

Editorial Introduction

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In this second issue of *Cultural and Pedagogical Inquiry*, the notions of effectively generalizing most educational contexts and relationships into the realms of cultural and learning relationships that permeate social life continue. To be sure, education is an expansive enterprise that actually affects and is affected by the historical, social and governance contexts where people live in. Hence, the enduring connections between the cultural and the pedagogical in more educational instances than one might think. In many instances in the histories of the development of organized pedagogical platforms, the notions as well as the practices of social exclusion were never situational anomalies. Indeed, engaging even a cursory glance at the earliest recorded platforms of non-family based pedagogy accords us a pragmatic understanding of how cultural categories and undoubtedly what came to be known as cultural capitals in the recent study of education and social reproduction were permissively ingrained in the learning existences of the privileged vis-à-vis the marginalized.

It is on this basis that the journal aims to elevate the critically transmittable triangle that should inform the dynamic and, many times, problematically divergent interactions between learning possibilities, the cultural locations of those possibilities and the ways they are conveyed to those who could use them for inclusive social well being. Indeed, the social well-being point will remain a very important analytical conjecture for us. With the current developmentally unjust life arrangements, there is the generalized perception that formal education enhances one's capacity to constructively live in their voluntarily or involuntarily constructed milieus of residence. From the perspective of this journal and its editors, the urgent response should be, ... but is the thing culturally and pedagogically relevant? Ditto for many related areas where the organizational line of life itself fairly follows thickly power-informed contours that could place billions of people in the non-viability categories of pragmatic educational and developmental sensibilities. No, this is not filling the current canvass with what the perennially privileged occasionally but unintelligently label 'the impractical desirables of those who are foolishly still complaining (*mirabile dictu*) about the legacy of colonized cultures and pedagogies.' Well, *ipso facto*, they do not have a point, and the story is not actually about the past per se, it is extensively *mid dhacaysa' waqtiga hadda' ah (au courant)*.

In many parts of the world, the usurped life realities that have been so deformed that they become techno-socially dysfunctional (with a 'k' as in Robin Kelley's *Yo mama's dysfunctional* – meaning 'educational cultures and pedagogies failing marginalized youth, and then wilfully blaming their struggling parents who were wilfully marginalized by the political and economic

systems that established the *really disfunktional schools* in the first place') any forward-looking prospects for the hundreds of millions that theoretically depend upon them for some livelihood ameliorative outcomes. It is with these facts that the search for the praxical insertion of workable cultural and pedagogical projects into learning systems becomes paramount. Needless to add that schemes of marginalization via contemporary learning contexts are not always international, historically isolated or monopolized by any racial, ethnic or religious groups. Apparently, what was learned from the hegemonic powers of the past 500 years has been mastered by many others who have been previously, quite interestingly, themselves marginalized by the system.

So the issues of problematizing the space of the cultural and the pedagogical in learning programs, and critically relocating them within those programs is as important as ever. And as will be discussed in the following pages by the authors in this issue, the issues are sometimes gender based, basic human rights located or identity-wise, mis-analyzed and exclusionist. It is with these generalizable pointers therefore that the three articles deal with learning issues that are clearly related to the cultural and pedagogical intersections of education and social development, which, as we alluded to above, remain the centre of this small publishing enterprise. Undoubtedly all education is human rights and citizenship education, and how that education is nationally or internationally located, and how it is operationalized have direct cultural and pedagogical meanings that would either render it useful or ineffective to address the needs of the concerned.

It via that timely reality that in the first article, 'Marriage-based Migration and Human Rights Education: Where Does Canada Stand?', Noorfarah Merali discusses the case of immigration for marriage as one of the most prevalent forms of population movement from developing to developed nations, especially as the situation applies to lives of women. She relates this to the case of Canada, where, as an industrialized nation with an international reputation for embracing diversity and pluralism, this northern country is a place where many individuals from the developing aspire to establish their family lives. Merali notes how approximately 30 percent of newcomers arriving in Canada annually are family members sponsored by Canadian citizens or permanent residents, with the majority of them being spouses from abroad. Since the foreign countries from which female marriage migrants have arrived often have different systems of governance and human rights records, the responsibility has been placed on the federal government to educate newcomers, expectedly, or more so, hopefully with the right cultural and pedagogical practices and methodologies about their rights as migrants and their basic human rights. But as Canada's family sponsorship policy holds male sponsors of immigrant brides directly responsible for facilitating women's integration and upholding their rights, the government has an equal obligation to educate sponsors about each party's rights in the sponsorship relationship. It is on the basis of these direct educational and human rights issues that are not also empty of historical issues which define First World/developing world dichotomies that Merali describes and analytically conveys the method as well as the results of a content analysis of government issued information for sponsors and sponsored persons and its human rights coverage. The article also outlines implications for rights-based education targeting both newcomers and their hosts/sponsors in marriage-based immigration cases.

In the second article, ‘The More Things Change, The More They Stay the Same: The Challenge of Identity for Native Students in Canada’, Tracy Friedel analyzes how for nearly four decades, the institutional response to fulfilling the goals of Indigenous cultural revitalization, and addressing the education gap between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal learners, has relied heavily on a theory of cultural discontinuity. While the enacting of Indigenous culture in educational realms is promoted as a solution to uneven outcomes, and as socially just in general, notes Friedel, in-depth examinations of the effects of this emphasis tend to be sparse. It is in response to these that the author elucidates select analysis of the case, and in the process offers a representation of a more or less typical group of urban Native youth. In this specific case, the focus is on a group desirous of belonging in an Indigenous sense and highly contemplative about what that has meant for them on an everyday basis. The analysis Friedel offers here seeks further consideration of existing solutions in the complicated, complex terrain that is Indigenous education. She says that rather than proceed along a trajectory whereby Indigenous students are understood as ‘the problem’, resulting in the application of a highly problematic focus on culture, what is needed at this time is a serious examination of the troublesome realities of cultural fundamentalism and authenticity in Indigenous education, and the manner in which these serve to cover over critical matters concerning race and power.

In the third article, “‘There is no home for me in this world’: States of statelessness and the need to deterritorialize human rights’, Carolina Cambre notes how there are millions of people in the world today who ‘reside’ in no place. Technically, though, no place simply means a non-existent place, which by extension annuls the existence of these people. According to her, many of these are from areas where they not recognized as citizens, and from where they have been uprooted because of war and related upheavals. It is because of these realities that people in this category have no other choice but to seek other places to live. As she says, it is when the doors are shut and they are not accepted in the new places that they become denationalized and trapped in ‘no-man’s land’. It is based on these that Cambre argue that this widespread problem exists due to lack of basic citizenship and human rights possibilities. She adds that the problem is also attached to specific understandings of sovereignty and human rights where, in the case of a conflict, for example, whatever the nation-state wants almost always takes precedence over the fundamental rights of the individual and/or the group. Indeed, this problematic reality is discursively (as well as pragmatically) located within the human rights, and related governance debates, which always display some form of conceptual and practical disconnect between the nation-state’s right to refuse entry, and an individual’s right for asylum.

Together, the three articles reflect upon and critically analyze, not only the locations of basic educational and human rights issues, but as well, the just ways these should be done, which for us is centrally related, not only to the primordial and evolving locations of learning and livelihood well-being, but as well, to the diverse ways these should be operationalized, so they

selectively fit the time-and-space exigencies of the immediate existentialities that human have to ascertain and achieve. Indeed, more often than many of us might believe, the physical presence of educational possibilities, many times camouflages the inherent cultural and pedagogical weaknesses that render their outcomes non-viable for the enunciated purposes of the overall enterprise. It is there, imperative, we submit, to study and couple all educational possibilities with a critical perspective that weighs the conceptual, socio-cultural and practical strengths of, again, those possibilities. Beyond the three articles, this issue also has comprehensive reviews of two books: M. Schueller's *Locating Race: Global Sites of Post-Colonial Citizenship* (2009), reviewed by Gada Mahrouse; and P. Dossa's *Racialized Bodies, Disabling Worlds: Storied Lives of Immigrant Muslim Women* (2009), reviewed by Aziz Choudry.

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