctoral journey was a tale of three journeys with stops along the way. Journey one was a journey back in time to when the women were growing up. It was a story about their families of origin, growing up, moving on, and pursuing post-secondary education before their PhD. It was a story about how the past shapes the future. Journey two was a journey inward that entailed a search by the women for understanding about why they undertook such an arduous challenge late in life, what sacrifices would be involved, to what end had they embarked, and did they have what it took to see it through. Journey three was their journey through their PhD program and life post-PhD.

Since there is a paucity of research on women who began their PhD studies at age 50 or older and who successfully defended their dissertation, the experiences of these seven women provide a window into how they used agency, personal and professional resources, and institutional supports to successfully navigate a rigorous academic degree later in life. While the experiences of these women as a cohort confirmed some of the findings in the literature on young doctoral students, their journey to their PhD and their experiences once in a doctoral program were unique to them and spoke of their decades of life experience and changes over time in how family, gender role expectations, economics, learning, and age are viewed. My exploration of the emergent themes elicited common threads as well as divergent experiences.

What the women I interviewed had to say about their doctoral student experiences reflects the deeply personal and complex nature of doctoral study in later life. Their input echoes their self-reflection as they contemplated pursuing a PhD and their experiences as they returned to university after a break, in some cases of decades. Age was the catalyst that pulled the women back to university as they searched for meaning in the second half of their life. And age was the facilitator of their success as they brought to their studies transferable personal and career skills. Much had changed in their personal and professional lives, and some things had changed in universities. At the same time, what remained constant was their dream of pursuing post-secondary education and achieving the highest level academically.

Karl Jung articulated the challenges faced by adults in their 50s and beyond as they move from a life focused outward on employment, money, success, home, and family to a life focused inward as the inner world demands attention (Jung, 2009, pp.80–81). With this in mind, I chose to conclude my paper with a quotation from Jean. Her words have a power that resonates for many women in the second half of their lives.

Incomplete, incomplete. And you have to feed yourself at some point. And sometimes we get so busy, I had kids early, you get so busy you never feed yourself. It's just, yeah, I don't even want to talk about it, but it's very easy to ignore the little part of you that is crying to do something that you could easily do and it would be useful, you know, and the time is now, and the time is now because the guy that I worked with died the other day at 53. (Jean)

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FITTING IN AND SPEAKING UP: CREATING DIGITAL FEMINIST LEARNING COMMUNITIES

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INTRODUCTION

Facebook has become a significant space for facilitating social movements with varied objectives and outcomes. Participants in social movements can build digital communities that engage with key concepts and issues. These digital communities may be public and open for conversation with diverse perspectives or private, allowing for intimate conversations between approved members. Research is now beginning to explore ways Facebook can support formal (Ahern, Feller, & Nagle, 2016) and informal (Pruchniewska, 2019) learning.

Adult education encourages learners to explore and learn ways structured power relations impact personal lives and can be resisted (Tisdale, 1993). Such learning may occur within formally structured adult education contexts within communities or higher education classes (Tisdell, 1993). However, learning may also occur informally through social movements (Hall, 2006).

Social movement learning in Facebook contexts allows ideas and theories to be “forged outside of academe, often incrementally, collectively, and informally” (Choudry, 2009, p. 6). This incremental, collective, and informal learning online is often under-researched and undervalued because formal education is often understood to generate legitimized learning and official knowledges (Choudry, 2015). However, it is important to consider these sites for informal learning as “social movements and activist milieus are also terrains of struggle over power, knowledge and ideas, including what constitutes legitimate or authoritative knowledge” (Choudry, 2015, p. 93).

Researching social movement learning through Facebook allows insight into how users negotiate and contest social norms such as gender. Additionally, research exploring online feminism considers ways “ordinary people have the potential to take control over their lives, that their consciousness emerges through struggle” (Choudry, 2015). Social movement learning thus emphasizes knowledge production through social interactions and that these social interactions may, in turn, build movements. Some researchers (Clark-Parsons, 2017; Pruchniewska, 2019) have found that feminist digital communities developed through private groups help users to learn about and engage with feminism in ways that may further facilitate and reinvigorate future feminist movements.

This research explores how some women learn about and advocate for feminism through Facebook groups. In this paper, I explore the key question, “What are some women’s experiences creating a feminist-focused Facebook discussion group?” Specifically, I explore the co-construction of norms, expectations, and content through a focus group discussion of 8 women who identify as feminists and use Facebook to learn about and engage with feminism.

Through this research, those interacting, researching, educating, and learning within social network sites may gain a deeper understanding of how online feminist spaces are

constructed and maintained through various gendered discourses and power relations. Specifically, those interacting in these spaces may benefit from understanding different perspectives regarding online engagement and may gain further insight into the implications of their engagement.

METHODS

In this research, participants participated in an initial and exit interview. I also invited them to participate in a digital focus group through a private Facebook group. This focus group collected data on participants' shared experiences and issues related to gender and Facebook and created a critical space to develop feminist standpoints and engage in feminist conversation. Of the nine total participants, seven participated in the Facebook focus group. All participants had previously joined Facebook groups to curate news and information. Four of these participants had also engaged in groups for social justice.

When creating the focus group, I titled it "Facebook and Feminism" and did not add any pictures or texts to the group leaving it as a blank slate for participants to build together. I told participants to participate in ways that were meaningful to them. To begin posting, I started with an introduction of myself. Participants then posted lengthy introductions followed by posts that they felt were relevant to the topics of Facebook and feminism. The data discussed in this paper is from the exit interviews where participants discussed their experiences participating in the digital focus group.

FINDINGS

This section discusses the participants' experiences participating in a feminist-focused Facebook group that supports informal learning. Throughout their interviews, the participants frequently compared their formal learning experiences and their participation in the feminist-focused Facebook group. Their interviews revealed ways that they relied on and applied expectations of formal education. In building a group where the participants felt comfortable exploring feminist topics, they navigated developing group norms, mitigating previous experiences and barriers to participation, and establishing a diverse yet cohesive group for informal learning.

Establishing group norms: Finding a template for engagement

The participants incidentally learned to develop strategies to engage with other group members by participating in the Facebook group. These strategies included reflecting group norms and expectations when contributing content to the group. The participants chose interaction strategies and content by evaluating how other group members participated. For example, participants explained they learned to compose self-introductions based on what other participants had written. As Nina explains, "I see how other people post first about themselves... I just kind of used that as kind of a framework to bounce off of and then I just filled it in in a way that was meaningful to me" (Intake interview). Nina describes other peoples' posts as a "framework" for her own.

Similarly, Alana “waited for other people to kind of take the lead... I actually find that very difficult. How do I introduce myself to this group? Do I introduce myself based on my job or my education?... There’re so many different ways you can portray yourself” (Exit interview). Like Nina, Alana observed other introductions before crafting her own. Alana also highlights ways her digital profile is fluid and discursively constructed. With “many different ways” to portray herself, Alana chooses an acceptable self-representation that aligns with the participants in the group.

Discerning group norms, Emma introduced herself based on the purpose of the group. The group was created for the purposes of academic research. So, Emma believed that academic work might be the most relevant way to introduce herself to the group: “I think I just chose to introduce myself based on the context of the group, like based on my academic work more” (Exit interview).

In developing their digital subjectivity, participants assumed a “template” (Lena, Exit interview) for self-construction that included presumed or expected markers (Haraway, 1991) that reflected their interpretation of the group expectations (Pearson, 2009). Their reliance on group norms to construct their subjectivity connected with some participants’ insecurity with their feminist standpoint.

As the participants shifted their conceptualizations of valued knowledge, they contributed and shaped the group’s culture. Describing decision-making processes when contributing to the group, Alana explained that she chose articles based on what she thought other participants might find interesting or meaningful, “I’m also... trying to pick things that I thought other people would find interesting in the group as well” (Exit interview). Diana similarly reflected ways she tried to contribute based on the interests of others and her own: “I thought oh that would fit well with this particular group” (Exit interview).

Despite having different viewpoints, Alana wanted to show support for all contributions on the page. In doing so, Alana wanted to ensure that all co-participants were equally valued. Lena similarly tried to acknowledge all posts in the group. She stated, “I tried to acknowledge it because I thought it was important and... they’re not posting it frivolously, there’s a reason they’re posting it in there and so I try to acknowledge it” (Exit interview). Lena, Alana, and Emma tried to support the co-participants in the focus group by using Facebook tools such as the “like button.” In doing so, the participants felt they were showing an appreciation for posts that aligned with and diverted from their perspective.

The group did not require a singular feminist perspective but encouraged the weaving of different perspectives. In this way, the group members’ consideration of others and thoughtfulness in their diverse views enriched the learning through the group. Describing posts that reflected different feminist standpoints, Emma stated, “I can appreciate it, and I don’t disagree with it, but we just have a slightly different interest in that sense” (Exit interview).

Qualifying Feminist standpoints: Credentializing perspectives

Some participants felt intimidated when interacting in a feminist Facebook group, expressing that they doubted their ability or authority to participate in feminist discussions. For the participants, this connected with their experiences in formal education and engaging with feminist topics on social media. Describing self-doubt when sharing insights within a group

setting, Alana states, “you’d go back to school mode like, oh my gosh... I won’t be able to say anything as smart” (Exit interview).

Similarly, Lena felt concerned that she wouldn't be able to “measure up” to others. She stated, “I guess I kind of felt that I had to have certain qualifications to be a part of this group but once it got down to it, it didn’t even matter” (Exit interview). Lena meticulously crafted her posts to address her own “insecurities” for participation. Afraid that spelling mistakes might delegitimize her posts, Lena prepared paragraphed responses in a word processing program. As Lena used academic writing conventions in her group posts, Emma found that she was “intimidated” by the posts and felt like an “impostor.” She stated, “I remember thinking at one point, almost feeling intimidated by that... I think is for me a bit of a problem in terms of confidence in academe. Like I always kind of feel like a bit of an impostor” (Exit interview).

Noticing that other participants connected their feminist standpoints with academic experience, Diana voiced concern for ways formal education may credentialize feminism. She stated:

there’s all kinds of people that they see this as an academic topic and it’s not an academic topic in my humble opinion, I think it’s a human topic, it exists everywhere, everywhere we go, in a grocery store in a you know wherever we go, wherever we travel there’s some element happening and you can watch it happening but if it’s only acceptable to talk about this in academic spaces then we’re in trouble. (Exit Interview)

In maintaining feminism in academia, feminism may become disconnected from the “everyday feminism” (hooks 1999) needed to support social movements. The participants saw each other as stronger, more qualified feminists than they saw themselves. They doubted their ability, authority, and qualification to speak intellectually about feminism and in doing so, reflect ways formalized schooling has monopolized “what counts as knowledge” over that of learning in other contexts (Nesbit, 2013, p. 21). As such, credentialed, formal, academic learning may be privileged over every day, informal, and experiential learning (English & Irving, 2015).

As English and Irving (2015) argue, patriarchal, bureaucratic discourses reinforce official learning in formal education. Such education discourses further diminish women’s experiential and informal learning (English & Irving, 2015). In likening the Facebook group to an academic space, the participants use language related to formal education to describe their informal learning. Through engaging in feminist-focused conversations, the participants began to discursively “reconstitute themselves as knowing subjects” (English & Irving, 2015, p. 139) and the group as a valuable space for learning.

Developing feminist voices beyond academia: Engaging with and extending informal learning

Gender power relations seep into everyday acts and representations of participants. While the participants had discussed ways they felt regulated on their public Facebook profiles, they believed the group was more supportive of feminist conversations. Their initial concerns for participation, such as their qualifications as feminists and credibility in posts, reflected their prior experiences dealing with backlash from other users. They agreed that having a focused topic, maintaining respectful dialogue, and having a restricted number of participants, allowed them to engage in ways they may not have otherwise. Participants eventually experienced the group as a learning space where they expanded their understanding and standpoint. For

example, Diana appreciated that the posts were not “frivolous” and offered a variety of perspectives that differed but were not oppositional:

I like when people post things that make me think. And not just from academic [posts]. [The group made] me think differently because it’s always interesting to hear someone else’s perspective. (Exit interview)

Additionally, Alana agreed that content was thought-provoking but in ways that were accessible beyond the academic contexts within which she typically engaged with feminism:

I found that talking about it in the context of the Facebook group with articles that we find that are not necessarily academic.... [allowed us to] talk about feminism in this meaningful, accessible context but not necessarily talking about different theorists or different authors or different researchers. (Exit interview)

The participants expressed excitement with an opportunity to informally learn in a non-academic context connected with their lived experiences. Although the participants began the focus group with a formal education framework, shifting to informal learning allowed them to engage in more meaningful or “accessible” (Alana, Exit interview) ways.

Emma explained that engaging with other participants allowed her to reflect on and learn about her positionality:

Seeing what other people were talking about it made me kind of recognize more of my identity in terms of feminism and where I fit into that in that puzzle... I think it was a good reminder not to be so insular. Especially when you’re doing this [academic] kind of work and your nose is in your laptop all the time and you kind of forget what experiences are for other women. (Exit interview)

Emma highlights the importance of engaging with multiple perspectives to understand further where she fits into the feminist “puzzle.” She emphasizes ways that her experiences as an academic are often “insular” and can lose touch with the experiences of others. As Alana discussed,

This is something that I’m interested in but maybe haven’t had a lot of opportunities to discuss... I was actually posting and sharing and doing things that I would have for discussions about that with friends and family that I might not necessarily have before. And I think a lot of that has to do with being immersed within the topic of feminism in popular culture media now whereas before it was more me being immersed in the theory and that might be harder to have discussions about. (Exit interview)

Participation in the group supported Alana’s access to news and information, which helped her confidence in discussing feminist issues in her workplace. Alana’s learning within the group extended into her offline life and influenced how she continued to engage online.

While Alana increased her exposure and access to feminist content that supported critical conversations in her personal life, Nina discussed ways the group could support critical conversations with her sisters. Nina believed that non-academic, media-based, feminist content and ensuing discussions prepared her for beginning feminist discussions with teenagers. She describes an example of an article posted in the group that applied a gendered critique to the media attention of Taylor Swift’s dating history. Nina reflected, “my younger sisters listen to Taylor Swift quite a bit and... I just kind of wished that I could have that conversation with my

younger sisters” (Exit interview). For Nina, having a group to discuss feminist content in multiple ways allowed her to engage in conversations that she may not have in other focused groups or on her Facebook profile or newsfeed. By engaging with diverse standpoints and perspectives, Nina expanded the possibilities for critical conversations to support and encourage feminism with younger females in her life.

While Nina developed tools to inspire feminist conversations with young women, Lena developed a greater understanding of her feminist subjectivity and feminist activism than she had before the focus group. Lena reflected, “I loved it, I thought it was so good... I realized I’m more of a feminist than I even knew, I learned that I know more about feminism, or understand more about feminism that I thought I did” (Exit interview).

Unlike more public Facebook profiles, having a private group with few members allowed the participants to engage in focused, meaningful conversations. In similarly valuing feminism (albeit from diverse standpoints), the participants found commonalities and developed a community of respect. The participants’ experiences reflect the importance of informal learning. Choudry (2015) highlights the importance of social interactions and ways everyday experiences influence movements. The group offered a space where these interactions can take place. For example, many participants shared media articles from multiple sources and added their own critique or perspective to the article. In doing so, participants shared their different standpoints and critically discussed current events that were not readily accessible otherwise.

CONCLUSION

The participants’ experiences reflect the importance of informal learning. While participants shared experiences and information across time and locational borders, they extended this learning to their everyday lives. This research does not claim that the participants engaged in transformative learning, but participants did express that they increased their awareness about current issues related to gender and enjoyed feminist-focused conversations. Increased understanding of gender advocacy within social network sites may thus support understandings of development of transformative digital learning spaces.

Choudry (2015) highlights the importance of social interactions and ways everyday experiences influence movements. The Facebook group offered a space where these interactions can take place. Hafkin and Huyer (2006) argue that we must promote women’s agency so that they become active constructors and disseminators of knowledge within technological spaces. Developing a feminist Facebook group allowed participants a collaborative space for community development and feminist-focused conversations (Jackson, 2007). With barriers to critical engagement on Facebook through profiles and posts, groups can offer user-controlled spaces for engagement. With misconceptions of feminism permeating popular media (McRobbie, 2009) and with feminism and gender studies being cut and marginalized in educational contexts (Ringrose, 2013), feminist Facebook groups may offer a space where feminist misconceptions can be challenged and learning about feminist activism can begin.

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COMBATING RACISM IN THE PANDEMIC: A SITE OF SOCIAL MOVEMENT LEARNING

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Abstract

The Covid-19 pandemic since the beginning of the year 2020 has witnessed a significant rise of racial discrimination and attacks targeting racialized and Indigenous communities in Canada. These incidents, triggered by public crisis such as the current pandemic, have amplified the deeply entrenched and pervasive systemic racism and at the same time, have spurred a rise of resistance from racially marginalized communities for social justice, as manifested in the mass of anti-racism social actions and movements initiated by racialized communities and their allies. However, there seems to be little research as to how these anti-racism social movements taking place during the pandemic have precipitated learning for both individuals directly involved in the movements and others who are made aware of such movements. In light of this gap, this paper therefore explores how social justice movements against racism during the current pandemic can be a site of learning.

Keywords: Racism, social movement learning, Stop Asian Hate, Black Lives Matter, Idle No More, pandemic, critical adult education.

INTRODUCTION

Much critical adult education literature has focused on the critique of structural inequality in analyzing issues pertaining to "race" and racism. Less attention has been paid to the individual and collective agency of members of the racialized communities. Yet, an emphasis on agency is necessary for exploring potentials and possibilities for social change to existing structures and such emphasis is captured by social movement learning (SML). This paper therefore sheds light on SML in the Covid-19 pandemic by racialized communities of Asians, Blacks, and Indigenous people in Canada. It first reviews SML as the theoretical framework. It then presents anti-Asian, anti-Black, and anti-Indigenous racism during the pandemic by primarily drawing on popular news media and public reports. Next, it discusses three main sites of SML in the pandemic mobilized by the racialized communities. Finally, the paper summarizes the characteristics of SML in the pandemic and provides their implications for research and practice of critical adult education.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK: SOCIAL MOVEMENT LEARNING

Social movements are grassroots collective initiatives and actions aimed at challenging practices and policies or advancing claims and visions that significantly affect the rights and welfare of the communities involved (Morris, 2005). They are usually mobilized outside of established political and institutional channels and are key drivers of social change (Johnston, 2014). In general, they share characteristics of people coming together in 1) informal interactive

networks, 2) shared beliefs and solidarity, 3) collective action focused on conflict, and 4) the use of protest (Porta & Diani, 1999).

The term “social movement learning” was first used by comparative and international education scholar, Rolland Paulston (1980). Since then, adult educators have become major contributors to the theorization of SML. According to Hall and Clover (2005), SML is “learning by persons who are part of any social movement and learning by persons outside of a social movement as a result of the actions taken or simply by the existence of social movements” (pp. 584-589). This definition sets out the site of learning and the learners involved, linking a learning agenda to social movements. As social movements engender a pressing stimulus to educate or inform the public about an important social issue and offer a space for learning through interaction, communication, and other forms of information sharing, they become “a necessarily educational concern” (Hall et al., 2006, p. 7). The work of Eyerman and Jamieson (1991) provided a useful foundation of theorizing SML as they presented three aspects of examining SML, namely, 1) cognitive praxis, 2) movement intellectuals, and 3) context of articulation (political, cultural, and institutional). The first aspect can be understood by what Diani (1996) referred to as “interpretive frames”, which is a conceptual structure or positional stance through which people make sense of their lived experiences and the world. The second aspect points to the agentic role of activists and advocates, who are capable of knowledge sharing and creatively mobilizing resources to take actions. The third aspect identifies the contextual factors shaping learning that takes place in social movements. As Walters (2005) asserted, the forms of SML are conditioned by the material social structure of the society as well as the class, gender, race, and other locations of the people involved in social movements. Thus, SML is an emergent process shaped by interactions between the socio-political context, the identities of actors in the social movements, and the multiple and conflicting values and knowledges mobilized in the social movements.

Limited yet rigorously conducted research has enriched the meaning and dimensions of SML. Foley (1999), for example, pointed out that SML is a kind of informal and incidental learning. It is learning through the process of taking actions. It is also an emancipatory form of learning as learners learn to develop alternative organizational forms to solve significant problems they face, engage the spiritual aspect of self, raise consciousness of political issues, and mobilizing community action to liberate themselves. In outlining principles for effective social change education, Arnold and his colleagues (1991) asserted that SML occurs when it engages individuals’ mind, hands, and emotions, and when local issues are brought into national and global contexts. Kim’s (2011) qualitative case study found that reflection is a key dimension of SML as participants actively engage in questioning and seeking answers for themselves. English’s (2002) qualitative life history research on international adult educators’ international development work revealed that participants may need to handle identity politics to implement social action effectively and creatively. The study also suggested that raising critical awareness of injustice in SML may be further encouraged and supported through interactive forms of reflection.

It is worth noting that although SML is an important foundation of adult education in Canada, there has been scant in-depth research (Hall et al., 2006). There has also been a wide variety of descriptors used within the broad topic of SML, making it hard to consolidate further theorization. In terms of types of movements, most SML scholarship is concerned with community development, women’s movements, environmental movements, labour movements,

and anti-globalization movements. There has been a lack of research on movements motivated by participants' experiences of marginalization due to their social identities such as aboriginal peoples' movements, anti-racism movements, and LGBTQ2S+ movements. There has also been a marked lack of work on health movements. Meanwhile, there has been a lack of attention to the creation of new social movement organizations that ensues from movements (Hall et al., 2006).

PANDEMIC RACISM

While the Covid-19 pandemic has plunged the world into a health crisis, a surge of hate-crime incidents targeting racialized and Indigenous communities prompted by this health crisis has further caught many ethnically diverse countries in a pandemic of racism. With a focus on anti-Asian, anti-Black, and anti-Indigenous racism during the pandemic, this paper sheds light on concerning ethnic tension in Canada.

According to media and public reports, the last two years into the pandemic have witnessed various forms of racism across racialized and Indigenous communities. An earlier report by the Chinese Canadian National Council Toronto Chapter (CCNC) (2021) revealed that there were 1150 cases of racist attacks from across Canada based on online racism reporting platforms within the first year into the pandemic. The majority of incidents were reported in Ontario and British Columbia. In Vancouver, for example, hate crime incidents targeting Asian communities rose by 717% in 2020 compared to 2019, the highest per Asian capita in North America (Liu, 2021). Some of its members are stigmatized because of the virus and their properties are vandalized. They have been depicted as "weak, sickly, diseased, and foreign, and therefore 'undesirable' citizens" (Guo & Guo 2021, p.204). As victims of racial discrimination, Asian Canadians have subsequently experienced high levels of anxiety, trauma, and desperation (Angus Reid Institute, 2020; Wang et al., 2021). Women, children, and seniors were more likely to fall victims of racist attacks as 60% of all reported cases were targeting women, and children and seniors suffered a high proportion of physical assaults (CCNC, 2021).

The long-standing issue of racism against the Black community also exacerbated during the pandemic. On the one hand, Black Canadians were exposed to higher health and social risks (African Canadian Civic Engagement Council and Innovative Research Group, 2020). They are more likely to report Covid-19 symptoms as they are more likely to have jobs that require face-to-face interaction and to commute to work via public transit. They are also more vulnerable to financial instability as they are more likely to experience layoff or reduced working hours, and thus, more worried about paying rent and household finances in general. Despite such higher health and social vulnerability, there was a refusal to collect and publish race-based health data on Covid-19 in Canada, an indicator of ignorance and trivialization of health inequities for the racialized community (Bowden, 2020; Osman, 2021). On the other hand, racism against the Blacks in Canada in the health domain during the pandemic has brought the public's attention to anti-Black racism in the broader social domain, particularly, the issue of police brutality against the Blacks. The death of a 29-year-old black Toronto resident, Regis Korchinski-Paquet, involving concerns of police brutality, is just the tip of an iceberg, as CBC News' research on fatalities at the hands of the police revealed an over-representation of Black and Indigenous people in death caused by police violence (Singh, 2020). The deaths in police brutality and

those due to Covid-19 appear to be separate concerns, but they are in fact “linked expressions of deeply entrenched anti-Black racisms” (Mianda, 2020, p. 3).

Similar to the experiences of Black people in Canada, Indigenous people were also disproportionately affected by the pandemic. There was a much higher Covid-19 case rate within the Indigenous community than the Canadian average due to poor living and health conditions including food scarcity, overcrowded housing, contaminated water, and substandard health care (Hawthorn, 2021). The implementation of public health behaviours such as frequent hand washing, physical distancing, and self-isolation is a challenge in Indigenous communities due to a lack of readily available clean water and quarantine space (Public Health Agency of Canada, 2021). Mental health issue also becomes prominent as government policies on lockdown triggered Indigenous people’s traumatic memories of colonization when white colonizers dismissed the rights and freedoms of Indigenous people. Mistrust in the government further contributed to Indigenous people’s reluctance to approach health care professionals and access healthcare service during the pandemic. The tragic death of an Indigenous women in Quebec, Joyce Echaquan, is but one example of how anti-Indigenous racism in the form of prejudice and bias could lead to deadly consequences. This case may also further fuel Indigenous people’s reluctance to access public healthcare. It is worth noting that while there are Indigenous representative organizations ready and available to engage with, they were not consulted in terms of Covid-19 intervention. Indigenous people’s right to self-governance during the pandemic is thus, neglected (Howard-Bobiwash et al., 2021).

ANTI-RACISM SOCIAL MOVEMENTS: SITES OF LEARNING

Anti-Asian, anti-Black, and anti-Indigenous racism is not a new phenomenon that arises during the pandemic. Rather, it is a prevalent and persistent issue linked to historical and structural racism and triggered by the current health crisis. It exposes a race-based social hierarchy in Canada where white supremacy is sustained at the expense of the lives and livelihood of racialized communities. The issue of race and racism during the pandemic has grown to be so disconcerting that a critical learning moment seems to have arisen when racialized communities and their allies started to question, to challenge, and to exercise their agency in finding solutions to this issue. The past two years into the pandemic have witnessed various scales and forms of grassroots social movements against racism, which are important sites of learning for social movement participants as well as the public at large. This section will demonstrate some of the sites of SML.

Protests and Rallies

Protests and rallies have traditionally been the primary form of social movements and have been utilized during the pandemic to raise awareness about and fight against racism. For example, members of the Asian community across Canada used the slogan “Stop Asian Hate” to organize rallies on March 28th, 2021, joining rallies across North America triggered by the tragic shooting in Atlanta, U.S., where six women of Asian descent were killed (Dao, 2021; Bowden, 2021). In the same vein, Alliance for Healthier Communities (2020) has led rallies calling for the collection of race-based data on the impact of Covid-19. With the “Black Lives Matter” (BLM) slogan, members of the Black community and their allies across Canada held rallies in many cities following protests across the U.S. over the death of George Floyd in Minneapolis’s police violence incident (CBC News, 2020). Thousands of people also joined protests against police

brutality after the death of Regis Korchinski-Paquet. These protests, organized by the Not Another Black Life group, were not only a response to this single incident, but also an action in support of the denunciation of anti-Black and anti-Indigenous racism (Westoll & Rocca, 2020). As for Indigenous people, protests were organized to mourn for the Indigenous children died in residential schools and to call for social justice, truth, and reconciliation following the discovery of hundreds of unmarked graves (French, 2021). Indigenous leaders also initiated the Orange Shirt Day movement to raise awareness about the history and legacies of the residential school system in Canada. Another more established social movement called Idle No More (INM), also Indigenous led, has led "Cancel Canada Day" protests to call for the recognition of ongoing colonization, genocide, oppression, and violation of human rights (INM, 2021). Many other rallies were organized by INM during the pandemic, including those against the federal government's discriminatory Covid-19 assistance toward Indigenous people, and those against anti-Indigenous police brutality and racism (Godin, 2020).

Online Platforms and Social Media

During the pandemic when people need to exercise physical distancing, digital platforms have become an increasingly important arena for mobilizing social movements virtually. To fight against anti-Asian racism, Chinese Canadians, for instance, organized numerous anti-racism campaigns and educational events using online meeting platforms such as Zoom and social media platforms such as WeChat. Many NGOs with Asian Canadian members set up racist incident report portals online and compiled educational resources on their websites to inform people as to how to respond to racism and discrimination, and to call for proactive actions (Boisvert, 2020; Patton, 2020). Many Chinese Canadians initiated online rallies and online petitions to stop discrimination (Babych, 2021; Chen, 2020; We Canadian, 2020). Popular social media such as YouTube have been utilized to call for solidarity and action against racism through artistic forms (CBC News, 2021). In the BLM movement, social media platform, Twitter, has become instrumental in creating a public sphere for Black activists (Carney, 2016). The hashtag #BLM has been created to gather collective support and resistance and has also sparked heated debates and critical reflection from the public (Maqbool, 2020; Perrin, 2020). For the Indigenous-led INM social movement, social media like Twitter and Facebook have also played a vital role in mobilizing collective action and building allyship (INM, n.d.). In using the hashtag #idlenomore, people who are separated by geographical locations can be united to participate in mass protests nationwide. Such user-generated and decentralized platforms also allowed every advocate and participant to have their voices heard (Donkin, 2013).

Social Movement Organizations and Long-Term Initiatives

In addition to social movement and advocacy organizations established before the pandemic such as the Action, Chinese Canadians Together (ACCT) Foundation, BLM Canada chapters and their newly launched WildSeed Centre for Art and Activism, and various Indigenous advocacy organizations like the Assembly of First Nations (AFN), there have been emerging efforts to establish new community organizations and long-term projects in light of pandemic racism. For example, Black Canadian leaders and activists have started long-term capacity-building initiatives by launching the Canadian Council of Business Leaders Against Anti-Black Systemic Racism and the BlackNorth Initiative to increase the representation of Black leaders in corporate Canada and to address multi-layered challenges facing Black Canadians (McNutt, 2021). An immigrant and refugee support organization, Skills for Change, has launched the Black

Leadership Institute on Social Action for Change to foster systemic change in addressing anti-Black racism (Skills for Change, 2021). However, such future-oriented anti-racism capacity-building initiatives are few and most existing projects are rather responsive and short-term, without strategic development plans.

DISCUSSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS FOR SOCIAL MOVEMENT LEARNING

The pandemic has a great potential for precipitating SML about race and racism not just because of the exposure of social inequity and injustice due to the health crisis, but also because of the racist incidents that spurred racialized communities' memories of a history of racist violence, discrimination, and resistance. It tended to evoke strong emotions of rage that can further one's engagement in SML through questioning, critical reflection, and action. It can be seen from discussions in this paper that there are various sites of SML during the pandemic and each site has been utilized differently by each racialized community. Protests and rallies continued to be a primary site of learning, but digital platforms and future-oriented long-term capacity building initiatives have also become increasingly prominent. These characteristics of SML suggest areas of research and implications for critical adult education in the following aspects.

First, since digital platforms have become a driving means for SML, there is a need for qualitative research on how learning occurs in the new virtual public spheres including any tension in knowledge exchange and identity development, and how such learning contributes to actual collective actions. Quantitative research can also help advance the theorizing of SML by examining and comparing the demographic profiles of activists who would rely on digital platforms for SML and those who preferred to physically participate in protests. Second, long-term capacity-building initiatives are emerging but still very few, especially in the Asian and Indigenous communities in Canada. Future research can explore why this gap exists and how initiatives oriented toward leadership and empowerment can be developed and further supported. Third, even though some Asian and Black community organizations have expressed their solidarity with the Indigenous community, it seems that each community is mostly involved in their own respective social movements. For promoting SML across racialized communities, critical adult educators could seek ways to facilitate inter-community dialogues for collective knowledge sharing and interactive reflection, which may be conducive to community development coalition and collective action in even broader and stronger solidarity. Last but not the least, consistent with previous findings in SML literature, SML in the pandemic seems to primarily take the form of informal and incidental learning. Critical adult educators could further explore ways to incorporate such learning into more formal settings so that more in-depth learning can be facilitated by situating individual knowledge within theoretical perspectives and various social, historical, and political contexts.

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THE MAKING OF IDEAL IMMIGRANT SETTLEMENT WORKERS: EXPERIENCES OF TEXTUAL RULING POWER IN MOULDING WORKPLACE SUBJECTIVITY

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Abstract

This research examines the learning experiences of immigrant settlement workers (ISWs) in Canada. Informed by Foucault's concept of governmentality as well as institutional ethnography (IE), we unpack how outcomes measurement, as required by the federal government and exercised by a series of technologies of power, constructs the translocal textual ruling relations that coordinate ISWs' daily work activities. Through three layers of governing—pedagogical training and learning, textual-mediated learning, and social relationships—ISWs foster their own self-governed subjectivities, producing adaptable, productive, self-caring, self-regulated, and self-accountable workers by implementing and operationalizing the objectives of outcomes measurement in immigrant service agencies (ISA). This process of making ideal ISWs legitimizes ISWs' apparatus role in reinforcing textual ruling power and serving the agenda of the state.

Keywords: Immigrant settlement workers, workplace learning, intersectionality, institutional ethnography, immigration and integration in Canada

INTRODUCTION

Canada is one of the most ethnoculturally diverse countries due to its promotion and development of immigration. According to the 2016 Census (Statistics Canada, 2017), 7,540,830 foreign-born individuals came to Canada through the immigration process, representing over one-fifth (21.9%) of Canada's total population. This proportion is close to the 22.3% recorded during the 1921 Census, the highest level since Confederation. Given this data, about one out of every five people in Canada is member of a racialized minority group. The shifting composition and increased diversity of the immigrant population calls attention to the matter of integration (Tolley et al., 2011). As a fluid and elusive term, integration "means various things to various people in varying situations" (Jedwab, 2006, p. 97) and is used interchangeably with adjustment, adaptation, and acculturation (Korac, 2003). In fact, though integration is conceptualized as both an individual and a group phenomenon (Berry, 2015), it does not happen spontaneously but instead requires government action and community cooperation (Tolley et al., 2011). It should seek to engage Canadians, communities, and institutions in a longer-term process of welcoming and embracing newcomers into Canadian society (Guo & Guo, 2016).

Despite Canada's rich immigration history and the strategic role that immigration plays in shaping our future, the issue of immigrant settlement and integration is nevertheless prominent. In this process, immigrant service agencies (ISAs) have taken on essential

responsibility to support newcomers' settlement and integration. What is less recognized, however, is the role of immigrant settlement workers (ISW), who work directly and closely with immigrants to facilitate their integration into the host society. More importantly, many of the ISWs are immigrants themselves, but there is very little research examining their experiences of learning in the ISA workplace. Therefore, this study explores their experiences of workplace learning at ISAs in Canada. The workplace can be a sophisticated site for learning and, as others have noted, can be driven by political and hierarchical power structures which manifests in workplace learning shaped by particular written texts (Fenwick, 2008). This learning process standardizes what counts as knowledge and forges work practices and the working relations of individuals. In light of these analyses, our research therefore focuses on the process of making ideal ISWs through textual ruling power that shapes how ISWs foster their own self-governed subjectivities in the workplace.

THEORIZING GOVERNMENTALITY

For its theoretical framework, this research adopts Foucault's concept of governmentality, which focuses on the relationship between power, institutions, and people in examining both governing power and practices of governing (Foucault, 2007). The theory of governmentality combines the terms government and rationality, focusing on two types of power: 1) the techniques or practices addressed to individual subjects within particular local institutions, and 2) the techniques and practices for governing populations of subjects at the level of political sovereignty over an entire society (Gordon, 1991). According to Foucault, governmentality encompasses multifarious "institutions, procedures, analyses, and reflections, the calculations and tactics" that have shifted interest from security over territory to security over people, which he described as "counter-conduct" (Foucault, 2007, p. 201). This concept is crucial to exploring technologies of power, the way governmental practices are articulated to conduct local practices and individual subjectivity through the exercise of self-formation activities (Foucault, 1991; Rabinow, 1997).

Studies of subjectivity are concerned with the instituted models of self-knowledge and their history in terms of how the subject is formed by a desirable or indispensable object of knowledge and how it is established at different moments and in different institutional contexts (Rabinow, 1997a). In governmentality, subjectivity originates from three components: 1) the conduct of conduct, that is the forces and capacities of living individuals, as members of a population, as resources to be fostered, to be used, to be optimized (Dean, 2010); 2) techniques of the self, that is, the rationality of governing that directs individuals to act on themselves and identifies both what work should be carried out on the self and how one should govern one's self through performing actions, achieving objectives, and employing instruments (Foucault, 1991; Rabinow, 1997); and 3) technologies of power, that is, the practices of governing that observe, monitor, shape, or control the behaviour of individuals situated within a range of social and economic institutions (Gordon, 1991). Together, these are the basis for micro and macro governmental practices that produce "specific types of rationality, regimes of representation, and interpretive models" (Bröckling et al., 2011, p. 2) through which individuals act upon themselves.

In the study of workplace learning, this focus on governmentality and subjectivity emphasizes the interdependencies between individual, social, and relational practices (Billett, 2006; Fenwick, 2006) and how these interdependencies can co-exist with the political and hierarchical

power by which they are further shaped and constructed. It needs to be noted that governing does not determine an individual's subjectivity, but it promotes and attributes active subjects through the promotion of reflection and reflexivity (Edwards & Nicoll, 2004). Governmentality shapes, sculpts, and constructs individuals' desires, needs, and intentions in workplace learning (Dean, 1999), compromising the conscious and non-conscious conceptions, dispositions, and procedures that direct individuals' agency in both the negotiation of knowledge and participation in social interactions to different degrees and in varying directions (Billett, 2006). This construction of subjectivity, therefore, privileges the interconnections between the distribution of power and its relations associated with the regimes of learning practices in the workplace.

METHODOLOGY AND RESEARCH DESIGN

This study employs the methodology of institutional ethnography (IE), which takes people's lived experiences as an entry point to interrogating how their local daily practices are related to or shaped by a translocal institutional nexus (Smith, 2005). According to Smith, power can be manifested through texts, which translocally generate "a complex of externalized social relations" that are organized and coordinated in people's social life in a local site (p. 6). Furthermore, the notion of ruling relations indicates the extraordinary yet ordinary complex relations between the interconnections of people, corporations, and government bureaucracies, which are textually mediated and connect individuals across space and time to organize and shape their daily lives (Smith, 2005, p. 10). IE goes beyond social discourses and social relations and focuses on the immediate local context and the ruling relations that are rooted in the managerial and "political-administrative regime" (Smith, 1990, p. 635).

Life history interviews and document analysis were employed in this research. Document analysis focused on the Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) Evaluation of Settlement Program, their conference materials and PowerPoints, the National Call for Proposal for Funding Guidelines, and the IRCC Settlement Program Logic Model. In terms of demographics, the 18 participants in the life history interviews were originally from 10 different countries, including China, Ethiopia, India, Iran, Kurdistan, Nigeria, Mexico, Philippines, a South American country, and a West African country (We are being vague about the last two to protect those participants' confidentiality). Two of these ISWs were male while 16 were females. All interviews were tape recorded with the permission of the participants and then transcribed verbatim. We utilized NVivo 12 and thematic analysis to analyze our data. Multiple research methods and data sources, including documents, interviews, and researcher reflections, were involved in the data collection process, meaning that this study adopted a triangulation approach, which enhanced the credibility and trustworthiness of the study (Schwandt et al., 2007).

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Contextualizing Textual Ruling Power

Textual ruling power in ISAs stems from the concept of outcomes measurement in IRCC, a government department that facilitates immigrants' settlement and integration. In IRCC, the Settlement Program is one of the major funders for settlement and integration programs

delivered by ISAs. Outcomes are measured in three phases: (1) Immediate outcomes—achievement, within one year from participating in the service, of changes in knowledge, skills, and networks; (2) Intermediate outcomes—achievement, within one to five years of participating in services, of the use of acquired skills and knowledge to support independent participation in the labour market or in society; and (3) Ultimate outcomes—success beyond the five-year period of integration within society (IRCC, 2017c, p. 4).

Based on analysis of IRCC outcome measurement documents, we found outcomes were assessed according to four major sets of data: inputs and resources, narrative reports, the Immigration Contribution Agreement Reporting Environment (iCARE) system that monitors the number of served clients and their integration progress, and the newcomers' survey to evaluate their integration and settlement progression (IRCC, 2017b, 2017c; Wright, 2019).

In the past five years, data collection methods have become central to assessing the outcomes of immigrant service programs, by which the IRCC Settlement Program determines the continuity of an ISA's programs. The Government of Canada Call for Proposal 2019: Settlement and Resettlement Assistance Program Funding Guidelines (IRCC, 2019) underscores the dual purpose of these data sets, defining an outcome-driven programming approach that is based on evidence and data and both tracks project outputs and measures client outcomes in order to recognize success at different outcomes stages while simultaneously providing the best outcomes for clients in their settlement journey.

The above analysis of outcomes measurement, its methods, and its importance to ISAs' programs contextualizes the art of governing that distributes technologies of power in order to foster textual ruling relations. In order to achieve the assessment of outcomes at local ISA sites, ISWs' learning in the workplace is moulded to serve this governmental agenda, shaping them to certain ways of thinking, doing, and acting. In the next three sections, we aim to demonstrate how this process of making ideal ISWs is developed and strengthened through ISWs' training and daily work exercise that ultimately construct the production of their self-governed subjectivity.

Governing through Pedagogical Training and Learning

Outcomes measurement is ingrained through ISWs' training and learning in formal, nonformal, and informal learning contexts, as ISWs are expected to practice institutional values in serving immigrant clients. For those ISWs who worked as professional consultants in their home countries or their previous employments, they experienced disjuncture in aligning their previous professionalism with the ISW training. For example, Helat and Maya indicated that the interaction with clients was insufficient to identify the needs of clients. Helat, particularly, stated that the approach of developing conversation was significantly simplified by assessment forms:

I was told not to cross the boundaries when working with my clients. You can't spend too much time chat[ting] with them but ask questions and get the information you need as soon as possible.... During the shadowing (training), I noticed [that] counsellors just provide them [immigrant clients] information about all [the] organization's programs and what they can access, what they cannot, asking about their, like, family situations, incomes, everything. That's it. (Helat)

In order to increase the number of clients served, instead of becoming familiar with clients' life difficulties through quality, in-depth conversations and assessing their needs based on those conversations, ISWs were taught to employ a "question and answer approach" by asking "what do you need?," "How can I help you?," and "Here is the information about...." Immigrants are therefore grouped into different categories on assessment forms or systems of data entry. Though many ISWs previously obtained professional training in counselling, and they found a lack of professionalism in their ISA training, they gradually accepted and normalized their learning experiences through their participation in work activities.

Our study also reveals that ISWs' training does not merely standardize their workplace practices; they also progressively adopt ISA pedagogical learning in acting on clients' lived experiences. There is a psychological and practical shift here as ISWs who did not previously uphold their pedagogical learning to implement outcomes measurement in their client interactions were gradually and naturally indoctrinated into the coordination of textual ruling power. Rather than paying more attention to assessing immigrant clients' needs through quality conversation, ISWs' thinking and acting conformed to institutional social relations. In this way, outcomes measurement has become a significant tool that reinforces "the ideological practices that produce a certain kind of knowledge practical to the task of ruling" (Smith, 2005, p. 421).

Governing through Textual-Mediated Learning

Textual-mediated learning is essential to ISWs' learning, as their practices are rationalized by outcomes measurement, which are embodied in various forms of action through a range of institutional operations. Many of our ISW participants indicated that ISAs' institutional practices tended to follow IRCC Settlement Program Models. For example, Lihua told us that the Logic Model was crucial in her experience, as all ISWs were responsible for participating in a chain service: every ISW had to provide quality data based on the Logic Model, which underscores service input and output, in order to collectively build a positive reputation for the program with the hope of receiving future government funding.

In order to further distribute outcomes measurement textual accountabilities, the chain service demonstrates how ISAs internalize the textual ruling order through a self-organized hierarchical reporting system. Frontline workers are responsible for first collecting data firsthand from immigrant clients, including information about their backgrounds and the services they received, and then reporting it to the governmental and organizational databases. Once the data have been collected, program coordinators review the data entry, collect numbers, summarize the main services provided, and generate reports on all these elements to managers. Next, managers condense and categorize reports from coordinators for outcomes description. Directors, then, address the managers' reports to strengthen the descriptions of outcomes. Finally, the CEO reports outcomes from all divisions and highlights achievements to the board. While this reporting system underscores a rigid role for each ISW for the measurement of outcomes, it stresses how the textual ruling power is created, distributed, and developed to constitute the social relations that translocally coordinate ISWs' learning at local sites.

Among the excessive textual burdens, frontline ISWs intensively engaged with textual documents in their role as data accumulators, collecting fundamental data for the later reporting steps. One participant, Kemi, for instance, indicated that in a typical workday she did not interact with clients but with documents and forms. When serving intake clients, she had

the client sign a consent form and fill out an intake form in order to collect their general information. She then completed an assessment form for the clients by asking them multiple choice questions. At the completion of services, clients filled out an evaluation form to trace their settlement and integration progress. Afterward, clients were invited to fill out a follow-up survey to give necessary feedback to the ISWs. As such, ISWs become textually sanctioned actors and agents to produce accountability in interconnected institutional rationalities and coordinative procedures (McCoy, 2014).

Governing through Social Relationship in the Workplace

Our research reveals how the process of making ideal ISWs through textual ruling power fundamentally alters social relations in the ISA workplace. As the textual ruling power crafts exemplary ISW subjects who, in submitting their learning agency in order to become part of the governmental apparatus, embody the normalization of ISA workplace learning, those ISWs perform and uphold institutional social relations that serve the agenda of the state first and foremost. For example, Yifeng suggested that there was a paradox between treating clients as “counted heads” and claiming to provide extensive services to clients, since meeting each client was time consuming and thus took time away from fulfilling their outcomes measurement reporting requirements. However, in participating in the textual ruling relations intensively through pedagogical training and textual-mediated learning, she progressively learned to operate in the coordination of textual ruling power. She stated,

If you are in the [ISA] system for so long and you work here as an insider, you unconsciously do the things that the organization expects you to. We know these tasks are requested by the funder, and that's how we survive. So gradually you become a machine listening to the organization.... This is my survival skill; it protects me [and allows me] to keep my job. (Yifeng)

For Yifeng, though she expressed some self-doubt about her practices in working with newcomers, she conformed herself to the textual ruling relations as a vital workplace survival skill, protecting her employment in the ISA. Similar to Yifeng, many ISWs expressed a paradoxical tension between their intentionality of working with clients and the reality of textual accountabilities. Though many of them understand that advising highly skilled immigrants to seek entry level employment is a significant waste of newcomers' skills, this is common practice nonetheless as it produces successful outcomes according to their reporting requirements. This finding was well addressed by Maya:

We don't have any other choice than suggesting [to] them (newcomers) [that they] go and do these [entry level] jobs. It is very upsetting.... But I think, after some time, you just kind of get used to the system, and your brain is kind of trained to guide your clients do that too. (Maya)

It is obvious that Maya's feelings about her interactions with immigrant clients have been subtly transformed from “upset about it” to “into it.” Through repetitive daily work tasks, ISWs have become self-governed subjects that serve textual accountabilities for outcomes measurement.

This learning process legitimizes what counts as knowledge and mould work practices and the social relationships between newcomers and ISWs themselves. This shifting role of ISWs generates textual ruling social relations that translocally produce ideal ISWs to serve the governmental function of the state.

CONCLUSION

This research examines the process of producing ideal ISWs in the ISA workplace. Particularly, it analyzes how outcomes measurement has, through certain technologies of power, come to form textual ruling relations that translocally shape coordination of ISWs' learning in the workplace, moulding them to certain ways of thinking, doing, and acting. Through pedagogical learning, textual-mediated learning, and social relationships, the ISA workplace produces ideal ISWs and self-governed subjects. Pedagogical learning highlights the textual accountabilities that regulate ISWs' work routine through formal, non-formal, and informal training and learning, which normalize a series of ideological practices and constructs ISWs' workplace knowledge to uphold the textual ruling power. Textual-mediated learning treats ISWs as "products," labelling them according to their outcomes-related textual accountabilities in the "production line." And in governing through social relationships, ISWs are invited to further exercise pedagogical knowledge and textual-mediated learning, configuring their self-governed subjectivity as adaptable, productive, self-caring, self-regulated, and self-accountable subjects. As such, not only do self-governed ideal ISWs strengthen textual ruling coordination by implementing and operationalizing the objectives of outcomes measurement, but their workplace learning is organized, normalized, and naturalized by the textual ruling power to reinforce their apparatus role for serving the state agenda.

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POLICE'S QUALIFIED IMMUNITY: EXPLORING BLACK CANADIANS DISGRUNTLEMENT AND IMPLICATIONS FOR ADULT EDUCATORS

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Abstract

Amidst the grief, disbelief and justified outrage at the killing of Black, Indigenous, and other racialized people, we attempt to make sense of what appears to be senseless police mayhem, violence and brutality invigorated by qualified immunity. The assault and killings of unarmed and non-dangerous Black people in North America by police have led to civilian protests and outrage globally. Racialized police brutality does not start and end at the Canada-USA border; thus, the gaze has now turned to Canadian police. In this substantive literature analysis, we employ an integrative literature review methodology to overview the knowledge base, critically review, and potentially reconceptualize and expand on the theoretical foundation of police qualified immunity in Canada. Such immunity sends an alarming signal to law enforcement officers that they can shoot first and think later, and it tells the public that palpably unreasonable conduct will go unpunished. This review contributes to Black peoples' liberatory praxis concerning the adult education/adult learning field of scholarship and practice. It informs adult educators, human rights and civil rights activists on how to approach institutionalized systemic and structural racism and discrimination in the bid to dismantle the dual injustice of police misconduct and qualified immunity in Canada.

Keywords: Qualified immunity, police brutality, anti-Black racism, White supremacy, liberatory praxis, adult education.

OVERVIEW

James Baldwin (1962) reminded us that not everything faced can be changed, but nothing can be changed until it is faced. If anything needs to change today in North America, it should start with structural racism invigorated by police brutality on people of colour. It is impossible to end police brutality without ending Qualified Immunity (QI) that shields criminals in the police force. The countless fatalities in the hands of police and other racially charged confrontations brought to the forefront a history of systemic and structural racism, discrimination, segregation, and selective treatment in Canada (BBC, 2020; McFadden, 2020; Taylor, 2020). Under Ontario (1990) Police Services Act (PSA), police officers are given immense leeway in determining whether keeping the public safe requires putting the public at risk. Tactlessly, this privilege is frequently abused while policing Black lives, habitually putting Black lives at risk (Friday, 2019, Maynard, 2017). Police should not be allowed to trade my safety for your safety. QI is how bureaucrats, especially courts, are given wide latitude to interpret the law, often protecting those supposed to protect us.

In Ontario, for example, Section 50 of the PSA on *liability for torts* deliberately includes vague language such as *acting in good faith*—to protect police officers from prosecution. How is acting in good faith measured after a violation of human rights? Since the state protects its protectors, qualified immunity from prosecution often allows police to get away with murder literally. According to Kitossa (2020), police are now an unprecedented, authoritative, cultural and

political force safeguarded by unions, the brotherhood, police services acts, increased authority, and lax prosecutions. The Court believes that qualified immunity doctrine is the way to keep the doors to the courthouse closed (Schwartz, 2017) and keep "bad cops" on the payroll. According to DasGupta et al. (2020), Black Torontonians represent 70% of civilian deaths in police shootings, meaning that police are 20 times more likely to kill a Black person than a White person. The Ontario Human Rights Commission (2021) reported that although Black people make up 9% of Toronto's population, they represent 36% of cases where police used pepper spray on an individual, 46% of cases where police used a taser on an individual, and 57% of cases involving a police dog. This reality of police bias takes its toll among Black Ontarians subject to bias-driven police street checks. Consequently, three-quarters of Black Torontonians reported a decreased sense of belonging in society, and 60% reported adverse mental health effects.

We are guided by Critical Race Theory (CRT) as the primary theoretical framework to explore how the *police's qualified immunity power* reproduces lawlessness, racism, classism, and oppression (Creswell, 2013; Delgado & Stefancic, 2012; Ladson-Billings, 1998). Regarding policing, we seek to unsettle/disturb/disrupt mainstream governmental practices of social control and ways Black people as a subjugated community are "governed through coercion, containment, repression, surveillance, regulation, predation, discipline, and violence" (Soss & Weaver, 2017). We aim to contribute to the adult education scholarly discourse on social justice, inclusion, diversity, equality, and equity (Rawls, 1999; Young, 1990) within the context of ongoing police reforms.

BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

Reuters described police's qualified immunity as a nearly failsafe tool to let police brutality go unpunished and deny victims' constitutional rights. Lawyers globally have argued that "using force ... serves no legitimate law enforcement purpose and violates the Fourth Amendment's protection against unreasonable seizures" (Wydra & Gans, 2021, p. 6). The Fourteenth Amendment was drafted more than 150 years ago in the USA to prevent and redress the identical police violence against African Americans. This judge-made-doctrine permits rights to be trampled and Black lives taken with impunity. Cohen observed that policing in North America today is born out of the nucleus of authoritarianism, which supports the unlawful proud mindset of "I can kill you, no matter the reason, and nothing will happen to me" (Render, 2021, p. xv).

Police Brutality and Rationale for Court Protection

In the USA, the first official American police department was formed in 1838 in Boston after lighter methods of policing enslaved Black people had failed (Neal, 2021). The sole justification for policing in North America was to oppress and subjugate Indigenous (landowners) and Black people (slave labourers). Neal asserted that the need to inflict forced labour on Black lives after slavery was the main objective of the original police force. Force was ingrained into police tactics as "hate groups" such as the Ku Klux Klan (KKK) merged with the system. Interpretive researchers need no further guidance to diagnose why generation after generation, new rules were put into place specifically to target the Black population, including segregation, incarceration, voter suppression, redlining, lack of government assistance, and economic

infrastructure. Qualified immunity was and still is suitable for the state to protect and shield police violence against Black and Indigenous people and propel White supremacy ideals.

In Chief Justice Earl Warren's high court decision, his idea that officers acting in "good faith" should not be held accountable for federal civil rights violations laid the groundwork for today's interpretation of qualified immunity in the USA and Canada (Januta et al., 2020a). The concept evolved as the courts worked to develop an objective test for whether an officer acted *reasonably*. Today, even if officers have violated a person's rights, judges must grant immunity if they find no clear precedent putting officers on notice that their actions were out of line. Warren wrote in his opinion that, while police are not entitled to *absolute and unqualified immunity*, officers should not be held liable "if they acted in good faith and with probable cause in making an arrest under a statute that they believed to be valid" (Januta et al., para. 7).

Acts of colonial violence on Indigenous and Black bodies continue to happen in Canada and are protected by qualified immunity. Both Indigenous and Black people are overwhelmingly overrepresented in police-involved deaths in Canada (Stelkia, 2020). The Ontario Human Rights Commission (2018) found that a Black person was more than 20 times more likely to be shot and killed by the police compared to a White person.

QUALIFIED IMMUNITY THEORETICAL FRAMING

Schweikert (2020) described qualified immunity as "a judicial doctrine that protects public officials from liability, even when they break the law ... and it severely undermines official accountability" (Para. 1). Similarly, Cohen (2021) maintained that "the theory underlying qualified immunity is that a police officer (an officer of the law) is not expected to know that something they might do is unlawful unless another cop has previously been convicted for breaking that particular law in their jurisdiction" (p. 35). For example, a case of police brutality is brought to a judge, "the judge is legally required to ignore a crime committed if there has not been a previous conviction of a police officer for precisely the same crime in that jurisdiction" (Cohen, p. 35). Since it's impossible even to get a trial of a police officer who is the first in their jurisdiction to break a particular law, there can never be a previous conviction. Therefore, police officers who violate that law can never be brought to trial. For example, a police officer said, "in my thirty-five-year law enforcement career, I can't recall two similar critical incidents I was ever involved in" (Myers, 2021, p. 43). Qualified immunity is particularly pernicious in the context of policing. It erodes the enforcement of constitutional rights, undermines the rule of law, and denies justice to those victimized by the police, letting the cycle of racialized policing and police brutality repeat over and over again" (Wydra & Gans, 2021, p. 9). While discussing the hostility that minority groups, especially Black people experience, Walsh (n.d.) maintained that "police themselves are often the original cause of violence (The crisis of policing Section), and we know that violence reproduces violence.

In a comprehensive analysis of data from courts on lawsuits against police officers, Reuters investigators found that the appellate courts' growing tendency to rule in favour of violent police officers is influenced by guidance from the Supreme Court to grant police immunity (Januta et al., 2020b). More than ever, courts ignore whether cops have violated a plaintiff's constitutional rights, thereby avoiding establishing a precedent for future cases and making it harder to win cases against the police. Januta posited that the failure to set precedents is

particularly challenging for plaintiffs because the data also showed that appellate courts increasingly require a nearly identical case from the past to serve as a precedent that clearly establishes an officer's actions as illegal—a high standard that again makes it hard to win against the police.

DISCUSSION

When public trust is lost and citizens are agitated by police routine murders, we cannot think of fixing the law enforcement system without first ending the problematic qualified immunity legal doctrine. Some politicians such as the Atlanta Mayor reasoned that “qualified immunity doctrine is perhaps the single lynchpin that holds the entire racism machine together” (Render, 2021, p. xii). There's no way to hold “bad cops” accountable for their violent crimes against Canadian people without ending qualified immunity. Render argued that the system will perpetuate itself largely undisturbed, and violence will rage on and on as Black communities all over the country keep on living in fear of the very people sworn allegedly to protect them. Canadian anti-Black racism is deeply embedded in institutions, policies, practices, and structures of thinking and action. Kline (2017) argued that antiblackness is about power and is revealed through practices, forms, and apparatuses and ways that “anti-Black racism has historically developed, changed, and reassembled/reterritorialized concerning state power, national identity, philosophical discourse, biological discourse, political discourse, and so on” (p. 66). Qualified immunity is immensely interwoven with the legacy of anti-Black racism and the ongoing denial of Black people of their basic humanity, reflecting the afterlife of slavery that continually situates Black peoples as objects of fetish and force (Sexton, 2010, 2015).

In Whose Interest Does the Police Serve?

The notion of police being there to serve and protect in times of need often does not apply to Indigenous, Black or other racialized minorities in Canada (Kitossa, 2020). We ask three fundamental questions regarding what the police are for and whom they serve? What do they protect in a colonialist and capitalist social order? The first part of the question implies that police protect “us” from that abstract noun the state calls *crime*. Kitossa reported that police are empowered by law to break the law in what is known as state lawlessness in protecting us from crime.

The police violence has always been the spark for the periodic bubbling over public discontent with colonialism, capitalism, racism inherent to social inequality. The legal justification for police violence is critical to understanding liberal democracies. In a capitalist social order, the principal function of the police is to maintain the order of mal-distributions of private and productive property. Without a domestic armed force, the economic, social and political power of the ruling class and elites would not be possible. Kitossa (2020) believed that police defend the interests of the powerful and those whose disorganization is their powerlessness. We learn from Marxism that those who uncritically accept the oppressive power arrangements of the world would form dominant or ruling class values and interests—although, according to traditional Marxism, they operate under a *false consciousness* (Marx, 1976, 1983). Qualified immunity is the engine that enables structural racism to function effectively. According to Bailey et al. (2017), structural racism is “the totality of ways in which societies foster racial discrimination through mutually reinforcing systems of housing, education, employment, earnings, benefits, credit, media,

health care, and criminal justice" (p. 1453). Mounting statistical evidence demonstrates that Indigenous and Black peoples are disproportionately overrepresented compared to other Canadians in several areas used to measure structural racism. According to Statistics Canada (2016), Black and Indigenous peoples continue to face higher poverty and unemployment rates than the rest of Canadians.

The police are the states' organ of repression and a functional force originally established to subjugate Indigenous people (stolen landowners) and Black people (stolen slave labour). In a recent study on right-wing extremism in Canada, Gagné (2017) reported that about 100 active groups operate. Between 1985 and 2014, right-wing extremism was responsible for more than 120 violent incidents. The relationship between qualified immunity, right-wing extremists, White supremacists, and anti-Black racism is inextricably intertwined and explains why ending one requires ending all. One would ask why does lawlessness in law enforcement go on unpunished? Why is it that when cops kill, redress is rare—except for famous cases (Hurley & Januta, 2020). The police protect its protectors—the state, including the invisible powers such as hate groups and White supremacists. White supremacy is a weapon of mass incarceration for indigenous and black peoples in Canada (Stelkia, 2020). What else explains why Black and Indigenous people are killed mainly by police and overly represented in prisons? Is there a biological relationship between race and crime?

IMPLICATIONS FOR ADULT EDUCATORS

The experiential learning cycle (Kolb, 2015) is vital in facilitating the hurdles that Black people in Canada experience. We need to be cognizant that "those who do not experience racism may be unaware of how it functions in Canada, i.e., perniciously and insidiously" (Henry, 2017, Engage Critically Section). However, evidence in the available literature informs us those hundreds of White scholars who have not experienced racism are equally disgusted with police brutality on Black and indigenous lives. In his *I am not your Negro* documentary, Baldwin (2017) said that history is not the past. It is the present. We carry our history with us. We are our history. If we pretend otherwise, we are literally criminals. As adult educators, we cannot develop decolonizing educational programs based on false, deceptive history.

For White students and educators raised on White supremacy and White privilege, knowledge from people outside of what has been represented as normal since early childhood seems fringe. It looks special interest and irrelevant to their education (Stack, 2017). It's not unexpected that anger, sadness, and confusion are combined when the White saviour industrial complex is challenged. We have already experienced the anger that Critical Race Theory (CRT) has ushered in educational circles and government bureaucrats, especially in the USA, where the right-wing extremists have strongly advocated for its burning in multiple states. Is it not permissible that the authors of devastation should be exposed? Stack concluded that White supremacy isn't about ignorance; it is about power. We need to empower our students with frameworks to analyze the world they live in and will hopefully work to change.

Dumas (2016) argued that as educational researchers, we must re-examine and reconceptualize racialized discourses and policy processes in education and grapple with cultural disregard for and disgust with Blackness. While these conditions have pushed epistemological issues and

uncertainties for educators (Fallace, 2017), there are possibilities for reflection, action, hope, and healing as we seek to critically engage in anti-oppressive practices to create transformative possibilities for ourselves and others (Kumsa et al., 2014). Understanding this embodiment is essential in examining how anti-Black racism, colonialism, White supremacy, and qualified immunity manifest in day-to-day policing and social services policies and practices (Doret & Gordon, 2018). Although Canada is regarded as a progressive nation, more tolerant and just as compared to some other countries, we still have a long way to go. Specifically, the literature described racism in Canada as being more insidious, more covert (Nelson, 2020) than overt.

CONCLUSION

Constitutional accountability demands that those victimized by abuse of power can seek redress in courts of law. Our constitution has fallen and failed, and our fundamental human rights repudiated if we rein in abuse of power and courts give state officials a free pass to do as they please in good faith. Good faith should be questioned, redefined, and qualified immunity eliminated if Canadians are to exercise their constitutional rights and democratic freedom. Qualified immunity cannot coexist with democracy. Though the future of Canadian police reform is unclear, racial justice will only be achieved through the collective effort of non-BIPOC people, government legislators, and civil society. By pushing for transformative reformation in Canada's policing, justice systems and decolonizing our educational curriculums, we can ensure greater accountability, increased transparency, and the unbiased protection of the rights and lives of all Canadians, whether Black, Indigenous or otherwise (Kwak, 2020).

Stelkia (2020) suggested that the policing changes we need in Canada to address structural racism fundamentally require undoing centuries of settler ideologies and dismantling the very systems and structures that have upheld power and privilege to settler society at the expense and oppression of Indigenous and Black people. With all of us, including senior leadership, persistently contributing to eradicating these pernicious practices and developing transformative strategies, conversations about race, equity, diversity and inclusion can become part of the everyday dialogues in classrooms, departments, selection committees and wherever essential decisions are made (Henry, 2017). South of the Canadian border, Supreme Court Justice Sonia Sotomayor has repeatedly criticized her fellow justices for creating an *absolute shield* for police officers accused of excessive force (Januta et al., 2020). Committing to eliminating qualified immunity is not about winning or losing or who is right or wrong. It is about a frame of mind, of being open to critical interpretations and a way of asking questions about the dense fog of ideology that besets us (Kitossa, 2020). Like Freire (2018) and Mandela (1995) argued, eliminating qualified immunity is a dialogic democratic process for liberating both the oppressors and the oppressed. The oppressed and the oppressor alike are both robbed of their humanity. Radical adult educators ought to strategically edify to agitate, destabilize, unsettle, and anger the architects, advocates and practitioners of qualified immunity to end it. We must illuminate more profound critical reflections and actions to reconstruct policing and liberate all humanity in totality.

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IN 2022 AND LATER, WHERE CAN ARTS-INFORMED RESEARCH METHODOLOGY (LITERALLY AND FIGURATIVELY) GO?

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Abstract

In 2008, Knowles and Cole published the *Handbook of the Arts in Qualitative Research: Perspectives, Methodologies, Examples, and Issues*, an edited textbook serving as “witness to the power of the arts in the lives and knowledge development of humans in a changing world of scholarship and research” (xi). The textbook includes their chapter, “Arts-informed Research”, in which Cole and Knowles offer a methodological grounding for arts-informed research and how it “infuses the languages, processes, and forms of literary, visual, and performing arts with the expansive possibilities of scholarly inquiry” (59).

I encountered this chapter early in my doctoral study, and pounced on its possibilities, eager as I was to engage with creative permutations of my chosen field of adult education (lifelong learning). To me, the article was revolutionary on two fronts: first, it showed me that there was precedent to move outside of academic discourse for collaboration and knowledge-making, and that understanding could and should live there, too. Second, the ‘qualities of goodness’ that Cole and Knowles proposed as indicators of meaningful, cohesive research in lieu of formal theoretical frameworks or factors such as rigour or validity made intuitive sense to me, and allowed for a metaphorical range of motion I deeply favoured.

For my doctoral research, I made use of arts-informed methodology to explore adults’ informal learning through material objects and public places. I shaped my design standards to those qualities of goodness Cole and Knowles noted would “enhance understanding of the human condition through alternative (to conventional) processes and representational forms of inquiry, and reach ... multiple audiences by making scholarship more accessible” (2008, p. 65): intentionality, researcher presence, aesthetic quality, methodological commitment, holistic quality, communicability, knowledge advancement, and contributions (2008, pp. 65-68). I found the ease of responding to these qualities to be a great inspiration, and discovered there a more accessible language with which to share my research. Frankly, their anti-framework was iconic for me in my work as an emerging scholar.

But times change.

Writing in 2008, Cole and Knowles did not know that a worldwide pandemic would emerge in 2019, nor could they have anticipated the ways in which the world would consequently change. Arts-informed methodological research needs adapting, too.

I propose to contemporize Cole and Knowles’ arts-informed qualities of goodness for 2022 and beyond by adding theoretical and practical au courant elements of digital curation, hybrid places, and pre-/post-COVID intertextuality.

Drawing on a constructivist perspective featuring interactions with adult learners, academic faculty, and most importantly, community organizations for whom arts-informed research is an

invitation to be heard, I will orally and visually present modifications to Cole and Knowles' 2008 conceptualization of arts-informed research. This revised methodology will better suit the shifting conditions of academic and community life and work in 2022 and later, offering adult learners the chance to speak of and show meaning-making through newly contemporary and expanded sites of spatial and discursive understanding.

Keywords: arts-informed research, methodology, adult education, qualitative research, arts enquiry

INTRODUCTION

Maps are tricky for me; I have been called spatially challenged by more than one person. I admit that I struggle to match my feet on the ground to the road on the page, but I respect the care put into the tracing of routes done by someone before me. Qualitative research methodology is one of those things people have done before me, and there are many maps for it, but now and again, by wandering about, you encounter wholly new terrain.

That wandering is what enabled me to explore arts-informed research methodology (Cole and Knowles, 2008) for the ways in which its qualities of goodness could bear strengthening. Ultimately, what I discovered instead was that the qualities left space for additional contextual elements more suited to 2022 and who-knows-what-might-come-next. In this discussion, I consider methodological meaning, arts-informed research methodology, and contemporary considerations that bring forth aligned elements of pre-/post-pandemic intertextuality, hybrid places, and digital curation of representation(s) to this framework.

DEFINING METHODOLOGY

Well known for his contributions to social science methodology, Norman Denzin wrote in 2017, "I have no idea what the word methodology refers to" (Denzin et al., p. 491). How gratifying, especially for someone like me who came late to the social sciences party. I began my academic career in literature and theatre, only focusing on education in my adult years, and initially I struggled to understand the concept of methodology.

As is wont for me, I turned to an analogy: my doctoral coursework notes contain a sketch in which a party banner spells out 'methodology', which was a satisfying comparison for me. Qualitative research methodology is like a themed birthday party, where everything from the decorations to the invitations to the napkins meshes with the overall celebration or selected occasion. Even if not entirely uniform, the party's theme is hopefully somewhat consistent or at least evident.

But a party does not need a theme to *be*; the party, the celebration, is there nonetheless. And it is the celebration that is responsible for surprise and delight. Likewise, it is the research

enquiry, not the methodology, that is delightfully unpredictable. This is the licence to which I am drawn, even in the design of research work, and one that tends to live in arts-centered undertakings. Methodological frameworks contribute to decisions that affirm or deny research done well, but widely diminish notions of affect, or allure, or sympatico. Yet, this is where I think the party gets interesting, and this is where Cole and Knowles enter.

ARTS-INFORMED RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Cole and Knowles (2008) credit Elliot Eisner with introducing new ways of thinking in relation to arts inspiration and qualitative research process. In suggesting that art could enrich research practice, Eisner saw new opportunities for connective knowledges:

What we think it means to do research has to do with our conception of meaning, our view of cognition, and our beliefs about the forms of consciousness that we are willing to say advance human understanding—an aim, I take it, that defines the primary mission of research. (1993, pp. 5-6)

Cole and Knowles took to heart the notion that research could mean differently both within and without the academy; they engaged in 'pushing boundaries' of "what was then possible in inquiry and representation (i.e., marginally acceptable as scholarship), trying to get closer and closer to human experience and to communicate it in a way that seemed truer to its original form and to those who may be involved" (2008, p. 58).

Arts-informed research seeks "to enhance understanding of the human condition through alternative (to conventional) processes and representational forms of inquiry, and to reach multiple audiences by making scholarship more accessible" (Cole and Knowles, 2008, p. 59). This methodology is distinguished from other arts-related research—arts-based research, art-based inquiry, image-based research, and visual sociology (Cole and Knowles, 2008, p. 58)—because arts-informed research does not study art; instead, it follows conventional qualitative research process infused by arts sensibilities, conceptualizations, and aligned practices to enrich and share knowledge generation. Additionally, research results are presented to, with, and within communities through readily-communicated forms or representations, in addition to scholarly products.

Arts-informed research methodology was bestowed by Cole and Knowles with qualities of goodness rather than measurement criteria; these qualities include intentionality, researcher presence, aesthetic quality, methodological commitment, holistic quality, communicability, knowledge advancement, and contributions (2008). As with all its features—including defining elements and its wayfindings of form(s)—arts-informed research rests on harmonious elements that fit the research enquiry, its practices, and its formal representation(s). I find arts-informed research to be distinct from other arts-based research types and labels, but Cole and Knowles' qualities of goodness occasionally overlap with the ways that other arts-based research is assessed, hence there is some terminological 'fuzziness' with arts-based research in this discussion.

I recognized that arts-informed research suited my temperament as well as my research enquiry into adults' informal learning in public places, although initially I had not decided what

representational form my research could take. Later on, I had accumulated participant drawings showing meaningful sites of learning, and ultimately decided on sculptural kinetic mobiles for representation. With this decision, I achieved the aim of arts-informed research,

to shift the dominant paradigmatic view that keeps the academy and community separated: to acknowledge the multiple dimensions that constitute and form the human condition—physical, emotional, spiritual, social, cultural—and the myriad ways of engaging in the world—oral, literal, visual embodied. That is, to connect the work of the academy with the life and lives of communities through research that is accessible, evocative, embodied, empathic, and provocative. (Cole and Knowles, 2008, pp. 60-61)

In my doctoral defense, I spoke to several qualities of goodness realized by my research, and I prefer to invoke these qualities even now in my current research (see Mason and de Condé, forthcoming, *International Journal of Talent Development and Creativity*). But these qualities may not be as resonant in 2022, where we have been buffeted by a multitude of forces that spin like mobiles on the wind. I am socially constructed by my understanding and experiences within the world, and these are not constant.

CONTEMPORIZING ARTS-INFORMED RESEARCH

Since 2008, there has been a global recession in 2008-09 (Amadeo, 2021), Arab Spring in 2011 (University of British Columbia, n.d.), the legalization of same-sex marriage in all American states in 2015 (Chappell, 2015), the #MeToo movement in 2017 (me too, 2022), the COVID-19 pandemic (World Health Organization, 2022), etc., etc., etc. The ways in which the world is changing are rapid, radical, and really difficult to comprehend. The impact of social movements is felt locally and shared globally, which necessarily produces new and different encounters with understanding. More recently, as are others, I am mindful of the profound shifts in life, work, health, and care brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic. We think, move, and feel differently now, and this also applies to the qualitative research methodological 'turns' that preceded the pandemic.

Similarly, there has been a proliferation of arts-centered and arts-associated research tools, fields of enquiry, interest, and uptake across divergent disciplines (Collier & Perry, 2021; Robert, 2021; Saratsi et al., 2019; Walker and De Niro, 2019). While the academy has become more accepting of research in and alongside the arts, communities have grown aware of opportunities they offer for engagement. Representations of research findings are colourful, collaborative, and worth noticing. We have multiplied the ways in which we are knowing, expressive beings, whether because we have more information, and access to it, than ever before, or because we have reshaped and are reshaping what meaning(s) that information has.

MODIFYING ELEMENTS

Perhaps my affinity for Cole and Knowles' arts-informed qualities of goodness is due to the changes in my life since its publication in 2008. People I have loved madly have come and gone, I have moved house five times, I carry more fears about global geo-political and social threats, and I despair of finding devices to play my outdated CDs. My world has drifted into a

broader, deeper, and thoroughly unpredictable cosmology that I cannot scry with means from the past. Eisner said it better than I can hope to: "As sensibility is refined, our ability to construct meaning within a domain increases" (1993, p. 6). Expanding our capacities of perception and therefore meaning-making abilities is our new responsibility.

To that end, I have identified three elements to augment Cole and Knowles' arts-informed research qualities of goodness: pre-/post-pandemic intertextuality; hybrid places; digital curation of representation(s). I describe these elements below and offer examples where possible, and prospects for realization where they are yet unbroached.

Pre-/Post-Pandemic Intertextuality

Though it may prove otherwise, I suspect for years to come there will be a distinct separation in referring to the time before the worldwide pandemic of the COVID-19 virus, and the time after its decline (ideally). I see arts-informed research as a bridge stretching across this rift, allowing forms of enquiry to travel between and so connect these distinct periods. More importantly, I am keenly interested in how arts-informed research representations between the pre- and post-pandemic are linked, and my early literature-bound self asks that I refer to the nature of these connections as intertextual.

Kristeva wrote that intertextuality consists of an intersection of texts, themselves each comprehensible through "a mosaic of quotations" (1986, p. 37), an analogy that brings together art and language for meaning-making. Others feel that intertextuality has shifted from its linguistic origins to the "social process of reception" (Bullo, 2017, p. 711). McNiff wrote that the most valuable feature of arts-based research may be its affordance of ways in which we can face contemporary problems in the world (2008), while Cole and Knowles caution that "use of the arts in research is not for art's sake. It is explicitly tied to moral purposes of social responsibility and epistemological equity" (2008, p. 60).

My own research suggests that there are different, if not new, ways of designing, doing, recording, and relaying information in the post-pandemic world; for instance, my research into adults' informal learning in public places would now require attitudes to space and distance unperceived in pre-pandemic time, and material representations through post-pandemic channels two or three times removed from personal interactions (based on quarantine practices, that is). I wonder how arts-informed research methods can communicate with pre-pandemic works: elaborating on themes now informed by different social cohesion, re-conducting information-gathering, new modes of documenting, and refashioning representations in the style of posthuman entanglements.

Hybrid Places

Sociologically, places can be categorized from the private sphere outwards; the Habermasian 'first place' is home (1962/1989); the 'second place' is the workplace or employment site (Oldenburg and Brissett, 1982, p. 266); and the 'third place' is a public setting or gathering place "to enjoy each other's company" (Oldenburg and Brissett, 1982, p. 269). To these have been added two other categories of place, derived from needs of the knowledge economy: 'fourth places', or combined 1st&2nd&3rd places fostering networking, collaborations,

interpersonal interactions, and tacit knowledge exchange through multi-purpose workspaces or innovation labs (Morisson, 2019). COVID-19's effects have produced a "quarantined fourth place', or 'fifth place'. . . a new hybrid place ... [that] sometimes works on a physical basis, and other times virtually" (Abd Elrahman, 2020, p. 124). Abd Elrahman writes that "different living mitigated atmospheres" (2020, p.126) will likely emerge from planners, architects, and designers imagining rearranged private and public areas to serve quarantine or other needs.

What then becomes of research informed by the arts if places are not simply multi-purpose, but capable of reformation according to urgent social need? The potential puts me in mind of aligned shifts in site-specific artworks, which

initially took the "site" as an actual location, a tangible reality, its identity composed of a unique combination of constitutive physical elements: length, depth, height, texture, and shape of walls and rooms; scale and proportion of plazas, buildings, or parks; existing conditions of lighting, ventilation, traffic patterns; distinctive topographical features. . . .The space of art was no longer perceived as a blank slate, a tabula rasa, but a real place (Kwon, 1997, n.p.)

Modernist sculpture, however, removed the base from the work of art, which "sever[s] its connection to or express[es] its indifference to the site, rendering itself more autonomous and self-referential, and thus transportable, placeless, and nomadic" (Kwon, 1997, n.p.). If we combine the tangible realities of site-specific art with works that are now base-less, we get a version of fifth places (which can be something other than place): where safety and social care is accommodated, and where functions fluctuate. I see these hybrid places as models of care for person and process, which can offer arts-informed research greater depth of meaning as well as materiality. 'Kitchen sink' dramas become kitchen sinks, and research becomes arts-informed by the versatility of the modes used for its conduct and representation instead of its locale.

Digital Curation of Representation(s)

Asna Adhami's unpublished thesis, entitled *In the spirit of inclusive reflection: Reflections of a cultural expeditionist*, consists of "fictional, factual, visual, anecdotal, theoretical, traditional, and cultural elements ... together in layers and as an integrated whole, where each piece is a companion to the others" (2015, p. 9); she characterizes her thesis "as a space for curation" (2015, p. 9). This concept borrows from art curators who acquire, organize, and develop collected works into a gallery display (Tate, n.d.). Arts-informed researchers produce accessible and community-embedded research representations, not artworks, so can digital curation generate "literal or metaphorical arrangements of theoretical constructs, narratives, [and] experiences ... so that there is a coherent articulation of a particular perspective that illustrates knowledge production and purposeful communication" (Cole and Knowles, 2008, p. 62)?

Researchers have access to institutional data storage, archival records, and library collections for retention purposes, but the climate of online teaching and academic job interviews has meant new significance for research findings that are digitally curated. And researchers are not alone in their bemusement about online storage and display: a 2014 study of UK performance artists found that artists highly value digital curation of their work, but they do not know the processes that enable these digital objects to be sustainably managed (Molly, 2014).

The adoption of posthuman perspectives, for this example akin to a Harawayan cyborg (1985), means that arts-informed research representations are as much about where they (digitally) appear as what they manifest. Digital curation is more visionary than dissemination or knowledge translation because implicit wonderings about the ways in which research results are embodied online are posing broader questions: how can multiliteracy capacities be taken up virtually? What organizational principles render representations clear or comprehensible? Are the online pathways used to reach and then depart digitally curated representations themselves meaningful, as a rhizomatic solution “to reach audiences beyond the academy and to make a difference” (Cole and Knowles, 2008, p. 57)?

Such entanglements have appeared in conjunction with libraries and galleries as learning sites (Bilandzic and Foth, 2014; Noble, 2021; Sinner, 2021; Vassilakaki and Moniarou-Papaconstantinou, 2021), but digital curation also serves immaterial functions: it allows encounter with distant research representations, and permits passage of meaningful realizations with others, and provides a repository for present and future engagement, and expresses connection in a networked world.

With these elements, Cole and Knowles’ arts-informed research qualities of goodness can be enriched by degrees of contextual relevance and opportunity, in addition to the existing perceptions of democratized knowledges. Pre-/post-pandemic intertextuality, hybrid places, and digital curation of representation(s) are products of their time, but paradoxically foster timeless (not to mention placeless) approaches to the effects of inspiration from the arts on research practice.

TO WHAT EFFECTS?

Several years ago, I was leaving a position in a student learning centre when a staff member I only knew casually presented me with an ornate pendant carved from bone in a traditional Maori style. The gift seemed to me to exceed our interactions, but he stressed its recognition of my care with learners. Then, as now, I believe that adult learning is the cultivation of empathy, as I suspect do Cole and Knowles. In fact, they refer to the multiple dimensions of the human condition made more known by “accessible, evocative, embodied, empathic, and provocative” (2008, p. 60) research forms. There is a moral purpose in arts-informed research’s quality of intentionality, and a reflexive self-accounting in its quality of researcher presence, and authenticity in its holistic quality (Cole and Knowles, 2008), all suggesting empathy, but assessing the degree to which one is able to be transported is a slightly different concern.

To be empathic or empathetic is to put oneself in another’s place, I argue: to re-place oneself somatically and virtually and cognitively and emotionally. The ways of being and secluding that we have undergone during COVID-19, and the fresh urgencies of connection and communication that warrants, along with adaptations of (research + artistic) practices, have also brought us towards and into new places. When lines are redrawn on the map, the former way finders are set aside, or revisited in order to set them on newer paths.

CONCLUSION

Qualitative research endeavours have, conventionally, been subject to evaluation measures based on empirical scientific process: "Terms like credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability replace the usual positivist criteria of internal and external validity, reliability, and objectivity" (Denzin et al., 2005, p. 13). For their part, Cole and Knowles used qualities of goodness in illuminating arts-informed research: intentionality, researcher presence, aesthetic quality, methodological commitment, holistic quality, communicability, knowledge advancement, and contributions (2008, p. 65). In doing so, they effectively brought to the forefront new capacities for knowledge more attuned to creativity and inspiration and discovery.

And while these markers of achievement are sound, the ground that was then underfoot is not so now. The elements I note here – pre-/post-pandemic intertextuality, hybrid places, and digital curation of representation(s) – more accurately reflect the changes in our world, and therefore more conversant attempts to explore it through research enquiry that acknowledges these differences. I am enthusiastic about the possibilities to shift our understanding towards new terrain.

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PERSPECTIVE TRANSFORMATION AND EMANCIPATORY PRAXIS OF PARENTS OF TRANSGENDER AND NONBINARY CHILDREN

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Abstract

Parents of transgender or non-binary children often experience transformative learning (Mezirow, 1978). For this life history study, 16 parents of children aged 6 to 29 participated in 33 interviews, 10 recorded in journals, and the author conducted an autoethnography. The data indicated that 16 of the 17 parents experienced transformative learning that was also a holistic experience (Illeris, 2003), a balance of emotion, cognition, and social connection. When one domain of learning was disrupted, learning often halted. Learning occurred in two phases, a private phase of cognitive and affective reframing, and then a more public phase as parents learned to become advocates for their child. Parents were most often motivated by love of their child and their value of authenticity. A few mothers wrestled with feminist conceptions of "What makes a woman?" For most, working through at least some discomfort was part of the learning process.

Keywords: Transformative learning, transgender, nonbinary, gender diversity, perspective transformation, emancipatory praxis, discomfort, authenticity

INTRODUCTION

It is not uncommon for those who experience transformative learning to feel cognitive dissonance (Festinger, 1957) as contradictory understandings collide. Such was the case of many of the parents of transgender or nonbinary children I interviewed for my study on the transformative learning process around gender. All but one of these parents grappled with newer conceptions of gender and gender identity while also working through difficult and often surprising emotions as they reconciled their dissonance. I employed a psycho-critical strand of transformative learning theory (Lange, 2013; Taylor, 1998; West, 2014) as these parents not only wrestled with conceptualizations that were new to them, but that challenged the status quo. This research explored the socially constructed understandings of gender of parents, how their gender perspectives were challenged during their child's transition and what this ultimately meant to them. I also employed Illeris's (2003) holistic framework of learning to analyze working together of the content (cognitive), incentive (affective), and interaction (social) domains of learning. A "tension field of learning" (Illeris, 2018, p. 5) exists as one works through the disequilibrium in the content, incentive and interaction domains, such as when parents worked through the often-emotional process of reorganizing their meaning perspectives around gender. Finally, this research was informed by Ridgeway's (2011) concept of gender "framing" and how these frames play a role when gender or gender identity norms are challenged. For most parents in the study, their transformative learning manifested in two phases: perspective transformation (Mezirow, 1978) and then emancipatory praxis (Hoggan et al., 2017).

METHODOLOGY

Life history methodology was a natural choice for this study as one of the research questions centred on the gender identity development of the parent and how this affected their ability to navigate their child's transition. Data triangulation included 33 interviews with 16 parents, journal writing completed by 10 parents, and an autoethnography. Parents were recruited from two LGBTQ+ support groups in Alberta and children ranged from ages 6 to 29 at the time of the interviews. One stipulation of the study was that parents needed to have known about their child's gender identity for at least six months before the time of the interviews. One parent whose child identified as nonbinary did indicate that they were planning to transition to female during the time of the interviews. Three children identified as non-binary at the time of the interview, eight as transgender, and one as gender creative at home but not in public. The data was analyzed inductively as well as deductively using process coding and values coding (Saldana, 2013).

The limitations of this study existed in racial representation. Although the western Canadian city where this study was conducted has a visible minority of 28%, all participants in the study were white and from European descent. A wide range of socioeconomic status, age, and level of education did exist. Six of the participants were male, that is, 38% of participants were fathers which was a relative strength of this study as, from my own experience leading support groups, most parents who seek support through support groups are women.

FINDINGS

The findings indicated that the learning process for most parents occurred in three stages, although the process itself was not necessarily linear for all. The first two stages demonstrated perspective transformation (Mezirow, 1978), while the last stage reflected emancipatory praxis as defined by Hoggan et al. (2017).

Sixteen of the 17 parents in the study experienced perspective transformation as they worked through the cognitive, affective, social aspects of learning. One parent, who self-identified as lesbian, was well acquainted with conceptions of gender diversity before her child was born. Researcher Kristi Ryan coined the term "gender-subversive parents" for those who have prior knowledge of gender and sexual diversity and who fearlessly "disrupt dominant gender schemas" (Ryan, 2016, p. 3) with their child. While this parent did learn much from her child, her learning did not evince perspective transformation like the other participants. She was, in fact, already an LGBTQ+ advocate who worked to "undermine hegemonic gender in their parenting . . . because they have an ideological commitment to resisting the restrictive forces of the gender binary that preceded their parenting experiences" (Ryan, 2016, p. 5). Ryan's studies suggest that the number of gender-subversive parents is growing with more education and positive models of gender diversity in the West.

For the other 16 parents in the study, the findings indicated that parents did experience perspective transformation in roughly two phases. The first phase reflected the disorienting dilemma (Mezirow, 1978) at the discovery or disclosure of their child. In the affective domain, most parents in this study initially felt emotions such as fear or worry. Many shared that they felt as if they were experiencing stages of grief (Kubler-Ross, 1969/2005) feeling anger, denial,

sadness, and wanting to bargain with their child. In the cognitive domain, parents entered a period of information-gathering, whether this was from books and online reading or gathering information from their partners or those they met through either in-person or online support groups. Socially, this was a lonely period for parents who felt they had no one who would understand their situation or emotions.

The second phase of perspective transformation began with the acceptance of transition, even if this acceptance was not yet welcome such as when a parent accepted that the child was going ahead with transformation with or without their support. Many parents in this phase critically reflected on assumptions and compared them with newer conceptions of gender. Many gender stereotypes emerged in this phase when parents' gender frames were threatened, but they were also challenged (Fisk & Ridgeway, 2018). In the affective domain, parents experienced edge emotions, or "those unpleasant emotions that arise when our assumptions are being challenged" (Mälkki, 2019) or, particularly for parents of older children who transition, ambiguous loss (Boss, 1999). Ambiguous loss is the ambiguity one feels when there is unresolved loss, and for these parents this loss centred on the loss of the "daughter" or "son" they thought they had. Another emotional experience was described by one participant as a black hole or an experience that impedes learning due to old unhealed wounds or fears. Two participants who had experienced sexual assault and incest found that their own learning and ability to support their child through transition was affected by the emotions triggered by past trauma. In the social domain, most parents in this study had reached out to in-person or online support groups, friends or family members for assurance and support. In this phase, many parents also commented on how they found role models in other parents who were ahead of them on this journey.

In the third phase, there was a shift. During perspective transformation, parents were working to regain harmony when there was cognitive-affective disequilibrium. Naturally, their love of their child motivated them to pursue this path, but the value of authenticity arose time and again in the data. Parents ultimately valued their child's ability to be themselves and this theme continued into the third phase. The value of authenticity as expressed by these parents is not unlike the expressive individualism that became popular during the 1960s revolutions that gave voice to minorities (Taylor, 2007; Hagel, 2017) and encouraged the values of self, personal freedom and rights, individual dignity, and private conscience. Other related research shows that parents born in the 1960s-1970s are more likely to raise children to value autonomy, independence, individualism, personal gratification, and self-expression (Alwin, 1990). This suggests that the metanarratives (Lyotard, 1979/1984) of expressive individualism are emboldening transamilies to champion gender authenticity. While the first two phases of perspective transformation is rooted in the value of authenticity, the third phase more publicly transfers authenticity to the public, sociocultural sphere.

After perspective transformation, all but one parent in the study demonstrated what Hoggan et al. (2017) coined emancipatory praxis, where parents felt more equipped to challenge society's prevalent gendered social norms, policies, and laws. Hoggan et al. (2017) suggested that in Mezirow's work, emancipatory praxis or social action follow perspective transformation at times, but it was not a necessary element of perspective transformation. Conversely, in Freire's social emancipatory transformative learning "the intent of education is not personal transformation, although that will happen; it is societal transformation, where education fosters action against poverty, oppression, repression, and injustice, and for social justice, equality, democracy, and

freedom" (Lange, 2013, p. 110). In the case of the transformative learning of parents of transgender and nonbinary children, most began with the intent of personal learning, but this ultimately led to social action. Hoggan et al. (2017) wrote of varying forms of emancipatory praxis, such as one that was "capable of effecting emancipatory institutional and social change" (p. 60). All parents in the study, except one who was estranged from his child, shared with me examples of this form of praxis as they challenged the dominant social culture, whether it be in the schools, at a local Registry requesting a name change, attending a Transgender Day of Remembrance vigil, or marching in a pride parade. Emancipatory praxis often presented an ethical and moral dilemma as parents found courage to do the "right" thing. Brookfield (1998) wrote of how "the concept of moral learning is curiously absent from the literature of the field [of transformative learning]" (p. 283) except, arguably, in emancipatory transformation. Parents who may have been reluctant to raise their voices initially reported that they did so later as they wanted their child, and others, to live authentically, in safety, and in a world with fewer categories to restrict them. Quite often, as seen in this study, eliminating oppression, and fighting for social justice becomes a moral or ethical obligation (Yacek & Ijaz, 2020). Parents demonstrated moral courage when they rose above their fears to advocate for their child and to challenge the status quo. As I asked each parent how they had changed on their journey, the words "advocate" and "advocacy" were at the heart of each response.

Although "passing" can be a goal for binary transgender people, three children in my study who were non-binary did not share this aim. One teen identified as nonbinary at the time of the interviews, another adult child as gender-fluid, and a third adult child as genderqueer. Parents of these children often felt unsettled, living in a state of ambiguity. In McGuire et al.'s (2016a) article on ambiguous loss, they discussed this ambiguity felt by family members during gender transition, but for parents of non-binary children, this period of ambiguity can seem endless. Rather than "losing" a son and "gaining" a daughter, parents of nonbinary children grapple with the unknown. Transition also evoked feelings of discomfort for many parents as they question what they know and even value about gender and reconstruct their perceptions to better reflect their newer understandings (Boler, 1999; Festinger, 1957; Mälkki, 2019). When one parent in the study met genderqueer artist and scholar, Vivek Shraya, her anxiety was mitigated as she saw how positive, joyful, and beautiful gender diversity could be. She later shared an analogy that allowed her to process her own understanding of her gender-fluid child. When she was with her cousins in Europe, she said, "sometimes I'm speaking French, sometimes I'm speaking German, sometimes I'm speaking English, and the person who I am when I speak French isn't quite who I am when I speak English." She then compared this nuanced shift in language to her interactions with her child: "Then I just say, 'Who are you today?' Then, I'll speak to that person." Parents of nonbinary children in this study, were pushed to reframe gender in new ways that accommodate genders outside the binary. As studies show that the numbers of people identifying as nonbinary are steadily increasing (Goldberg & Kuvalanka, 2018; Meadow, 2016), this may have salient implications for the future.

One curious finding arose in the narratives of three feminist mothers. For feminists who have built their understandings of gender on a binary, the transition of a transgender or nonbinary child can catalyze a re-examination of those premises and the emotions that arose. If transitioning to a woman, can your trans daughter leave behind her male privilege? If you identify as non-binary, how do you experience privilege? These mothers' first reactions were born out of experience, their resistance to hegemonic masculinity. But in many ways, their children pushed them to redefine womanhood. What makes a woman? was a question raised in

several interviews and it is a question grappled by many third-wave and fourth-wave feminists' groups who make room for their transgender sisters. Radical feminists fail to budge beyond the binary, but when the binary is recognized as the spectrum it is, gender becomes the making of our imagination. It is a complex and evolving balance of nature, nurture, and culture (Ehrensaft, 2011). By redefining "woman," these mothers were able to see their own gender differently and they, too, were further liberated from the constraints of gender.

Transfamily theory (McGuire, et al., 2016b) explores how one gender-expansive family member can challenge our thinking about the nature of gender. In my study, I have investigated parents' learning processes and have found that many unlearn and then relearn gender frames (Fisk & Ridgeway, 2018) in the process of perspective transformation (Mezirow, 1981) and emancipatory praxis (Hoggan et al., 2017). This learning process is holistic (Illeris, 2018), involving the cognitive and affective aspects of learning working together with social ones. Learning can stall if one of these three domains of learning is overwhelmed, and parents of nonbinary children may linger in the unlearning/relearning space as they seek role models and understanding of what it means to live outside the gender binary. Last, as more nonbinary children are come forward into this brave space, some premises of gender-developmental theories may be re-evaluated, such as Kohlberg's concept of Gender Stability and Gender Constancy, as gender is not stable nor constant (McGuire et al., 2016b) but is often fluid and changing.

CONCLUSIONS

"Only by unlearning the rules and losing our 'expertise,'" wrote Butler (2006) "do we have a chance of exposing the field of norms and their coercive effects" (p. 533). This study gave voice to the process of unlearning and relearning what it means to be gendered. The findings of the study demonstrated how parents' learning was holistic, a balance of the more personal cognitive and emotional aspects of learning with social space. Many parents initially resisted the discovery or disclosure of gender but they "unlearned" the rules, unpacked stereotypes (Eagly & Wood, 2012), analyzed gender frames (Fisk & Ridgeway, 2018), swam in the ambiguity and discomfort (Boler, 1999; Festinger, 1957; Mälkki, 2019) of newer conceptualizations of gender, and scrutinized the gender metanarratives and recognized their flaws and limitations. The individualistic value of authenticity gave space for gender expansion, and most parents bolstered their ability to challenge and to queer social, political, and cultural norms that affected their child's life.

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THE MEDIUM IS MORE THAN A MESSAGE: CULTURAL MATERIALISM, CRITICAL PEDAGOGY AND PRACTICE IMPROVEMENT IN A NETWORKED, COVID-ADAPTED WORLD

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Abstract

In this paper, the author explores the work of cultural theorist Raymond Williams as a potential critical-analytical lens for interrogating new media learning technologies deployed in popular adult education for social innovation. Following the work of Sandlin, Giroux and others (Giroux, 2004a; Sandlin, O'Malley, & Burdick, 2011; Wright & Sandlin, 2009), the author examines Williams' significant contributions to a contemporary critical dialog regarding screen-based visual new media, the Internet and their increasing role in shared, public and technology-mediated sites of popular education utilizing critical pedagogy. Fuchs, Hands and others (Fuchs, 2015, 2016; Giroux, 2004b; Hands, 2011, 2013) have provided the conceptual and theoretical foundations within the borders of critical theory upon which to position Williams' thinking. This paper, however, explores the direct application of Williams' cultural materialism to the process of critical reflection in a popular education framework tasked with supporting a social innovations agenda. Using a layered accounts approach (Ronai, 1995; Ronai & Ellis, 1989) to better attend to Williams' emphasis on the value of artistic production and multiple voices, an auto-ethnographic approach which leverages a cultural materialist lens is suggested. This is intended to help the educator and learner explore their agency in relation to the shifting social, cultural, technological, pedagogical and political threads that are interwoven in contemporary technology-mediated popular education, specifically when designed to promote policy-driven, sustainable positive social change across a number of social strata.

The central aim of this paper is to examine the ways in which this lens may provide a new set of tools for interrogating and comprehending the evolving position of screen-based, networked new media in the design of a critical adult learning framework for social innovation, and a discussion of the broader potential contributions of Williams' unique brand of critical cultural analysis to the field of critical adult education in the COVID-adapted information age.

Keywords: Innovation, technology, framework, critical framework, critical Pedagogy, online learning, new media, creativity, cultural materialism.

INTRODUCTION

As a critical adult educator, I'm always eager to add to my practice *toolkit* – that loose collection of continuously evolving facilitation approaches, group activities, grounding exercises, etc. that best align with the theoretical and philosophical pillars of my professional practice. Among those that have been with me the longest, critical reflection remains one of the most fundamental (Mezirow, 1990) tools. It is the mirror upon which I can most authentically assess the quality and appropriateness of my practice. It helps me to articulate my allyship with the learner and with the process of learning as it unfolds. And it reminds me to name and communicate the

ways in which the prevailing neo-liberal pathways of power and privilege temper my efforts to engage in an education that espouses dialog, equity, compassion and social consciousness.

After reflecting recently on the last two years of a COVID-adapted professional practice context that has seen me (and most of my colleagues) operate almost exclusively online via a popular video-conferencing platform, deploy several online facilitation platforms with learners, use online group-learning approaches and essentially pivot a number of established practices to online analogs, it occurred to me that I may be lacking in grounded and theoretically-rigorous tools to navigate these changing contexts in my reflective practice.

From this position, I sought to develop a new addition to my toolkit – a reflective-practice frame for critical reflection in adult education within a distributed, networked and culturally-integrated learning context. This paper outlines my efforts to return to base concepts around learning and knowledge, power and privilege, and culture and connection in community, and from there, construct a viable, rigorously grounded lens to assist in critical reflection that aligns well with our ever-more networked, integrated and culturally rooted sites of critical pedagogy in this increasingly online, COVID-adapted context.

This paper is also a call to others to similarly experiment – to come together to innovate – to write, workshop, design, redesign and redefine the materials we have to use as critical educators.

FIRST STEPS FROM FIRST PRINCIPLES

If critical adult education has, as one of its main tenets, the conscientization (Freire, 1970) of the learner, and a subsequent active and collective reshaping of a world view to better represent a more transparent analysis of the ways power and ideology weave through and around them, then surely it must also authentically endeavor to support the learner as they seek points of authentically informed critical engagement as they move through this process of conscientization? That is, if the learner is deeply engaged in ensuring they are authentically expressed in the learning and have trusted us as the educator to facilitate this process, surely, we must also ensure that the strategies and approaches we offer are likewise vetted to be the most appropriate, learner-centric and values-driven ones we can offer.

In more pointed critical-theoretical terms, the emergence of cultural *forms and materials*, in this case new adult learning identities, systems, platforms, communities, etc. must be critically analyzed to illuminate the ways in which the concerns of contemporary, neo-liberal forces are encoded as ideology into their core functionalities and woven into and through the cultures which produce them. This is obviously of concern to an adult educator operating to any degree online and for whom critical pedagogy forms a central pillar of their practice.

Since critical reflection (Mezirow, 1990) provides a base structure for reflective practice (Ixer, 1990), it also offers a good site upon which to innovate in the design of a new tool. Following best practice in approaching a new reflective frame (Fook & Gardner, 2007) and constructing a core set of values and related areas of professional practice, the parameters I identified as fundamental for this new analytical frame were:

- It should be theoretically and philosophically grounded in critical theory broadly, and critical pedagogy more specifically.

- It should attend to the culturally integrated nature of adult learning online in a neo-liberal, networked world.
- It should be simple to understand, and easy to use as a reflective practice tool.
- It should be fit for purpose i.e., it should suit the COVID-adapted, integrated online context.
- It should remain useful when applied progressively i.e., it can be used whole or in pieces and remain useful.

An exploration of the relatively recent critical pedagogy literature (Giroux, 2004a; Sandlin, O'Malley, & Burdick, 2011; Wright & Sandlin, 2009), reveals a compelling contemporary exploration of cultural materialism and the writings of Raymond Williams as a post-Marxian framework for interrogating our media-based, online cultural reality as it pertains to critical pedagogy. The relatively poorly explored cultural studies toolset (at least within critical pedagogy) forwarded by this growing body of work has the potential to illuminate new ways of understanding our hybrid role as educator-learner in this emerging, integrated and all immersive online world/marketplace.

RAYMOND WILLIAMS, CULTURAL MATERIALISM AND CRITICAL PEDAGOGY

The choice of Raymond Williams' work to analyze adult learning *as culture* may not be immediately apparent but finds a comfortable synergy with critical adult education and adult learning technology for a number of reasons.

Firstly, Williams provides a compelling critical analysis of the ways in which contemporary information technology works within the fibers of the neo-liberal fabric to co-construct dynamic and breathing cultures that surround and permeate us at all times (Williams, 2001; Williams & Williams, 2003). Williams tells us how our cultures are varied and variable, context-infused, dynamic processes that subsume our learning, political, economic and social energies, etc., generating a cohesive and living cultural system where isolated frames and reductionist analyses will inevitably only provide an incomplete snapshot, limited in dynamism, chronology and relational richness. In order to interrogate these cultural systems successfully, we must explore the dynamic relationships between system components and crucially, include artistic and creative components as they are singularly the most capable of recording the overall 'feel' of a culture (Williams, 2001, 2011).

Williams allows us to depart from the more deterministic and prescriptive models of McLuhan or the hard-to-pin-down and shifting landscape of the poststructuralists (Murphie & Potts, 2003), defining an analytical frame that allows for critical engagement, critical intervention and directed social change. It allows us to leverage the *hope* that these online knowledge and learning cultures aren't predefined or predetermined by their technological materials, and can be reclaimed by the critical adult educator and learner – this hope being one of the key components in the toolbox of the modern critical pedagogue (Freire, 1998; H. A. Giroux, 1997). The medium, according to Williams, isn't exactly the message – the medium is as much a product of our voices, and the ways in which we choose to raise them plays a crucial role in the nature of any mediated cultural, social and political output.

Secondly, Giroux and others remind us that where appropriate, viewing contemporary, critical adult learning contexts as critical public pedagogies and interrogating them as cultures can open up the rich Marxist, analytical toolbox for us that Williams has supplied to cultural studies (Henry a. Giroux, 2004a, 2004b; Wright & Sandlin, 2009). This is particularly relevant in light of the increasing number of ways the new technologies mediate our collaborative meaning-making, cultural production and knowledge management, not to mention the ways in which our dissenting and contrarian energies can be contained and constrained by them (Henry a. Giroux, 2011).

Thirdly, the inclusion of William's critical cultural studies perspective in the reflective practice of critical adult education brings with it the tools to analyze digital communications and better understand the complex use of *meta-media*: the digital images and texts, combined with video, audio, time data, geo-locational data, cybersecurity data, etc. of the web that are, by their nature, mutable, programmable, malleable, and are copy and paste-able (Manovich, 2001). These ubiquitous, virtual, screen-based communicative artifacts can act to encode neo-liberal ideologies, becoming conveyances for the hegemonic archetypes that make up the visual fields of our adult learning technologies (and everything else) online and as such deserve at least a cursory treatment within a critical analysis.

Finally, but not inconsequentially, Williams worked across the disciplines of visual culture and adult learning, identifying deeply as an adult educator and believing in the application of his work in cultural studies toward the pursuit of a critically satisfying pedagogy (McIlroy & Westwood, 1993). In many ways, when we teach or learn online, in our efforts to co-construct learning spaces that strive to nurture a sense of critical consciousness, we endeavor to find and collectively reclaim informed control over forms of digital cultural production. This notion, when generalized as an axiom - what we create (or neglect to) together becomes our shared reality - is deceptively simple but alludes to a central professional practice as a critical adult educator.

Ultimately, this interpretation of Williams' Cultural Materialist analysis provides a set of criteria across which we can analyze critical educational *materials* (the sets of ideas, assumptions, identities, ideologies and media artifacts that constitute this element within a given context) and attempt to illuminate the ways in which ideology works to subjectify, often underscoring how hidden threads within the culture manage to remain hidden. Adopting Williams most fundamental lens of the three main categories in the definition of a culture, we can critically probe our digital learning narratives along these three central threads; **The Ideal, The Documentary** and **The Social** (Williams, 2001).

An example of the application of the **Ideal** lens might look like an effort to uncover the ways in which the field of new media design defines itself in an absolute historical sense. These are the ways are in which it is aligned with the greater culture of the human condition and constructs hegemonic archetypes which exist in a more perfect, "timeless" manner. Williams himself was careful to qualify the idea of *perfection* as one more akin to *evolution* in this sense. Williams is concerned with an active, moving process rather than a final state of perfection, even though that process is often defined in terms of its pursuit of some ideal state (McIlroy & Westwood, 1993).

An example of the **Documentary** lens would see a critical analysis of the ways in which educational technology practice is documented (i.e., what is documented, who does the recording, what are the power dynamics involved in the process, how are the recordings

archived and accessed, etc.). Here we are concerned with the formation of a cultural memory and who it actually represents. As we are equally concerned with imaginative works here, a question also emerges around what the dominant art forms are and how free they are in modulating the modes of constructing a shared, abstract cultural memory?

If the **Documentary** lens is concerned with the dominant modes of cultural recording, the **Social** lens would be concerned with what those recordings say about the culture, both internally and externally and how we navigate these systems of representation, normative codes and cultural symbols that they give rise to. This lens is concerned with the ways in which we communicate with one another, and its role in supporting or undermining power relationships in a culture.

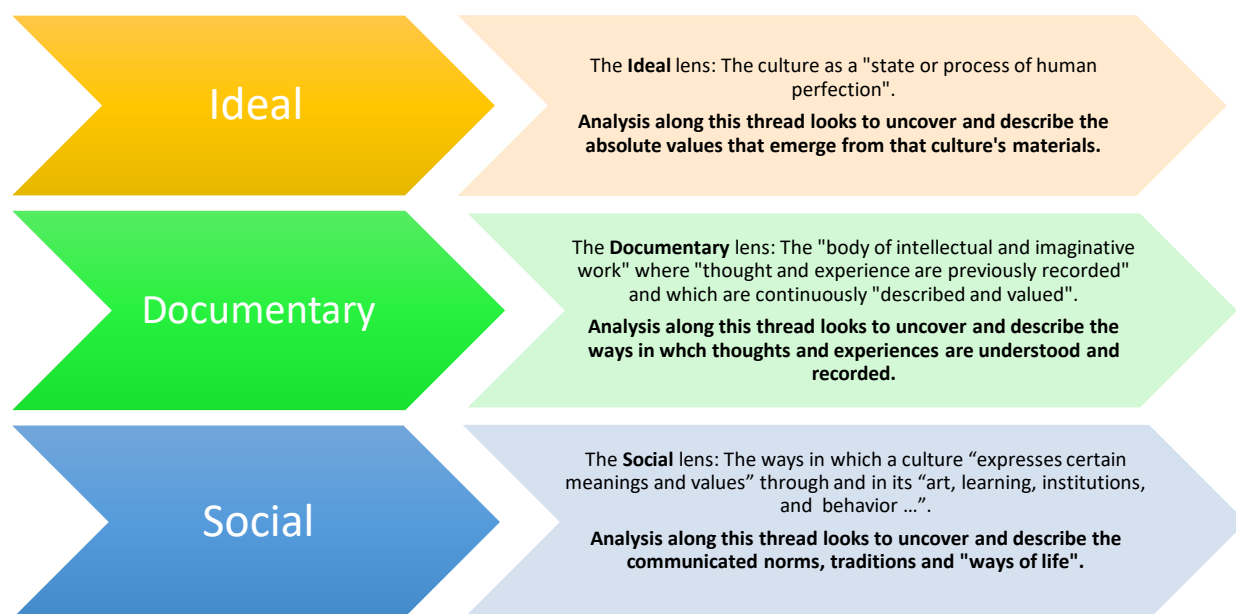


Figure 1. Williams three categories of cultural analysis

To Williams, technological systems, particularly those of mass communication, are only subjectifying tools of the prevailing powers because the communities immersed within them have yet to reconfigure the social assemblage to more appropriately represent their own informed political will and voice. Once the social assemblage is suitably reconfigured, the technologies can only then exist as a reflection of this new reality. Furthermore, Williams was an important early proponent of the concept of a *public pedagogy*: that the site of education can move well beyond the walls of the traditional classroom and be found in any location where adults are organized in the shared construction of meaning – emotional, political, social or economic. In particular, Williams saw this as a contemporary reality, given the swathes of information and communication fields most of us are immersed in on a daily basis.

Critical pedagogue Henry Giroux has expanded on much of the thinking around public pedagogy (Giroux, 2003, 2004, 2011), building on the work of Cremin, Gramsci, Williams (Cremin, 1970; Gramsci, 1995; McIlroy & Westwood, 1998) and others and calling on contemporary public

intellectuals to adopt a broader notion of learning, adopting a lens where educators can not only see the pedagogical in all things social and political but where other avenues of human cultural production can utilize pedagogy as a catalyst for political and critical action. Giroux has launched a concerted, sustained and well-articulated attack on the forces of neoliberalism and the associated cooption of public pedagogies to devalue existing progressive social norms such as communal action in favor of market-driven social values such as the primacy of the individual, the pursuit of personal gratification over all else and of course the financial shaping of higher education as merely a public good that serves the needs of the workplace and the economic health of the state. Giroux sees the intersection of cultural studies and critical pedagogy as a rare site of hope: a position from which we can wrestle back control of progressive socio-cultural assemblages from the prevailing forces of neoliberalism

EVOLVING A MULTIDIMENSIONAL ANALYSIS

To action this theoretical framework into a practice-oriented one, I propose reshaping it in light of two additional practice-focused critical frames: Ronai's Layered Accounts and a new critical pedagogical framework C3 – Creativity, Criticality and Connectivity.

To engage in the multiplicity and intersectionality of identity expression for adult learners, we can utilize a methodology that is a variant of the layered accounts approach in a critical auto-ethnography (Ellis, Adams, & Bochner, 2011; Ronai, 1995; Ronai & Ellis, 1989), as a way of exploring and interrogating the multiple voices and the shifting, mutable identities that emerge from the interplay of one's cultural self as both adult learner-educator and as a member of our shared, technological COVID-adapted online reality. Ronai's *Layered Accounts* approach to the construction of a compelling narrative in a self-study defines a space wherein multiple voices and, interestingly, artistic productions are positioned as central to understanding how and where the *self* crystalizes and forms out of ones lived experiences as they occur across a number of cultural paradigms. By giving voice to multiple layers of our consciousness, we can begin to understand the numerous ways in which we are bound to and reflective of others, our various cultures, and to the channels of power and systems of knowledge that suffuse and contain our reality and form the wellspring of our own epistemologies.

The added emphasis on abstract artistic productions in the layered accounts approach helps to move the analysis from the strictly concrete, and into other layers of knowing and consciousness - other modes of meaning-making, potentially illuminating those intimate components within a cultural materialist analysis that may be overlooked by a more prescriptive or constrained narrative approach. It brings us closer to what Williams refers to as the vital, spontaneous energies that best capture the creative productions which are singularly the most capable of encoding the overall 'feel' of a culture – that intangible element of context that is difficult to reclaim in analysis after the fact (Williams, 2001). That is, hidden in the creative and artistic expressions that we feel best reflects and encodes the spirit of a cultural moment for us, *may* lie the most intimate recordings of how that culture shapes us and gives form to our identities.

In a recent reflection on a professional critical pedagogy context, it was noted how, in my own practice, **Creativity, Criticality** and **Connectivity** have begun to form the ethnographic backbone of a renewed practice-driven, personal expression of critical pedagogy (C3) as an emergent and living reality between educators and learners (Okafo, 2021). These three

pedagogical pillars align well with the Williams' lenses outlined above, are similarly derived from a theoretical and conceptual locus centered around cultural materialism and concern themselves with the critical adult learner online in a networked and all-pervasive neo-liberal culture of screen-based new media. Overlaying this pedagogical construct with Williams' cultural materialist lens provides a concise, well-informed multi-dimensional analytical tool (fig. 2) that I hope will serve as a set of prototypical critical reflective ethnographic frames.

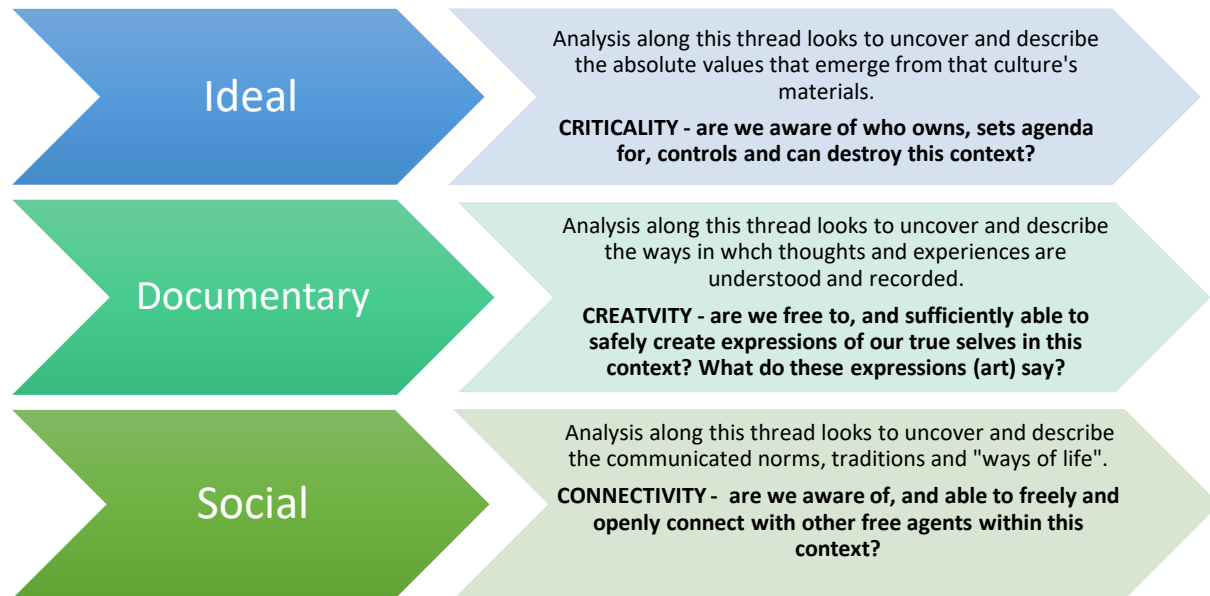


Figure 2. Critical Reflection Framework

At the highest levels, it asks us to consider, in our pedagogical and program designs, in our critical reflections and in the broader aspects of our professional practice.

- Can we – the learners and the educators – use the medium to best describe the learning context, its impact on our digital selves, and can we enact innovative efforts to reshape it for our own emergent, artistic expressions?
- Can we – the learners and the educators – understand the ways in which ideology can be encoded into the fabric of this digital reality, and can we effectively work to free both it and our extended digital selves from the neoliberal forces aiming to marketize the learning?
- Can we – the learners and the educators – understand how to find, form and support secure, safe and mutually empowering relationships with the people, places and objects that co-inhabit the mediated, networked learning context?

My intention is to use this new framework in upcoming professional efforts, exploring its utility in dialog with colleagues and across a number of contrasting practice contexts, where working as a *critical online adult educator* can have strikingly diverging meanings. Over the course of several projects, I hope to further refine this prototype and arrive at a tool that serves its original design goals and enables an improved and more appropriate professional practice.

CONCLUSION

Where contemporary critical adult education is moving online and is tasked, even vaguely, with social change (e.g., recent proliferation of EDI courses online), a critical-analytic framework is an excellent and important addition to our professional toolset. I've leveraged several contemporary takes on the emergent, integrated culture of adult learning online to present a multi-dimensional, critically reflective practice-oriented frame that will assist in my own (and hopefully others') reflective practice and generally act as an analytical tool in my broader practice of designing critical adult learning programs online. I plan to use this in my work going forward and will document its utility and evolution as a reflexive and context-driven tool.

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MEANING-MAKING, EVERYDAY LIFE, AND THE MOBILITY INTENTIONS OF DOMESTIC AND INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS IN NOVA SCOTIA: A MIXED-METHODS STUDY

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Abstract

International student in-migration to Atlantic Canada is increasingly offered as a policy solution to the problem of local youth out-migration in a region that currently has the lowest birth rates and highest median age of any region in the country. Attracting and retaining international youth to Atlantic Canada is seen as crucial to what is perceived to be a demographic powder keg and thus represents an important step toward long-term regional sustainability. However, what is missing in these policy equations is a clear understanding of what Atlantic Canadian youth, be they local or international, really want.

Current educational scholarship examines how formal pedagogical interventions often channel youth and recent immigrants into low-end sectors of the labour market and propel youth from peripheral regions to relocate for work and a better life. However, it is well established that learning is not just something that happens in the formal classroom, rather learning forms an integral part of individuals' whole life experiences and their engagement with their social environment. The overall purpose of this research study is to develop an analysis of how *learning in daily life* interacts with both migrant and non-migrant youths' attempts to craft a meaningful life. Focusing on youths' informal learning shifts the attention away from a narrower examination of formal skill acquisition and labour market integration toward highlighting how youth make sense of their life experiences, and how youths' identity practices become integrated into their individual life strategies.

This project began with a survey that was shared with domestic and international university students at three Nova Scotia universities (approx. 1000 respondents). The survey was followed by semi-structured interviews with 36 students, which were then followed by participatory photography workshops with 4 participants. For this presentation, we will focus on theme of 'nature', grounded in data from the photography sessions. Participants' collaborative analysis of their own photographs reveal how everyday citizenship learning emerges from international students' affective relationships to place in such a way that obscures how international education is implicated in processes of settler colonialism. In highlighting how participants' sense of belonging is deeply implicated in their connections to place, we discuss opportunities for integrating international students in current initiatives to 'decolonize' the Canadian academy.

Keywords: International students, Indigenization, Mixed-methods, Participatory photography.

INTRODUCTION

In Atlantic Canada, attracting international post-secondary students is a strategic priority toward achieving the region's economic and demographic growth objectives (Atlantic Growth

Advisory Group, 2018; El-Assal & Goucher, 2017; Toughill, 2018). At the same time, in light of the release of Canada's Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) report in 2015, there has been critical attention paid to how post-secondary institutions, including those in Atlantic Canada, must transform to meet the educational needs of Indigenous communities (Cote-Meek & Moeke-Pickering, 2020; Pidgeon, 2016). While these two priorities are rarely considered in counterpoint, scholars have begun to question and complicate international student positionality in relation to Canada's violent and ongoing colonial relationship with Indigenous peoples (Chatterjee, 2019; Gomez, 2020). A small subset of recent scholarship on this question calls for the integration of Indigenous place-based pedagogies to challenge and stretch international education policies and practices in settler colonial states (Anderson & Bristowe, 2020; Beck & Pidgeon, 2020). As part of a mixed-methods research initiative that examines how informal pedagogies may shape post-secondary students' mobility decisions in Atlantic Canada, the present study offers an analysis of findings derived from a participatory photography project undertaken with university students in Nova Scotia. We focus specifically on international student participants' reflections. We examine how participants' collaborative analysis of their own photographs reveals how everyday citizenship learning emerges from their affective relationships to 'place' in such a way that obscures how international education may be implicated in processes of settler colonialism. In highlighting how participants' sense of belonging is deeply implicated in their connections to place, we discuss how recent theorizing in the area of 'land education' (Simpson, 2017; Tuck et al., 2014) may present an opportunity for critically engaging international students in the process of 'decolonizing' the Canadian academy. We identify as white-settler allies working as educators in academia and the non-profit sector who are committed to both migrant and Indigenous justice, and to advancing anti-racist and decolonizing approaches to post-secondary and adult education.

CONTEXT

International Education

Canada relies on immigration to meet human capital and demographic objectives. In Atlantic Canada, immigration is seen as an important policy response to decades of out-migration and a rapidly aging population (El-Assal & Goucher, 2017). For example, in 2018, Statistics Canada reported that Nova Scotia had experienced its largest three-year population increase in a generation (2.8%), and cited immigration as integral to this demographic surge (Public Policy Forum, 2018). This is the local context in which international education policies have evolved. In short, international education policies are considered an important tool to attract young and skilled immigrants who will eventually be integrated into local labour markets (Sharma, 2020). Policymakers thus perceive the internationalization of higher education as an economic and political strategy for Canada's peripheral regions to maintain a competitive advantage in the global knowledge economy (Knutson, 2020; Sharma, 2020; Trilokekar & el Masri, 2019). In Atlantic Canada, the retention of international students post-graduation is thus a key priority. In Nova Scotia, the site of this study, there were a total of 14,760 international students enrolled in post-secondary institutions in 2020, by far the largest share of international students among the Atlantic provinces (Canadian Bureau for International Education, 2022). To better integrate retention priorities with international education policies, in 2017 the province initiated the Study and Stay program, a provincial education co-operative that brings together government and educational partners to support the long-term retention and economic integration of

international students (EduNova, 2018). Study and Stay, which operates in tandem with federal and provincial programs that aim to facilitate international students' transition to permanent residence, incorporates a mentorship program and informal cultural programming targeted at select international students across the province. Nova Scotia has thus spent a lot of political capital to find ways to attract international students to permanently settle in the province, and since 2015 the province has reliably exceeded the government's annual retention target of 10 percent (Dodds, 2020).

Indigenizing the Academy

In 2015, the TRC report (Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, 2015) identified several 'Calls to Action' that dealt with transforming Canada's post-secondary educational system in such a way that aims to heal the legacy of residential schools and facilitate the process of reconciliation (Louie et al., 2017; Pidgeon, 2016). Scholars writing in the area advocate for a process of 'decolonizing' the academy and call for the meaningful inclusion of Indigenous knowledges and epistemologies in all areas of academic institutions, including curricula and governance (Battiste, 2013; Cote-Meek, 2014). While critics warn that this movement is occurring within institutions that are deeply embedded in the colonial structure (Simpson, 2017), scholars such as Battiste argue that education can be harnessed as a tool for what she refers to as a process of ongoing decolonization. To this end, in her book *Decolonizing education: Nourishing the learning spirit*, Battiste (2013, p. 186) calls on educators to "reject colonial curricula" and to teach critical perspectives on the historical and contemporary context of settler colonialism. Calling for a genuine commitment toward social transformation, for many, the process of Indigenizing the academy is seen as an opportunity for Indigenous students to become "more empowered in who they are as Indigenous people" and for non-Indigenous students to develop a deeper understanding of the "complexities, richness, and diversity of Indigenous peoples, histories, cultures, and lived experiences" (Pidgeon, 2016, p. 87). Indigenous scholars insist that this movement must be grounded in the local cultures and territories where institutions are located.

Internationalization and Indigenization

Recent scholarship highlights the tensions between international education practices and the movement toward Indigenization (Beck & Pidgeon, 2020; Gomez, 2020; Heath, 2019). Central to the idea of Indigenization is the importance of Indigenous peoples' relationship to place, and a recognition that colonial educational practices have been complicit in severing this connection (Simpson, 2017). The commitment to transformational change that the TRC Calls to Action represent fundamentally challenges the reality that Canada's institutions of higher education are themselves located on (often unceded) Indigenous lands (Beck & Pidgeon, 2020). It is not often recognized that the movement toward internationalization in post-secondary education takes place within this simultaneous movement to challenge Canadian universities' historical and ongoing relationship to settler colonialism. The question arises of how to integrate internationalization policies and practices in such a way as to respect and support efforts to support reconciliation. Scholars such as Beck and Pidgeon (2020) and Heath (2019) explore the intersecting priorities between the movements toward internationalization and Indigenization, for example the commitment to intercultural learning. They suggest re-centring the framework of internationalization from one that promotes neoliberal institutional outcomes and regional demographic/economic goals toward one that prioritizes a wholistic international education framework that respects Indigenous knowledges. In the words of Beck and Pidgeon (2020, p.

396): "... learning from within the Indigenization movement would help move internationalization from operating as a tool of the oppressor to a tool of decolonization." In what follows we explore how 'land education' may be employed as a framework to promote citizenship learning among international students as a way to support the movement toward this goal.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK: LAND EDUCATION

Land is deeply embedded in Indigenous epistemologies and is thus central to conceptualizations of Indigenous pedagogy (Simpson, 2017; Tuck et al., 2014). The interruption of Indigenous relationships to land due to settler colonialism has been and continues to be a profound act of violence epistemically, ontologically, and cosmologically (Tuck & Yang, 2012), and is thus an act of violence against Indigenous ways of knowing and learning (Sefa Dei et al., 2022; Wildcat et al., 2014). Within this context of Indigenous land dispossession, decolonizing approaches to education must first and foremost reconnect Indigenous peoples to land as well as to the "social relations, knowledges and languages that arise from the land" (Wildcat et al., 2014, p. 1). Doing so would represent a pursuit of "whole-body intelligence practiced in the context of freedom" (Simpson, 2017, p. 151). In her highly influential work, Michi Saagiig Nishnaabeg scholar Leanne Betasamosake Simpson (2017, p. 154), explains how "Indigenous education is not Indigenous or education... unless it comes through the land, unless it occurs in an Indigenous context using Indigenous processes." She goes on to describe the idea of 'land as pedagogy' as an understanding of education that resists "the permanence of settler colonial reality... on the ground in the physical world in spite of being occupied" (Simpson, 2017, p. 153). Similarly, Tuck et al. (2014), discuss the need for educators to center discussions of current and historical contexts of colonization in relation to land. They advocate for curricular critiques of settler colonialism that underscore Indigenous understandings of land and that engage with "acute analyses of settler colonialism as a structure, a set of relations and conditions" (Tuck et al., 2014, p. 13).

Discussing Indigenous pedagogy through her own experiences in the sugar bush harvesting sap and making maple syrup, Simpson depicts land as pedagogy as a deeply experiential process. She says: "if you want to learn about something, you need to take your body onto the land and do it" (Simpson, 2017, p. 165). Instead of a process of learners learning *about* the land, from a land education perspective, the pedagogical relationship to land is recentered such that land itself becomes the teacher (Zurba et al., 2022). Two recent projects have explored the possibilities of integrating a land education approach to Indigenization efforts (Marom & Rattray, 2022; Zurba et al., 2022). To foster new relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people in Canada and to promote a deeper understanding of reconciliation, Marom and Rattray (2022) conducted 'land gathering' workshops for Indigenous and non-Indigenous youth on Tahltan land in Northern British Columbia. For their part, Zurba et al. (2022) initiated land-based excursions to Webaseemoong Independent Nations in Northern Ontario. The project brought together Indigenous academics and Elders to lead university students from the University of Winnipeg through land-based curriculum. In both cases, they found that the opportunity for students to learn experientially through land-based interactions promoted critical reflection and allowed space for learners to question taken for granted "truths" about the world (Zurba et al., 2022). They stress the need to develop strong and respectful partnerships with Elders and Indigenous communities, as well as to make space for engaging with Indigenous

students and not to cater primarily to the needs to non-Indigenous learners (Marom & Rattray, 2022).

Given what we know about the pedagogical potential of engaging learners in land-based education as a means of fostering a critical reflection on reconciliation, the question arises as to what it may look like to engage international students in curricular interventions grounded in a land-based educational framework.

METHODOLOGY

The findings discussed in this paper are drawn from a mixed-methods project on post-secondary students' mobility decisions in Nova Scotia. Using the frameworks of mobile transitions (Robertson et al., 2018) and informal citizenship learning (Biesta et al., 2009), the project explores how youth in Nova Scotia (be they local or international) learn to adapt to an increasingly mobile world. The project involved participation from three Nova Scotia universities (St. Francis Xavier University, Mount Saint Vincent University, and Cape Breton University). The project involved a province-wide survey that focused on the economic, relational, and civic factors that play into youths' mobility decisions. We had approximately 1000 students respond to the survey. Respondents identified as Canadian citizens (approximately 60%), international students (approximately 35%), and permanent residents (approximately 5%). Approximately 5% of Canadian citizen respondents identified as Indigenous. The survey was followed by 36 one-on-one semi-structured interviews with international students (n=23) and domestic students (n=13) that took place in Halifax, Antigonish, and Sydney. The interviews were then followed by two online participatory photography workshops with 4 participants (3 international and 1 domestic). No Indigenous students participated in the qualitative research. This paper offers a reflection on the participatory photography workshop. Brigham et al. (2018) describe participatory photography as a qualitative visual arts-based method that encourages participants to articulate their realities, tell their own stories, and to spark a critical conversation amongst a group of research participants. For this workshop, participants had already taken part in both the survey and an interview, and so were familiar with the project and the research questions. The workshop took place online over two days. On the first day we had a professional photographer teach participants some basic photography skills, and then they were instructed to go out into the world and take photographs related to the project themes, with corresponding reflections. Three weeks later we got back together to share the photographs and reflections, and participants were asked to thematically organize photographs and to reflect further on their significance. For this paper we are focusing on the results grounded in the photographs and reflections from the international student participants. The results were published on the project website: <https://adamperry.ca/photovoice/>.

THE SPIDER AND THE WASP: RESULTS

All of the international student participatory photography participants discussed how engaging with what they referred to as 'nature' was very important to their experience of living in Nova Scotia. In both the photography sessions and the interviews that preceded them international students talked about how the province's physical environment played a major role in their decisions to either stay or leave the province long-term. They discussed at length for example the importance of being surrounded by water, of going for hikes in the Cape Breton highlands,

and how spending time in nature allowed them time to reflect on their lives. These experiences were integral to their developing a sense of place and belonging. What we can see is how international students' citizenship learning is a situated and relational process (Biesta et al., 2009) partially linked to their informal and experiential engagement with their physical environments. In the words of one participant (Aadav):

... living in Cape Breton, it is mountains and hills and has the ocean, two of my favourite things combined. Staying here has always been an option because I like the quiet lifestyle and you can always go and take a hike into the woods or trails anytime you want. At the end of the day, I will eventually settle here.

However, while these participants would have had exposure to Indigenization practices on campus, such as institutional land acknowledgements for example, none of these reflections mentioned historical and ongoing settler colonial relations. Participants' experiences of Nova Scotia's natural environment are thus divorced from the realities of Indigenous land dispossession and the contemporary concerns about truth and reconciliation. That being said, we found that, while decontextualized from the issue of decolonization, participant reflections do inadvertently touch on some of the themes discussed within the land education literature. As such, we suggest that there is an opportunity for carefully orchestrated land-based education interventions with international students to support broader Indigenization objectives.

Participants describe finding their own holistic learning experiences drawn from everyday experiential relationships to the world around them. Two photographs with corresponding reflections, both by Aadav, an international student from India studying at Cape Breton University, are illustrative.

The Land as Teacher

The first photograph is a close-up of a spider eating a wasp caught in its web. The reflection states:

While looking for bugs, bees, and other insects this wasp zooms by me and gets caught in the spider's net and the spider starts to wrap it in its silk. It made me realize we are all like that wasp speeding with our life suddenly getting caught by the monster called 'time' – wrapped and ready to be devoured.

In reflecting on how this event 'made him realize' his own mortality, Aadav is reflecting on the pedagogical value of being with the natural world. In his reflection he articulates how the relationship between the wasp and the spider taught him that we are all dominated by the Earth's natural rhythms.

Relationships

The second photograph is a wide-angle shot of a wooded trail, with two unidentified people halfway through the frame walking away from the camera. The person nearest to the photographer is holding a butterfly net. The reflection states:

Going into nature has always been a special feeling to me. Healing my soul and sanity and enjoying what Mother Nature has to offer. And the best part about it is when you have people you love and respect accompanying you, parting their knowledge and understanding, making you wise and humble.

Aadav's photograph and reflection accentuate the spiritual and relational aspects of learning from one's physical environment. For Aadav, the healing properties of the natural world are amplified when the experience is shared with others, emphasizing a "whole-body intelligence" that is gained through the collective realization of a loving and interdependent relationship to our physical surroundings (Simpson, 2017, p. 151).

CONCLUSIONS

There is a need to better integrate Indigenous pedagogies to critically engage international students more directly in the process of 'decolonizing' the academy in settler colonial contexts (Anderson & Bristowe, 2020; Beck & Pidgeon, 2020). This need is particularly acute in Atlantic Canada, a region that has identified international education policy as key to its economic and demographic future (Toughill, 2018). Drawing from the framework of 'land education' we reflect on international students' experiences of engaging with their physical environment. We find that participants' connection to the natural environment is integral to their developing a sense of civic belonging and relationship to place (Biesta et al., 2009). These experiences are divorced from an understanding of Indigenous land dispossession. However, they do represent an opportunity for engaging international students in carefully crafted land-based educational interventions that aim to foster relationships with Indigenous communities and promote a critical understanding of reconciliation. Based on the positive results reported from recent land-based education projects elsewhere (Marom & Rattray, 2022; Zurba et al., 2022), we suggest that Atlantic universities better integrate internationalization and Indigenization practices and that they prioritize efforts to critically engage both international students and Indigenous students in land-based curricula that critiques settler colonialism and supports reconciliation.

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MEMORY AND IDENTITY IN THE TIME OF THE INTERNET: AN AUTOETHNOGRAPHY

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Abstract

There are moments that define one's life and while we never forget them, reflection can lead to new perspectives. In 1982, I was part of a long peace march for nuclear disarmament. In 2020, the first item of an Internet search for this peace march was titled 'Historic Images': while I immediately recognized my then-partner holding one side of the banner, it took time to recognize that the other person holding the banner was me! It was a strange moment, coming face to face with myself 40 years later. As surprising as this was, it led to an even more astonishing discovery on the Internet: the detailed diary of our peace march by Andy, another core member. This was an amazing gift across the years since he died in 1994. His friends typed his 500-page handwritten diary upon his return in 1982 and in 2012 did a pilgrimage in his memory from New Orleans to New York and published his diary on the Internet. Here I was, in 2020, reading a diary I had not known about by a diarist who died decades ago. The discovery of photograph and diary provoked questions of memory and identity. This study suggests that unexpected spontaneous events can provide impetus for critical self-reflection and honours the generativity that older people seek when we look for threads that weave who we have been, what we have done, and who we are becoming. This exploration may provide support for future transformation as I contemplate the retirement process in the coming years. It also suggests that social movements can be inclusive of a range of people with different levels of knowledge and that engagement itself is a source of learning.

Background

On January 1, 1982, I joined the World Peace March for Nuclear Disarmament from New Orleans to New York, a 5 ½ month, approximately 2500 km, walking journey. Japanese Buddhist monks initiated the peace march in support of the 2nd United Nations Special Session on Disarmament initiated by non-aligned countries. We relied on hospitality provided by people welcoming us into their homes, churches, schools, and community centers. It was an intense and formative experience. The core group of 6 included 3 Japanese monks; Andy, an American from the War Resister League; my German partner and I, both of us speakers of English as a second language. This peace march also included 10 walkers who had left San Francisco and 10 who had left Los Angeles. Aside from walking, carrying the banner, or beating hand drums and chanting

a prayer for peace (we did not chitchat as we walked), we met local people and after walking all day our intensely physical activity immediately turned into an intensely social one as we attended meetings and took all opportunities to meet people. We took a 15-minute break midmorning, one mid-afternoon, and 45-60 minutes for lunch at noon, wherever we were, regardless of weather. We usually had a day off every 3 weeks.

On June 12, 1982, in New York City, we were 1 million people, the largest peace gathering in the United States at the time. This peace march supported the new Nuclear Freeze Movement which demanded a stop to the testing, production, and deployment of nuclear weapons. A few years later, the General Secretary of the Soviet Union, Mikhail Gorbachev, and the President of the United States, Ronald Regan met in Geneva (1985) and Reykjavik (1986), which led to the 1987 Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty which was followed by the 1991 Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START) by Mikhail Gorbachev and George Bush (Arms Control Association, n.d.). A New Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (New START) was signed on 8 April 2010 by United States President Obama and Russian President Medvedev (Arms Control Association, n.d.). Andy's diary provided a unique opportunity to consider different perspectives and highlighted the importance of documenting our lives. In an aging population the notion of memory becomes of great interest. How is identity linked to memory?

Methodology

To explore the link between identity and memory, I chose autoethnography as it allows the exploration of layers of self-awareness. The discovery of these artefacts led to an examination of critical incidents that hold significance in terms of my development as an activist and academic. The data generated and analyzed were photographs, Andy's diary, autobiographical reconstruction, and Internet searches of media reports on the 1982 World Peace March for Nuclear Disarmament and demonstration in New York City on June 12, 1982.

Findings: New Perspectives

Reading Andy's diary was a wonderful experience, making me laugh out loud but also humbling, although immensely welcomed as it offered new perspectives. While a small core of 6 spent 5 1/2 months walking together, I discovered Andy through his diary: despite daily proximity, I knew so little about him. And while I was an intrinsic part of this peace march, I gained a new understanding of the historical and socio-political context of the peace march. Had Andy been alive, I would have flown to North Carolina

Motivation: Familial History

My motivation was rooted in family's history. We lived in a small town in southeast Quebec. In the early 1960s, a cousin, of my age who lived nearby, died of acute leukemia within one month. I remember the grief of his mother, his siblings, and us cousins. Shortly after, my mother asked the doctor if leukemia was hereditary since her

three older sisters had lost 1 or 2 children to leukemia. The doctor did not believe it was hereditary and thought it had to do with experiments in the atmosphere, but he did not know exactly what. A few years later, as a college student, I found out that wind patterns carried pollution from the Eastern US directly over southeast Quebec, including emissions from American nuclear plants and learned that radiation from nuclear energy could result in leukemia. After my cousin's suffering and the grief of relatives who had lost children to leukemia, nothing could convince me that nuclear energy and nuclear arms should be used if they could cause leukemia. In the early 1980s, I was very concerned about the nuclear arms race, and I welcomed the opportunity to join the peace march from New Orleans to New York and stand up for something I believed in as I was free and in search of purpose and adventure.

In reading Andy's detailed diary, I was immensely surprised that while I was intrinsically part of this march, I did not remember many of the events he wrote about, although I could see it was all believable. How was it possible to read about things I said and did, and yet have no memory of them? At times, I came across as very creative and daring, while at other times I seemed naïve and lacking the understanding of the larger context of the peace march. For example, a few days after we started, a local organizer asked for volunteers to do radio interviews. Here is an excerpt from Andy's diary:

Carole said she would go, but that she would talk about something "positive" like meditation or vegetarian diet. She would not talk about nuclear weapons because this would create "negative energy" in the universe and thus help to bring on a nuclear war. Lorie looked at me, and I [Andy] volunteered to do the afternoon program.

It is humbling to read how naïve I was. Upon reflection, I realize that the history of leukemia in my family motivated me, and that I compensated my deficiency of knowledge of facts with enthusiasm, perseverance, a belief in peace, and a friendly willingness to approach anyone about the need for a world free of nuclear arms. While we walk during the day, evenings were for prayer services, presentations, and meetings; it took me a long time to appreciate why the monks insisted on exhibiting painful photos of the victims of Hiroshima/Nagasaki which I could hardly look at. One evening, sitting kitty-corner to a monk, I saw his jaw tightened when they showed those horrible images and I realized that he must have found it just as difficult to look at those photos, but he used that pain to strengthen his resolve and commitment. This realization was a bridge to my relatives' suffering and strengthened my own resolve.

At times, Andy, my partner, and I felt that the peace march was too Japanese and Buddhist, and we were not interested in suggesting that Buddhism was superior to Christianity as most people we met were Christians. Yet, despite this conflict, I remember a strong sense of purpose that inhabited my days as we walked and prayed. We found ways to make it more inclusive. For example, my partner and I initiated

holding hands in a circle and signing some simple songs just before walking for the day so that everyone who was walking with us that day had a moment of feeling together. Initially the monks clearly disliked the idea and refused to hold hands; however, I remember when the senior monk came to me and said 'Carole, sing, sing!' a recognition that our intuitive ways also had some merit. A few hours before we were to join the much larger Los Angeles march in Washington, D.C., the senior monk asked that we spend time together holding hands and singing as this would be the last time the monks would be able to participate! As far as Andy was concerned, we were the only march who tried to be democratic in decision-making, which changed in Washington. Yet, there is no denying that the monks gave credibility to this peace march in a way that few of us could, and we were grateful for their generosity and example of dedication and perseverance.

Historical and Socio-political Context

While Andy's memories are detailed and factual, mine are not. When I think about the peace march, I think about what I learned. My partner and I were recent English speakers and had never been to university. By contrast, Andy had been a member of Students for a Democratic Society and had a Master of Social Work; and after working as a social worker for the government he grew disillusioned with the bureaucratic nature of his work. He had an analysis of the connection between the arms race and social issues, including poverty and racism, as he knew the historical context of the region. He wrote that the region we were walking through was known for people opposed to the idea emblazoned on our banner. He was informed about labour and civil rights movements. In his diary he commented about dangers we faced, most of which I had forgotten. For example, we walked intown were the Klu Klux Klan had recently paraded in their sheets. Sometimes we heard gunshots in the air and once a balloon full of water was thrown from a passing motorcycle, hit me and threw me on the ground. Andy's diary detailed the serious concerns of the logistics organizer from the Fellowship of Reconciliation in Atlanta who believed that the monks would have been hurt, and possibly not survived, had they been alone. She also acknowledged that the FBI had been 'protecting' us although we never saw their presence but apparently, they were around. Later, I understood that being vulnerable allowed people to extend themselves to support us and thus participate in some way. The idea that vulnerability is key to social change has stayed with me.

The best part of walking in the Deep South was meeting African Americans for the first time. I recall the warm hospitality people gave us for 5 1/2 months, which affirmed my faith in humanity. Neither my partner nor I knew much about the 1960s Civil Rights Movement. Three incidents stand out. In Selma, Alabama, we were invited to the Brown Chapel and I remember the intensity in the Chapel as well as from well-wishers. We learned that during the Civil Rights Movement, the Brown Chapel had continued to provide space for meetings even after State and Federal courts had issued injunctions to ban meetings in black churches. This was a place of intense courage. In Camden,

New Jersey, African Americans welcomed us along the route and offered delicacies we had not seen since New Orleans to our group of 50 walkers by then even though there were only a few jobs in this disaffected rust belt neighbourhood of 80,000 people living in dilapidated buildings. They welcomed us with grace and kindness and offered tickets to a play by Walt Whitman. The next day, after the church service, they gave each walked a loaf of bread baked by women of the community, to keep us strong. This reception was the warmest hospitality along with one in Alabama, in the 5th poorest county in the US, where African Americans offered a fabulous meal while some brought their own mattresses for us to sleep on in the church hall. Later, while walking through a very poor neighbourhood in Philadelphia where there were no trees, no regular garbage collection, and buildings were in disrepair, the quiet stares of residents made my partner and I feel our racial privilege although we did not know that term at the time. My partner said that while we were walking for peace, the bomb had already fallen, economically, on this community. Nuclear arms seemed remote from the daily survival in this neighbourhood, but they were linked, something Andy understood. I had been to so-called developing countries, and more since, but it is in the US that I saw the worst poverty.

Gender and Future Impetus for Research

I was the only woman for the first 2 ½ months. I was enthusiastic and easily took initiative. However, I felt that because of being a woman I was not invited to speak even though there were usually more women in the audience, and I felt we should reach out to them. As we approached Atlanta, Georgia where we had been invited to speak at Emory University, there was a meeting to discuss the program and the senior monk asked all the marchers, except me, to prepare a speech. It was not that as an individual I felt I had something so important to say but I felt it was respectful to provide a woman's view as I was walking just like the other walkers but had a slightly different perspective. After seeing that I was not happy to be left out the monk asked me to prepare a "small, small, small speech." After reading Andy's diary and my early comment about not speaking about nuclear arms I have a new perspective for why the senior monk was not thrilled to have me speak.

After the meeting, we were invited to watch a film about the creation of the United Nations and as I watched, men were fighting with arms, leading men with arms, and then more men discussing the alternative to war, the United Nations was born. And as the camera panned across the newly created UN, representatives, most if not all, were men. In that moment it seemed obvious that women were missing from this whole enterprise. I understood, viscerally, that I had been feeling oppressed as a woman in the group and could see a connection to women being ignored in the peace process. Despite their initial dismissal, when we joined the much larger march from Los Angeles, when senior monks were asked to send speakers to different organizations, they often asked myself, another woman, and a monk who had been very supportive of our attempts at democratic decision-making from the New Orleans march.

Conclusion

I joined other peace marches from Bonn to Vienna with German Women for Peace (Women for Peace, n.d.), and from Panama to Mexico with Norwegian Women for Peace (Becker, 2004). I organized a small peace walk from Victoria to Nanoose Bay where I was later involved in the civil disobedience Motherpeace Action (McBride, 1986) against US Navy using Nanoose Bay for research on underwater weapons that could later be fitted with nuclear arms, and which brought in Canadian waters US warships and submarines that may have nuclear reactors and/or weapons. However, I realized that I could not work on all issues and turned to non-formal education and worked with Canada World Youth (CWY)'s international exchanges to encourage youth to live with purpose and a sense of possibilities; I was also stimulated by the cross-cultural context. During a break from CWY, I took university courses and started to ask about women activists in the past. I had met many women activists but what about before our generation? It was exhilarating to discover ignored threads in a mosaic of women's collective acts of resistance of creativity and perseverance. It became the heart of my academic work and led to a doctoral thesis on a group of creative and courageous activists, the Raging Grannies.

Unpredictably, feeling oppressed by monks and the film on the creation of the UN led a decade later to my academic work on women's activism. Andy's diary raised questions of identity. Where was that young, naïve but determined, not afraid, and daring woman who challenged sexist comments and negotiated with American police during the peace march? Post-secondary education gave me a framework for understanding my experiences yet despite my limited knowledge during the peace march, my visceral experiences gave me a sense of purpose, a trust in my ability to analyze situations on my feet and identify creative approaches to unexpected problems. There was freedom in living in the moment. Education has given me knowledge and skills to understand the larger context, but I wonder if education, or/and age, have eroded the courage I had to walk through other countries for peace and against nuclear arms, and have faith in humanity on a daily basis. Andy's detailed diary is remarkable, and I wish I had done so too as I now so much want to recapture memories that seem gone. The passage of time is enriching yet memories also vanish quickly. But memory has different aspects, from recalling detailed scenes and facts to the distilled learning and insights that come from such events. Andy kept an excellent record of the detailed events while I have internalized the meanings these events had.

Activism and academic work required different skills and orientations, yet activism led me, unsuspecting, to academic work, which now allows me to consider that earlier activism from a different perspective, understanding that the peace march took place within an important historical and socio-political context that clearly linked the nuclear arm race to social issues of poverty and racism, which have become only more pressing. Yet, even with imperfect understanding at the time, I could participate in an

action that allowed space for different motivations, and in this there may be a lesson for social movements, to welcome people to join as they are, knowing that in joining collective actions, we do learn, and we do not need to know it all before uniting with others. The willingness to engage and to be vulnerable is also a contribution to social movements. Small groups with a clear purpose and intense focus brought one million together and demanded changes, which supported a larger Freeze Movement and led to treaties, however limited they are: "It is hardly hyperbole to say that 30 years ago today, we, peaceful demonstrators, citizen agitators, members of the human race, played an incalculably important role in saving ourselves from ourselves" (Daley, 2012, n. p.).

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THE NARRATIVES THAT THE MAINSTREAM MEDIA TELL: A CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS OF MAINSTREAM NEWS REPORTS ABOUT IMMIGRANTS WITH ENGINEERING BACKGROUNDS IN CANADA

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Abstract

Analysis of media framing of immigrants and refugees, an area of extensive research, is typically revealing of the politics surrounding immigrants and integration. This paper reports the results of a critical discourse analysis of mainstream news reports that feature immigrants with engineering backgrounds (IWEs) in Canada. It shows four dominant ways in which IWEs are represented: the accomplished, the challenged, the criminal or criminalized, and the posthumous. Together, these reports formulate four main overarching media discourses regarding IWEs and Canadian society. These are (1) normalization and individualization of integration barriers; (2) representation of Canada as a privileged and moralistic country, and (3) obscured narratives of colonialism and violence of settlement. As news media function to educate adults about social issues, it is hoped that this paper becomes one of the many voices that strive to change the narratives that normalize immigrants' marginalized status in the host society.

Keywords: Immigrant engineers, media representation, immigrants in Canada

INTRODUCTION

The research reported in this paper is an unexpected outcome derived of a large research project, which was designed to explore the roles that immigrant engineers play in knowledge “transfer” and innovation in Canada. While we were somewhat successful at finding representations of immigrant engineers as contributors to professional knowledge and practices within professional magazines, we failed to locate many with such profiles in the mainstream news media. These initial analyses prompted us to ask: If IWEs are not being celebrated much in news media, how are they being reported and represented? And what are the social discourses articulated through media reports focused on IWEs? These questions are important given that news media function to educate adults about social issues and simultaneously frame them in certain ways (Walker & Walter, 2018). This paper reports our inquiry into these questions.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Understanding the media representation of IWEs is particularly important because media constitutes a meta-capital that exerts influence on various societal fields. It has the power to legitimate representations and grant symbolic capital to particular ways of understanding social life (Couldry, 2003). Despite the growing influence of social media, legacy news media outlets

are still very powerful in terms of (mis)educating the public and setting the news agenda (van Doorn, 2015). In this research, we also draw on Entman's (1993) concept of news frames to understand how news storytelling has embedded ideological and power basis through the unconscious process of news production (Gans, 1979; Mastro et al., 2014).

Academic research examining media frames of immigrants and refugees is extensive and longstanding. Most studies focus on negative portrayals of immigrants, narrowness in the overall media discourses and simplification of immigration issues (Esses et al., 2013; Farris & Silber Mohamed, 2018; Lawlor, 2015; Quinsaat, 2014; Smith & Deacon, 2018). For instance, Farris and Silber Mohamed (2018) argued that U.S. media frequently depicts immigrants as undocumented by presenting images of border as well as arrest and detentions. Moreover, working immigrants are disproportionately portrayed as engaging in low-skilled activities. Research also points to the differential framing by media of different immigrant groups. For example, in European media, migrants from Eastern Europe are generally framed as a threat to the economy and welfare system (Eberl et al., 2018), while immigrants in one of New Zealand's newspaper are more likely to be represented as good for the economy (Lee & Cain, 2019). What needs to be pointed out is that media discourses also juxtapose various viewpoints, some of which are contradictory, about immigrants and refugees (Bauder, 2008). In Quinsaat (2014)'s study of news frames of immigrants between two highly contentious bills in the US, the author showed that media creates diametrically opposed representations of immigrants. In the Canadian context, Sakamoto et al. (2013) identified three recurring frames of immigrants in Canadian newspapers: the "successful", the "humble", and the "unlucky" immigrants. While the first two frames appear to be positive, the underlying assumption is the otherness of immigrants who are hard-working and willing to accept low-paid jobs.

Despite the attention to media representation of immigrants in the academic literature there is still a lack of focus in the academic literature on immigrants who have a professional background. Hence, this research fills in the gap of the literature and look at how immigrants with engineering backgrounds are represented in mainstream news media in Canada.

METHODOLOGY

This paper focuses on three major news media outlets as data sources: *CBC News*, *The Globe and Mail*, and *Vancouver Sun* from 2015 to 2019 prior to the COVID-19 pandemic. We chose these outlets based on research that points to the continued primacy of news media and national broadcasters in setting the parameters of debate across other legacy and social media outlets (Nerghes & Lee, 2019). Furthermore, the most visited online news sites continue to be large media companies with an offline presence (e.g., the BBC) (Smith & Deacon, 2018). To narrow down the scope of our search, we focused on the province of British Columbia (BC) and the city of Vancouver in particular. The search terms used for the initial media search was 'engineer* AND ("British Columbia" OR BC OR Vancouver)'. We then skimmed through these articles and finally identified 61 news articles that have a reporting on an IWE from the three media sources online (Vancouver Sun, 36; The Globe and Mail, 20; CBC News, 5).

The analysis of the data started at the same time of data collection. A heuristic table was created for descriptive analysis to capture the characteristics of each reports (e.g., headline, publication date, genre category), IWEs' demographics and professional profile, their achievements or challenges, the structure of the reports, and the linguistic features (e.g., the

tone is empathetic to the IWE). We used Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) to identify emergent patterns and emphases of discursive frameworks in the news media portraying IWEs. If media framing suggests a “bottom-up” approach that focus on the textual and visual structuring of news pieces, CDA lends itself to media analysis also with a “top-down” perspective that takes into account the political, ideological, and historical issues of power and knowledge that are constitutive of discourses (Wooffitt, 2005).

RESEARCH FINDINGS

Four Frames of the Portrayed IWEs

We found that the IWEs were being represented mainly in four different ways: the accomplished, i.e., portrayed as contributing to or successfully adapting to society (26 reports); the challenged, i.e., faced with significant difficulties (16 reports); the criminal or criminalized, i.e., depicted with either sympathetic (3 reports) or negative tones (4 reports); and the posthumous, i.e., reported posthumously (9 reports).

The Accomplished

Twenty-six articles depicted the IWE as making a significant contribution or successfully adapting to Canadian society, by, for instance, establishing a company or running a successful local restaurant. Eleven articles (42.3%) of them featured IWEs employed in engineering fields, and 15 articles (57.6%) in non-engineering fields. The examples of the accomplished IWEs in the engineering field include a *Vancouver Sun's* report (Kwantes, 2015) featuring a Welsh-born IWE, who had become the president and CEO of Westhaven, a company that produces diamonds. The IWE was framed as the “diamond pioneer” and contributing to Canadian industry in a highly positive way.

Six reports depicted the smooth transitions of the IWE in their workplace. For instance, a *Vancouver Sun* article stated:

Fred was born in India, raised in Northern Rhodesia (now Zambia), earned a degree in electrical engineering in South Africa and then mechanical engineering accreditation in England during a postgraduate fellowship at a British company supplying equipment for electricity generation. Much of the equipment was being shipped to BC Hydro's new Burrard Thermal plant.

"I copied the name of BC Hydro's chief engineer from a packing crate, wrote him a letter and asked for a job," Fred recalls.

The response was: When can you be here? (Edwards, 2016)

The depiction implies that getting a job as an engineer for the IWE was a simple and quick process. It is noticeable that those represented as accomplished IWEs either came from Western countries (10 IWEs), and/or got educational credentials in Canada (4 IWEs) or Western countries (4 from the UK, 2 from the US), which might imply that knowledge gained in Western countries is readily valorized in Canada compared with those from non-Western countries.

The Challenged

The second trend in the media is to portray IWEs as having challenges in different aspects of life in Canada. Sixteen news articles fell into this category and the types of the challenges addressed in these articles include integration issues (7 articles) such as language barriers, cultural gap, and un/underemployment; the financial unaffordability of housing (4); US border bans to Muslim-majority countries (2); discrimination based on countries of origin and religion (1); and family issues (2). Just as the types of the challenges addressed were varied, so too were the degrees and intensities of the challenges the IWEs were undergoing. While some were jobless Syrian refugees, others had a promising job, but the market conditions prevented them from buying a house. For instance, *The Globe and Mail* (Gold, 2015) portrayed an IWE in a managerial engineer position, who was having difficulty purchasing a house. His case was used as an example to "*illustrate perfectly how wrong it can go when a city's property market is burdened by soaring prices.*"

In contrast, another news article from *The Globe and Mail* (Hunter and Hager, 2016) showed how a Syrian refugee IWE was having a hard time due to the debt he owed to the Canadian government (e.g., air fare and medical exam fees) and his inability to afford housing and education. *The Globe and Mail* (Uguen-Csenge, 2016) also reported another Syrian IWE and noted, "*Ms. al-Sibai knows how difficult it is to become accredited as an engineer in Canada and is coming to terms with the fact that she likely won't be able to work in that field again.*"

In this report, the Syrian refugee IWE was depicted as having no other choice than accepting that she might not be able to become an engineer in Canada. The difficulties to validate IWEs' prior educational or professional credentials from non-Western countries seemed to become tacit knowledge, something that should be expected and taken for granted.

The Criminal and Criminalized

Seven news reports featured IWEs who were criminals or criminalized, yet the attitude towards these IWEs are diametrically different. Four reports (2 IWEs from Jordan and China) reported the IWE's crime and life in a dry, neutral tone, while three reports (2 IWEs from Iran and UK) presented the IWEs as innocent prisoners and showed strong sympathy to the unjust circumstances the IWE was put under. As an example of the former case, three reports from *Vancouver Sun* (Bains, 2018; 2019; The Canadian Press, 2018) featured an IWE from Jordan who had been facing deportation after making posts promoting terrorism on Facebook. These articles reported that he was deemed a "danger to the public" by immigration authorities. Bains (2018) used direct quotes from the legal authorities "*he glorified and encouraged lone wolf attacks*" and "*he...allied himself with a terrorist organization and he served that organization's social media agenda.*" All these reinforce the representation of the IWE as threat in Canadian society.

On the other hand, three news articles featured IWEs as criminalized. These reports portrayed the IWEs and their stories in a compassionate way, contesting their charges. *Vancouver Sun* (Chan, 2018) and *The Globe and Mail* (Derakhshan, 2019) featured an IWE from Iran who was arrested two days after returning to Iran to take care of his father. He was imprisoned since then over pornography charges. Chan (2018) criticized Iran's legal system and its lack of attention to human rights. Thus, these three articles portrayed the IWEs as being imprisoned for unjust causes and the IWEs were described as victims rather than criminals, who were brought to injustice due to another country's unfair system and judgement.

The Posthumous

Nine articles featured IWEs posthumously. Four of them focused on historically significant figures, including Edgar Dewdney from England, for his involvement in a wagon road construction in Vancouver (Mackie, 2017); and Theodore Maiman from the US, who invented the laser (Ligeti, 2018). Four news articles reported preventable and early deaths, a car crash (2 IWEs), gas-and-dash (1), and a boat sinking (1). These reports used emotional language or offered more detailed accounts about the IWEs' life. For example, two articles from *CBC news* reported multiple tragedies occurred in a family, where the IWE couple from Iran got laid off, and the wife got killed trying to stop someone who were driving away without paying at a gas station where she was working as a gas attendant, and the husband also got killed in a car crash two years later while driving to his late wife's memorial. In these articles, presenting the IWEs' country of origin offered the context of the story, and perhaps more importantly, it also served to add a dramatic effect that might more strongly appeal to the reader.

The Social Narratives That Media Tell

Across the four categories of representations of IWEs, we also found overarching media discourses regarding IWEs and Canadian society. We categorized these into three patterns: (1) normalized barriers of integration with little critiques of structural change, (2) Canada as a privileged and moralistic country, and (3) absent narrative of colonialism and violence of settlement.

Normalized Barriers of Integration with Limited Critiques for Structural Change

Eighteen news articles focused on the importance and difficulties of integration to Canadian society. For instance, *Vancouver Sun* (Sinoski, 2015) quoted an IWE, who was becoming a citizen: "I see a lot of people who come here and aren't into the culture...It takes courage to grab on to that. You have to step in and not expect what you expect. I wasn't open-minded until I came here." This comment from the IWE problematizes immigrants who are not actively adapting to Canada and implies that it is an individual responsibility to adapt to an open Canadian culture.

The Globe and Mail (Uguen-Csenge, 2016) featured a Syrian refugee IWE who faced difficulties to become accredited as a professional engineer and instead volunteered as an Arabic interpreter for other new arrivals. The article quoted the IWE as saying, "I enjoyed to help them" and "It make me very happy to help people". All these worked to normalize barriers of integrating to Canadian life, leaving unattended systematic issues obstructing immigrants' integration, such as credential recognition.

Canada as a Privileged and Moralistic Country

Seventeen news report portrayed Canada as a privileged place and as a human rights defender. Nine articles use IWE's stories to amplify the privilege of being a member of Canadian society. *Vancouver Sun* (Sinoski, 2015) depicted an IWE from Egypt, who was becoming a citizen at a citizenship ceremony. In this article, Canada was described to be "the best country in the world" by the Citizenship Judge, and the IWE was quoted as saying that Canadians are "very nice..., very friendly, very welcoming, very generous" and these were the qualities made him "want to be like them."

Sometimes Canada was established as a country that could influence supposedly the inhumane systems in another country. VanderKlippe (2017) from *The Globe and Mail* reported an IWE from China working to free her husband who was held on a corruption allegation and to challenge the anti-corruption interrogation system for communist party members (*shuanggui*) in China. The author included many disturbing descriptions of how the husband was tortured in China ("being burned by cigarettes and whipped with his own belt"). In contrast, stating that "Canada has an obligation not to return people to a country where there is a likelihood they will be tortured", the journalist suggested that Canada could be a potential savior by quoting a retired Canadian diplomat ("Ottawa could insist on eschewing any case based on evidence with roots in *shuanggui* ... And if other countries echo this message, then that could have a cumulative effect").

Absent Narrative of Colonialism and the Violence of Settlement

Through the analysis, it became evident that part of the accomplished IWEs' successes might have been built on the praise of purported Canadian superiority. In addition, what is absent through these frames and representations is an acknowledgement and critique of the colonial history on which Canada is built. For instance, *Vancouver Sun* (Kwantes, 2015) from *Vancouver Sun* depicted an IWE who is the CEO of a mining company as "diamond pioneer" in a positive tone to describe his life trajectory in mining: "Thomas found buried treasure himself decades later. But it was in Canada's North that he discovered diamonds, and his fortune". The news article also depicts his wealthy and success, reporting that "Thomas's exploration successes in the North have afforded him a comfortable life in West Vancouver." While the news disclosed the IWE's life trajectory positively, it also indicated that Canada is a place where its natural resources are extracted without considering that much of this land was stolen from First Nations people who continue to face racism and poverty throughout Canada.

CONCLUSIONS

Considering that media is a prominent outlet to direct people as to what social issues to pay attention to and how to understand them, the types of media narratives that are being used in portraying IWEs are informative. The critical discourse analysis shows four dominant ways in which IWEs are represented in the mainstream media: the accomplished, the challenged, the criminal and criminalized and the posthumous. Where IWEs are represented as accomplished and challenged, IWEs' prior knowledge appeared to be valued more when the credentials are from Western countries. Where IWEs are described as criminal and criminalized, it might not be coincidental that alleged or criminal IWEs from Jordan and China were depicted in a dry, neutral tone but imprisoned IWEs from Iran and the UK, were portrayed as innocent victims of unjust causes. More detailed accounts about the IWE's lives were given mostly for those who were framed as accomplished or who were portrayed posthumously. The unequal power relations between Canada and the countries where IWEs are from seem to underpin news media discourses in a subtle way. The barriers and difficulties IWEs experience for integration are normalized with very limited attention given to the structural causes. In comparing Canada with the countries where IWEs are from, media tends to portray Canada as a benevolent, privileged, and moralistic country, and others, particularly those non-western countries as unjust and even inhumane. This Canada pride however obscures the colonial history and possible appropriation

of Indigenous resources in the media portrayal of accomplished IWEs, which may perpetuate the marginalization of Indigenous people in Canada.

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CEXPANDING OPPORTUNITIES: POSTGRADUATE STUDIES AT THE NEXUS OF MIGRATION, INTERNATIONALIZATION AND INTEGRATION

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Abstract

Higher education institutions in Canada have witnessed a surge in the number of international students and mature immigrant students. Research has established a positive correlation between attending higher institutions and immigrant and international students' labour market outcomes. It is however not known how attending higher education may have worked to advance people's professional careers. Neither do we know how the increasing number of students with migratory experiences may have impacted higher education and the engineering profession in terms of knowledge and practice. Drawing on a qualitative study with immigrants with engineering backgrounds, this paper provides some insights into these questions. In particular, it sheds light on the unique position that postgraduate studies occupy in the life trajectories of the research respondents, and the ways in which they benefitted from the programs as well as the impacts they brought to professional knowledge and practices. Special attention is paid to the features of postgraduate programs that enabled the respondents to expand both their professional and life opportunities and the existing knowledge and practices within the engineering profession. Theoretically, this work benefits from a practice-based conception of immigrant as "distinctive knowledge practitioners". Empirically, the study brings together life history research and situational analysis.

Keywords: Postgraduate studies, engineering, immigrants, international students, life history, situational analysis

HIGHER EDUCATION AT THE NEXUS OF MIGRATION, INTERNATIONALIZATION, AND INTEGRATION

Higher education institutions have undergone a sea change in Canada. Among others, they have witnessed a surge in the number of students with migratory experiences, i.e., mature immigrants and international students. Research has documented that immigrants, particularly skilled immigrants who are admitted to Canada based on their educational and work experiences, tend to return to school after immigration (Adamuti-Trache, 2011; Banerjee & Verma, 2009; Hou, Lu & Schimmele, 2019). In Adamuti-Trache's secondary analysis of a longitudinal survey of immigrants to Canada (2011) for instance, 46% of immigrants enrolled in post-secondary education (PSE) within 4 years of arrival, and 17% of immigrants participated in university education. The study suggests that participants in universities are more likely than both non-participants and participants in other types of education to improve their employment

outcomes. It also shows that immigrants' choice of PSE is the result of the interplay of a range of structural and individual factors, such as the recognition of credentials and prior work experiences, language proficiency in English/French, occupational aspirations, and perceived value of Canadian education.

In the meantime, the number of international students has been on the rise in Canada, especially at the postsecondary level. According to IRCC (2020), by the end of 2019, before the hit of the COVID-19 pandemic, there were 642,480 international students in Canada; 498,735 of them were enrolled at postsecondary institutions. International students today are not only perceived as a way to address decreased funding for higher education, they are also considered an ideal pool of immigrants (Sá & Sabzalieva, 2018). While previously, international students were expected to return to their home countries, since 2008, a two-step immigration pathway has been created for them; international students are not only allowed to work while studying, upon graduation they can also apply for post-graduate work permit (PGWP) and/or immigration.

Clearly, higher institutions have played an increasingly important role in recruiting and retaining international students in Canada (Schinnerl, 2021), and unwittingly perhaps, in integrating immigrants to the host society (Banerjee & Verma, 2009; Walton-Roberts, 2011). It is however not known how higher institutions have worked at the intersection of migration and integration. More importantly, little attention has been paid to how the increasing number of international and immigrant students might be contributing to higher education and their professional fields in terms of knowledge in Canada. This paper seeks to address these issues from a practice-based perspective of immigrants as distinct knowledge practitioners.

IMMIGRANTS AS "DISTINCT" KNOWLEDGE PRACTITIONERS: A PRACTICE-BASED CONSTRUCTION

Immigrants are largely positioned as "replacement knowledge bearers", who need to conform to the knowledge frameworks in the destination countries to do well in the labour market (Williams, 2007, p. 366; Guo & Shan, 2013). In contrast to the dominant discourse, Williams (2007) proposes that immigrants should be recognized as "distinctive knowledge bearers", and that immigrant knowledge is valuable precisely because it is different. This paper builds on Williams' tenet. This is not to say that immigrant knowledge is better. It is rather to argue that given the social, cultural, and geographic distances that immigrants traverse, they are likely to develop knowing and doing that may share commonalities with, as well as differences from non-immigrant counterparts, which constitute a potentiality that could be activated to expand professional practices (Shan, 2020; Williams, 2007). By proposing immigrants as distinct knowledge practitioners, the paper is not to take stock of the distinct knowledge that immigrants bring with them. It is rather to understand the practices that enable immigrants to leverage their unique positionality as boundary spanners and mobilize their ways of knowing, doing, and being within professions.

The attention to enabling practices is inspired by the practice turn in social sciences (Schatzki, 2001). By looking to the practice turn, rather than seeing immigrants merely as newcomers, and learners who need to fit in, it is possible to see them as participants within dynamic practices where agency for change might be distributed among all constituents of practices (Shan, 2015). Within the practice turn, there are a multitude of constructs of practice, which simultaneously sensitize us to both the normative and emergent properties of practices (Fenwick, Ewards, & Sawchuck, 2001). Practices are normative as they are constituted through communities, mediating cultures, cultural artefacts, tools and technologies, and a shifting political economy of demand, distribution and supply. They are emergent as they are enacted and performed moment to moment, and contingent on the encountering of individual entities, both human and non-humans.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY, METHODS AND RESEARCH RESPONDENTS

Empirically, this paper draws on a qualitative study that focuses on the professional impacts brought about by immigrant engineers in British Columbia (BC), Canada. For the study, interviews were conducted with 34 respondents who have made a contribution to the engineering profession in Canada. All respondents came to Canada in the last 20 years. All obtained at least a bachelor's degree in engineering outside of Canada. All were working in engineering in BC at the time of the study. Among the 34 respondents, 17 have attended postgraduate programs in Canada, and this paper focuses on the experiences of the 17 participants. Among them, 10 obtained master's degrees including an MBA, 6 obtained a PhD degree as the highest degrees, and 1 was in process of completing a Master's program at the time of the interview. Out of these 17 respondents, 12 came to Canada as international students, and 5 were immigrants returning to universities. Twelve of them are men and five are women. They originated from Bangladesh (1), China (1), India (2), Iran (7), Mexico (4), Pakistan (1), and Taiwan (1).

All interviews were conducted over zoom and phone and were recorded and transcribed verbatim except for two who declined to be recorded. All transcripts were sent back to the respondents for member check. Life history analysis (Cole & Knowles, 2000) and situational analysis (Clark, 2003) were then simultaneously used to understand the data. Life history analysis is used to understand the life trajectory of the respondents as a continuity within context (Cole & Knowles, 2000). For each event of significant contribution that the respondents reported, a situational map was constructed to articulate the structural and emergent conditions involved in affording immigrants a space to make the contributions (Clarke, 2011). Finally, the research team compared, and contrasted the situational maps and produced an ecological analysis of the practices that enabled immigrants to expand both themselves and the practices in higher education and engineering.

RESEARCH FINDINGS

The paper shares the findings related to 17 respondents who attended postgraduate programs in Canada. Pseudo-initials are used to keep the identity of the participants confidential.

Postgraduate programs in the respondents' life trajectories

9 respondents enrolled in postgraduate programs in Canada *mainly to fulfil their educational aspirations*. They intended to upgrade their education as a way to pursue a professional interest, and in some cases to advance knowledge and develop specialization in an area that is not well developed in their country of origin. For instance, QA wished to pursue study in timber structures, as he was inspired at a conference where he learned about new applications of timber structures. He decided to pursue this particular area of practice, and hence chose a master's program that focused on this specialty, with little consideration about the location of the university.

Enhancing professional opportunities was an implicit or explicit goal for all respondents when choosing graduate programs. Like ZX, five other immigrant respondents also planned to join higher education before landing in Canada. Some of them carefully studied the needs of the Canadian market and intentionally targeted niche areas in making their program choice (KL). Seven respondents, especially those who had landed in Canada and who were not satisfied with their professional status, also framed their postgraduate study explicitly as a way to enhancing professional opportunities in Canada. Taken together, respondents with immigrant status at the time of their study attended postgraduate programs to try to obtain P.Eng. accreditation (RF, AS), build an alternative life/employment route (OP), and in some cases re-compose one's professional self and flag their expertise to employers.

A Canadian postgraduate program could serve a pathway to immigration. Notably, respondents developed their intent for immigration both before, during and after their studies (see also Brunner, 2018). In seven cases, the respondents clearly sought postgraduate studies in Canada with immigration and settlement in mind. Not all respondents planned to immigrate in the first place, but they started thinking of immigration in the course of their study or after graduation. Those who immigrated as former international students related discovering Canada as an attractive place, which helped them firm up their immigration decision. Some of them regarded Canada a safe place for growing family, a friendly work place for women in engineering, and a country of more freedom and possibilities compared to where they came from.

Of note, immigration might also be a matter of convenience rather than a permanent plan. In the case of QA for instance, he applied for immigration simply because he was eligible to apply. When asked about his future plan, he was uncertain where he would settle eventually.

Individual outcomes through postgraduate studies

Through postgraduate programs, some respondents *advanced their professional and research skills in the areas of their interests (CV, OP, QW)*, others explored new areas of knowledge and practices such as clean energy, engineering management and business operation, biomedical

engineering, big data analysis, mechatronic systems engineering, natural resources and environmental studies, process engineering (ER, GH, JK, SK, AS, UI, BN, QA). For most of the respondents, postgraduate degree programs provided an opportunity to develop knowledge and practical skills. For some other respondents though, the theoretical courses they took were a repetition of what they already studied back in their home countries (KL). A number of respondents pointed to the universal nature of engineering knowledge and commented that engineering is the same in Canada as across the world. Those who continued their study in their prior areas of practice stated that the main difference lays mostly in the codes and industry standards used (KL).

16 respondents found *employment* after completing their programs, either immediately or within four months. That is, most of the respondents had a smooth transition to the labour market in Canada. For instance, CV, ER, QW, TY, AS, UI were employed within a month after their graduation. Some were already involved with the companies through research or coop projects (CV, AS, QW). ER looked for a job while still working on her Master's program in Canada; her first Canadian job was as a graduate trainee for 4-months, after which she transitioned to her next position as a consultant in another company. Graduates with PhD degrees (OP, UI, QW) were looking for academic positions but given the limited number of such positions in Canada, they successfully applied for postdocs (OP, UI, QW) as an alternative route for employment in Canada.

Three study respondents started their *entrepreneurial ventures while doing their postgraduate programs*: DF, UI, TY. UI co-founded his company with a friend in his home country while still a PhD student and co-developed it to a successful business. Right after completing an MBA, DF co-founded a company with his friend that soon became a success with 75 employees and multi-million contracts. The idea was born while he was a student in Canada. After completing his MBA, TY became a co-founder of a company that grew from 2 to 21 employees. The study shows that combining engineering undergraduate degrees with MBA (DF, TY) and additional education in engineering management (TY) might lead to the successful development of businesses.

All respondents who came to Canada as international students, except for one received an open work permit upon graduation and later applied for permanent residency. In the case of NM, he had to return home after receiving his master's in 2002 due to a lack of employment opportunities, but he came back five years later to obtain a PhD degree in 2008 and stayed in Canada. This is not surprising as, prior to 2008, international students were expected to return to their home countries rather than staying on in Canada.

Impacts of respondents on higher education and the engineering profession

Patents, papers, software, and models. ZX's is the owner of five patents, two of which are based on his PhD dissertation and are used worldwide. CV developed a mathematical model and simulation software for system controls while doing research at a large public utility. Several respondents published their papers in journals and conference proceedings (WS, JK, ZX,

BN, QW, UI). For example, ER published a publicly accessible report based on her capstone project. WS and BN published papers based on their theses. By the time of the interview, QW had published 14 journal papers and 17 conference papers. BN's thesis research suggested a new solution to constructing wooden buildings and potentially provided data for developing new standards in this industrial area. He said: *For solid wood design, we definitely need to improve Canadian standards. So my research could provide good data for those guys who are going to develop the standard for wood design.*

Some of the respondents also directly contributed to the *teaching practices in higher education*. UI and QW returned to universities in a new role as university professors bringing their unique knowledge of non-Canadian educational systems. Reflecting on his experience as an undergraduate and postgraduate student in his home country, QW suggested that the engineering education in his home country is competitive:

...even if you just go from the quantity, the number of courses that I had in my university specialized in power engineering was probably ten times what is being offered in any other university in Canada to the undergraduate and graduate students.

Additionally, he pointed out that, in his home university, he benefited from the involvement of expert practitioners working as associate part-time professors and from ready access to the well-equipped laboratories with industrial machines and "not just mock-ups." His experiences in his home country positioned him well as a part-time adjunct professor teaching a capstone course, which connects students to industry through small-group industrial projects.

Enabling features of postgraduate programs

The key question asked in this study is: what elements of the programs did the respondents find most beneficial? Among all features of the programs that the respondents identified as most attractive were co-op programs, capstone projects, research projects, industrial placements, and internships, all of which helped them connect with industry, and sometimes directly to employers and employment.

All programs the respondents attended provided connections to industrial sectors either through supervisors, courses or industrial projects. Respondents reported that they benefited from their supervisors' relationships with industrial partners as well as their supervisor's research network and connections to other professors (BN), and the networks of other professors within the same universities. The collaborations and partnerships that supervisors have with industry in particular shaped the research problems, questions, and objects that the respondents tackled during their postgraduate programs, and the research process, place and placement, team, resources, tools, and technologies they were able to access. Supervisors were the ones who dissected industrial problems into multiples pieces and questions appropriate for student degree projects at different levels and with different capacities (ER, JK, CV, BN, WS). Many identified

their supervisors as nodal points for them to develop their professional networks by opening access to other research and research communities in Canada and globally (BN, ER, CV).

It needs to be noted that some respondents also sought funding opportunities to finance their postgraduate programs. Available funds included research funding, teaching assistantships, and fellowships and scholarships provided through industry sponsorship and the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council (NSERC). Seven respondents' study and research projects were sponsored by industrial funding or industrial partner scholarships such as those through NSERC. In a few cases, it was the funding opportunity that determined the choice of program and university for the respondents.

Three respondents explicitly expressed that they appreciated the diverse teams at university in which they were involved, through which they were exposed to diverse expertise and backgrounds (WS, QA, BN, CV). To give an example, QA showed us a tool that he learned about from a peer student who was from another cultural context and talked about how that tool was helpful for his own work.

The university environment and infrastructure are also important for the respondents to maximize their professional opportunities. Universities provided resources for learning, such as labs, workshops, and info sessions. Respondents who started entrepreneurial businesses in particular mentioned that they attended workshops on entrepreneurship, built their social networks, and even applied for seed funds as they went about setting up their businesses. They also suggested that partner programs at universities, such as Mitacs workshops, were helpful in them developing soft skills and entrepreneurship (UI, DF, TY).

CONCLUSIONS

It must be mentioned that the study draws on the experiences of an elite group of people who have either been profiled in professional media or identified as someone who has made a significant contribution to engineering in Canada. In the study, not all respondents were completely satisfied with the postgraduate programs they attended. Some of them ventured out of their degree programs to take courses, for instance, to pick up some other specialization that they believe to be marketable (AS). Despite these limitations, the study is still informative. For one, it shows that people with migratory backgrounds have expanded practices within engineering through postgraduate programs, which is rarely addressed in the literature. Secondly, it shows the features of postgraduate programs, particularly their connections with industry that are enabling for program participants to thrive professionally. Thirdly, the study suggests that students with migratory backgrounds are not merely positioned to learn, but have a lot to impart. Opportunities need to be made available for them to participate in research projects, capstone courses, partnership programs, etc. so that they are able to expand their professional and life opportunities as well as innovate practices within professions.

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WOMEN PIRATES LEARNING THROUGH LEGITIMATE PERIPHERAL PARTICIPATION: SHAPING A FICTIONAL NARRATIVE BASED ON HISTORICAL FACT

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Abstract

In this paper, I apply adult education feminist theories of situated learning to fiction-based research with respect to a historical novel about privateering in the 17th century. I connect past to present in my exploration of women's experiences in (para)military organizations. I conclude with a discussion of how adult educators can use fiction to engage with theory in their own teaching and research.

Keywords: Communities of practice, fiction-based research, feminism, gender, legitimate peripheral participation, military, piracy, situated learning, theory.

INTRODUCTION

In this paper, I apply adult education feminist theories of situated learning to fiction-based research with respect to a historical novel about privateering in the 17th century. I introduce situated learning in gendered communities of practice, explain women's experiences in (para)military organizations, and describe fiction-based research. I then compare theoretical concepts and quotations with excerpts from my fiction to explore feminist situated learning adult education theories, women in non-traditional roles, fiction-based research, and how women's lives from the 17th century connect to those in the 21st. I conclude with a discussion of how adult educators can use fiction to engage with theory in their own teaching and research.

SITUATED LEARNING IN (PARA)MILITARY GENDERED COMMUNITIES OF PRACTICE

Theories of situated learning through legitimate peripheral participation (LPP) in communities of practice (CoP) (Lave & Wenger, 1991; Wenger, 1998) explore how newcomers and old-timers interact in a learning trajectory in groups that have mutual engagement, joint enterprise, and a shared repertoire. The learning is contextual as group members move from peripheral to more central organizational tasks, which is connected to individual and group identity. Paechter (2003, 2006) argues that CoPs cannot be understood without examining how masculinities and femininities intersect, privileging some bodies and identities over others. Learning trajectories are laden with power relations in that members who are perceived as not fitting into the organization may find their participation inhibited by old-timers and/or their path to full membership blocked, which often results in their leaving (Barton & Tusting, 2009). This power can be heavily gendered in the ways in which it values particular forms of masculinities and

femininities while devaluing others (Paechter, 2003, 2006). This is particularly so in (para)military contexts.

Western militaries were created by and for white able-bodied cisgender heterosexual men who had a female spouse to care for the family and the home (Eichler, 2021). Military culture is hypermasculine, with the expectation that ideal members demonstrate a quite specific and narrow type of heroism, courage, stoicism, and toughness (Taber, 2020). Anyone viewed as outside this ideal (women, those with a disability, people of colour, Indigenous people, LGBTQ2S+ people) is often othered; their path to full membership is a more challenging one than for those viewed as an ideal (Taber, 2011, 2016, in press). This hypermasculinity is also found in paramilitary organizations, such as police forces and firefighting, for much of the same reasons as militaries.

In my research, I found that privateers and pirates in the 17th century, with their predominantly male violent (and sometimes hierarchical) crews, also practiced and privileged hypermasculinity (Tucker, 2014). Thus, any woman who sailed with them faced challenges in becoming accepted as a crewmember. It is this element—women's membership on a paramilitary pirate ship—that I decided to explore in my fiction-based research.

FICTION-BASED RESEARCH ABOUT WOMEN PIRATES

Fiction-based research is grounded in the creative practice of story writing (Leavy, 2013, 2018). It links to other forms of research, such as autoethnography, biography, ethnography, life history, and narrative. Each of these forms agree that humans learn through story-telling (Cron, 2012). However, unlike other forms, which *story* factual data, fiction-based research fictionalizes it, in order to engage readers' imaginations, reach a general audience, demonstrate complexity, promote empathy, and dislocate stereotypes (Leavy, 2013, 2018; Nayebzadah, 2018). Leavy (2013) explains that "'imagining' is an integral part of the process of learning" (p. 28) as it engages researcher-authors, readers, educators, and learners. In my writing of historical fiction, I also aim to show the ways in which historical and contemporary gendered power relations intersect.

In the fiction-based research discussed here (writing for the novel is ongoing), my purpose was to explore the gendered nature of privateering as relates to individual and state violence in the 17th century. As a feminist antimilitarist who critiques the ways in which patriarchy, capitalism, colonialism, and racism intersect with militarism (Enloe, 2016) one might wonder why I would write about women engaged in the violence of piracy. I wanted to imagine—and help readers understand—the complexity of women's lives in that time and place. What might a woman who finds herself quite unexpectedly on a pirate ship think and do in order to survive?

In the 17th century, privateering was a way for nation states to arrange for assaults against enemy countries without beginning a war. With a letter of marque signed by the king, privateers could (and indeed, were expected to) engage in state-sponsored violence by attacking enemy ships and stealing their cargo (Latimer, 2009). Privateers tended toward democratic practices (Latimer, 2009), giving all crew members a vote when possible (with the captain making decisions in battle and emergency situations), dividing their plunder, and setting aside a certain amount of money for those injured (Klausmann et al., 1997). The line between

privateers (also known as buccaneers, freebooters, and corsairs) and pirates (not state sanctioned) was thin, with crews sometimes moving between one and the other depending on the degree to which they followed privateering rules (Duncombe, 2019). Regardless, a “violent masculinity” (Tucker, 2014) was mostly perpetrated by men.

While often viewed as victims, women were also participants and supporters of piracy (Tucker, 2014). Wives of pirate captains sometimes sailed with their husbands. Other women were full-fledged pirates, such as 16th century Grace O-Malley (Irish), 18th century Anne Bonny (Irish) and Mary Read (English), and 19-century Lady Ch'ing (Chinese) (Klausmann et al., 1997). A much lesser-known pirate was 17th century Anne Dieu-le-Veut (French). During my research, I became interested in Anne. Aside from a few spare details, not much was known about her life. She was therefore a prime candidate for fictionalization.

In my novel, Marianne (based on Anne) joins corsair ship. In trying to imagine how she might interact with the crew while trying to position herself as a full member, I realized that theories of situated learning, LPP, and CoPs as relates to women in contemporary military roles could assist with the narrative. I therefore reread and revised my manuscript with these theories in mind. As a result, the characters and situation became more complex and realistic; more factual, even though fictionalized. Additionally, gendered echoes between the 17th and the 21st century became ever clearer.

DISCUSSION

In this section, I give examples of how feminist situated learning theories informed my fiction-based research with respect to how my protagonist, Marianne, dealt with her positionality as a woman on a male French corsair ship. My examples are at three points in time: her first encounter with corsairs, when she is not considered a newcomer and has no path to membership; when she joins a corsair ship as a newcomer with the expectation of engaging in legitimate peripheral participation; and, when she argues for full membership in the form of a vote. The excerpts from the novel below have been edited for clarity and length, as well as to mitigate spoilers should anyone wish to read the novel when completed.

Encountering life with corsairs

In this part of the novel, Marianne is one of several women passengers on a corsair ship sailing from France to Tortuga, in the Caribbean. Though she boarded somewhat willingly, it was not entirely of her own choice. Marianne wants to learn as much as possible about their destination, so she tries to eavesdrop on the corsairs as they converse about Tortuga. The following quotation encapsulates how Marianne may have been treated by the crew: “The establishment of the boundaries of a community of practice may involve the coercive exclusion of others and a claiming of superiority for members” (Paechter, 2006, p. 15). As a woman passenger, she is considered both beneath notice and worthy of harassment, demonstrating her vulnerability and her need to make decisions to keep herself safe. She is decidedly viewed as not belonging and less than.

When Marianne woke, she climbed above decks and walked towards the stern. When she passed by the captain, she hesitated, waiting to see his reaction to her presence. He ignored her. Good then. As long as she stayed out of his way—which she most definitely would—he’d

leave her be. She started toward the bow, one hand close to her hidden knife. She walked by a cooper repairing a water barrel.

"First place I'm going in Tortuga is the bawdy house," he said. "Buy me one of you." He pointed his adze—a small axe-like tool—at Marianne. "That's why I voted yes to bring you lot aboard." He snapped his teeth at her.

She stepped back.

"Whaddya want?" he said.

"Nothing." Marianne said. "Just out for a walk."

"Then walk." He jerked his thumb to the other end of the ship.

She nodded and kept going, not daring to stop anywhere for more than a moment, which made it difficult to catch anything more than a snippet of conversation.

Moving towards acceptance

Later in the novel, after spending time in Tortuga, Marianne is invited to join a different corsair ship by its captain, given assurances that she will not be harmed, and told there is a possibility she can become a crew member. She accepts the invitation as it is a better option than the one she is now in. The following quotation is a guide in considering how she might have been greeted by the crew. "Because full participants are seen as the custodians and enactors of knowledge of what it is to be a full member of a community of practice, they also have the power to...redefine...what it means to be a man or a woman, boy or girl...this negotiation can never be power-neutral, and one's value to the community affects what is actually negotiable" (Paechter 2006, pp. 19–20). Marianne is grudgingly accepted as a newcomer when the captain introduces her to the crew. However, as the crew has not yet redefined corsair membership to extend to a woman, whether she will be able to move on a learning trajectory from newcomer to old-timer with a vote is very much in question.

"Enough chatter," the captain said. "You will treat her with the respect that is due me. She knows her way around a ship, so she can lend a hand."

"If I ever need a hand from a woman, I'll cut my own off," one of the corsairs said.

"I can arrange that," the first mate, said.

The corsair shoved his hands behind his back.

"Welcome, Marianne," another corsair said.

She nodded hello. At least there was one friendly face in the crowd. Maybe one vote for her. The corsair nudged the man next to him, who called out a welcome, which turned into a chorus of welcomes, some clearly more forced than others.

"Right then," the captain said. "Weigh anchor and let's get us some Spanish gold."

Working for a vote

Over the weeks that follow, Marianne proves herself as a worthy newcomer due to her assistance in battles and storms, setting herself on a path toward becoming an old-timer in the form of gaining a vote. The following quotation illuminates how Marianne may have argued her case. "Learning full participation in a community of masculinity or femininity practice is about learning one's identity and how to enact it... The embodied performance of community membership is crucial both to legitimacy and to full participation" (p. 17). It is the crew—those already with a vote—who have the power to give Marianne a vote or deny her it. Marianne uses what she has learned to embody the identity of a corsair in her argument for why the crew should vote for her.

Marianne put her hands on her hips, her fingertips just a smidge away from the pistol handles at her waist, and faced down the crew. "I've proven my worth. What more do you want? It's time I get a vote." She stared the corsairs down, willing herself not to break eye contact.

"Aye, that's true," a corsair said. "We're supposed to be a crew of equals, woman or no. Now it's time to see if Marianne gets to truly join us. We should vote."

"Who cares if she's a woman?" someone said.

"I care," another said.

Marianne fired her pistol into the air. "Enough. I've proven myself. Any of you who dare speak against me are sons of a biscuit eater."

"She looks like a corsair to me," the first mate said. "Smoking pistol, sea legs, and all."

Several corsairs nodded. The captain chimed in. "If you give her a vote, she'll have even more reason to work with us. We're a lucky crew to have her."

"Give her a vote," the crew called. There were still a few dissenting voices, but that was it. She was now a full member of the crew.

For a time, things go relatively well for Marianne. Until she decides she no longer belongs and goes in search of... But that's a spoiler.

IMPLICATIONS

The novel not only focuses on Marianne's situated learning with respect to the paramilitary context of corsairs, but it also complicates and problematizes individual and state violence, which I did not have the space to explore in this paper. My aim here was to demonstrate that, in certain situations, women may have to conform to a given set of norms (i.e., what it is to be a corsair), in order to challenge them, which Marianne indeed does later in the novel. Readers may consider how Marianne's fictional 17th century experiences intersect with their own in the 21st century as relates to women in non-traditional roles in gendered organizations.

Above, I explained how applying feminist situated learning theories in my fiction-based research informed the writing of my novel. I argue that this application works in two interrelated ways: it helped my understandings of character and plot as a researcher and should assist readers in

better understanding not only Marianne's learning experiences, but their own. Likewise, adult educators can guide students in creating or analyzing pieces of fiction to engage with theoretical concepts. As Gouthro (2019) argues, a focus on adult education theory is important for "making sense of the ways in which power exerts in every teaching and learning situation, and to understand how...adult educators can make a difference" (p. 73).

Adult educators have used fiction in the past in other ways. Gouthro and Holloway (2013) had their students read fiction to "explore alternative perspectives, envision different landscapes and consider important social, cultural and political issues" (para. 3) while Jarvis (1999, 2012) asked her research participants to read fiction that related to her research aims (in her case, love and empathy) and apply it to their own lives.

Theory and fiction may seem to be somewhat oppositional, but they work well with one informing the other. Theories are lenses through which academics analyze concepts and data. Fiction immerses readers in worlds not of their own. As such, adult educators can use theory and fiction to engage imaginations, in their research and teaching, to problematize the past and present in order to imagine a future socially just world.

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THE CO-PRODUCTION OF COLLABORATION: TRACING ASSEMBLAGES ACROSS PRIMARY CARE WORKPLACES

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Abstract

In this paper two sociomaterial methodological approaches, Actor-Network Theory and construction of boundaries and boundary objects, are applied to reveal the micro-practices of collaboration. The second purpose of this paper is to extend our understanding of the co-production of collaboration by tracing assemblages as they come together, maintain, change, and shift apart.

By applying Actor-Network Theory, specifically assemblages, alongside boundary construction and boundary objects, this research traces how collaborative policy is enacted through localized and embedded micro practices (Latour, 1987; Fenwick & Edwards, 2019; Mulcahy, 2016; Holford, 2016). I begin with situating this research in the literature on boundary construction (Paraponaris & Sigal, 2015), boundaries (Hernes, 2003), and boundary objects (Carlile, 2002).

Multi-faceted methods were used to compare primary care collaborations across three time periods amplified by COVID-19 within interior British Columbia. First, 15 virtual semi-structured interviews with clinical, administrative, and executive informants were conducted to capture their collaborative experience. Second, discourse analysis of the Public Health Act, Public Health Orders and provincial modelling was completed. Phase three included member checking with the informants to discuss themes. Interviews and publicly sourced documents were coded for human and nonhuman actors and their intra-actions in collaborative practices. Identified boundaries and boundary objects were then classified. Data was presented in three distinct assemblages: (1) pre-Wave 1 COVID-19 (Jan-March 2020), (2) Wave 1 (March-May 2020), and (3) post-Wave 1 (June-August 2020).

This paper presents findings that demonstrate the continual changing nature of assemblages as new boundaries and boundary objects were constructed. The findings highlight that different boundary and boundary object classifications were used for distinct collaborative processes across the three time periods. This paper concludes with a discussion that applying pluralistic sociomaterial methodologies provide a more wholesome understanding of the performative nature of collaboration across workplaces.

There is an identified gap in applying sociomaterial approaches for collaborations in health care research to better understand interdisciplinary, interprofessional, intra-professional, interorganizational collaborations (McMurty et al., 2016). Although counter-intuitive, collaboration can be explored through the enactment of boundaries and boundary objects (MacNaughton, et al., 2013). By better understanding how collaboration is enacted and ways to influence its co-production, this research could support primary care teams to deliver collaborative policy direction more efficiently.

Keywords: Assemblages, boundary construction, boundary objects, collaboration, primary care

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this paper is to demonstrate that applying pluralistic sociomaterial methodological approaches can illuminate a clearer understanding of the performative nature of collaboration in workplaces (Scoles, 2018; Nicolini et al., 2012). The two sociomaterial methodological approaches used include assemblages from Actor-Network Theory alongside boundaries and boundary objects. By tracing micro-practices in primary care workplaces during a short, novel period of time with the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in British Columbia, this paper advances our understanding of collaboration as the shifting nature of assemblages which become traceable by observing shifts in the creation of boundaries and boundary objects. How does tracing the changing micro-practices of collaborative processes in primary care workplaces in a localized region within interior British Columbia through assemblages, boundaries, and boundary objects help to magnify the co-production of collaboration?

Although counter-intuitive, collaboration can be explored through the enactment of boundaries and boundary objects (MacNaughton, et al., 2013). Boundaries simultaneously enable and restrict different types of interactions. Through a continuous, negotiated process, "boundary constructions are in a constant flux of action (and potential) co-construction and reconstruction at the hands of the intra-acting actor" (Paraponaris & Sigal, 2015, p.895). Boundary Objects are constructed to bridge between different sides of boundaries based on a desire to communicate but not necessarily requiring shared meaning and usage of knowledge. Star and Griesemer (1989) define boundary objects as "both plastic enough to adapt to local needs and the constraints of the several parties employing them, yet robust enough to maintain a common identity across sites." (Star & Griesemer, 1989, p.393).

Recent policy changes in primary care are asking healthcare professionals to collaborate (Health Government, 2015). There is an identified gap in applying sociomaterial approaches for collaborations in health care research to better understand interdisciplinary, interprofessional, intra-professional, interorganizational collaborations (McMurty, 2013). This research traces how collaborative policy is enacted through localized and embedded micro practices in the coming together, changing and shifting of non-deterministic assemblages (Latour, 1987; Fenwick & Edwards, 2019; Mulcahy, 2016; Holford, 2015).

METHODOLOGY

The paper provides a comparison of collaborative processes across three distinct assemblages, during a short, novel period of time marked by the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic's first wave. Multi-faceted methods were used to compare primary care collaborations across three assemblages including semi-structured interviews, discourse analysis and member checking. Both informant transcriptions and publicly available sources were coded for the following categories: human actors, non-human actors, and their interactions. Data was presented in three distinct assemblages (pre-Wave 1 COVID-19, Wave 1, and post-Wave 1). Using assemblages as a magnify glass to explore the shifts in collaboration was an effective way to loosely place a border around what was in and what was out in the exploration.

Collaborative practices were then organized using Hernes' (2003) classification of boundaries: physical, social, and mental. Boundary objects were classified using Carlile's (2002) syntax, semantic, and pragmatic categories. The first is for a shared language or syntax purposes, as a

way to represent knowledge such as a mathematical theory. The second is for shared meaning that is transferred through a semantic boundary where interpretation is more difficult. Lastly, a pragmatic boundary object "facilitates a process where individuals can jointly transform their knowledge" (Carlile, 2002, p. 452). This process of transforming knowledge through a pragmatic approach of boundary objects aligns well with boundary construction.

The first phase of data collection included 15 virtual semi-structured interviews. Purposive sampling was used to identify informants who had worked with interprofessional teams; provided clinical, administrative or executive support, in primary care; operated within a specific region of the interior, and had been involved in collaborative work between January-August 2020. Informants were asked to describe their collaborative experience and identify humans, objects, and their interactions that were involved for: pre-Wave 1 COVID-19 (January-March 2020); Wave 1 COVID-19 (March-May 2020); and post-Wave 1 COVID-19 (June-August 2020).

The second phase of data collection included discourse analysis of publicly sourced documents included coding to The Primary and Community Care in BC: A Strategic Policy Framework; Public Health Act, the Health Act, the Hospitals Act, and the Emergency Act. The March-May 2020 assemblage's discourse analysis included the various provincial modelling and Public Health Orders that were being put in place during the onset of the pandemic. Phase three included member checking with the informants to discuss overarching themes and review their own contributions.

Limitations and Delimitations

One limitation of this study included the potential for informants who volunteered to participate to view collaboration is a positive light and to include or not include certain actors in their responses. One delimitation of this study was that primary care services provided by the First Nation within this region of British Columbia were not included due to capacity from the Nation at the time of the study. A more wholesome research project conducted specifically with the First Nations' experience of primary care delivery during this time period would be warranted.

RESULTS

There are three distinct assemblages that come together and apart during the pre, during, and post wave 1 of COVID-19. The experiences and performance of these particular actors is unique, however the qualities of how they come together and how they create boundaries and boundary objects is something that we can learn from and apply it to other workplaces.

Pre-Wave 1 COVID-19 Assemblage (January-March 2020)






The pre-wave 1 assemblage was traceable through five physical boundaries and one mental boundary coded using Hernes' (2003) classification. There were also combined classifications of boundaries observed such as six identified physical-social boundaries, one physical-mental boundary, and one mental-social boundary. This assemblage is also traced through a combination of boundary objects used. The spread was fairly even but less of the pragmatic than in other time periods we look at using Carlile's (2002) system for coding boundary objects. This included four syntax boundary objects, five semantic, and three pragmatic boundary objects. Examples of the syntax boundary objects include referral letters between specialists,

and scopes of practice between providers. A few semantic objects include care conference orders.

An example of a physical and social boundary that was coded during this first period includes connecting to a specialist by email or fax where “When I send a letter to the specialist and you’ll see this person then that’s a complete disconnect. Then there’s months and then the patient gets seen and then eventually a letter comes back detailing what happened” (Informant). This need for dialogue between providers was also represented in other physical and social boundaries such as that of the format of the care conference “They have a relative format. They want the nurse to talk then rehab to talk, the occupational therapist to talk. Each discipline to talk in order. Which allows them to say this is just the information and I’m delivering it” (Informant). See below in Table 1 examples of boundary and boundary objects from pre-wave 1 assemblage.

Table 1. Examples of Boundary and boundary object classification in pre-wave 1 assemblage.

January-March 2020

Boundary classification	Boundary object	classification	
Physical and social	Swallowing assessment	Pragmatic	
Physical and social	Letter between FP and SP	Syntactic	
Physical and social	Health service planning	Semantic	
Physical and social	Care conference order	Semantic	
Physical	Hallway	Semantic	

Wave 1 COVID-19 Assemblage (March-May 2020)

At the start of the pandemic so many unofficial partnerships were formed out of necessity. One example of this is an unofficial partnership in this assemblage occurred between the local health authority and a private clinic; “they supply swabs and PPE and we book the patients here, do the swabs here, and send the swab off” (Informant). Another shift in collaborative practice with this assemblage was loosely formed networks began to come together more frequently, some as often as daily, others weekly where previously they may have been meeting on a monthly, or bi-monthly schedule. One leadership group in particular came together and produced surveys that would then be fanned out for broader input to understand needs and what organizations were hearing across the community. These surveys as well as the meetings themselves become boundary objects during this time period. As one informant describes “I think there was just an ongoing need to talk about these orders, single site restrictions, staffing problems, the PPE problems, the lockdown of facilities...” (Informant).







This assemblage was also marked by fear and boundary objects such as case counts, ventilators, current capacity of critical care spaces and potential scenarios to communicate with the healthcare system and the general public. A very common boundary object used in this assemblage that impacted the response of British Columbians was that of the Hubei and the Northern Italy scenarios (BC Ministry of Health, 2020). During the first wave, these two scenarios were used regularly in both the media and the provincial modelling to compare the trajectory of the virus in British Columbia.

During this time period the collaborative processes were traced through boundaries more physical in nature. This included nine physical boundaries, five social, and one mental, and two mental-social coded from the data. An example of physical boundaries that were created include one informant's experience of construction in their clinic. "We brought in carpenters and made temporary walls with plastic barriers. And created an official red zone. And we opened up an outside entrance that had never been used before in order to have a separate entrance for people with symptoms versus everybody else that was not supposed to come onto our site if they had any symptoms." (Informant).

The use of pragmatic boundary objects also increased. There were two syntax boundary objects, three semantic and eight pragmatic boundary objects. One prominent pragmatic boundary object used at this time included the collaborate role of personal protective equipment (PPE). As one informant shared, "I mean I drove PPE over to an office where they needed PPE and I was sitting there with a box at my feet as I was waiting for it to be picked up and put into storage. So, I just picked it up and brought it to where it needed to go. And nobody thought twice." (Informant). See below in Table 2 examples of boundary and boundary objects from wave 1 assemblage.

Table 2. Examples of boundary and boundary object classification in Wave 1 assemblage.

March-May 2020

Boundary classification	Boundary object	classification	
Physical and mental	Masks/PPE	Syntactic	
Social and mental	Weekly meetings	Pragmatic	
Physical	Curtains, doors, temporary walls	Semantic	
Physical	Respiratory Assessment clinic	Pragmatic	
Social	Crisis	Pragmatic	
Physical	Cleaning protocols	Semantic	

Post-Wave 1 Assemblage (June-August 2020)

One of the noticeable changes during this third assemblage was the role that funding played in collaborative practices. One of the interviewees even spoke of a Ministry call to action "The call to action was that actually you're not going to get funding to do anything unless you're collaborating." (Informant). This period is also marked by the nonhuman actor of exhaustion. As described by one informant, "I think people were really tired. And not tired of collaborating but just so tired that we didn't sort of know how to push forward anymore on the status of collaboration. We had collaborated so much. We had done so much work. I just feel it went a bit stagnant." (Informant).







I observed another shift in the types of boundaries that were constructed during this time period. They moved away from the majority being physical boundaries, instead increasing the physical-social to six boundaries and three mental-social boundaries. An example of a mental-social boundary was this shift in scope in practice. As one informant describes, "I didn't have anyone say to me, 'I'm not going to do that' I didn't have someone say, 'I don't think I'm allowed to do that. I have heard people say 'actually no, that is in my scope now.'" (Informant). This includes both a new way of interacting at a social level as well as a shift in their own mental model.

An example during this assemblage of a physical-social boundary included the shift to remote work environments. As described by one informant, "A huge change in working environment. Working from home. Everybody is at home. Whether it is with their spouses, or with their families, complete shift with everybody that I know at all of those tables." (Informant). Virtual healthcare also increased significantly during this assemblage. "The interesting and neat thing about all of this is how much you can do, especially in primary care, by not asking the person to physically come in. And it's so much more patient-focused and safe for the, especially, the vulnerable elderly to not have to get on a bus, get on the Handy Dart, to not have to expose themselves to any COVID-19 possible viruses." (Informant).

Boundary objects continued to shift during this time period including coding of nine pragmatic, one syntax and one semantic. Collaborative practices in this period start to include a broader range of actors including the public. One of the shifts in this assemblage was the way geography and demographics began to play a larger role. The reports and modelling devoted more time speaking to the different demographics that were experiencing COVID-19, both as proportion of overall cases, critical cases, and death. There was also increased emphasis on the difference in prevalence across the five geographic health regions in the province of British Columbia (BC Ministry of Health, 2020b). These communications materials however, were done with graphical icons, with short statistics for quick public consumption and requiring less translation (BC Ministry of Health, 2020b). See below in Table 3 examples of boundary and boundary objects from post-wave 1 assemblage.

Table 3. Examples of boundary and boundary object classification in post-wave 1 assemblage.

June-August 2020

Boundary classification	Boundary object	classification	
Physical	Telehealth	Semantic	
Physical and social	Emergency response documents	Pragmatic	
Physical and social	Funding collaborative tables	Pragmatic	
Social and mental	Scope, regulatory practice	Pragmatic	
Physical and social	Work environments	Pragmatic	
Physical and social	Good will	Pragmatic	

DISCUSSION

Applying two sociomaterial methodologies in this study has provided a unique opportunity to explore the co-construction of collaboration. This research has shown their value in application and to encourage others to use assemblages and boundaries and boundary objects as magnify glasses for their own exploration of collaboration in the workplace, learning, and policy implementation.

Assemblage

One of the strengths of Actor-Network Theory, and the role of assemblages, is that both human and non-human actors are considered. In this case COVID-19 itself as an actor was instrumental in the articulation of the assemblages. COVID-19 could also be seen as initiating collaborative practices as the qualities of the virus required participants in the healthcare system to respond to safe in-person care, shortage of supplies, virtual care, and following health orders in a very specific fashion. Another virus or another emergency may have contributed to different actions being taken. Assemblage also holds a place for the researcher to be an actor in its application of a methodology making decisions around what is included and given voice and what is not. Examples of these decisions include the choice of geographical placement in one region within one of the five health authorities in the province. You could go through the same data collection process outlined in this paper in a different region and observe a different assemblage.

The second point to consider is that assemblages acknowledge that sections of intra-actions are included that extend across time periods, or across geographies, or across the local and global. In this study, an example of this involvement is seen through the documents such as the

Primary and community care strategic policy framework and the Health Act (Health Gov., 2015). Both of these documents were in existence provincially before the start of the development of this assemblage. However, at the start of this study the assemblages recognize these actors and their involvement in the performance of collaborative practices that unfold. In regards to time, the use of assemblages these impacts of collaborative practices continue across the time periods. The boundaries of the three assemblages are distinct enough to be observable and yet sufficiently permeable that many of the actors continue across time periods and continue the process of adding to and taking away from their historical intra-relations.

Different Boundary and Boundary Object Classifications Were Used

The findings highlight that different boundary and boundary object classifications were used for distinctive collaborative processes across the three time periods. What we see in boundaries is that there is a shift over the three periods of the types of boundaries the actors in this assemblage constructed. This research positions boundaries production and their shifting nature as the way in which collaborative processes unfold. The different role of boundary objects and the different categories of boundaries that span across this time period reflect the performative, relational role boundary construction plays.

Through the difference in boundaries over the periods we saw that physical nature of boundaries that were being constructed during the wave-1 period. At the same time this is where the collaborators spoke about the concreteness of the work. They found it very tangible and meaningful and in their control for decision-making. Another obvious note within the changes that occurred was that there was variation in objects between local and provincial documents. The objects used, the knowledge that was co-produced and the boundaries created locally were more community focused. Lastly that as the boundaries shifted and the collaborative experience shifted the role of boundary objects changed as did the category. The pragmatic classification of boundary objects came during wave 1 and stayed during post-wave 1 indicating increased novelty of these collaborations.

CONCLUSION

There is an identified gap in applying sociomaterial approaches for collaborations in health care research to better understand interdisciplinary, interprofessional, intra-professional, interorganizational collaborations (McMurty, 2013). By better understanding how collaboration is enacted and ways to influence its co-production, this research could support primary care teams to deliver collaborative policy direction. In this paper both Actor-Network Theory and construction of boundaries and boundary objects were used to help reveal the micro-practices of collaboration and provided insight into collaborative processes that can be applied in future work.

The study provided a comparison across three time periods, three distinct assemblages, during a compressed time period amplified by COVID-19 (January-August 2020) within primary care in a localized region within Interior British Columbia. This comparison demonstrated the changing assemblages as new boundaries and boundary objects were constructed. Although counter-intuitive, the enactment of boundaries and boundary objects can be seen as the act of collaborative practices (MacNaughton, et al., 2013). This paper demonstrated that applying a pluralistic sociomaterial methodology approach provides a better understanding of the performative nature of collaboration.

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COMMUNITY-BASED RESEARCH FACILITATORS IN THE THRESHOLD: A POST-QUALITATIVE APPROACH TO NARRATIVE INQUIRY

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Abstract

This article provides a methodological account of a study focused on how community-based research facilitators' subjectivities are produced within power relations. I define it as a narrative inquiry disrupted by poststructuralist thoughts. In this sense, I apply Jackson and Mazzei's (2013) figuration of the threshold and Jackson's (2013) Foucauldian power analysis to produce a collaborative narrative as an assemblage. In this, stories and theory are decentred while new links emerge, and new knowledge is produced. I conclude the article by providing an example of how it works.

Keywords: Power, subjectivity, community-based research, facilitators.

INTRODUCTION

This paper aims to provide an account of the research methodology I have been working on to study how community members who facilitate community-based research (CBR) perceive the production of their subjectivity within power relations. I define my work as a narrative inquiry disrupted by poststructuralist thoughts. This position led me to work on the borderlands of qualitative/post-qualitative inquiry and humanism/post-humanism. I came to wander in these borderlands by attempting to respond to my doctoral committee's challenge of working with post-structural notions of self and power while inquiring into the lived experience of CBR facilitators. By trying to navigate the challenge, I kept narrative inquiry as a methodological starting point while thinking with the work of scholars such as Jackson and Mazzei (2012), St. Pierre (2011), and then Deleuze and Guattari (1987), and Barad (2007). This process made me feel that my research was caught up in an unstable process of becoming. The expression "thinking with" echoes Jackson and Mazzei's (2018) understanding that "thinking keeps things on the move, keeps things becoming" (p. 722). In this sense, how can I work with traditional research categories, also included in narrative inquiry, without neglecting the advances and deconstructions triggered by the post-modern/post-structural turn? How can I maintain the humanist subjects, who make sense of their lived experience through stories, while considering their stories as agential in producing knowledge?

In this paper, I give an example of how I am applying narrative inquiry along with Jackson and Mazzei's (2012, 2013, 2018) post-structural and post-humanist notion of threshold to study facilitators' subjectivity within power relations. The threshold is a figurative space in which theory and data are read through one another in such a way that both are decentred while an assemblage emerges, and new knowledge is produced (Jackson & Mazzei, 2018). I am using the stories told by Sari (they/them), a CBR facilitator and international development practitioner

placed in the Eastern part of the world. Sari is a 31-year-old queer person who sees themselves embracing different subjectivities as they navigate between different power/knowledge networks. Even though I provide an example of Sari's story, I keep in mind that post-qualitative inquirers such as Jackson and Mazzei (2012) and St. Pierre (2011) refuse to provide an alternative structure to humanistic research.

I start the article by providing a brief background of my research. Then, I discuss the methodological process and conclude by presenting an example of a narrative produced as an assemblage in the threshold.

RESEARCH BACKGROUND

CBR started as a grassroots movement for emancipation and social transformation in the Global South but has become institutionalized as an action-oriented research approach based on the partnership between academics and community groups (Hall, 1992; Strand et al., 2003). Consequently, on the one hand, academic researchers strive to engage the community as equal partners for research. On the other hand, academics remain the main initiators and facilitators of the inquiry process, potentially creating tensions and unequal power relations (Nation et al., 2011; Viswanathan et al., 2004). Rahman (1991) suggested that it is not easy to achieve the ideal of a subject-subject relationship. In essence, while academics struggle to overcome the tendency to dominate the inquiry process, the community, commonly victims of structural injustice (Adelman, 1993; Delemos, 2006), struggles to overcome tendencies of subordination. For Rahman (1991), one of the ways to deal with this issue is to make CBR "the people's own inquiry" (p. 17), whether they count or not on the support of university researchers. Still, scholars have given little attention to the processes in which community members become CBR facilitators. While my research seeks to contribute to filling this gap, it is also part of a broader research agenda seeking to rescue community-based research (CBR) as an approach "inherently of the people" (Sousa, 2021, p. 1).

WITH AND AGAINST NARRATIVE INQUIRY

This study relies on a post-structural notion of self in which individuals are better conceived in terms of subjectivity. In other words, individuals are always in a "relational, dynamic and restless, potentially unruly and unpredictable" (McGushin, 2011, pp. 134-135) process of becoming. People's subjectivity, however, is produced within power relations. From this perspective, power is not someone's possession but is "something which circulates" (Foucault, 1980, p. 98). In other words, "power is employed and exercised through a net-like organisation. And not only do individuals circulate between its threads; they are always in the position of simultaneously undergoing and exercising power" (Foucault, 1980, p. 98). Jackson (2013) clarified that power circulates through people's "cultural-social-discursive-material practices" (p. 842) aiming to maintain or disrupt power relations. In addition, people also interpret and respond to practices by accommodating and struggling against them (Jackson, 2013). Through power relations, individuals develop knowledge that establishes the contours of how individuals become in the world (Feder, 2011). In this sense, Jackson (2013) proposed a methodology in which power is analysed from the bottom up, starting with practices at the micro-level and its strategic conditions. I sought to apply Jackson's (2013) methodology in collaboration with my participants.

The poststructuralist assumption that individuals are always becoming puts the living experience of facilitators at the center of my attention which moved towards narrative inquiry, "the study of experience as storied" (Connelly & Clandinin, 2006, p. 375). Narrative inquiry is rooted in Dewey's ontology of experience, which suggests that people's past experiences inform current and future experiences; it is the foundation for people to understand themselves and the world around them. At the same time, one should consider that the stories people live by receive environmental influence (Clandinin & Rosiek, 2007). According to Clandinin (2013), an individual's experiences take place and find expression within "social, cultural, familial, linguistic, and institutional narratives" (p. 18). However, different from traditional social inquiry, the stories people tell are not merely an image of reality, but reality itself, hence a legitimate source of knowledge. In other words, stories are the beginning and end of the inquiry process and the foundation for change (Clandinin & Rosiek, 2007).

In the spirit of narrative inquiry, in the first phase of the research, I asked participants to tell me their stories of how they became CBR facilitators by considering the three narrative inquiry spaces: interaction, continuity and situation (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). According to Clandinin and Connelly (2000), interaction refers to the personal and social aspects of one's life; it encompasses both "feelings, hopes, aesthetic, reactions, and oral dispositions" (p. 50) as well as environmental conditions. Due to the importance of relationships, I also asked the participants to emphasize people and relationships in their stories. Continuity denotes temporality, one's past, present and future. Lastly, situation expresses the idea of place. In this phase, Dewey's notion of reflective thinking was necessary. Lyons (2010) explained that Dewey's reflective thinking "starts with a situation of doubt, a puzzle" (p. 12). In the case of this research, the puzzle is the participants' process of becoming CBR facilitators. Hence, a situation that once was obscure for not being under scrutiny becomes clear through reflection as people tell their stories (Dewey, 1933).

In the second phase of the research, I invited the participants to come into the threshold to collaboratively analyse the narrative created through storytelling in the first phase of the research. The analysis was performed based on the Foucauldian notion of power and subjectivity by applying Jackson's (2013) methodology, starting by looking at how power works to produce subjectivity at the micro-level. The threshold is a figuration employed by Jackson and Mazzei (2013) that conveys the idea of a "passageway" that gains purpose when "it is attached to other things different from itself" (p. 264). They evoked Deleuze and Gattari's (1987) idea of the book as a machine that "must be plugged into [other machines] in order to work" (p. 4). In this sense, it is in the threshold, Jackson and Mazzei (2012) explained, that the process of plugging in takes place. In other words, different machines are plugged into one another to produce an assemblage and make something new. It is in the threshold that the facilitators-as-machines (field-text) and the-concepts-of-power-and-subjectivity-as-machines are plugged into one another to constitute each other in such a way that there is no distinction between them. In addition, our memories, experiences as facilitators, and interactions during the interviews also come together to make critical narratives (research-text). Inquiry in the threshold becomes a directional but not directed process (Massumi, 1992).

The participants and I also had the opportunity to discuss the concepts and activities before the collaborative analysis. I intended to create an environment for us to perform a diffractive reading of their stories based on Foucault's notion of power and subjectivity. Diffraction reading was an appropriate analytical tool because I wanted to search for "patterns of difference" (p.

72) not sameness (Barad, 2007). For instance, narrative scholars employ analysis of narrative in which concepts are used to make meaning of stories (Scharam, 2003). Yet, this kind of practice would lead them to an "easy sense". Nevertheless, diffractive reading "spreads thought and meaning in unpredictable and productive emergences" (Mazzei, 2014, p. 742). In the threshold, participants experience a disruption of the story they first told while making new links. Then, research texts of the facilitators' live experiences emerge as an assemblage, creating new knowledge that has the potential to inform their practice. The participants and I met twice to analyse their stories.

The heading of this section is working with and against narrative inquiry because I consider the epistemological value of stories and the possibilities participants and researchers find to relive and change their narratives. At the same time, I resist the sameness scholars may produce through the codification of stories, whether based on theory or patterns that emerge from bringing different stories together. My critique of narrative inquiry echoes the critique Jackson and Mazzei (2013) do of interpretivism in general. By attempting to work in the threshold, I resist and de-center the theory/practice binary in which concepts like power and subjectivity and the lived experience of the participants as data exist in different dimensions. Alternatively, in the threshold, "they constitute or make one another" (Jackson & Mazzei, 2013, p. 264), shifting and multiplying narratives (Jackson & Mazzei, 2018). Lastly, I had no intention to compare participants' stories but understand how power worked at a given moment in their stories and how it produced their subjectivities (Jackson, 2013).

COMMUNITY-BASED RESEARCH FACILITATORS IN THE THRESHOLD: AN EXAMPLE

In this section, I exemplify the process I described previously. First, I present a summary of Sari's story. Secondly, I present the narrative created in the threshold as a result of reading Sari's stories diffractively.

Sari's River of Life

Sari (they/them) is an international development practitioner and community-based research facilitator placed in the Eastern part of the world. They told me their story using the idea of the river of life. Sari's river of life started in an ivory tower, representing the university. As it flowed, the river turned into three branches: research, facilitation, and training. Although there were three different branches, Sari acknowledged that they were part of the same experience. Sari met people relevant to their journey as a participatory facilitator along the river. Among them were Amelia, Olivia and Emily, researchers involved in the Institute of Development Studies, University of Sussex. Even though the three of them contributed meaningfully to Sari's journey as a facilitator, Amelia became a mentor and a friend. She hired and trained Sari as a researcher and facilitator. A few years later, Amelia and Sari, with other researchers, also pioneered an international people-centred development organization that is still operating today.

Sari shared that there are four islands along their river of life, representing place and learning experiences. The first two islands are Participatory Video Island and Digital Storytelling Island. Sari was focused on learning how to apply participatory methodologies in these places. In the last two islands, the Stunting Island and Malaria Island, the methods were not a big concern

but rather the issues the research addressed were. Sari ended their story by identifying another island down their river, but they did not name it. They are not sure about the future. Yet, Sari wants to be a better facilitator like those who influenced their life.

Re-telling Stories in the Threshold

I invited Sari to meet me in the threshold to think about Sari's River of Life by plugging in the theoretical concepts of power and subjectivity into Sari's story in order to produce new knowledge, a new account. The following narrative is an example of a narrative created in the threshold. It shows how Sari's dynamic subjectivity is produced as they navigate between their organization which Sari helped to found, and the Stunting Island. We started our conversation by first identifying the people in the story, their practice, and how it shaped how Sari participated in the social space. This is one possibility of assemblage produced based on our conversations:

Sari met Amelia, a foreign woman interested in doing participatory research, when they jumped from the Ivory Tower and started navigating their river. While Sari is reluctant to talk about life in the Tower, it excites them to think about their encounter with Amelia. In essence, Amelia introduced Sari to a new discursive field and, consequently, a new way to participate in the world. In the tower, Sari said, "the way we look up to teacher or professor is that they are the authority that you cannot question" (Sari, Personal communication, May 14, 2021). However, Amelia asked them, "don't calling me Madame or Mis. or whatever, just call me the name" (Sari, Personal communication, May 14, 2021). Sari also said,

I was asked to inform very active, like, I remember in the first year when I still learning how to do the fieldwork, Amelia was asking me to join in a meeting with a commissioner, to design, study design, like, she asked me like: what do you think? that we need to dig more for this particular study? (Sari, Personal communication, May 14, 2021)

Amelia's practice or attitude toward Sari "destabilize[d] what seem[ed] to be fixed truths and foundational knowledge" (Jackson & Mazzei, 2012, p. 61) for them. They explained that referring to authority figures by their name is "a big thing." The same can be said about contributing to meetings and project design as a junior team member. Hence, they resisted by asking themselves, "am I in the position that I can contribute anything?" (Transcript, May 14, 2021). Sari's very being was discontinued (Foucault, 1984) while power worked on them. As a response to Amelia's power/knowledge practice, Sari opened up to a more equalitarian way to be in the world based on new knowledge about themselves. The same way of being with each other was also reproduced inside the organization Amelia, Sari, and others founded together. Sari mentioned, "the relation that [Amelia] wanted to create in [the organization] since the beginning, is as equal as possible. Not only on the way we talk to each other, but also the way we work" (Transcript, May 14, 2021). In this context, Sari came up as a queer person and agnostic, which are ways they cannot exist outside the office.

Nevertheless, as Sari went to the field to facilitate community members through participatory processes in the Stunting Island, they "convert[ed] into something else" (Foucault, 2000, p. 247); They became Muslim and is no longer an openly queer person. They adopt subject positions available in a conservative society assigned to them at birth; it gives them a viable life and enables them to facilitate (Hekman, 2010). Sari said, "I never coming out in the field to the

participant, because the risk, you know? It's still a conservative society" (Sari, Personal communication, June 4, 2021). At the same time, they realized, "as a fluid [person], I can easily hangout and talk with women, as well as men" (Sari, Personal communication, June 4, 2021). However, talking to different people in the community is not only what they do. Sari explained, "the word is getting informal as possible" (Sari, Personal communication, May 3, 2021); it entails using "simple clothes, talking the way they do" (Sari, Personal communication, May 3, 2021). For Sari, such practices are grounded in immersion, a participatory methodology where practitioners live in a community to learn about people's lives and conditions (Chambers, 2007). Although being informal is a practice found in participatory discourse, also used by Amelia when she met Sari, wearing simple clothes and speaking the simple language are cultural practices that work to maintain the relationship between Sari and the people.

In this sense, Sari was caught up in power relations, whether at the office or in the field. These power relations constrain and enable Sari differently as they move from one space to another (Taylor, 2014). Sari is constantly becoming as they circulate between the threads of power (Foucault, 1980). In other words, even though this story is an account of Sari's lived experience, this is no longer Sari. If Sari was, they are no longer becoming (Massumi, 1992).

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

In this article, I presented the methodology I have been using to engage with CBR facilitators to understand how they perceive the formation of their subjectivity within power relations. I gave the example of how I met Sari in the threshold to read their story diffractively. We understood how power worked in different moments of Sari's life not by looking for examples of Foucault's concept of power in their story (sameness), but by allowing the concept to shift and multiply stories. It was neither a product of Sari's voice alone nor an application of theory, but it was Sari being produced in the entanglement, which according to them, gave a better understanding of themselves.

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DUAL PERSPECTIVES ON TRAINING IN HIGHER EDUCATION: FROM ONBOARDING TO INMATE EDUCATION

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Abstract

In this paper, we will use onboarding as the critical lens in which to discuss, a case study research project, focusing on the role correctional education plays in helping to rehabilitate offenders incarcerated in the correctional system. This recognizes the various ways in which onboarding can be understood and extended beyond traditional approaches, acknowledging that both socialization (Bauer, Erdogan, & Taylor, 2012), and integration (Hillman 2010), within the context of onboarding may have a multifaceted meaning. Using this information as the foundation on which to ground our presentation we aim to highlight the important connection onboarding can have and the critical role it plays in various educational settings.

Keywords: onboarding, socialization, integration, correctional education, recidivism, correctional environment

INTRODUCTION

Onboarding is a process that helps new employees gain the skills and resources necessary to become “fully engaged and culturally aware members of a productive workforce” (Hillman, 2010, p. 1). The process of onboarding often starts before an employee ever begins work within an organization and can continue for many months after the new employee starts (Gesme, 2018). Onboarding recognizes the important and critical role that training, and development have in helping a new employee become productive within the organization (Bauer, 2013). Utilizing onboarding as the critical lens in which to discuss, a case study research project, brings into focus the role correctional education plays in helping to rehabilitate offenders incarcerated in the correctional system. This recognizes the various ways in which onboarding can be understood and extended beyond traditional approaches, acknowledging that both socialization (Bauer, Erdogan, & Taylor, 2012), and integration (Hillman 2010), within the context of onboarding may have a multifaceted meaning.

A significant number of offenders serve their sentenced time only to re-offend and serve additional time (Fazel & Wolf, 2015). Educational programming is a key strategy put in place to correct behaviour and reduce recidivism (Correctional Service Canada, 2019). Recent studies have shown that “inmates who participated in correctional education programs had 43% lower odds of recidivating than inmates who did not” (Davis et al., 2014, p. 14). Substantial resources back these programs, and academic experts from post-secondary institutions are contracted to provide this education and training in Provincial systems. Instructors report that their students struggle with learning challenges including dyslexia, Asperger’s syndrome, autism, and attention

deficit hyperactivity disorder; many of which are prevalent conditions among incarcerated learners (Bhatti, 2010, p. 33). These challenges, as well as the lack of diverse instructional and learning tools available in the classroom, create additional complexity in an already complicated situation. Using onboarding processes as a lens in which to highlight these challenges as well as potential ways in which instructors can develop strong practices that provide important outcomes for their learners highlights the importance of socialization within an onboarding experience and the important role socialization has in supporting integration.

THE IMPORTANCE OF SOCIALIZATION

One of the key purposes of a successful onboarding program is to assist in helping new employees socialize into a new organization and into their new job. Socialization can be understood as the process in which a new employee gains the knowledge and skills necessary to be successful within a new organization (Baldwin, 2016). This understands that a well socialized employee will increase performance, have an enhanced work attitude resulting in an increase in desirable work behaviours such as engagement and innovation (Bauer, Erdogan, & Taylor, 2012).

In looking at socialization from the perspective of the new employee, it can be understood that a new employee is primarily responsible for their own socialization experience. As part of this socialization, they will rely on individuals such as socialization agents and other processes and procedures as a guide in assisting with their onboarding process (Klein, Polin & Sutton, 2015). In this way both the organization and the new employee have important roles in the socialization experience. For an organization, they must develop processes such as the creation of policies, procedures and other information that will provide guidance to the employee as they learn about the new organization (Ellis et al., 2015). An organization should also provide additional support for an employee such as socialization agents, often called an onboarding buddy, who will act as a liaison, providing support, knowledge and information as the new employee begins working within the organization (Graybill et al., 2013). One important item to note is that typically the socialization agent or onboarding buddy is an individual who is either familiar with the new employee's job function and role, or a seasoned individual who will work closely with the new employee (Graybill et al., 2013). The on-boarding buddy is prepared and positioned to fully support their new colleague. The new employee is primarily responsible to navigate their own way through the organization's socialization process because they are best situated to understand their own deficiencies and gaps in understanding the support they need (Klein, Polin & Sutton, 2015). The employee led socialization may consist of asking questions, seeking guidance, and determining the specific requirements needed from the new employer and the socialization agents to ensure they are able to become a productive and successful member of the organization (Graybill et al., 2013). Using this understanding of socialization from an onboarding perspective provides a strong foundation on which to recognize certain challenges that a newly hired instructor may need to navigate as they acculturate themselves into their new role as an educator within the correctional education system.

There are several unique attributes to correctional education that differ from mainstream educational environments. The main one being that the correctional education space is governed by a single overriding mandate. This mandate is to ensure safety; the safety of society and law-abiding citizens, and ensure the public, including employees and instructors, are free from threats from convicted and incarcerated individuals. An additional element of safety

focuses on keeping incarcerated individuals safe from each other, for example, if there are members of different gangs, or perhaps particularly violent or aggressive individuals. Due to this mandate the instructors have an additional complexity of grouping their students into classes that are conducive to learning, and possibly only having classes in certain sections of the correctional centre. The acclimation and socialization of instructors to these safety concerns can be different for each centre, providing new cultural and administrative norms for newly hired instructors to learn. Additionally, this system of safety can present a steep learning curve for instructors new to the correctional environment. The safety concerns may affect class size, class composition, available materials, the length of the class, and student attendance rates due to institutional transfers, cell block changes, or other administrative changes (Mastrorilli, 2016). These factors lengthen the on-boarding process, adding additional complexity to an already complex learning space. The learning space of adult correctional facilities focuses on teaching adults, soft skills, vocational skills, and academic upgrading skills. These skills are designated by the correctional administration as providing important skill sets for re-entering society successfully once released from the correctional institution. Applying adult learning principles provides a successful foundation for student learning, however, like all adults, students are generally challenged by self-doubt and confidence issues when they return to the classroom after an extended period (Koo, 2015). This apprehension can be further exasperated within a correctional education environment, due to a large percentage of the learners having learning disabilities typically much higher than a standard adult learning classroom (Lugo, 2018), adding instructional design and curriculum development challenges for the instructors. As the instructor navigates their on-boarding to the overall setting of the correctional education system and the detailed requirements of a specific centre, they are consistently managing the safety and students' complex learning needs in this unique environment.

What this discussion has shown is the excellent opportunities that exist within an on-boarding process to provide unique and context specific training for new instructors within the correctional education system. Current instructors will act as onboarding buddies, sharing individual practices with new instructors, while centre administration creates different policies, procedures and organizational norms that are put in place to ensure a safe learning space for the new instructor. The role of the instructor in the socialization process includes keen observations, asking questions, and seeking advice to ensure a fulsome educational experience for their students. In this way the instructor's own experience with onboarding and socialization will help them to develop the appropriate skills needed to be a socialization agent that assists newly released offenders better integrate into society.

INTEGRATION LEADING TO ONBOARDING SUCCESS

Moving from a knowledge-based or cognitive relationship with an organization to an equitable, contributing, and collaborative relationship is successful integration. Specifically, where employees have a strong level of confidence both in their level of knowledge and how they can apply this knowledge, to make effective and creative impacts within the organization through innovation and idea generation is a key element that is represented both within the goals of onboarding as well as the re-integration of newly released offenders. To gain a better understanding of how this integration may occur we must first re-visit the idea of socialization to gain an important perspective of the key role an employee has within the socialization process.

As discussed in the previous section the purpose of socialization within an onboarding context is for a new employee to gain the skills and knowledge necessary to be successful within the new organization (Klein, Polin & Sutton, 2015). Socialization is designed to assist the new employee in understanding their specific fit within the organization (Baldwin, 2016). Socialization is not a hurried process and can often take more than a few days (Korte, 2007). The socialization process for employees may be continuous and require constant navigation throughout an individual's career within an organization (Korte, 2007). In this way socialization may be seen as a consistent element for an employee always looking to modify behaviours and perspectives to meet the needs of the organization (Korte, 2007). This constant navigation will support the employee in developing and understanding the norms of the organization and how they can best situate themselves into the workplace culture (Korte, 2007).

An important element within the socialization process is the significant and meaningful role the new employee has on the culture and environment of the organization. A new employee can have a substantial impact on the culture and environment of an organization (Holton, 1996). This is due to the ways in which a new employee navigates the socialization process will at the same time influence, processes, policies, procedures, amongst other considerations that can influence organizational culture (Holton, 1996). Socialization should therefore be understood as a process in which both the employer and employee bring knowledge and information into the socialization experience which can over time shape, and modify organizational customs (Stanley, 2012). This understanding of socialization highlights how successful socialization enables a new employee to successfully integrate into the organization. As socialization occurs the employee's thoughts, perspectives and ideas begin to shape and develop organizational culture, indicating that the employee has successfully integrated into the organization and thus now has influence on the organization, organizational values, and customs (Holton, 1996; Stanley, 2012). Using this understanding of the key role new employees have in shaping the organizational culture and modeling this for both correctional education instructors and correctional student's offenders highlights an enhanced understanding of both how and why integration is such an important and key element that has a crucial role in on-boarding knowledge transfer and integration.

The evolution of the newly on-boarded instructor from socialization to integration is key to the continuing advancement of instructional design and curriculum design in the classroom ensuring the best education available for correctional students. There are two key aspects that assist with this integration. The first is professional development and the second is community of practice. Professional development is a common way to evolve any career or profession, and at first glance, there seems to be many opportunities for educationally themed professional development. However, instructors find it very difficult to seek out other educational practitioners in correctional centres and ask them about their instructional and curriculum concerns, or even about how to advance or grow their current practice (Bhatti, 2010). Given the vast number of correctional institutions with correctional programs in Canada and beyond, it stands to reason that there are many experienced and expert instructors in this field, however, there do not seem to be many venues or resources to access them. There are some journals, which are often academic in nature, and a few conferences which are at times inaccessible due to the limited professional development funding or personal financial resources of educators teaching at correctional institutions. Consistent and equitable access to professional development for correctional educators would further the integration process to the benefit of both the instructor and the students. The second aspect is access to a community of practice

(Wenger, 2000), where instructors can act in both the role of the expert and the learner, creating a more collaborative and readily accessible space for integration. The act of sharing practices in a collegial space would also spark creative and innovative conversations and solutions which over time can evolve organizational norms. These communities can exist between instructors in the same institutions, between instructors from different institutions and between different roles at the same institution, for example, higher administration, correctional officers, instructors, and others. Venues for these communities of practice may consist of monthly meetings, online forums, quarterly meetings with instructors from different institutions or other collaborative spaces. It is important to include shared responsibility for contributions and organization of the meeting content, this way the workload is shared equitable, and everyone is offered an opportunity to share about their practice.

Through professional development and community of practice, newly on-boarded instructors are able to transition from a cognitive and applied level of learning in the socialization phase, becoming a creative and contributing member in the integration phase. This phase is a long-term commitment which informs and grows educational and professional practice and identity throughout their employment and their career. The additional benefit for instructors as they become contributing members within the integration phase is the important role they have in developing skills, tools and knowledge which, in turn, aids in their support of incarcerated individuals as they successfully integrate back into society.

CONCLUSION

What this paper has highlighted are two important elements: socialization and integration and the significant role these elements have within a correctional education environment. Socialization, understood as gaining the knowledge, skills and tools needed to be successful (Baldwin, 2016), helps correctional education instructors better understand the specific learning environment and tools needed to be effective. This is critically important as correctional education institutions have distinct goals and mandates, with diverse learning environments. Strong socialization in the correctional institution systems allows instructors the ability to better meet the needs of their learners which ensures an overall better learning success.

Building on this understanding of socialization, integration also underscores the ability for a correctional education instructor to take their own knowledge, skills and understanding based on their participation in communities of practice and professional development and make meaningful change within the correctional education system. This emphasizes the critical role instructors have within the organization and their ability to influence structures, systems, and organizational norms. This is especially important within the correctional education system as it allows instructors the ability to develop learning experiences that will meet the needs of their diverse learners, ultimately assisting in creating a more purposeful and meaningful learning environment for incarcerated individuals and may lead to greater success when these individuals integrate back into society.

What this discussion has emphasized is the important considerations that should be established within the process of hiring a new employee and the development of organizational culture and norms. Onboarding programs, socialization and integration all have the ability to strengthen an individual's ability to effectively participate within the organization and make meaningful change. What this discussion has highlighted is that these foundational frameworks can have

long lasting implications that may affect individuals beyond just the new employee and the organization. Further research and engagement in on-boarding in correctional education, would provide opportunities to engage in active and applied research and support a positive evolution of the profession. This type of research would be beneficial for all stakeholders, including the students, the instructors, the institutional staff, and the governing bodies.

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PEDAGOGY OF SUBORDINATION IN “LIBERATED” SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS: CASE OF IRANIAN WOMEN

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Abstract

This study investigates Iranian women’s mobility in online and offline spaces. Focusing on the discourse of subordination and its pedagogical impact, it examines the practice of everyday public mobility in order to explore Iranian women’s experience accessing and being accepted in public spaces in Iran. Through a critical feminist lens and public pedagogy at individual and institutional levels, this study examines how 25 Iranian women internalize—yet still resist—subordination through their everyday practices, including their continued presence in public spaces, and how their online mobility is also influenced by that same ideology of subordination. Through personal narrations the results show how the discourse of subordination can transform into a tool of empowerment and resistance to encourage access to public spaces, even if the notion of acceptability remains convoluted.

Keywords: Iranian women, social media, public mobility, public pedagogy

INTRODUCTION

Over the past 40 years, Iranian women have become more visible and active in public spaces than ever before. Women’s considerable participation in higher education and the workforce, along with their casual presence in public, has partially pushed at the boundaries of homosocial masculine public spaces (Afary, 2009; Najmabadi, 2005). Alongside women’s decreased confinement, the emergence of the internet in the 2000s created additional public realms that offered some Iranian women new spaces enabling greater freedom and mobility (Naghibi, 2011; Sreberny & Khiabany, 2010; Amir Ebrahimi, 2008). However, while many scholars perceive online realms as liberatory (Jarvis, 2011; Shirky, 2011), patriarchal social and cultural mores still penetrate online spaces and constrain autonomous online mobility. This paper investigates the experience of subordination and its pedagogical effects on the social construction of everyday public mobility (Bagheri, 2013) from the standpoint of women living in Iran. With this goal in mind, this study examines public space as a “lived space” that can simultaneously produce and reproduce emancipation and oppression (Luke, 1996, 1994) under the indoctrination of subordination at institutional and individual levels. By adopting a public pedagogy approach enacted through a critical feminist lens, this paper illustrates how public mobility requires both access and acceptance, and is intertwined with the discourse of subordination to help reform the bodily mobility of women in various online and offline public spaces.

Women's Public Mobility in Iran

Even a passing glance at the past hundred years of Iranian history clearly demonstrates the paradoxical struggle between institutional force and individual practice around women's public mobility. During Reza Shah's reign (1925-1941), modernity was thrust upon Iranian society as the controlling powers forcefully converted the formerly homosocial public realm into a heterosocial space granting public access to women who complied with the new unveiling decree. Gender mixed interactions and communication empowered some women to gain access to non-segregated public spaces, such as educational institutions, workplaces, movie theatres, restaurants, and parks (Paidar, 1995). However, women who chose to remain veiled and resisted the new norms faced even greater confinement and restrictions than before. The governmental decrees and Reza Shah's push to 'modernize' clashed with historically rooted ideologies, shaped by *urf* and shared public memory. Iranian society continued to perceive public spaces as male-dominated homosocial realms where women's bodies were subjected to harassment and social control. Despite the incompatibility between gendered elements of tradition and modernity, politics and culture, under Mohammad Reza Shah in the 1940s (1941-1979) the number of high school attendees in urban areas reached gender parity for the first time. Furthermore, women gained access to most professional fields and were granted the ability to study abroad (Ahmadi, 1964 in Paidar, 1995; Arasteh, 1962). Mohammad Reza Shah's reign produced antithetical values caused by the collision between the *shari'a*-based constitution, traditional culture, and the rapid modernization that enabled women to resist subordination by exercising a degree of bodily autonomy. Women now enjoyed an increase in mobility, educational and career opportunities, sexual autonomy, financial empowerment, and choice of attire. Nevertheless, the traditional discriminatory attitude towards women limited their acceptance in, and access to, public spaces. Women were still legally and culturally considered a secondary sex, occupying an identity of subordination and legal dependence on male guardians (Afary, 2009; Amin, 2002). Women's bodies continued to be sexualized and politicized, as both veiled and unveiled women faced public policing and sexual harassment (Afary, 2009, p. 9; Paidar, 1995).

After the revolution in 1979, the new gendered bodies, rooted in theocracy, restricted women's mobility under the purview of the Islamic regulations. As a result, gender segregation and mobility restrictions that were formerly cultural traditions became systematic, institutionalized, and legal constructs (Arjmand & Ziari, 2020). The Islamic government, based on ethical objections, challenged mixed-gender interactions and implemented gender segregation policies in hospitals, educational institutions, and government sectors, followed by complete seclusion in some public spaces such as stadiums and beaches (Afary, 2009, p. 272; Sadeghi, 2008). However, war and economic hardship forced men to be absent from home for longer periods; therefore, previously shared responsibilities, such as taking children to school, banking, and shopping, were relegated to tasks for women (Bayat, 2013; Sadeghi, 2011). As a result, women's mobility increased (including that of traditionally unemployed women), with them spending an average of two hours daily in public, including travel on public transit. Whether motivated by financial independence or hardship, women of all social classes became more mobile and raised their collective socio-political awareness (Bayat, 2007, p. 19; Nashat, 2003). When given the chance, women's increased socio-economic participation proves that the social, political, economic, and legal barriers faced by women were rooted in hegemony, rather than their "nature" (Sadeghi, 2011).

New Technologies for Autonomy and Resistance

Along with women's achievements in public mobility, the internet as a new public space provided a unique platform for mobility and autonomy for some women. Online mobility propelled women to adopt the internet as an alternative tool to demand their rights (Batmanghelichi & Mouri, 2017; Khiabany & Sreberny, 2004, p. 33). The rise in popularity of social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram and Telegram created easily accessible social forums and open political spaces for many women to participate in and communicate. Sharing videos and images through social media platforms enabled some Iranian women to cross the lines of *urf* (tradition) and break through legal and social restrictions upholding subordination (Koo, 2017; Ebrahimi & Salaverria, 2014; Akhavan, 2013; Amir-Ebrahimi, 2008; Alavi, 2005). Although digital participation provided women with a modicum of freedom, patriarchal culture permeated that new space and impinged upon women's digital autonomy. Despite perceptions of online spaces as new and alternative public spaces, they remain male-dominated, thereby hindering women's mobility and access (Wheeler, 2004) in ways that are replicated in offline public spaces in Iran. As such, women's online lives continue to be influenced by traditional social encounters as they attempt to maintain their offline social roles and status while online (Mortazavi & Poelker, 2017; Yazdanpanah, 2019). Using a public pedagogy analytical framework to delve into the everyday practice of public mobility within a patriarchal and hegemonic culture, this study investigates the learning impact of subordination on women's experiences accessing and gaining acceptance in public spaces, focusing specifically on the effects of gaze, harassment, and conformity.

STUDY DESCRIPTION

Data in this study is derived from 25 in-depth interviews with Iranian women, conducted to investigate their experiences of body mobility in everyday online and offline spaces. The decision to define my sample was based on the participants' formal educational experiences within Islamic educational institutions, while first gaining access to the internet in their youth. While the data collection method relies on "partially localized knowledge," the participants' experiences represent a primary step toward knowledge production, therefore a snowball sampling method was adopted as the most suitable method to locate participants through trusted intermediaries (Cassell, 1988).

ANALYSIS

Thematic analysis combines descriptive and exploratory approaches to develop pedagogical models that can reveal hidden oppressions and resistance affecting bodily mobility, while seeking to address social, cultural, historical, and educational issues (Wodak, 1997). In order to understand the participants' depiction of their experiences and perceptions in detail, this analysis organized the data into relevant codes and themes to unpack similarities, differences, and selective patterns of accessibility and acceptance in various public realms.

Forfeiting Public Mobility (Gaze)

Women's politicized bodies illustrate the impact of socio-religious-cultural values on their mobility, whereby simple access does not grant women autonomous mobility or acceptance. Women often become the subject of observation in public (Day, 2011), where males, police, and other local citizens, empowered by laws and social norms, feel it is their duty to remind women of their subordinate role. These unwelcome gazes create more obstacles to women's acceptance in public spaces. Given the public promotion of the subordinate position of women, and the absence of legal protections, the hegemonic cultural standards that promote homosocial spaces force gender norms and any attendant discomfort and disadvantages onto some of the participants. At times, the women were forced to conform, or to become dependent upon significant men in their lives. Societal mindsets and habits shape online conduct as well as offline public spaces, making it impossible to completely separate the online realm from the offline world. Even though participants reported more control over their audiences and increased mobility in online spaces such as social media platforms, they still struggled with the notion of gaze. Participants expressed concern about the judgments made by viewers of their posts and images and sought to behave "properly" to receive their followers' approval, or simply to avoid the gaze. Influenced by a masculine culture and lack of socio-legal protections, participants became accustomed to perceiving the public appearance of their bodies as a cause of sexual disruption and immorality. Meanwhile, such values, shaped by institutional public pedagogy on discourses of subordination, reinforce the significance of compliance by normalizing the participants' experience of gaze in relation to public acceptance, as well as the necessity of conformity.

Street Harassment

While the gaze limits women's mobility, street harassment by men relentlessly impedes women's mobility and ability to feel accepted in public spaces. Patriarchal hegemony and subordination gives men a sense of entitlement and ownership over public spaces, and any trespasses position women's bodies as recipients of unpredictable retribution in the form of social punishments. Harassment often caused a sense of insecurity and dehumanization among the participants and limited the participants' autonomous mobility—yet they continued to resist it at the individual level. Having more autonomous options on social media, the participants learned to take more defensive actions such as deleting, blocking, and declining unwanted behaviors, without being worried about the consequences or suffering from otherness and estrangement. Online autonomy allowed the participants to distance themselves from institutionally inculcated subordination, and these online experiences were empowering in relation to the offline world as well. Despite having better control over online public space, practices rooted in patriarchal ideology, such as the subordination and sexualization of women's bodies, extend to social media. These types of sexist practices were evident in the participants' experiences of unwanted friend requests and messages, and inappropriate comments and images from male strangers, which reintroduced some of the same limitations, insecurities, and discomforts that women experienced in offline public spaces. Therefore, the same patriarchal social construction of gender that dominated homosocial public offline spaces, along with a

sense of entitlement over women's bodies that dared to enter into those spaces, continued online—just to a different degree. The sense of “otherness” and “estrangement,” explained by Shahidian (1996), promoted secondary sex status amongst women, causing shame and urging conformity as a means for social acceptance and mobility. Consequently, acceptance of indoctrinated subordination as a means of self-protection can distort participants' sense of bodily autonomy, while simultaneously providing them with a method to actively remain in public spaces, as we will discuss in the next section.

Coping Mechanisms

Paradoxically, participants learned to adopt a subordinate identity as a way to defeat subordination and maintain public mobility. Through everyday practice, public education's attributes of oppression and resistance enabled participants to challenge homosocial spaces through apparent conformity. As women learned to take responsibility for their lack of acceptance, they were more inclined to normalize their sexual objectification to maintain access to both online and offline spaces. The discourse of subordination at the individual level enabled women to problematize public limitations by engaging in public yet remaining passive and voiceless. Many participants normalized the experience of unacceptance through silence; however, this normalization of subordination does not necessarily indicate acceptance of street harassment or gaze; rather, it is an alternative approach to resist patriarchal public spaces by suppressing and ignoring the incident so they can maintain their public appearances and mobility.

While communication and self-expression play vital roles in women's autonomous conduct online, their approach to communication and self-expression is still bound to hegemonic socio-cultural criteria. Participants chose mainly to interact online with familiar people such as friends and family members. Participants only occasionally interacted with users outside of their close circles, as commenting and liking unknown posts can lead to socio-legal consequences. Consequently, participants tended to practice lurking and anonymity in social media as tools to avoid drawing attention to their presence, and for avoiding unwanted male gazes and harassment. Participants' conformity became a tool of resistance by permitting them to gain greater access to the public realm. In fact, such silent resistance will gradually normalize women's presence in every public space, while also raising their consciousness of oppression via the institutionalized assimilation of their subordination.

Veiled Bodies, Veiled spaces

Participants practiced another form of conformity: attire modification. Although scholars such as Moghissi (1999) argue that women's restrictive dress codes have never been proven to be a form of protection against sexual harassment and sexual violence, the majority of the participants perceived that street harassment, and the male gaze would be lessened by appearing in more modest, loose, and plain attire. Moreover, a lack of social and legal protection left them with no other alternative but bodily self-regulation to defeat the homosocial public space. Consequently, their persistence brought changes to society, and many women reported less street harassment in comparison to previous years. Although participants still had a better chance of claiming their voice and more freedom online, habitual subordination along

gender lines and social discipline forced many women to re-veil their bodies, identities, and voices while using the internet. In the presence of the institutional public pedagogy of subordination, women were forced to find alternatives for their online participation, such as using private accounts or anonymous identities to protect themselves from confinement and isolation. Trapped by bodily discipline and social order, women used private accounts as an alternative to veiling to protect themselves and resist societal oppression. In the absence of external protection, self-protection became a core value of participants' public mobility. Women converted subordination into an educational force and learned to take responsibility for maintaining their safety and reducing the unpleasant experiences of public unacceptance. Women transformed subordination into an emancipatory tool for remaining active members in public spaces.

CONCLUSION

For over a century, Iranian women have been problematizing restrictions, public confinement, and the ideology of a homosocial public space. Women have challenged patriarchal institutional goals and values that promote subordination and gained access to previously prohibited spaces, despite the myriad of barriers. The emergence of the internet and social media has granted Iranian women increased mobility, providing them with tools for transgressing into traditionally homosocial public spaces. Yet patriarchal socio-cultural norms soon enveloped these new public spaces and translocated the limitations Iranian women experience in public life to their online participation. At the institutional level the discourse of subordination (one of the core cultural values of Iranian patriarchal society) reinforced through public pedagogy continues to affect women's mobility by limiting their acceptance as unmolested equals in public spaces. Socio-cultural norms and values taught participants to internalize subordination as part of their relational identity. Furthermore, institutional public pedagogy placed predefined expectations squarely on women's shoulders, imbuing them with the responsibility to present themselves as "proper" in others' eyes. The patriarchal society attempted to exert power over women's mobility and societal acceptance by imposing upon them the responsibility for male transgressions such as harassment and the gaze.

At the individual level, Iranian women adopted subordination as a tool for resistance, using it to maintain their access to public places and increase their acceptance therein. Such compliance enabled them to become active but invisible participants online, and silent participants offline. Despite the educational forces promoting traditionally defined and socially acceptable modes of propriety and subordination, women's active presence in public spaces has challenged the idea of homosocial spaces by reshaping the culture of public spaces relative to gender and mobility. Everyday practices related to public mobility have created a paradoxical resistance to subordination through the superficial acceptance of it, by accessing information from public pedagogy (Savage, 2010, p. 106). The participants of this research have achieved mobility and challenged patriarchal values in social and legal arenas by actively participating in society, having careers, and being involved in higher education, as well as remaining active members online. The spatial representation of women's presence and preferences confirms that interpretations of built environments are tied to socio-economic institutional forces, as well as influenced by symbolic meanings derived from local culture and history (Low, 1996; 2000). Women learned to conform—a key component of subordination—to minimize the negative

experiences of unacceptance and maintain their access to public spaces, meaning socio-cultural reconstruction. In this regard, cultural production generates and distributes new knowledge on women's mobility in both online and offline public spaces. More importantly, these women's experiences shed light on the unrealistic, binary divisions inherent in the categories of public/private, modern/traditional, and form/meaning. The reality is that women's experiences do not exist in such tidy distinctions. Therefore, they are emancipating every day.

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ROUNDTABLES

FEMINIST ADULT EDUCATION, THE IMAGINATION AND CREATIVE POSSIBILITY

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Abstract

Based on a recent book entitled *Feminism, adult education, and creative possibility: Imaginative responses* this roundtable focuses on 'the feminist imaginary' and how it is being conceptualized, practised and mobilized pedagogically for gender justice and change. Discussions will centre around four thematic areas: visualization/ representation, storying, decolonizing and caring.

Keywords: imagination, visualisation, representation, storying, caring, feminist adult education

INTRODUCTION

Generation Equality Forum describes gender discrimination as "the most enduring and defining inequality of our time" (2021, n/p). Worldwide, "patriarchal patterns of gender oppression remain more resilient than any of us suspected" (Vintges, 2018, p. 165). Baksh and Harcourt (2015) have documented practices of "physical, psychological, and symbolic violence against women...in north and south" in what they called "epidemic proportions" (p. 13) whilst Shameen (2021) illuminates a disturbing new "global patriarchal backlash [of] fundamentalist and fascist agendas" (p. 2). Through mainstream and social media forces of extremism, neocolonialism and the (re)imposition of "patriarchal heteronormative family values are shaping the parameters of public discourse and consciousness" (p. 10). Rising simultaneously are vilifications of "feminism as the primary threat to public morality" (p. 10). Despite this, new feminist practices are being developed as collective, disruptive, critical querying and transformative tool to give women "the strength to go on" (Ahmed, 2006, p. 3). Central to this work, and to our roundtable, is the mobilization of the human aesthetic dimension and the imagination as pedagogical processes of consciousness and change.

AESTHETICS AND THE IMAGINATION

To borrow from feminist Solnit (2014, p. 10), the above scenario represents a "failure of the imagination", a failure to implant an alternative vision and consciousnesses of what a decolonized gender just world can be. The imagination is "highly consequential because control

over it is control over the future" (n/p) and therefore, it is "the most subversive thing a people can have" (Mohanty, 2012, p. ix).

Since the turn of the century feminist adult education has taken what Wildermeesch (2019) characterised as 'an aesthetic turn'. For Shotwell (2011), aesthetics is the "pursuit of a politics within which people can live with our whole selves—as political, social, emotional, physical beings who need to be able to find dignity and delight in many different dimensions of our being" (p. 119). The aesthetic turn is marked by an increase in a cultural politics of imaginative and creative thought and practice. Feminist adult educators worldwide are tapping into the power of the aesthetic and using art and creativity to give those who have been oppressed and marginalised access to what they have been denied or told they do not possess: the power to imagine the world differently on their own terms and to bring that into being. In so doing, educators are (re)establishing women and other marginalized groups as 'knowers', key social actors, critical carers, and artists.

THE FEMINIST IMAGINARY

As a group of feminist adult educators from different parts of the world (Feminist Imaginary Research Network, FIRN), we have been exploring and theorizing what we call 'the feminist imaginary' as a pedagogical force for change. Through workshops, virtual exhibitions, and métissage activities we have been exploring how the feminist imaginary is conceptualized, practised and mobilized as a (re)visualizing, (re)storying, decolonizing, and strategy of care. A result of our conversations is an edited volume entitled *Feminism, adult education, and creative possibility: Imaginative responses* (2022). This book takes up the feminist imaginary through four themes that form the basis of this roundtable.

Visualization and representation

The first theme is visualization and representation. For Hall et al (2013), representation is the most powerful socially educative force of our time. Representations can reinforce problematic gender understandings and stereotypes but equally, they can disrupt patterns of "common sense making about the world and ourselves" (Kidd, 2015, p. 3). Darlene Clover will discuss the creation of a feminist multi-media exhibition entitled *Disobedient Women* and how it worked as a representational feminist pedagogy of possibility. Sondra Cuban will share her work with group of migrant women who 'drew' themselves into their homes and communities. Kathy Sanford will share how a large-scale installation entitled *Wasteland* offered a public pedagogical visualization of climate anxiety. The question that guides this roundtable is: How are feminists re-visualizing and mobilizing new forms of representation as resistance and reclamation?

Storying

The second major theme is storying. Stories bring experience to life. Our feminist narratives of creative possibility give us presence and an owned identity. For Andrews (2014), narratives and the imagination are integrally tied. Nancy Taber will focus on feminist fiction-based research in the context of war and military museums and how storytelling can foster imagination and empathy. Bringing research into life, Laura Formenti Silvia Luraschi and Gaia Del Negro will discuss their experiences of feminist practice with and through different artists. The question

that guides this roundtable is: How do self-authored accounts enable us to (re)construct a sense of ourselves as critical actors in society?

Decolonizing

Theme three is decolonizing which, for Tuck and Yang (2012), is a political pedagogical strategy of redressing colonial/imperial injustices. Dorothea Harris will discuss Indigenous feminist aesthetic work as cultural revitalization in response to the impacts of colonisation and as a practise of cultural safety. Catherine Etmanski will outline the decolonizing aesthetics of the *Witness Blanket*, a mixture of tangible objects, documents, and photographs that weave together a comprehensive narrative of Survivor experience and history of residential schools in Canada. The question that guides this roundtable is: How do our feminist creative practices decolonize our minds? What is a decolonized feminist imaginary?

Caring

The final theme is caring and research practices. Feminists underscore the importance of centring care and caring as aesthetic concerns in a troubled world (Puig de la Bellacasa, 2017). Drawing from Chatzidakis et al (2020) who query, "what if we were to begin instead to put care at the very centre of life?" (p. 5), Kerry Harman will look at how care can be practised when researching with homecare workers. Drawing on her scriptwriting/popular theatre work, Lauren Spring will show us how she practises 'estrangement pedagogy'. The question that guides this roundtable is about 'what if' we centre care in our research practices. How would a focus on care shift research representations of the world as we know it and as it could be?

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EXAMINING THE FRAGMENTATION AND POSSIBLE REJUVENATION OF ADULT LITERACY PRACTITIONER NETWORKS: A METHODOLOGICAL DISCUSSION

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Abstract

This roundtable paper will discuss the first steps in a research project that explores the current state of adult literacy practitioner networks in Canada. Our research will review the impact that practitioners experienced following the loss of federal funding to support literacy and essential skills organizations in 2015. Emerging from our research project, we hope to seek out possibilities for rebuilding and regenerating these practitioner networks on a local, regional and national level. This paper is a first step in reflecting on our experiences as researchers and practitioners and considering the methodological directions of our research.

INTRODUCTION

Prior to 2015, the adult literacy field in Canada was supported by a wide array of regional, provincial and national network organizations — including the Movement for Canadian Literacy/Canadian Language and Literacy Network, and the National Adult Literacy Database — where practitioners would exchange ideas and support each other's work. According to a CUPE report (2018), federal defunding of literacy work resulted in the weakening and disappearance of many of these networks. This contributed to fragmentation in the field, most visible in the loss of cohesion and identity by practitioners and researchers in the field. This impact is also evident in a precipitous decline in research publications and collaborations between practitioners and researchers (Crooks et al., 2021; Taylor et al., 2011). Grounded in this context, our research project aims to develop a critical analysis of the scale and depth of the impact of this fragmentation, particularly on adult literacy practitioners and their ability to collaborate with each other.

BACKGROUND

In the last decade, the adult literacy field in Canada has been significantly impacted by the withdrawal of federal core funding for national and provincial literacy networks (Crooks et al., 2021; Elfert & Walker, 2020). Practitioner networks were crucial in supporting diverse adult literacy practitioners in exchanging ideas, materials, and strategies to serve adult learners, as well as advocating for a precarious field with activist roots. However, following the call for funding applications to support a pan-Canadian network for literacy and essential skills in 2014, Jason Kenney, then the Minister of Employment and Social Development stated,

Our government is committed to ensuring that federal funding for literacy is no longer spent on administration and countless research papers [emphasis added],

but instead is invested in projects that result in Canadians receiving the literacy skills they need to obtain jobs...Canadian taxpayers will no longer fund administration of organizations but will instead fund useful literacy projects. (Kenney, as cited in Centre for Literacy, 2014, par. 3)

Having their applications rejected, most national literacy organizations and research centers lost their core funding and few remained active past 2015 (CUPE, 2018, 2020). Today the impacts are compounded by a regime of arbitrary program and accountability measures (Darville, 2014; Smythe, 2015) which have narrowed practitioners' sense of supporting adult learners (Atkinson, 2015; Elias et al 2020). Meanwhile, adult literacy has been reduced to the margins of local and national priorities, perhaps with the exception of more general public concerns about literacy's effect on Canada's global competitiveness (Elfert & Walker, 2020; Walker, 2014).

In our research, we plan to look more closely at this impact of defunding on the relationships among practitioners which, in the past, connected literacy practitioners and learners and fostered innovation and activism in the field. We also are interested in the disconnects among policy makers, researchers and the field that may have widened over the last decade since the withdrawal of federal funding. Ultimately we hope that our research can work to support the development of new connections in the field.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

As we continue to develop the project, we are considering and deliberating potential research questions, such as:

- How have literacy practitioners experienced the fragmentation of adult literacy support networks?
 - What networks do adult literacy practitioners connect with in their work today?
 - How does the experience of fragmentation differ or coincide for adult literacy practitioners working in different contexts?
 - How has engagement with adult literacy networks changed in the last 30 years?
- How do literacy practitioners describe the impacts of the federal defunding of literacy practitioner networks?
 - What impacts do practitioners see on their identity as adult literacy practitioners as a result of defunding?
 - How do practitioners describe the level of engagement and cohesion in the field today?
- What do literacy practitioners see as new possibilities emerging for reconnection and activism in adult literacy?
 - How do adult literacy practitioners understand their work in relation to building local, provincial, and national networks of support?

- Do adult literacy practitioners envision practitioner networks as part of the future of the field?

METHODOLOGY/THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

As adult literacy practitioners and researchers, we ground this research in our own experiences. Individually, we draw on various methodological approaches in critical and feminist traditions of educational research. Our roundtable discussion will build a common methodological ground where we can address our wider research questions. Ultimately, our goal is to establish a research framework that can best engage with the range and depth of impact that federal defunding has had on adult literacy practitioners from the perspectives of practitioners. We are also interested in leveraging the research to establish a way forward for rebuilding and regenerating adult literacy practitioner networks.

Drawing on our own backgrounds and interests and informed by the priorities described above, we are currently considering three distinct methodological approaches: (1) feminist genealogy (Pillow, 2003, 2015), which centres how educational policy and practice work to shape and regulate bodies (2) critical participatory action research (Fine et al, 2021; Jordan, 2009; Kennelly, 2018), an intersectional approach to qualitative research in which researchers work alongside participants with a focus on social change (3) institutional ethnography (Jackson, 2005; Ng & Mirchandani, 2008; Smith, 2005), which investigates everyday experience and work as part of an institutional complex of activity that organizes people's lives .

Once we have more clearly identified our methodological framework, we plan to further revise our research questions and identify next steps. Next steps will focus on reaching out to practitioners who are interested in engaging in a critical discussion of fragmentation and possibility in the field. Ultimately we seek to (re)connect practitioners and researchers in the field of adult literacy.

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RESPONDING TO THE DRUG CRISIS IN CANADA: UPHOLDING THE RIGHTS OF PEOPLE WHO USE DRUGS

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Abstract

Using past and current responses to the drug crisis as an example, this session will provide a forum to share experiences and discuss how researchers think about and approach value-laden issues, such as drug use, to better understand their complexity and how we can avoid reverting to prevailing positivist methodologies in our research.

The drug crisis in Canada is escalating and people are dying in unprecedented numbers. Governments continue to criminalize people who use certain drugs. Over the years numerous groups have been calling for more progressive drug policy informed by public health and human rights approaches. Yet repressive practices continue. During my 34-year career in public health I have seen how progressive reforms have been slow, inconsistently applied, and remain vulnerable to changes by governments in power. At the roundtable, I will share how I plan to explore this lack of progress through my doctoral research and the rationale for my approach. I will also talk about the personal struggles I have experienced as a nurse and researcher shifting from a dominant health science approach to one that is more qualitative and critical.

Keywords: Drug Use, Drug Policy, Human Rights, Critical Analysis, Qualitative Methods

INTRODUCTION

Throughout my career in public health, I have found it very challenging to put comprehensive drug policy and practices into effect. I have witnessed the growing frustration, anger and despair of activists, workers and policy makers in the field who have repeatedly called for significant change and provided concrete programs to address the wide-ranging harms experienced by people who use drugs and the cautious and often restrictive response of governments and organizations in the health, justice and business sectors.

During the roundtable discussion, I will share the context for my research and the plans and rationale for my approach. I also aim to spark a conversation about overcoming prevailing positivist methodologies, by sharing some of the internal challenges I experience as I attempt to step outside the science-based paradigm of my past education and experience, and take a more critical approach to this important, but value-laden issue.

CURRENT & EMERGING APPROACHES TO DRUG USE

People who use drugs experience a wide-range of human rights abuses and these can increase their vulnerability to harm (Jurgens et al., 2010). As reports on human rights, drug policy and health have shown, when the state addresses human rights obligations and adopts policies that are human rights-based as well as health-focused, vulnerability to drug-related harm can be reduced (Csete et al., 2016; HIV Legal Network, 2021; International Guidelines on Human Rights and Drug Policy, 2019).

Canada's main response to drug use, however, has historically been and largely continues to criminalize people who use drugs (Jelsma & Armenta, 2015; Solomon & Usprich, 1991). This approach has significant impacts on public health and there is a racial, ethnic, class and gender bias in the enforcement of drug laws (Penal Reform International, 2016; Canadian Drug Policy Coalition, n.d.; City of Toronto, 2018; Correctional Investigator Canada, 2015; Health Officers Council of British Columbia, 2005; Stevens, 2011).

Over the past 30 years more comprehensive public health approaches, that include prevention, treatment and harm reduction, have been employed (City of Toronto, 2005; MacPherson & Rowley, 2014). However, public health approaches also have limitations. Framing addiction as a health issue can obscure the structural factors that contribute to drug use and continue the stigmatization of people who use drugs, especially when interventions focus on individual behaviour change (Roe, 2005; Smith, 2012). Furthermore, public health approaches often rely on and privilege professionals and science, limiting the inclusion of people with lived experience (Ritter et al., 2018).

Human rights-based approaches address many of the limitations of the dominant approaches. They go beyond individual health interventions and attempt to address broader impacts by, for example, ensuring everyone, including people who use drugs, has access to medical care, child rearing support, employment, food and shelter (Ezard, 2001; International Guidelines on Human Rights and Drug Policy, 2019; Pauly, et al., 2013; Rhodes, 2002). Human rights-based approaches also centre the perspectives of people with lived experience of drug use, including them in the development, implementation and evaluation of policies and programs (Csete et al., 2016; HIV Legal Network, 2021; Jurgens, 2008; Jurgens et al., 2010).

RESEARCH FOCUS

While a broad range of human rights-based harm reduction services has been implemented and researched in this country, often through advocacy and action by social activist groups led by people who use drugs, they are not universally available and they are susceptible to changes in government (Hyshka et al., 2017; Souleymanov & Allman, 2016; Watson et al., 2020; Wild et al., 2017).

Recently, public health authorities, major health professional associations and mental health organizations, as well as police chief associations, have been recommending more extensive changes to Canada's approach to drugs (Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police, 2020; Centre for Addiction and Mental Health, 2021; City of Toronto, 2021a; Toronto Public Health, 2022). Governments at all levels, in various parts of Canada, are now indicating support for more progressive drug policy. However, it remains to be seen how comprehensive, sustainable and effective changes will be.

As a nurse and policy-maker, I have been questioning why it has been so difficult to develop and employ more humane and holistic approaches to drug use that are sustainable and responsive to the changing and varied needs of people who use drugs. Through my research I plan to take a critical approach and examine this question by hearing from a broad range of people with varying locations and interests who have experience trying to develop, implement or make significant shifts in drug policy and practices. I will put particular effort into reaching people who have been largely excluded from developing and implementing drug-related policy and programs such as people who have past or current experience using street drugs (i.e. regulated and unregulated drugs that are purchased through the illegal market). I want to learn about:

- the difficulties they have encountered and how they have addressed them;
- their insights about current proposed changes and how those have come about; and
- what possibilities they envision for creating more systemic change in our approach to drug use in Canada.

I believe taking a critical approach to my research will enable me to develop a deeper understanding about what is preventing progressive change. However, this is a major shift in my practice. As someone educated in the health sciences, I have been trained to believe in the primacy of scientific evidence. I find it difficult to frame my research outside the bounds of my past training, often trying to maintain objectivity and privileging science-based evidence. In the area of drug use, however, despite the large body of empirical evidence, many interventions have been actively resisted by powerful institutions such as the police, many politicians and business and resident groups (Watson et al., 2020). I am developing and strengthening my critical research skills to tackle this personal challenge by utilizing strategies such as ongoing reflection, connecting with others in the critical qualitative research community and, setting as a priority, engagement with those who have front line or live/lived experience of drug use.

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TRANSFORMATIVE LEARNING EXPERIENCES OF PROFESSIONAL COLOMBIAN IMMIGRANTS TO SUCCEED

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Abstract

The purpose of this qualitative study with narrative inquiry methodology is to explore the holistic transformative learning (TL) journeys of 6 to 10 professional Colombian immigrants, who have lived in Canada for two or more years, as they build their intercultural communicative competence (ICC) to succeed professionally. Arriving to Canada with a career and the target language (English or French) might not be enough for newcomers to communicate effectively and build meaningful connections in the community of settlement to succeed professionally. While these newcomers go through a phase of adaptation and integration, they may face barriers to increase their ICC or their ability to communicate effectively while still embracing the similarities and differences of both cultures (their culture and the culture of the community of settlement). Additionally, while these immigrants navigate the professional world in Canada, their attitudes, values and experiences in both countries and their communities of settlement may have impacted the strategies they implemented to overcome barriers to succeed professionally. To delve into the essence of the experiences of these immigrants, this study will use semi-structured interviews, demographic surveys, and optional journaling. Thus, this study will inform the field of adult education to implement programs through post-secondary institutions or organizations that provide services to immigrants or employ immigrants in their organizations. Additionally, this study will inform the field of language and literacy to enrich ICC in language programs. Finally, this study will inform immigrants, not only Colombians, about strategies that they can use, in terms of ICC and TL, to succeed professionally in Canada.

Keywords: Transformative learning, intercultural competence, intercultural communicative competence, immigration, transnationalism, adult learning, language and literacy, Colombian immigrants.

BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

Immigration introduces the phenomenon of transnationalism, which allows immigrants to maintain their own cultural, ideological, and language identities when interacting with individuals and organizations from the new country of settlement (Duff, 2015; Roose et al., 2020). Most skilled or professional Colombian workers who immigrate to Canada with the purpose of being professionally successful have at least one university degree and can communicate in English or French (Embassy of Canada to Colombia, n.d.). However, Colombian immigrants are one of the ethnic groups who face cultural barriers that cause higher levels of poverty and un/under employment in Canada (Armony, 2014). These barriers delay their success and prevent them from succeeding professionally in their journeys. Therefore, these

immigrants need to acquire new knowledge and skills to build their *Intercultural Communicative Competence* (ICC) (Byram, 2021) to belong in a different culture and build personal and professional connections. Thus, ICC is having the ability and the willingness to connect and integrate with other cultures with respect and appreciation for the cultural similarities and differences (Byram, 2021). Hence, participants with enhanced ICC can communicate effectively with the other culture to build interpersonal connections and succeed professionally. Concurrently, while the target participants build their ICC, they may experience *Transformative Learning* (TL). Through TL, while individuals reflect on their new knowledge and skills, they may experience significant changes in their frames of reference (e.g., previous assumptions and mind-set) and some personal traits to justify their new actions in a challenging situation or new environment (Dirkx, 2012; Illeris, 2014, 2016). In turn, TL captures the cognitive, emotional/affective, and social dimensions of the learning process, which reveals a holistic learning journey. Indeed, these dimensions are not explored in isolation; rather they are linked as components of the whole TL experience (Illeris, 2016). As a result, I explore the professional Colombian immigrants' potential TL journey and how enhanced ICC provide them with the necessary tools to succeed in their professional careers, as they apply strategies to overcome internal barriers (e.g., low self-esteem) and external barriers (e.g., difficulty making personal connections).

PURPOSE

The purpose of this study is to explore the holistic TL journeys of professional Colombian immigrants in Canada as they build their ICC. To inform the field of adult learning, this study also considers the challenging and rewarding experiences of professional Colombian immigrants as they apply strategies to succeed.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The primary question guiding the research is: To what extent did professional Colombian immigrants' experience *Transformative Learning*, and how did they make the shift from where they were to where they are today, in increasing their *Intercultural Communicative Competence*? In addition to the primary question, I have five secondary questions that center on their cultural background, strategies to communicate effectively, strategies to help address cultural barriers, and strategies to foster and experience TL.

METHODOLOGY

This qualitative study located in narrative inquiry methodology consists of three rounds of one-on-one semi-structured online interviews, along with demographic surveys and optional journaling, where I explore the TL journey of 6 to 10 professional Colombian immigrants. The purpose of using a narrative inquiry methodology is because it focuses especially "on how individuals assign meaning to their experiences through their stories, which are linked to their social and cultural contexts" (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2018, p. 58). Therefore, the researcher becomes part of the stories shared by the participants (Connelly & Clandinin, 2006). Additionally, using narrative inquiry provides the opportunity to explore the participants' reflection process to interpret their perceptions, emotions, and experiences of their realities (Plano Clark & Ivankova, 2016). During this process, participants can reflect while they tell,

retell, and relive their stories (Connelly & Clandinin, 2006) and provide a detailed context that could add more value to the study, while engaging in a professional relationship with the researcher to understand the phenomenon under study.

RATIONALE AND SIGNIFICANCE

The rationale of this study originates from the desire to assist immigrants, especially Colombians, who are facing barriers while adjusting culturally and linguistically to a new life in Canada. Additionally, beyond the language and cultural adjustment, I want to learn from their experiences and provide them with strategies to help them find their own success as professionals.

The significance of this study is multifaceted. First, this study can provide a better understanding of the holistic transformative journey of immigrants in Canada in terms of their process of adjusting to the culture. Thus, health and community organizations can learn and provide programs to support immigrants to aid their personal growth, as well as their ICC. Second, in language improvement, the study can supply a detailed understanding of the adult learners' background and their strategies to acquire ICC since the literature focuses more on youth (Byram, 2021). Third, in the business world, the insight of the participants can support organizations to incorporate programs that support the transition of skilled immigrants. Lastly, the findings of this study can inform adult education programs in sectors to assist professional Colombian immigrants and other skilled immigrants in developing their ICC and reflecting on their learning experiences to succeed professionally.

CONCLUSIONS

Previous studies that comprised of professional Colombian immigrants in Canada did not capture participants' learning journeys, in terms of building their ICC and experiencing TL. For instance, some studies including Colombian immigrants in Canada explored only refugees who lack the target language or may not have a professional degree (Landolt & Goldring, 2015; Pozniak, 2009), others focused only on discrimination (Armony, 2014; Wilson-Forsberg, 2015), career accreditation for engineers (Friesen, 2016), and safety in the workplace (Basok & Hall, 2014). Furthermore, previous studies only included participants from eastern Canada (Crooks et al., 2011; Pozniak, 2009) or only one gender (Crooks et al., 2011). More importantly, in the last 10 years, there are no studies with the same research focus as this one, which includes professional Colombian immigrants of all genders, who speak the target language, come from various regions in Colombia, and are settled in various geographical locations in Canada as skilled workers. Thus, my research addresses these gaps.

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COMMUNITIES OF PRACTICE: A COMPLEMENTARY FRAMEWORK FOR PEER OBSERVATIONS OF TEACHING IN HIGHER EDUCATION

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Abstract

Communities of Practice (CoP) is a widely accepted theoretical concept that has been incorporated in many workplaces that are situated in industry, education, and healthcare. Due to the lack of theoretical concepts within the field of Peer Observations of Teaching (POT) research, this paper addresses educational developers and faculty by arguing that communities of practice should be considered because it aligns well with the current initiatives of improving teaching efficacy in higher education. Elements of practice such as participation, reification, community, boundaries, and constellations should be explored, and this paper will outline how they can play a role in fostering a community of practice within a peer observation of teaching context.

Keywords: Communities of practice (CoP), theory, faculty development, teaching and learning, higher education, peer observations of teaching (POT)

INTRODUCTION

Peer observations of teaching (POT) - also known as classroom observations - are initiatives to improve teaching and learning activities in higher education. Despite their growing popularity, the literature is divided on whether POTs should be used as summative assessments because some argue that they should only be used for professional development purposes (Aleamoni, 1982; Centra, 1979; Cohen & McKeachie, 1980). Others claim that they can be used as part of a summative assessment if the instructor who is evaluated chooses to include POTs in their portfolio (Chism & Chism, 2007). The literature also suggests that POTs should require a framework that guides faculty because it can create issues with reliability and validity of the assessment (Arreola, 2007; Centra, 1975; Chism & Chism, 2007; Hutchings, 1996; Millis, 1992; Seldin & Associates, 1999). For example, guided frameworks consist of processes, announced visits, choosing the appropriate peers, training, and frequencies of the visitations as opposed to those that lack the former activities.

COMMUNITY DEFINED

The theoretical concept of communities of practice (CoP) was developed by Wenger (1998) and he argues that it is initiated by individuals who seek to engage in collective learning with one another. He explains that there are three dimensions that connect practice and community together: mutual engagement, joint enterprise, and a shared repertoire. Mutual engagement is the act of individuals doing things together or developing relationships. In the context of POT, mutual engagement would entail both peer reviewers engaging one-another with the POT processes acting as their guide. During this activity, two or more individuals may develop

relationships with another based on trust. In terms of joint enterprise, the POT acts as a conduit because both individuals would espouse mutual accountability. Additionally, they would also be in constant negotiation with deep conversations on good teaching practices, as well as following the rhythms of all individuals who are participating in the endeavour. Finally, shared repertoire is defined by Wegner by having individuals to share stories, artifacts, concepts, historical events, and discourses. Within a POT context, a shared repertoire between both peers can only happen after time when artifacts and concepts become solidified as part of a routine of practice.

THE ROLE OF PARTICIPATION AND REIFICATION

According to Wegner (1998), practice as meaning contains participation and reification which are important factors within the CoP framework. The term “meaning” is described by Wegner as the “negotiation of meaning” which entail individuals to achieve routine over and over gain. To achieve routine, it is argued that both participation – having action - and reification – turning something abstract into an object or thing – are all important factors. Participation requires individuals to gain and maintain memberships and to interact with one another while reification can manifest itself into a process, instrument, and a form. In terms of POTs, participation – an active process – in which more than one individual engages in POTs is important because this describes both peer observations that rely on formative and summative assessments. In terms of reification, the process of the POT itself manifests into a document that outlines the routine activities such as training, pre-observation meeting, classroom observations, post-observation meeting, debrief, and the final report. The same can be applied to the classroom observation rubrics as well as course materials that are used and assessed during the POT process.

BOUNDARIES AND CONSTELLATIONS

Wegner (1998) explains that all communities of practice have boundaries that surround the participation and reification processes that entail one’s experience, meaning, worldview, and negotiation. However, a physical space can be a part of the reification process such as a university or a school. Specifically, products of reification can cross boundaries as well, whereas in the case of POTs, a university is not a place just for faculty; it is also a space for academic support staff and other workers. In addition, individuals can belong to multiple communities of practice. For example, in the POT context, an education faculty member may be selected to observe a part-time history faculty member who seeks to gain feedback on their teaching in a multidisciplinary classroom observation. That faculty member could also belong to the university’s scholarship of teaching and learning committee and can also chair or involve themselves with other initiatives.

According to Wegner (1998), there are two types of connections: boundary objects and brokering. Boundary objects are things that connect multiple CoP and are reified items such as forms, terminology, and artifacts. Brokering connections on the other hand, can provide new insights from CoP to another. In the case of POTs, the boundary objects could be the documents that guide the processes of the observation or the classroom observation rubric that is used by both observer and the instructor. In terms of brokers, an instructor who may have come from another university who has already participated in a POT could bring important insight to another institution with regards to teaching practices.

Wegner (1998) defines constellations as objects that can be seen as configurations. These constellations are formed by CoPs that only relate to one another by having similar historical roots, sharing a belonging to an institution, sharing of artifacts or objects, having common members, and competing for the same resources. In terms of POTs, the institution itself contains constellations of various CoPs because they may share common members who sit on various committees for across the institution therefore, transmitting ideas between them.

CONCLUSION

This paper discussed an array of topics stemming from Wegner's (1998) perspective of what practice is and how participation and reification are important characterizations that highlight active processes and creating things from abstract language. Additionally, the concepts of boundaries and constellations are important for educational developers and faculty because they should consider these concepts in POT frameworks because they provide a visual landscape of what a CoP could be when implemented in various professional development activities. Despite that CoP lends well as a theoretical framework, Wegner does not discuss the impact of power relations which could have been beneficial to the context of POT. This is important as some higher education institutions have mandated POTs as part of initiatives that aim to improve teaching and learning but have been met with immense suspicion due to a sense that administrators set to establish modes of surveillance of faculty.

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POSTERS

BEING BELIEVED: EPISTEMIC (IN) JUSTICE AND THE HEALING JOURNEY OF INDIAN RESIDENTIAL SCHOOL SURVIVORS

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Abstract

The focus of my study will be on the healing journeys of two Indian Residential School (IRS) Survivors who have gone through an out-of-court settlement process known as the Independent Assessment Process (IAP). The IAP model resolved claims of serious sexual and physical abuse allegations reported by IRS Survivors and is one of five components of the Indian Residential School Settlement Agreement. Researchers recognized that IRS Survivors who participated in the IAP were required to recount personal narratives about their experiences at IRS, and that 'being believed' was one part of their healing journey. I would like to learn if Survivors felt it was a therapeutic experience for their healing journey and recovery if their stories of abuse were believed. Collecting life history research uses oral history and honours its participants because this qualitative methodology opens a window into an individual's life, exemplifying culture and society from a unique historical point.

THE LIFELONG LEARNING EXPERIENCES OF INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS IN THE PROCESS OF SETTLEMENT AND INTEGRATION IN HALIFAX, NOVA SCOTIA

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Abstract

As Canadian immigration policy has given international students the comparative advantages to obtaining permanent resident status in the last decade, many international students enroll in higher education institutions as a means of acquiring permanent resident status in Canada. This poster will present the findings of a qualitative case study involving ten adult immigrants from East Asian countries who have undertaken a study-migration pathway within the context of the Nova Scotia Community College. I share the findings within the broad scope of study-to-work transitions, quality of life, and sociocultural identity.

BECOMING BLACK: PERCEPTIONS OF AFRICAN INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS AT MSVU ON THE ROLE OF PRAGMATIC COMPETENCE AND INTERCULTURAL FRIENDSHIPS IN ACCULTURATION

Ajoke Laseinde

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Abstract

Learning to adapt to a totally different culture and establish meaningful relationships is challenging for anyone. More so for African international students in Canada who must navigate a new cultural and academic context characterized by limited research to inform efforts to improve their educational experiences and outcomes. It is like being visible yet unheard. Adopting a qualitative method of inquiry with a theoretical framework that includes Africentricity, language socialization, intercultural pragmatics, and critical race theory this study examined the acculturation experiences of 5 African international students at MSVU. From a communication standpoint, it answers questions such as how their understanding of host culture sociocultural norms and their friendships with Canadians mediate their adjustment experiences. Through this poster presentation, I will present on the complexity of African international students' acculturation experiences. Further, drawing on emergent narratives from participants' data I will explore the intersection between African international students' racialized identities and the acculturation experiences of African international students.