Effects of online participation, ICT use, and online interaction quality on adult learners’ social connectedness
Diep, Anh Nguyet; Cocquyt, Céline; Zhu, Chang; Vanwing, Tom; De Greef, Maurice

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2016 Triennial Conference European Society for Research on the Education of Adults (ESREA)

Imagining Diverse Futures for Adult Education: Questions of Power and Resources of Creativity

BOOK OF ABSTRACTS

8-11th September 2016
Pre Conference PhD Day 7th September 2016

Maynooth University, Maynooth, Co Kildare
Imagining diverse futures for adult education: questions of power and resources of creativity

WELCOME

In the era of lifelong learning adult education has acquired a new prominence. Across the world the amount of time adults spend in education has steadily increased and new policy imperatives – often linked to notions such as the ‘knowledge economy’ – has made adult education and adult learning major topics of research.

Within the body of research which has emerged from the dynamic and diverse field of modern adult education – in vocational, further, community, continuing and higher education as well as in civil society – power has always been a major concern. In particular there is a longstanding interest in the relationship between education and progressive social change. In a period of crisis characterised by deepening inequalities, a rise in racism and xenophobia, and in which we face grave ecological threats these questions of power and change have acquired a new urgency and relevance. Contributions on power will investigate a range of other questions related to power. Including but not limited to: how does power work in and through adult education? What is shaping and driving policy and what impact can adult education hope to have on socio-cultural, economic and political inequalities? How have shifts in economics, technology, work, migration and culture reconfigured adult education and learning? How is the ‘necessity’ to learn through the lifecourse affecting how students and educators think about education and how has the new language of standards and outcomes, which has become ubiquitous, reshaped conceptions of learning? And how can we, in the light of these changes, effectively research and theorise the complex, often ambivalent and sometimes fraught nature of student and practitioner experience in contemporary education?

Discussions and analyses of power can lead to a sense of private powerlessness in the face of seemingly intractable public issues. Resources of hope, however, reside in our capacities for reflexivity, imagination and creativity; capacities which allow us to question and trouble the givens of public discourses that limit our thinking, feeling and acting. Contributions on creativity in adult education and learning include papers which explore the link between adult learning and creative forms of political agency and the various definitions, sources, and uses of creativity and how this operates on different scales. How is, and can, creativity be used in classrooms, institutions and research? How can creativity – in language, practices and relationships – in formal and informal settings enhance adult learning? What histories and intellectual legacies can be drawn upon to feed a sense of creativity? Where are the new paradigms of practice and inquiry in adult education that combines the critical and the creative and challenge epistemologies and psychologies that erase the endless complexity and intrigue of subjectivities? In particular the conference wishes to foster conversations which explore how arts and narrative-based methodologies and new media are being used in adult education research and practice.
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Innovative Program Development in Swedish Folk High Schools

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Harlin, Eva-Marie
Hallqvist, Anders
Linköping University, Sweden

This paper concerns innovative processes in folk high schools. Specifically it concerns how a new program that can be seen as innovative in folk high schools, is emerging and is being established as a legitimate folk high school program. A folk high school in Sweden is a specific form of education, open for all adults older than 18 years old. Each folk high school is unique and self managed. They have their own admission and assessment system. They offer a wide range of courses and programs of different levels, with both short courses and long programs. The long programs are available as both general and specific ones. In the general programs, a folk high school offers students opportunity to complete primary and secondary education, while special programs are offered in specialized areas, including artistic subjects such as literature, art and music. Folk high schools also arrange some vocational programs to become for example journalists, drama teachers, youth leaders and cantors. Folk high school courses can provide access to further studies such as university, college and vocational college.

The folk highs schools have no national curriculum but instead four aims are formulated: The objectives set up by the national parliament to control the public funding are formulated in general terms, why schools can operate with large degrees of freedom and independence.

- strengthen and develop democracy,
- make it possible for people to influence their life situation and create participative involvement in societal development,
- bridge educational gaps and raise the level of education and cultural awareness in society,
- broaden the interest for and increase participation in cultural life.(Prop.2013/14:172, p. 26)
Based on these goals, folk high schools formulate curricula locally. This makes possible for individual schools to act innovatively and reform the programs offered as the environment changes. Local, regional and national needs may influence the design and content of the programs. New target groups can be identified and recruited.

The folk high schools encourage particular educational ideas characterized by democratic ideals and empowerment and interpretations of Bildung. Research has pointed out that folk high schools have been attractive alternative for those adults who have not completed their education because of their specific pedagogy and methods (Andersson, Larson & Wärvik, 2000; Maliszewski, 2003, Larsson 2013, see also Folkbildningsrådet 2016, Prop.2013/14:172). Factors such as that the folk high school programs are more individually tailored, that it focuses on individual’s need, experience and development, that it offers creative and socially supporting environment and opportunities to work together, and that the learning environment is characterized by informal and democratic relationship between teachers and students are identified as reasons why this particular school forms can be complementary educational institution for the ordinary school system.

From a historical perspective there are many examples of folk high school programs, when they proved sustainable, have been taken over by the public schools. In this sense, folk high schools have served as a kind of laboratory for the development of new educational programs. Larsson (2013) shows how the folk high schools have been able to identify the society’s needs of "new" programs throughout history. It has been about identifying new target group of participants and meeting their specific educational needs through new programs such as programs for workers, women, people with different types of disabilities and immigrants. The folk high schools have also been able to offer courses and programs with new kind of contents, such as aesthetic programs and various types of vocational training. They are also shown to draws upon new pedagogical approaches and methods. According to Larsson (2005; 2013), change is so characteristic to folk high schools that it may be considered as part of its identity. This matter of fact suggests there is a great variety among Swedish folk highs schools. This is even more evident if we consider the existing variety among owners, stemming from conservative to radical, and with a considerable diversity when it comes to their respective philosophical and religious preferences. But even so, those schools show a great unity and uphold a strong identity as folk high schools and as providers of bildung (popular education). The diversity and the tendency to continuous renewal, does not seem to counteract this unity. (Paldanian 2007)

Below we examine processes of change in Swedish folk highs schools, suggesting that those changes may be understood in terms of translation (and materialization): as the shared idea of folk high school are translated and materialized in to the local situation, both continuity and change are accomplished. The aim, thus, is to describe and understand how new programs that can be seen as innovative in folk high schools, is emerging and is being established as legitimated ones.
Promoting resilient leadership via peer-group mentoring – diverse positions under negotiation

Merja Alanko-Turunen
Heikki Pasanen,
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In this paper we ask what kind of an approach to leadership can provide stability and resilience for a leader. Furthermore, how does one manage to adopt such an approach to leadership? We examine approaches to leadership and how they emerge in the context of new and precarious work. The empirical part consists of material provided by newly appointed managers involved in an in-service training programme on peer-group mentoring. The training took place during organisational change at a vocational education institution where novice managers were negotiating their new positions.

Based on the data analysed and constructed via the critical practice of close reading, we identified two main approaches to everyday leadership. These approaches differ from each other with respect to stability and resilience. The first one is based on traditional practices, and the other on trust. We named them top–down and bottom–up approaches. Each manager has to develop her own role or identity and choose her main approach to leadership. Simultaneously, she also has to resolve the psycho-social debt relationship within the power structure of the organisation and community.

Our main argument is that peer-group mentoring is an appropriate medium for assisting in the development of this approach. We offer this contribution as a new theoretical approach to the discussion of leadership, especially when the emphasis is on the interpretation of leadership constructed as a debt relationship.

Time, power and the emancipatory aim of adult education

Michel Alhadeff-Jones
Teachers College, Columbia University
Sunkhronos Institute (Switzerland)

Nowadays, tensions associated with the experience of time (e.g., stress, burnout, lack of work-family balance, monotonous or compulsive repetitive behaviors) express new forms of ‘temporal constraints’ that reveal power dynamics and conflicts of interest. In such a context, what does it mean to be emancipated and what does a process of emancipation involve? In order to address such questions, the aim of this paper is to frame how emancipation can be theorized, from a temporal and rhythmic perspective, and identify the issues that such an attempt may raise from an epistemological and educational point of
view as well. At the core, it is assumed that a process of emancipation should be conceived as a temporal phenomenon, composed through specific rhythms, and that it must be contextualized in relation to specific forms of temporal alienation.

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**Between continuity and discontinuity: Theorizing the rhythms of empowerment**

Michel Alhadeff-Jones
Teachers College, Columbia University
Institut Sunkhronos (Switzerland)

When life is experienced as going too fast or being too discontinuous, it raises a feeling of instability and uncertainty. Education constitutes a source of discontinuity and a resource to negotiate a sense of continuity. This paper claims that in order to embrace such a temporal complexity, it is relevant to conceive education as a rhythmic phenomenon. In order to ground this reflection, Bergson and Bachelard’s philosophies of time are first introduced. The second section discusses how continuity and discontinuity appear at the core of training practices developed around life history and biographical approaches. To conceive the dialogical relationship between continuity and discontinuity, the experiences of life transition and social insertion are then interpreted through Lefebvre’s theory of moment. The aim of this paper is finally to promote the idea according to which lifelong learning dynamics should be envisioned through approaches focusing on their rhythmic features.

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**Analysing Power and Creativity in Adult Education Institutions in a Theory-of-Conventions-Perspective.**

Matthias Alke
Sonja Muders
German Institute for Adult Education, Leibniz Centre for Lifelong Learning

In educational science there is a broad consensus that in all sectors of education, including the sector of adult education, a “new” educational governance regime is about to rise, which implies the modification of the former central steering role of educational policy and hierarchical regulations in favour of network structures, non-hierarchical actor-constellations, more self-regulated and cooperative forms of managing and coordinating action in the educational field (Schrader 2010). As a consequence, power as an actor-specific resource (Giddens 1984) takes a new shape. Many scholars in educational science assume a general shift of power from the level of policy making and administration to the institutional level, i.e. educational managers and professional staff in adult education institutions. This assumption is paired with the expectation of boosting creativity, i.e. the capacity for innovation. However, there is still a lack of evidence regarding the question of how the new educational governance regime affects the institutional level and,
consequently, educational management and professional work in adult education institutions.

The presentation highlights a current research project which deals with the question. The project is based on a qualitative pilot study in the field of German public adult centres (Volkshochschulen). The data source comprises 11 guided interviews with managers and professional staff. Furthermore the project refers to the “Theory of Conventions”, which has been developed in French pragmatic Sociology (Diaz-Bone & Thévenot 2010) as theoretical background for analysis. Conventions are defined as institutionally embedded logics and principles of acting, adapted and at the same time further developed by individual or collective actors. The project aims at analysing typical and possibly surprising conventions of acting adapted by educational managers and professional staff in adult education institutions while reacting on the implications of the new educational governance regime. In this sense the project exposes conventions as relevant “mediators” in the relationship between power and creativity. The presentation will draw on some empirical results which give evidence to this. The presentation closes with the discussion of the “Theory of Conventions” as a useful theoretical approach to analysing the relationship between power and creativity in adult education institutions.

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**Multiracial identity against Sweden’s white racial frame?**

Daphne Arbouz

Linköping University, Sweden

Social borders demarcating those who are considered part of the nation and it’s Others are lines enacted, drawn and contested in different ways. They are nation-building processes in constant change. Depending on the subject speaking about Sweden, immigration, belongingness or not, this constitutes the frame for a so-called Swedish self-identity as such. The category “mixed” is used here as a figure of thought or mental representation in order to bring forth a different series of distinctions seeking to articulate social identities beyond the now existing ethno-racial division of swedes (white) and immigrants (non-white), and majority vs. minority. The article draws on 18 in-depth interviews with young adults of mixed parentage and uses an analytical framework that addressed nations as representations of communities (Anderson, 1983), and bodies as social constructions, central in the formation of various social and national identities (Garland-Thompson 2009). Inspired by the concept of ‘white hegemony’ (Hughey, 2010) and ‘racial framing’ (Feagin, 2013), an analysis is presented here about how young adults of mixed background are managing, dealing and challenging existing Swedish ethno-racial norms (Goldberg, 2015). The paper raises important issues surrounding the production of social identities and the acquisition of racial literacy (Winddance Twine, 2010) in an increased diverse Swedish society and spaces of education and work.
From 1976 UNESCO Recommendation to 2015 UNESCO Recommendation: Reframing policy-making towards sustainable political mobilization? - researching effects on Portuguese ALE agendas

Rosanna Barros
University of Algarve, Portugal

This abstract presents an ongoing exploratory study (January 2016-December 2017). The aim of this study is to provide evidence, and constitute a preliminary stage in order to build a pluri-annual, pluriescalar and intersectoral research project. It also intends to contribute to the understanding of the way global policy of ALE develops.

UNESCO is treated in literature as one of the most important supranational actor with effective contributions in the construction of ALE as a politics object with public interest. UNESCO and UIL are, for this reason, the main initial focus of the study, and constitute the departure point to analyse the Portuguese context.

Being diverse, and recent, the theoretical proposals available to consider the complexity of today’s global policy, we tend to agree with the perspectives that regard global policy in ALE researchable mainly through its material dimension. In that sense, our exploratory study adopts Milana’s (2013) theoretical model for interpretations. In that matrix the occurrences of the structure of the global policy of ALE are caught through four main relational categories (qualities, scales, agents and environments). These relational categories exercise power to govern ALE through policies that intercept places and themes, material as well as ideological, and interact with several agents, concepts and technologies of governance.

With this perspective we started a systematic enquiry of an analytic nature to understand what kind of material changes took place at national level as a result of the normative action of UNESCO, undertaken to the Recommendation on the Development of Adult Education, of 1976, and of its revision, the Recommendation on Adult Learning and Education, of 2015. To know until where its influence is patent in the Portuguese policies of ALE (characterized to be intermittent in terms of material scope and hybrids in ideological terms) is our main question. We are interested in research, particularly, how it is proceeding in the new (left) recently appointed government, (January 2016), as it was announced (in the Government program) a new investment in ALE (p. 112-114). There is a new compromise of revitalising this sector, which has been left behind, suspended and almost extinguished, by the previous (right) government.

We are also interested in researching how the national reports for monitoring (a request by the new specific mechanisms of governance of UNESCO) have been made. This is important to understand the national impacts of the Belém Framework for Action as well as the Dakar Framework for Action. We want to address the extent to which, in Portugal, these mechanisms are, or are not, structuring material changes in Portuguese ALE policies. We also need to know, if they are politically mobilising other actors, mainly civil society associations, enabling them, or not, to lobby, especially in this new political cycle and its
preparatory phase of an already announced new program intended to structure the ALE political agenda for the next decade.

To study these occurrences (during 2016-2017) of real structure of ALE’s global policy we have chosen a qualitative research design, with methods and techniques that complement each other and are been used to collect and analyse data. In the first phase of the study in progress, a documental analysis of political archives has been made. This is composed by i) UNESCO’s and UIL’s publications and political documents and by ii) national political official documents. In the second phase of this study, documental analysis will be complemented by discourse analysis of materials coming from some associations of civil society1 recently created to pressure government in favour of the interests of an agenda for ALE, that come from the base. Interviews will be made to strategic actors and participative observation will put in place in different environments. In the third phase evidences will be mapped, based on results.

The implications of evidence resulting from this preliminary study will be considered in order to outline and structure a pluri-annual (2018-2020), pluri-scalar (supranational, national, regional, local) and intersectoral (collaboration and participation of various actors) research project, run in several national contexts in Europe, aiming at a contribution to better understand the complex developments of today’s global policy in ALE and evaluate the sustainability of political mobilization from UNESCO and UIL in some national contexts throughout Europe.

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**Professional identity and the Irish Further Education and Training practitioner**

Sarah Bates Evoy,

Waterford Institute of Technology, Ireland

This paper introduces the reader to the recently established (2013) Irish Further Education and Training (FET) sector, before presenting an overview of a 4 stage PhD research project which aims to examine the professional identities formed by FET practitioners in the Irish FET sector and the impact of recent significant sectoral changes upon those identities. The paper then focuses on the first 2 stages of the research which involved a consultation event using Open Space Technology principles with FET practitioners around the theme ‘Who are Further Education and Training practitioners?’ and a further scoping exercise via an on-line survey.

Selected findings which relate to issues around job security and satisfaction, terminology, professional qualifications and registration of FET practitioners will be discussed. The paper

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1As for example: i) ANPEFA - Associação Nacional de Profissionais de Educação e Formação de Adultos, created in 2011; ii) APEFA - Associação Portuguesa de Educação e Formação de Adultos – Aprendências, created in 2011; and iii) APCEP, Associação Portuguesa para a Cultura e Educação Permanente, created in 1982 and revitalized in 2015; etc.
highlights the confusion which exists within the Irish FET sector and the importance of listening to FET practitioners themselves in the development of the sector.

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**What deciding means**

*Biographical bifurcations and schemes of intentionality*

Jean-Michel Baudouin

Aurélie Dirickx

University of Geneva, Switzerland

This paper is situated in the field of biographical research in adult education (Baudouin, 2010; 2012) and focuses on voluntary vocational retraining processes (Négroni, 2007). In a broader sense, it attempts to investigate the phenomenon of the destandardisation of life courses in contemporary societies. These life courses may be marked by greater unpredictability and by biographical bifurcations, from which it is difficult to distinguish what is intrinsic to socioeconomic over-determinations and/or to the human agency of individuals (Bessin, 2009).

In this research framework, voluntary vocational retraining appears to be a rich object of analysis: it seems to characterize a type of contemporary biographical transformation, it addresses the field of adult training, which can be a prerequisite for its achievement, and it questions what might constitute its ‘voluntary’ dimension. The empirical data is made up of biographical interviews collected in the context of a doctoral research in progress (Dirickx, 2015). Interviews have been conducted with adults who made a significant career change in the Swiss context and who define it as the result of a voluntary decision.

In this paper, we discuss the relationship between bifurcation and intentionality. The biographical interviews we collected make it possible to observe what is – or seems to be - the result of a personal initiative. This leads us to the core of a theory of action specifically relating to the narrative process (Ricoeur, 1984). This approach helps to identify motives and intentions formulated by the person at a particular moment of his/her history. Intentionality is the essential correlation linked to initiatives, which are necessarily located in specific contexts of action (Zimmermann, 2011) that biographical interviews can shed light upon.

We therefore focus our analysis on what deciding means, addressing the issue of intentionality with the support of empirical data collected from two interviews accounting for substantial vocational retraining. It seeks to define a broader problematic of schemes of intentionality and to better describe the multiple patterns that express the desire of change. It also aims at extracting some forms of legitimization from the autobiographical narratives. These figures thus reconstitute ways and biographical moments within which intentions are built.
Two sets of indicators are used for determining the schemes: (i) the differential of temporalities intervening in decision-making processes, which can cover very long periods (this is the case of ‘countered vocations’ for example) or much shorter ones (unexpected events or opportunities arising in a context of growing professional frustration); (ii) some various contextual and agential constraints influencing the general biographical framework of decision-making (relational environment, financial needs, access to training, labor market, etc.).

A 'social' approach to vocational education: The influence on the educator role of technology's power

Hazel Beadle
Institute of Education, University of Chichester, United Kingdom

Drawing on data collected in a large public funded medical practice based in the United Kingdom, this paper identifies technology’s power to have the potential to reveal itself through a number of implications for the workplace educator role. These are implications which are consequent to the organisation expressing its intention to make use of social media. This paper identifies the participant learners’ perspectives with regard to how they were developing competence; including the impact of the process of exploration, informal support and a problem solving dynamic. Also highlighted is the influence resulting from a desire to maintain a professional persona. The data reveals a need to creatively reconceptualise the workplace educator’s role; embracing both change in that role, a change in the roles of the learners they support and including the need to respond to the progressive dynamic offered by technology. This paper concludes by identifying that effective delivery of the workplace educator role in the context of the increasing use of social media appears to hinge upon the presence of a new understanding of the relationship between technology and the users with whom those educators work; a relationship which embraces the power of technology as a force to be channelled, and where that channelling encompasses the developmental dynamic.

Agency and learning in middle-aged women: Stories and sketches from the life course

Chiara Biasin,
Karen Evans
University of Padua, Italy;
UCL Institute of Education, University of London, United Kingdom

The aim of this paper is to explore the link between agency and learning in women in mid-life. According to a gender studies perspective, the paper assumes this time of life as an age
of specific transitions for women’s life course, involving changes in orientations to work, relationships, family, learning, and personal life. The theoretical framework is grounded in Narrative Learning, paying particular attention not simply to the accounts of events but to the way in which women learn from their lives and are able to exercise agency through environments. In this qualitative study we employ a sample of in-depth interviews with 50-year old women from the longitudinal study “Social Participation and Identity”, a part of the broader National Child Development Study, one of the UK’s flagship panel studies. Women were invited to tell their life stories, to discuss the turning points of their lives, and to draw a visual representation of their life trajectories. In this paper we analyse the link between agency and learning, trying to understand how these women narrate and portray their life course. We attempt to show the process of meaning-making linked to the ways of constructing, reconstructing and representing the life story, recognizing the power of the cultural and social role models. Comparing different biographies, accounts and sketches, we highlight also the link between narrative (life stories) and creativity (drawings) as strictly embedded with an awareness of women’s identity.

Inclusive workplaces - symmetries in power and equal opportunities for learning

Mary Genevieve Billington
Gunn Vedøy
Merete Jonvik
International Research Institute of Stavanger, Norway

This paper aims to identify and discuss the salient features of specific Norwegian workplaces that appear to integrate immigrant workers successfully into their organisations, thereafter to investigate symmetries in power and equal opportunities for learning in these workplaces. We visited a multiple of “best practice” workplaces in various public, private and voluntary sectors. Interviews were conducted with management, employee representatives, and groups of immigrant workers. Most prominent was the strong and consistent articulation of values. This expression indicated a common platform of shared cultures and behavioural norms specific to the workplace. It was seen as critical for the organisation that new employees are quickly introduced to and immersed into this system of values. The tensions between understanding work as entitlement or endowment, and between enculturation and acculturation both potentially inhibited learning and equality.
Rethinking social justice in adult education: Does adult education have the power to overcome existing educational hierarchies?

Pepka Boyadjieva
Petya Ilieva-Trichkova,
Institute for the Study of Societies and Knowledge, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, Bulgaria

The paper aims to show that equity is an indispensable dimension of the widening of access to adult education. Building on the understanding of social justice in adult education as a complex phenomenon, two indicators are developed: an index of inclusion in participation in adult education and an index of fairness in participation in adult education. The paper analyses social justice separately in formal and non-formal education for two social groups – people with low and with higher education. Using data from the Adult Education Survey (2007, 2011) it is shown that in most of the countries there are signs of improvement in the fairness aspect of social justice as a result of a decrease in the overrepresentation of people with higher education and in the underrepresentation of people with low education in adult education. However, the inclusion of people with low education in adult education remains considerably lower in comparison to the inclusion of people with higher education.

What’s going on? An adult students experience of online education

Cecilia Bjursell,
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The purpose of this paper is to explore the experience of being a working adult engaging in online continuing education. The autoethnographic account deals with the issues of online arenas, perception of time, and flexibility in flexible learning. A second reading of the texts focuses on motivation and structure; it is necessary to provide an overall structure while also, importantly, connecting each individual student to that structure. An issue that arises is the tension between quality and quantity in education. Offering courses online is often regarded as a cost-effective means of allowing large numbers of students to participate in courses. If educational quality is the goal, however, online education requires more resources and fewer students. An additional contribution is made through the polymorphic research approach: that is, the choice of autoethnography as method supplies in-depth observations of real life experiences in online learning.
Finding voice and engaging audiences: The power of arts-based community engagement

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A dynamic and vibrant pluralistic democracy involves communicative practices where the voices of all are included and considered important. Some groups and individuals, however, who are positioned on the margins (due to structural inequalities), face significant barriers to find their voices, tell their stories, and more importantly to be heard by others. In the wider field of adult education and learning, many now understand the power of art and various forms of creative expression to enable the voices of underrepresented individuals and communities to take shape and be heard. This aligns with one of the key features of liberatory education which is to enable participants and learners to find their voice and to create conditions and processes that support that process. Voice has been given most of the attention in these emancipatory processes but we argue that our responsibilities, as adult educators, also must include creating conditions for those voices and their stories to be heard by others. In this paper, we report on an exploration of particular forms of creative expression that were used with marginalized groups to tell their stories and how that genre and process of creation also contributed to conditions for listening. We explore several examples of this voice-audience dynamic taken from our recent book Working the Margins of Community-based Adult Learning: The Power of Arts-Making in Finding Voice and Creating Conditions for Seeing/Listening (2016). Our selection includes an analysis of how film festivals are powerful public pedagogic venues; a prison-based project in which inmates created and produced a puppetry show; a photography project where marginalized individuals disrupted stereotypes through the creation of images; a study of how a group of Filipino activists created and performed political fashion shows to speak truth to power; a story about how art became a vehicle for building bridges across Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities; and lastly, a popular theatre initiative that told stories about living with mental illness.
Cultural-Historical Activity Theory and Informal Learning as a key component of co-design practice in a community initiative.

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Madeleine Sclater,
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Paul Smith, Institute of Design Innovation, The Glasgow School of Art, Scotland.

This paper outlines PhD research associated with Leapfrog, a three-year-funded AHRC project, which aims to analyse the impact of co-design practices in developing ‘engagement tools’ within community development. One challenge in co-design is identifying ways to understand holistically the context. Understanding individual and collective contextual factors simultaneously requires bridging the gap between theory and practice. Cultural-Historical Activity Theory (CHAT) interconnects all the components simultaneously illuminating a holistic approach for understanding such context. The paper focuses on the distribution of power in co-design aiming to illustrate how designers balance power and reflects on the experience of applying CHAT into practice, identifying informal learning as a key component. It elucidates how ethnographic methods can provide a deeper understanding about the context. About this, it can be concluded that a greater awareness of context, understood through the lenses of CHAT, helps designers to reveal the interconnection between individual and collective factors.

New and old ways of association: The place of adult education

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Associative organizations have a long history and have been places that have suffered many transformations in the last 40 years of democratic regime in Portugal. Since the beginning of the democracy (in 1974) associations have been important educational contexts, as well as places of participation, citizenship and democracy. In this article, in order to understand this dynamics of transformation, we present two forms of associative organization: CRACS, an
association with a long history, formalized, with statutes and legal personality, and TEIA, a recent non-formal citizenship movement. We proceeded to a comparative analysis of the daily life of these two forms of association, according to several dimensions, to understand the implications of these two forms of associative organization on learning and educational processes. We conclude that: 1) it is needed to think critically about the model of organization advocated by the current Portuguese law; 2) there are many differences between those two organization models; 3) Both organizations have potential in adult learning but they also have differences that should be further studied.

'Learning Identity' and desire to participate

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This paper reviews the connection between learning in adulthood and self-identity; more specifically, it investigates transitions and transformations of the ‘learning identity’ of adult college students as they progress in their studies. The work builds on the category of learning identity as revealed in a previous grounded theory study by the author wherein the construct was positioned within a wider teleological conception of learning as desire for participation. The paper also discusses frameworks for theorizing identity, particularly in relation to the fluidity of the modern world, as provided by Erikson, Frosh, Giddens and Illeris and examines the implications for adult learning research and practice.

From the previous study learning identity may be regarded as shorthand for “how I see myself as a learner”; it includes experiences at school and educational courses; achievements such as passing a driving test or being successful at voluntary work; and learning to respond to challenges such as imminent retirement, marital problems, or coping with alcoholism. Learning Identity is also manifested in terms of the feelings expressed by informants such as regret at missed opportunities, feelings of inadequacy, frustration, comparisons, often age related, with others perceived as more competent and expressions of confidence in one’s abilities or lack thereof. Of course, experiences and feelings are never isolated from each other—experiences give rise to feelings, which in turn influence the nature of experience.

This new study (ongoing) builds on these ideas and is a partial response to a suggestion by Illeris that the target area for transformative learning should be defined by the term ‘identity’. College students were interviewed in relation to their own learning stories – this paper reports on the analysis of the first six of these interviews. The method used is grounded theory practice – a systematic set of research procedures to inductively derive theory grounded in a phenomenological interpretation of data. A characteristic of the approach is the simultaneous processes of data gathering and analysis. Individual interviews were conducted over several months and the resultant analysis thus far reveals useful insights on how learners frame their education narrative in terms of previous experience and associated feelings.
Preliminary findings reveal aspects of the on-going process of building a conception of ‘self’ in relation to the world. For adult students this is often framed in terms of the need for inclusion and participation in what are regarded as powerful activities such as professions, the digital world and business. Furthermore, this educational journey is often accompanied by a shift in perspective, from a conception of learning directed toward immediate and defined competences to a broader desire to participate; from learning regarded as a personal affair directed at enhancing the individual in action, to learning as a social practice directed at enhancing activity itself.

The findings will provide insights for educators and adult learners and will contribute to our overall understanding of learning through the life span.

**Increasing flexible provision in adult education by harnessing the potential of educational technology**

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The Higher Education sector in Ireland is expanding, and is expected to have grown by 40% between 2009 and 2029. Student demographics are also changing, with an increased level of lifelong learners; who require flexibility in education while developing and updating their skills. In addition to the challenges presented by these changes, the sector is facing increasing resourcing pressures.

In this paper it is suggested that harnessing educational technologies to deliver flexible lifelong learning programmes is key to preparing the Irish Higher Education sector for the challenges of the future.

The proposed research aims to develop a framework to guide and support practitioners in implementing educational technologies, in a pedagogically effective manner; ensuring that learners develop digital skills in addition to developing work skills. This paper outlines the proposed conceptual framework and methodology for this research.
Art and the radical imagination: Creative ecological nonformal learning at Tate Modern

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Using Illeris’ conceptualisation of museum pedagogy as a complex process of construction, deconstruction and power, I explored a six-week nonformal course at Tate Modern/Britain in London as a space of creative learning and the radical imagination. Entitled Art and Slow Violence the course aimed to use the images, representations and narratives in a variety of multi-media and photographic exhibits to engage people in dialogue and thinking about conflict, war, and environmental destruction. As a participant-researcher, I gathered data for this case study through observations, informal conversations and formal interviews with participants and the coordinator. Findings show tensions and challenges around subject knowledge, authority of knowledge, and working pedagogically with a group of a very diverse group. Yet this did not deter the potential of the informal space as a site of active engagement and discussion, or the power of the artworks to render visible, and to stimulate important questioning and debate around the ideologies behind some of the most complex and contentious, yet ‘invisible’, issues of our time. I conclude with recommendations to strength creative learning at Tate.

Exploring the relationship between characteristics of blended learning environments and adult learners’ social capital

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Tom Vanwing,
Chang Zhu

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Lifelong learning and social capital are interconnected, in the sense that social capital influences lifelong learning, which in turn affects social capital. Nowadays, lifelong learning practices are changing into innovative learning spaces. Therefore, this study examines how characteristics of blended learning environments, such as learning support and constructivist learning activities, are related to adult learners’ social capital. The results show that non-native and younger adults perceive more benefits regarding social capital. Concerning learning support, peer and transfer support are positively related to social capital, whereas instructional support negatively influences social capital. Constructivist learning activities, and especially the extent to which learners’ needs are met, enhance adult learners’ social capital. In other words, this study highlights the importance of characteristics of the blended learning environment in order to foster adult learners’ social capital.
Identity construction of non-native Swedish speaking teachers in second language and initial literacy education

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Teaching adult emergent readers in a second language setting is a demanding but relatively new practice in the Swedish for Immigrant system (SFI). The group of Low Educated Second Language and Literacy Acquisition (LESLLA) learners and teachers were, to begin with, more or less invisible and ignored in second language research and educational policy. Only latterly, the awareness on this type of education, has started to increase. Against that background, the aim of this paper is to explore LESLLA teachers’ individual biography of professional learning in regard to changes that have taken place within the school context and in the wider SFI setting. To understand the teachers’ trajectories, the theoretical concepts of community of practice and learning field are applied. Data have been collected through semi-structured interviews and analysed through a narrative approach. Some tentative results are that the LESLLA teachers’ learning are dependent on the personal relationships and other resources developed in the work team community and that relations to a wider learning field are crucial for both individual and collective development.

Vocational training of IT-professionals – coping with future demands

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The increasing digitization of all areas of life and economy leads to an increasing demand for IT-qualifications in nearly all sectors. Therefore since their implementation in 1997 the four German training occupations in the field of information technology are writing a success story. Nevertheless they are facing big challenges because of the rapid development of technology. The question rises whether the four IT-professions are still adequate concerning their contents, learning objectives, imparted competences and training organization. In March 2015 the Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy commissioned the Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training (BIBB) with the evaluation of the existing IT-training occupations. First findings suggest that although there is a common contentment among companies, trainers and apprentices, new contents should be included in the training.
Transforming ways of thinking the self and the other through new forms of narration
A crossed perspective on adult education with creative approaches

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Andrea Galimberti,
Università degli Studi di Milano-Bicocca – Italy

We aim to contribute to the European Research conference offering a crossed perspective of two researcher and actors in adult education. Our recent common work (Authors, 2016) made us explore, through a dialogue, the questions of the transformative potential of telling stories, and how they can make a difference in various adult education contexts.

Both our approaches – narrative workshops with non-traditional students and biographical portfolios with young teachers – have been conceived and implemented from an epistemological posture of learning as narration (co)construction (Bruner, 1991) and narration as path of change (Evans, 2006). What we do together is crossing our visions and experiences, which leads us to do a common work in conceiving new paths for adult education settings.

We explore and study thereby non-traditional paths and new ways of thinking research and training, specifically about the experiences of making university studies and training as a teacher.

For the Maynooth conference we wish to deepen our understanding of the empowering potential of some creative tools – such as for example the Pecha Kucha art of presentation, the method of the Photo-language or the Caviardage – in offering new perspectives to adults who make their way through a transformational process in learning. We will present some concrete implementations and offer a critical perspective on those experiences.

We believe in the possibility to offer spaces and tools for small but significant changes in ways of thinking on a individual but also on a local community level. New challenges of the actual world lead to new pressures towards the necessity to learn, as put forward in the call. We believe our crossed perspective offers us concrete ways of exploring different approaches to research and new conceptions of learning. We feel completely coherent with the call that summons “new paradigms of practice and inquiry in adult education that combines the critical and the creative”.

Contributions, considerations and controversies about community art

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In this paper we use a particular perspective on citizenship (Pols, 2004) that we've developed, based on Pols’ concept of enacting citizenship in relation to community arts. By relating this perspective to practices of community arts, we illustrate how arts can function as an important mediator for different dimensions of citizenship. In Flanders and Brussels, community arts – social artistic practices as they are called in Belgium - seem under certain conditions a promising way to enact citizenship of minorities, migrants, people experiencing exclusion, (Demos, 2014).

The paper starts with an elaboration of the used methodology. Secondly we introduce the concept of ‘enacting citizenship’. In the next part we present the Flemish context of community arts and the two specific cases, that try to realise an artistic and political platform for their participants. By highlighting certain similarities and differences between both cases, we illustrate the strengths of enacting citizenship through community arts. We conclude with some important considerations about (community) arts as a way of enacting citizenship. Furthermore we critically address the possibilities and limitations of art as a potential powerful way to address questions of inequality and social injustice.

Citizenship as practice in a Learning Community in Brussels

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This paper will discuss how citizenship is realised in a Learning Community in Brussels. This specific learning community consists of a group of people supported by the non-formal adult education organisation Citizenne (folk high school) in Brussels. This case has been studied as a part of a multi case study research concerning solidarity in diversity (DieGem: solidarity in diversity, 2015).
The LC started in 2012 through a collaboration between Citizenne and the Centre for Basic Education Brusselereer.

The LC works with those people who can no longer be admitted to courses “Dutch for non-native speakers” in Brusselereer, because they are considered “slow learners” who seem to have reached their learning limit. Because these people are still motivated and/or need opportunities to practice Dutch by speaking, this specific Learning Community was created. The LC is situated in the metropolitan and diverse context of Brussels and reaches a group of socially vulnerable people with various ethnic-cultural and socio-economic backgrounds. In this context and with this group we see how dominant conceptions of citizenship seem to fail and how questions about new perspectives on citizenship arise.

In this paper we want to focus on different aspects of citizenship, on the limitations of certain conceptions of citizenship and on how citizenship takes place within and through this learning community. Through this analyses we present a perspective in which citizenship is seen as an practice that is realised in and through everyday interactions and relationships and in which individual aspirations are connected to public and political issues (Mills, 1959). This perspective is not new and only offers a partial answer to the challenges posed in this Learning Community. Our research shows that an integrated view on citizenship is necessary that takes into account different aspects and manifestations of citizenship into account. Pols (2004) formulated the concept of ‘enacting citizenship’. Citizenship is in this perspective not seen as a practice of individuals, but as a quality of society.

To conclude this paper we will focus on the way adult educators can shape this ‘enacting citizenship’ and how adult education can use this conception of citizenship to address questions of power and inequalities.

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Effects of online participation, ICT use, and online interaction quality on adult learners’ social connectedness

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Online interaction and interactive web-based technologies usage (ICT use) have been associated with positive outcomes, academically and psychologically. In educational settings, a mechanism through which instructional design can foster social connectedness has rarely been examined. The present study investigates the relationship between learners’ online participation, ICT use, and online interaction quality regarding their social
connectedness. The interplay between these variables was also analyzed. A questionnaire was developed to collect data with adult learners in Belgium as participants. Multiple regressions and interaction analysis were conducted. The result shows that online participation, ICT use, and online interaction quality significantly predict social connectedness. For learners who have low and average levels of online participation and ICT use, the effect of online interaction quality is stronger whereas for those with high level, the effect of online interaction quality is non-significant. Thus implications for research and instructional design are discussed.

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**I'm Not Just a Commodity You Know!**  
*(Taking Back Their Power)*  
**People in Recovery Doing it For Themselves**

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Soilse (In Collaboration with European Partners)  
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This paper is based on the findings of the RECOVEU project: A participative approach to curriculum development for adults in addiction recovery across the European Union. This is an initiative that brings together partners from the United Kingdom, Cyprus, Romania, Italy and Ireland with the aim of developing access to learning resources for people in recovery from addiction. Although the role of learning in the recovery process has been recognised, there is limited evidence across Europe to inform adult learning practice with people in addiction recovery and no data which specifically identifies the barriers they experience or how to support them as adult learners. The Consortium wishes to begin to develop a coherent EU-wide approach to adult learning in the addiction community. Project outcomes support the aims of the EU Lifelong Learning Programme by improving the attractiveness and accessibility of learning opportunities available to a group of adult learners who are particularly at risk of social exclusion and marginalisation.

The Focus Group research phase of the project was carried out through quantitative and qualitative methods. Each partner in the project conducted a series of focus groups and participants were asked to complete a questionnaire in the focus groups held by each partner. The qualitative data were collected through delivering of focus groups by all the partners in the project with 2 target populations: service users and service providers.

The data collected from each focus group was summarised by each partner in the Focus Group Feedback Template and each partner then produced a Focus Group Partner Summary. Cross cultural data in the form of Focus Group Partner Summaries were then analysed using constant comparison analysis – first used in grounded theory research.
Despite a voluminous body of scholarly critique, neoliberalism, coupled with the ideological constructs of globalisation and the knowledge economy continue to exert an inordinate influence on educational aims, policies and processes in many developed and developing countries. Moreover, adult education principles such as lifelong learning, originally conceived as vehicles of liberation and emancipation (Friere, 1970) have themselves, been co-opted by neoliberalism in pursuance of its own economic and political logic (Grummel) at a time when critical pedagogy is under threat. Increasingly what we are witnessing is the commodification of education, together with the commodification of the learner as a knowledge worker (Patrick, 2013) where his/her intellect has become the most important productive resource (Peters and Reveley, 2012). This rational instrumental approach to knowledge and its value, is accompanied by the assurance that everyone, regardless of their socio-cultural positioning can compete in the global competition for high skilled jobs - if only they are the beneficiaries of the credentials, knowledge and skills to do so - thereby ensuring that the way in which economic and political power operates is not explored. However, this has not been the lived experience of the majority of recovering people across Europe who participated in this piece of research. On the contrary, it was the failure of educational programmes that precipitated the need to design a programme for those who are in recovery in the first place. While one of the key aims of the RECOVU project is to assess the impact of participation on self-efficacy and sustained participation in learning, their continuous prioritisation of recovery as pre-requisite, resulted in research participants changing the research focus. This shifted to include the contribution that these learning activities might make to sustained participation in both recovery and learning.

In prioritising ‘the self’ and beginning with their needs as human beings, they have reversed the trend to subjugate the human being to the needs of capital and the economy. On the other hand, by expanding the concept of human capital – a concept that under the influence of neoliberalism, relates skills and knowledge to economic outcomes (Falk, 2002)- and by incorporating other forms of overlapping capital including physical, social and cultural, collectively referred to as Recovery Capital (Laudet and White, 2008)- they have provided us with a way to lay the foundations for the development of a theoretical framework that can accommodate both the internal and external barriers to and resources for their participation in a programme of education for people in recovery. In doing so they have provided us with the space whereby we may begin to reclaim adult education from neoliberalism.

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**Career Adaptability of Refugees and Asylum Seekers: The Role of Social Capital**

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With much of the world humanitarian migration focus presently on Europe and the Middle East, Australia has by no means escaped this global phenomenon. For many escaping
conflict or persecution arriving in the new country means not only a safe haven but a chance to establish a new livelihood.

Using narrative inquiry, this qualitative study of twenty people from a refugee background, sought to examine what types of social capital (bridging and bonding) were sourced to aid in getting their careers back on track. The participants' interview narratives were recorded and documented exploring two key areas: Firstly, identifying the challenges and obstacles in the quest to re-establish their livelihoods; as well as what bridging and bonding capital did they draw upon to navigate the education and employment structures?

The stories in this study have illuminated the way in which we must reconsider career guidance for people from a refugee background. Understanding the plight of the refugee and not assuming people from a refugee background don’t have careers or because the local language is not adequate, we should deny them the right to funded training or education, are issues all policy makers, organisations and educational institutions must address.

Embracing social inclusion? The asylum seeker experience of applying for admission to tertiary education in Australia.

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Susan Webb,
Jane Wilkinson,
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In 2015, UNHCR estimated that more than 60 million people were on the move as refugees or ‘persons of concern’. Many assume the new country will provide not only safety, but future opportunities for the re-establishment of a livelihood, including employment and education. Yet a significant body of literature over the past ten years has acknowledged the multiple aspects of refugees and asylum seeker settlement difficulties in re-establishing their lives (Castles, Hass & Miller, 2014).

This paper draws on a qualitative narrative-based case study exploring the opportunities, blockages and dilemmas asylum seekers on temporary bridging visas [TBVs] are encountering accessing Australian higher education. The paper will discuss three participants whose experiences illustrate the clash between the precariousness of the refugees and asylum seekers trajectories and the stability of the institutional practices they encounter. Employing critical race theory, the paper builds on Guo’s (2015a) arguments from Canada that skills have ‘colour’. Developing this framework in the context of access to universities in Australia, the paper argues that in applying ‘neutral’ institutional policies and practices to assess applications ensures that the education, skills and experience of refugees and asylum seekers are not adequately considered.
Reflections on Deliberative Walks – A Participatory Method and Learning Process

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This paper focuses on a model called Deliberative Walk, which was first proposed by Ehrström & Raisio (2014), and builds on the deliberative models Citizens’ Jury and Development Walk. Using data from two case studies, Raisio & Ehrström (forthcoming), explore the potential of joining these two participatory models, one talk-centric and the other more observation-oriented. The idea to combine the models is influenced by outdoor pedagogy and place-based learning. Thus, Deliberative Walks is introduced as a vehicle to learn in a more complete matter. Early results are promising as interviews show that participants in both cases experienced the observation phase as valuable for the learning process. Ideally Deliberative Walk could make learning processes more equal, as individuals who have challenges in learning by listening experts or reading information packages, could learn by seeing, observing and feeling. Deliberative Walks is also understood as a reciprocal learning process for citizens and decision-makers.

“Leaning Out”—Critical Feminist Analysis of Learning with Women

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This paper provides a theoretical and nuanced examination of the intersection of women, learning and adult education, from a critical feminist stance. The author analyzes critical feminist and adult education research and its relationship to more popular publications such as Lean In (Sandberg, 2013) that appear to present an ahistorical, unnuanced, and ultimately regressive feminist narrative. The purpose is to create space for a feminism of difference, inclusion and learning, not only for higher education but for the global policy community as well. The author asks readers to think about how feminist theorizing (and the absence thereof) can contribute greatly to our understanding of women’s learning and activism within the larger international development sphere and the role of public policy. In focusing on women as a distinct political category and group, the author provides a deeper examination of Eyben’s (2014) tension of “working within existing paradigms or changing them” (p. 160), in order to present possibilities for bona fide inclusion and participation of women in global learning and action.
Adult education as a result of power relations? The concept of „Adult Basic Education“ between universal and particular interests at education policy level

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In 2015, the German government announced a national decade of adult literacy and adult basic education. Although adult basic education has played a crucial role at international and national level, there is still no clear agreement on its concept: What knowledge, skills and competencies could be considered at least suitable – and, in the end, worth funding and promoting? According to New Literacy Studies, literacy is considered a social practice that is deeply involved in social context and used in order to enforce and to steady social hierarchies (Barton/Hamilton 2000; Street 2003). This contribution is going to illustrate the entanglement of adult education, interests and power relations by using the example of adult basic education in education policy. Based on interviews with policy makers the influence of ambivalent interests on definitions of adult basic education will be discussed.

German Adult Literacy Survey 2017/18: Concept and Methodological Approach

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The first German LEO-Survey (Grotlüschen/Riekmann 2012) provided data on adult reading and writing skills with a differentiated focus on the lowest literacy level. Due to the result that 14 percent of the German working-age population is affected by functional illiteracy, adult basic education has been put high on the agenda of education policy in Germany since then. In this contribution we will discuss the concept and methodological design of the second, upcoming LEO-Survey 2017/18 which won’t be a mere replication of the first one. First of all, the data won’t be limited to reading and writing skills but will consider a broader concept of adult basic education. Secondly, there will be a stronger emphasis on skill use in everyday life and work. Therefore, the assessment of literacy skills is complemented by an enlarged background questionnaire that involves questions about the demographic background, the use of basic skills as well as about participation and social inclusion. The aim is to provide a differentiated view on participation and social exclusion and their correlation to different skills and contexts of adult basic education.
The Role of Vocational Training Centres in the Local Development Process. The Case of the Urban District of Samba, Luanda, Angola

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The purpose of this research was to understand contribution of the VET centres to development of the local economy in the district of Samba, Luanda, Angola. More specifically, the study aimed to understand: (1) How the training strategies of the Samba’s VET centres contribute for satisfying the occupational skills needs of the local community; and (2) To what extent the occupational output profiles of the Samba’s VET centres contribute to development of the local economy.

Results indicate that VET offers constitute a lever for development of local economy due to relevant occupational skills acquired by individuals. In summary, the following conclusions could be drawn:

1 - Training offerings of the Samba’s VET centres are relevant to satisfy needs of occupational skills for development of the territory.
2 - The Samba’s VET centres make individuals able to identify conducive working environments for using new knowledge and skills enabling them to gain autonomy and new attitudes at work.

The Challenges of Researching Inclusive Learning in Higher Education across Europe: HE4u2 project

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Maynooth University, Ireland

The integration of migrants and ethnic minorities in education system is one of the key issues facing Europe as we struggle globally with unprecedented challenges of civic unrest, war, hunger, environmental and other changes. The process of crossing borders calls on all societies to critically examine our own life position and how global structures lead to inequitable balances of societal and life chances.

This paper proposes to draw on initial design and planning of an Erasmus + research project on ‘Integrating Cultural Diversity into Higher Education’ initiated by European adult and
continuing educators and lead by EUCEN. This project aims to generate evidence to strengthen the relationship between policy and practice through innovative forms of collaboration with policy makers at institutional, national and European level. It adopts an adult education approach which; integrates learning strategies, tools and inclusive pedagogies; respects the perspectives of educators and learners; mediates learning barriers for learners from culturally diverse backgrounds; and values the cultural understanding they bring. The project aims to improve the practice of higher education practitioners by developing an innovative integrated approach that: is relevant and pedagogically sensitive to the needs of migrants and ethnic minorities; promotes cultural and religious tolerance and understanding; respects the knowledge, experiences and perspectives of both educators and students; and creates intercultural dialogue to the benefit of all learners.

This paper will draw on initial analysis from the Irish partners of an international survey about the intercultural diversity and needs of learners in the seven partner higher education institutions across Europe. This will present a picture of the needs of learners from migrant and ethnic minority backgrounds which will be contextualised within the different national higher education contexts. We will explore the implications for curriculum planning for cultural inclusion in higher education. This initial analysis will focus on identifying the features which contribute to meaningful lifelong learning for learners, teachers and higher education institutions at different levels and disciplines.

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**Analysing community development processes: reflections on power and empowerment**

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In the past we have analysed the community development processes that took place in a specific area of (country), from 1985 to 2002. This was a multiple case study in which we encountered five different cases, used to describe and interpret a number of dimensions of these community processes. Observation and non-structured interviews were the main techniques used to gather information. In 2011 and 2016 we went back to the same community and conducted informal conversations and non-structured interviews to key local social actors. Our intention was to follow the changes that took place in the local community, widening our understanding on the ongoing community development processes. Our major aim in this paper is to analyse at the local power processes across the various phases of the community development processes, via the perspectives of the social actors who were involved in these processes. Our theoretical framework is based on the
analysis of theories of power, on the discourses of empowerment; and on community development theory.

Our results show that we had different phases in the community development processes. The action was triggered in the middle 1980s by an external entity. From 1985 until 1991/2, community social actors were gradually involved in the organization of groups of citizens to become associative structures, in various social and educational activities and in managing collectively such initiatives. In this learning phase there was not spontaneous activities organised by local actors. But the educational, non-formal and informal processes of learning constructed a number of actors who gained the awareness the changing was possible.

After 1991/92 the institution that triggered the processes stopped its direct action; and a new association began to act towards the older citizens’ care dimension. Spontaneous local development activities started to emerge. Most events were shared by the different community groups. It seemed, therefore, that a diversity of social actors had the ability to decide on the directions of development processes that were happening back then. The collective decisions seemed far more important than individual protagonists. However, this phase was very short. From 1994 to 2002 opposite signs marked the action. On the one hand, groups who had participated in former processes were now being the “engines” of development activities. At the other hand, the level of fragmentation within the core groups was growing and conflicts were now clear. The local balances of power were definitely moving and unpredictability was a key-word. From 2002 until today the situation is characterised by a clear growing dominium of one of the community groups, and by a hidden struggle between individual protagonists.

Our discussion and conclusion will analyse the factors that were determinant in local power dynamics, its tensions and paradoxes. We also want to reflect upon the uses of empowerment within community development theory and practice.

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**Transition to adulthood: stories from looked after young adults**

Andrea Galimberti,

Mirella Ferrari,

Laura Formenti

Bicocca University, Italy

The paper refers to a pilot study in Lombardy (Italy), involving a small sample of looked after young people who grew up in children’s homes and/or foster families, being labelled as “at risk” from a very early age, and whose life trajectory was accompanied by professionals: social workers, in home assistants, special educators, psychotherapists, etc. The years between 18 and 21 appear crucial to pass from ‘protection’ to ‘agency’: the Italian State has special programs for this transition (this is where we met these subjects), but it is
not clear how do they function. The huge investment of energies and resources to protect children, in case of abusing or negligent families, typical of contemporary times, has created a system of intervention that produces learning, at many levels, but is this learning functional to freedom, self-direction, reflexivity, and a meaningful life? A critical appreciation of the results of social intervention needs to be done. What are the practices, and their results? The focus of intervention is very often on the economic, social, and psychological aspects. There is not much research on the specific learning factors, intervening in the process of identity building, life and career design, relational life. This is a hole in research, and quite strange, since most of these youngsters had educators working with them, from infancy to maturity.

What are the conditions to create a good enough learning experience for these young adults (Reid & West, 2015), facing the passage from school to work, from protection to agency, from a ‘welfare life’ to self-direction and responsibility? And all happening at the same time? Do stories have the power to make any difference, in relation to our understanding and knowledge, but also in the lives we are studying? We will use auto/biographic methods (Merrill & West, 2009) to create a basis for reflection and reflexivity, both in the researchers and in the involved subjects.

The research question is: how can stories, told by insiders of experience, illuminate processes of learning that accompany the development of an adult identity, for people who are under State protection until mature age, and how do they grow their potential, repositioning themselves as adults in a system of interdependent and complex relationships, in a certain territory, in a community? How are these stories influenced by the larger society, dominant discourses, cultural models, processes of stigmatization, etc.? These young adults have to face a dominant narration that begins with multi problematic families, passes through social services and school under-achievement, and points directly towards professional failure or low qualified careers. Besides, they develop perspectives of meaning, scripts, and worldviews that are coherent with the systems and contexts around them. As we approach these stories from the point of view of complexity theories, it appears clear how macro, meso and micro levels are strictly intertwined in shaping these trajectories (Author, 2012). Following Margaret Archer morphogenetic approach (Archer, 2003) we can consider how structural factors condition social interaction but also, on the other side, how agency can mediate and transform them through reflexivity (Archer, 2010). We will search, in stories, clues of the factors that have the power, at certain conditions, to “unstick” (Field & Lynch, 2015) these young adults from a self-fulfilling prophecy. Were the different systems they grew in (original family, foster family and/or children’s home, school, groups, community) and their frames coherent and easy to compose, or did they – more probably - clash? And eventually, was the clash able to generate disorienting dilemmas that triggered transformative learning (Mezirow, 2000, 2009). Besides, which kind of transitional spaces (West, & Carlson, 2007) were able to foster emancipatory learning? Which kind of guidance (Reid, 2016) – or other meaningful relationships – was offered to these young adults to allow what has been called “biographicity” (Alheit & Dausien, 2000), that is the possibility to develop a new script, a different identity/theory, or even a deep understanding of the action of social determinants in one’s life, so as to re-design it in more adaptive and meaningful terms?
The paper analyzes different kinds of data (qualitative and quantitative) through questionnaires, interviews and focus group, especially our research focuses its investigative efforts with the auto/biographic methods, and with in-depth interviews. The paper will reflect on data from the first analysis of the interviews.

**Critical approaches to adult education: Empowerment, emancipation and literate practices.**

Sarah Galloway,
University of Stirling

This paper distinguishes between empowerment and emancipation in the context of adult education, considering why this demarcation matters and what it might mean for learners and educators. In so doing, I also address directly a problem that has been raised with traditional understandings of critical adult education. The problems is that understandings have tended to rely on the idea that learners require assistance from experts, be they teachers or researchers, in order to gain knowledge about how they are oppressed. Here the role of the educator is to engage in dialogue and critical reflection with learners as a way out of ‘false consciousness’. This approach has been criticised, for power is a complex web that educators cannot claim to step outside of in their relations with students (Wildemeerch, 2014); educators cannot ‘show the way’ for students because there is no one answer (Fenwick, 2006).

There has been a shift where adult education is less associated with rights and solidarity, instead orientating towards responsibility and self-help. This has been described as a shift away from ‘emancipatory’ approaches and towards those geared towards ‘empowerment’, where ‘empowerment’ relates to education aimed at assisting individuals to compete for employment within a globalised economy (Inglis, 1997; Wildemeerch, 2014). However, educators who care about critical adult education typically frame their contributions to discussions whilst employing the language of power or empowerment rather than emancipation. For example, this is noticeable amongst those who have critiqued Paulo Freire’s work (e.g. Ellsworth, 1989; Taylor, 1993, see Galloway, 2015), with a few notable exceptions where instead the idea of an emancipatory education is in play (e.g. Biesta, 2010; Gur-Ze’ev. 1998). It seems that the language of empowerment has come to be closely associated with critical understandings of education.

Adult literacies learning is an area of adult education where the idea that teaching and learning might be either empowering or emancipatory has been subjected to detailed discussion. In particular, the idea that literacies education can (and should) be ‘powerful’ or ‘empowering’ has not only gained currency (Crowther et al, 2001), but has also been theorised (Gee, 1996; Ade-Ojo and Duckworth, 2015, Janks, 2010). Empowering literacies are typically described in relation to accounts of how power is reproduced through discourse production, where students might capture control over discourse and author their own identities (Gee, 1996), or accumulate cultural capital (Ade-Ojo and Duckworth, 2015). In this theoretical paper I draw largely upon the work of Paulo Freire and Jacques Rancière.
to argue that such techniques fail to depart from the abovementioned problems associated with traditional approaches to adult education. I attempt, briefly, to describe emancipatory education as a conceptualisation that counters or refuses identification, in the assumption that with regard to oppression and emancipation, we do not need teachers to reveal the truth to us. I also express something of the difficulties faced when attempting to understand emancipation as an educational purpose.


Michelle Glowacki-Dudka,
Cathy Mullett,
Amy Ward,
Ball State University, USA
Alice Bennett,
Maynooth University, Ireland

This paper reports on the dialogue that occurred in Fall 2015, with 7 American doctoral students at Ball State University and 5 recent adult education alumni from Maynooth University. The students corresponded through web-based technology in order to share personal narratives. When examining what occurred we asked the following research questions: 1) How would this dialogue between scholars increase their personal and professional agency? 2) How would they describe commonalities and differences in their educational journeys? 3) How would this intercultural connection transform them? We examine how the opportunity for international dialogue became an example of transformative and intercultural learning. Through the use of technology, ubiquitous today, learners can engage with each other to gain a deeper understanding of each other’s personal narrative. Scholars may also recognize how the educational systems in each nation have impacted their learning journeys.

Shaping the future by selecting adult education’s teaching staff: Empirical data on recruitment practices in Germany (What creates and regulates access to the adult education profession? A research project on recruiting practices)

Annika Goeze,
Dorett Schneider,
German Institute for Adult Education – Leibniz Centre for Lifelong Learning, Germany

Although it is a typical and at the same time very consequential task, recruiting processes in the adult education profession have so far remained largely unexplored. In this paper, a
A research project is presented examining the question, who is (not) going to be chosen as a course instructor, trainer, or coach by representatives of diverse further education providers in Germany, and why? In a first step, semi-structured interviews with more than 20 adult educators were conducted to get an idea of their recruiting practices and to formulate hypotheses. Potential influencing factors on the recruiting and selection processes are examined on an individual and organisational level. Following a mixed methods approach, further research is planned to verify or falsify these hypotheses using a questionnaire for at least 300 participants who are responsible for recruiting in their adult education organisation.

Evaluating Learner Centred Education (LCE) as a tool for quality adult education in distance learning

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Open University of Cyprus, Cyprus

The proposed paper presents a critical account of the extent to which learner-centred education (LCE) is used as a tool for quality adult education in a distance learning context. LCE is promoted by international organizations within a rights framework, and is used as part of the definitions they give for quality education (Schweisfurth, 2013a). According to Schweisfurth (2011), it can also be used as a foundation for the building of democratic citizens and societies suitable for economies of the future. However, in adult and lifelong education the term appears recently and has not been extensively used despite sharing common principles with andragogy (Knowles, 1980), Freire’s (1972) notion of ‘conscientisation’, experiential learning (Jarvis, 2004) and transformative learning (Mezirow, 1997). It is regularly associated with child-centred education while, according to Schweisfurth (2013b), LCE is a practice that extends beyond the childhood years. In adult education, LCE is used interchangeably with problem-centred, enquiry-based and problem-based learning, despite the slightly different connotations of these terms.

The research proposed adopts LCE as a key concept and draws on Schweisfurth’s (2013b, p.20) working definition, “as a pedagogical approach which gives learners, and demands from them, a relatively high level of active control over the contents and processes of learning”. It aspires to shed light on the extent to which LCE is used as a tool for quality adult education in a distance education context, through the experiences and insights of adult learners and educators who embarked on distance learning units delivered by the Open University of Cyprus (OUC) and the Hellenic Open University (HOU). It seeks to illuminate the ‘fine-grained’ processes at work during the delivery of the distance learning units by focusing on a much neglected part of the educational terrain, the practice of teaching and learning, and on how such practice relates to the context in which it is embedded. The final purpose of the study, in an applied sense, is to inform the design, implementation and further development of distance learning units that support adult learning and the empowerment of adults through LCE.
The exploration is illustrated by qualitative data from interviews with eight adult educators and sixteen adult learners, and adopts a case study approach within a phenomenological mode. In the study proposed, LCE is seen as being at one end of the educational practice continuum, and comprised of a number of elements, namely: motivation, epistemology, techniques and relationships (Schweisfurth’s conceptualization of LCE) that are used as a conceptual framework to guide data analysis and interpretation. Findings reveal the partial and unintentional use of LCE in the distance learning units explored. Moreover, one of the valuable insights that emerge from the research is the existence of a rather significant gap between the theories of adult learning (the tenets upon which our work claims to rest) and our practices. Finally, it is the recognition that both learners and the educators often experience disempowerment- that is, being cut off from meaningful opportunities to learn and teach.

The master's thesis in distance learning education as a creative process: challenges and difficulties adult learners face.

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Open University of Cyprus, Cyprus
Despina Tsakiris,
University of Peloponnese, Greece,

The proposed paper is based on a research project that explores the difficulties and challenges that adult postgraduate students encounter in the course of completing their master’s thesis, as part of the master's degree programme in Education Studies, at the Hellenic Open University (HOU) and the Open University of Cyprus (OUC). The ultimate aim of the research is to enlighten and highlight the ways and approaches that adult students use to overcome the obstacles that arise, as these relate to institutional deficiencies, students’ subject knowledge and their nature as adult learners.

The master’s thesis remains a significant part of the master’s degree programme in Education Studies, and it is undoubtedly a creative process. According to Charlot (1999), the preparation of a master’s thesis is a process of knowledge formation that is gradually conquered through exploring the subject in depth; constant training on determining problems; choosing the proper methodological tools; and critically presenting the findings and their implications. In this process, adult students are required to go beyond the understanding and application of the knowledge gained throughout their studies. They start to synthesize complex issues, develop skills in research, writing, analytical and critical thinking. They also learn to better organize the time available.

From the above, it becomes palpable that an exploration of the barriers that adult learners experience in the course of preparing their master’s thesis in a distance education context is an important issue, for the learning of adults in this particular context, and for the optimization of the outcomes of the process, which can only be facilitated through the understanding of this process (Gravani, 2015). However, a critical reading of the relevant
literature has revealed that only one piece of research (Olakulehin & Ojo, 2008) focused on
the above, while no research has been conducted on the HOU and the OUC. This is the focus
on the proposed research.

The study has as its main unit of analysis adult students’ experiences and perceptions. Twenty five adult students (15 from HOU and 10 from OUC), who were carrying out their dissertation during the academic year 2010-2011, participated in the research. Qualitative research methods were employed and data was collected through non-structured interviews, so that a space is provided for adults to present their personal stories and remarks.

Data has revealed that the adult students in the study partially met their needs in the course of completing their master’s thesis as far as the quality of academic and institutional services is concerned. It has also been found that the lack of specialised knowledge in education studies, methodology and methodological tools demanded extra work on behalf of the students. Data revealed a relationship between adult learner’s age, working commitments and difficulties they face in completing their thesis. Students were able to overcome these difficulties through personal efforts such as intensive studying, good organisation of their time and self-motivation. Finally, the contribution of the supervisor was proved as vital, as, beyond the emotional encouragement, academic guidance and support were offered.

The Narrative of ‘Equality of Chances’ as an approach to interpret PIAAC results on perceived Political Efficacy, Social Trust and Volunteering and the Quest for Political Literacy

Anke Grotlüschen

The article focuses the question whether workforce literacy strategies in research and policies may tend to exclude relevant fields of literacy, which have emancipatory chances for participants, but which regularly fail in including low qualified or literate adults (Hufer 2013), namely the area of basic civic education or political literacy. The relevance of basic civic education will be discussed using contemporary theories, which point at a crisis of democracy and explain this by the spread of income and capital (Piketty 2014) and its legitimization (Rosanvallon 2013). Further detail is provided by using Rosanvallons criticism on the term ‘equality of chances’. The everyday unfairness, covered by the narrative of equal chances, leads to peoples’ disengagement with reciprocal relations and solidarity within a society. This theoretical approach will be underpinned with empirical data from the PIAAC 2012 dataset which relate literacy on the one hand with variables on political efficacy, social trust and volunteering on the other hand. Results will be compared with volunteer and youth surveys. Furthermore, the connection of a nouveau droite and peoples’ low feelings of political efficacy will be reflected in order to fight back the stereotype, marginalized groups would automatically become voters of right-wing populists.
Enabling learning environments in national competence development programmes

Agneta Halvarsson Lundkvist,
Henrik Kock,
Maria Gustavsson,
Linköping University, Sweden

Education and training for adults is sometimes developed and provided by temporary, publicly funded workplace development programmes (WPDPs). A WPDP is a complex programme, with various stakeholders, often including providers of adult education that, through the programme, act jointly as change agents in local workplaces. The aim of the paper is to identify conditions that enabled stakeholders’ learning and supported programme development processes in two studied WPDPs. A total of 73 interviews were conducted and 20 meetings were documented in this qualitative case study. The findings showed that WPDPs are dependent on rich learning environments with enabling conditions for stakeholders if development processes are to move forward. Among important enabling conditions, were the involvement of appropriate stakeholders in a sufficient number of learning activities and distinct steering of the programmes.

The distribution of the sensible: aesthetics, politics and democracy

Kerry Harman

This paper explores possibilities for more democratic approaches to researching learning in and through practice. This links with a concern with who is able to speak in representations of learning at work, what is able to be spoken about and how knowing, learning and experience are inscribed in theories of practice. Ranciere’s proposal for understanding experience, knowledge and politics as aesthetic provides a useful way of rethinking experience and its relation to knowledge and learning. Drawing on Ranciere’s discussion of aesthetic experience, which opens up the possibility of knowledge without hierarchies, the implications for researching learning in and through practice are explored. Ranciere’s proposition that academics should start from a position of equality provides a resource of hope as it enables counter stories to the story of destiny when writing about workplace experience.

Going against the grain? The value placed on collaborative pedagogies in adult education
Lisa Harold
Paula Carroll,
Maeve O’Grady
Waterford Institute of Technology, Ireland
Beatrice Barry Murphy
Independent Contractor,
Lorcan Brennan,
Men’s Development Network
Ailish O’Neill,
National Youth Council of Ireland,
Mairead Barry
Waterford Institute of Technology, Ireland

A new experiential training programme called ‘Facilitation Skills for Health and Well-Being’ has been developed to empower youth workers (n=16 participants) in their own lives and work practice to, in turn, empower the most vulnerable young people in our society with whom they work. The youth workers have the opportunity to go through creative experiences to develop social and emotional intelligences; evidence to date indicates that by experiencing a creative, experiential programme some youth workers are going through a transformation and this is affecting them both personally and in some aspects of their work practice. The training has influenced the attitudes, values and beliefs of youth workers and consequently how they support the young people with whom they work. Upon further data collection and analysis, diffusion and sustainability factors will be examined and whether this type of experiential training has impacted work practices amongst the youth workers. The conceptual frameworks adopted from the outset are Transformative Learning Theory, Experiential Learning Theory, The Diffusion of Innovation Theory and Sustainable Models of Health Promotion.

This training programme demonstrates a holistic and experiential way of learning in adult education which can empower individuals to use learning in their everyday lives. Further research is required to present the theory of experiential learning in a more simplistic way and also the affective domain (felt experience) which is a significant factor of experiential learning.
Visual research methods and new masculine subjectivities

Ann Hegarty,
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Photovoice is an engaging, powerful arts-based research method employed to problematise hegemonic discourses that confine and limit human flourishing. The complex, nuanced relationship between constructs of hegemonic masculinities, fatherhood and family literacies were explored through self-authored images with twenty men from resource poor communities in Dublin city. In the context of economic recession, the breadwinner role for these marginalised men was exchanged with one of at-home caregiving father. Deeply held subjective certainties about masculinity were disrupted leaving men in a liminal space where much that they had learnt about masculinity became obsolete.

Photovoice, combined with a respectful and constructive facilitation space supported the research participants to reflect collaboratively on their roles as men and fathers involved in learning care work. The creative process freed the men to express what was previously ineffable. They broke through gendered norms that depict men as inexpressive and unwilling to reveal their vulnerabilities. In articulating their subjective realities the damaging mask of masculinity, which some men found so difficult to wear, became lighter. Previous hurt-filled encounters with the education system were replaced by an enhanced and empowering experience of adult learning. Counter hegemonic caring and care-full masculine identities were reflected upon, articulated and opened up to transformation. A collective, creative exploration of the role of fathers doing family literacy work grounded the men and clarified how adult education might become a really useful element in their process of radical change.

Connecting vocational education with work based learning in four Nordic Countries

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Background
In all the Nordic countries, we see a strong political interest in including (more) work-based learning in vocational education and training (VET) for youth and adults. In addition, all the Nordic countries have attempted to introduce or expand apprenticeship programmes in recent decades, but they have not been very successful. Connecting VET closer to working life and the labour market has many advantages for learners as well as for society, which includes increasing the engagement and the employability of the participant (Kondrup
However, it has turned out to be difficult to get labour market organisation involved in education and to get access to training placements of high quality (Jørgensen 2015).

**Aim of paper**
The aim of this paper is to explore strengths and weaknesses of vocational education and training (VET) in the Nordic countries regarding their connection to the labour market. In the Nordic countries, the two dominant types of VET-systems are represented: full time school-based (Sweden and Finland) and apprenticeship-based systems (Denmark) and a mixed type (Norway). This paper examines how these different systems connects to work life and the labour market. A key issue examined is the transition processes of the students to the labour market after completion of VET and the variations in students’ transition patterns between different programmes and occupations. A special interest is taken in the involvement of the labour market organisations in the governance of VET, and the certification and portability of the skills acquired.

**Research design/mode of inquiry**
The paper build on extensive data from a comparative research project on four Nordic VET-systems based on a combined framework of historical institutionalism, comparative-historical analysis and critical education studies. The research combines examinations of the institutional architecture at national level with case studies in two occupations in the four Nordic countries. Background research reports are available at www.nord-vet.dk

**Results and significance**
The paper emphasises the significance of intermediary institutions between education and working life in order to enhance the connectivity of the learning processes and the cooperation between the world of work and the world of education. In addition, it presents new ways of organising training that bridges between the two worlds.

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**How does making collaborative theatre facilitate transformative learning?**

Peter Hussey

Maynooth University, Ireland

“The arts can serve as models of what educational aspiration and practice might be at its very best” (xii, Eisner, 2002).

The aim of this paper is to present the findings from interviews with a group of young adults reflecting on how they learned, and what they learned, when they engaged in collaborative theatre making. The paper will suggest how theatre-based methods of learning are ideal for a range of educational contexts, including adult, community and further education.

The interview material strongly suggests that engaging in the making of theatre can

- Efficiently problematize the here-and-now, manifesting subtext and other hidden agendas in a way that allows them to be critiqued
- Provide an aesthetic engagement that removes the capacity to think about anything else. In this way, it serves as a useful tool for dealing with stress and managing crippling anxiety.
- Reduce focus on the ego.
- Stimulate the learner to embrace the unknown and welcome the unexpected.
- Use the resources of the imagination to solve problems
- Fictionalise personal experience allowing it to be critically analysed and understood.

In five interviews with young adult learners we will make a tentative exploration of what happens when you engage in collaborative theatre. The results are pertinent to education.

Many of the most complex and subtle forms of thinking take place when students have an opportunity either to work meaningfully on the creation of images – whether visual, choreographic, musical, literary, or poetic – or to scrutinize them appreciatively (xii, Eisner, 2002).

It will also draw on the work and practice of the author, who has incorporated performance methods into his teaching with adults in higher education institutions in Ireland. These range from techniques that illustrate the dynamics of power in groups and in systems, to theatre-based research and evaluation methods.

The paper will draw on insights and ideas posited by Augusto Boal (1992) in his influential *Theatre of the Oppressed* – a work that provides educators and theatre makers with tools to engage learners in Freire’s (1970) *conscientization* process. It will also draw on the work of Elliot Eisner (2002), Ursula leGuin (2004) and Edward Bond (2000), particularly in their examination of role of imagination in shaping problem-posing learning. “Imagination gives us images of the possible that provide a platform for seeing the actual, and by seeing the actual freshly, we can do something about creating what lies beyond it” (4, Eisner, 2002).

The paper will develop recent research and theory emerging from cognitive performance – that is, examination of the way collaborative performance shapes the brain. Work by Rhonda Blair and Bruce McConahie (2006) will be used to support the material emerging from the interviews with the young people.

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**Marginality in adult education: a critical reconceptualisation**

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Kristiina Brunila’

AGORA for the Study of Social Justice and Equality in Education, University of Helsinki, Finland

Marginality is present in many ways in the politics and practices of adult education. Despite its ever-increasing presence, marginality has been a neglected topic in contemporary discipline of adult education. Especially theoretical work that addresses the topic of
marginality in adult education has been rare. The purpose of this paper is to argue, however, that marginality intertwine with key debates in adult education and therefore it preserves further theoretical attention. The marginality is reconceptualised here as a form of disciplinary and productive power. The concept of power is borrowed from the French philosopher Michel Foucault. The focus is on how discursive power construct meaning, subjectivities and difference rather than on explanations of the inevitable and already stated ‘marginalities’. In addition, the mechanisms through which adult education is involved in the constitution of the marginality will be addressed and examples from adult education literature will be presented.

**Pedagogical dimensions of participatory democracy:**
**Learning through self-organized communities and participatory budgeting in Maribor, Slovenia**

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University of Ljubljana, Slovenia

Sabina Jelenc Krašovec
University of Ljubljana, Slovenia

The central issue of this article is a case study of the pedagogical dimensions of the participatory democracy that was developed by self-organized district community assemblies in Maribor, the second largest city in Slovenia. It researches informal experience-based learning, investigates the mutual community learning that takes place through collaborative public action and elaborates critical knowledge and insights into the processes of informal learning. The pedagogical dimensions were researched with militant research, passive observation and follow-up of the process, twelve semi-structured interviews, a focus group and a study visit in Reykjavik. Our case study confirmed – similarly as Schugurenskys pioneer work – that interviewees acquired instrumental and technical knowledge about politics and citizenship, developed analytical, leadership and deliberative skills, and, even more importantly, that they have translated the new understanding, abilities and dispositions into new social practices and behaviours.

**Re-constructing a typology and re-imagining the limitations and possibilities of restricted, reformist and expansive narratives of widening participation in higher education in England**

Iain Jones,
Newman University Birmingham, England.

The paper reports on a study of narratives of widening participation in higher education in England. The theoretical and conceptual framework for the study compares a rational and
in instrumental paradigm that emphasises ‘what works’ with a critical policy analysis of widening participation. Having firstly contextualised the research problem and methodological framework, and how this may relate to questions of power, the paper then asks how specific narratives of widening participation in higher education were made, re-made and shaped through interactions between different sites of policy making. Finally, the paper analyses how widening participation could be re-constructed and re-imagined. It does so by considering the implications of a bricolage and exploratory typology of restricted, reformist and expansive narratives for sensitising research on widening participation within specific settings in the future.

Creativity and agency of organic vegetable entrepreneurs

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Goal of the study was to clarify emergence of agency for organic vegetable entrepreneurs. Because motives are meaningful in the emergence of agency along with cognitive and behavioral factors (cf. Kuczynski, 2014), motives were studied further. In the study was observed that creation of operations model (OM) for enterprise represents emergence of agency. The results also indicated that the more intrinsic motives were involved, the more OM challenged the predominant i.e. economic scale rationale of food production. Informants, who had diversified OM, i.e. they were small scale entrepreneurs, challenged the dominating rationale most obviously. If source of creativity is intrinsic motives like Ceci and Kumar (2016) indicated, entrepreneurs with diversified OM in this study were more creative. However it can be argued that creativity has relational character, because originality i.e. specialty of OM can be detected only in relation with the predominant rationale.

The diverse adult learners and the “paradigm” of peerness

Katinka Käyhkö
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Facing the plethora of peer-related educational practices this paper studies peerness within formal and non-formal adult education. It aims to answer three questions: 1) who do the diverse adult learners themselves consider as their peers or equals, 2) who study-wise “significant others” are mentioned by them and 3) how do these “others” influence adult learning?

The data is gathered from adult learners around Finland. Findings show that adult learners’ peers are found outside of their current studies, if found at all. While many people influence
studies, especially mature and immigrant students rely on their teachers. The “others” can motivate, help and serve as examples but they can also hinder learning.

This calls for rethinking the use of merely study-related “peer” practices. The findings are debated with theories of peer learning and a new conceptual model is used to differentiate aspects of peerness.

Further Education and Training (FET): Questions of Power and Resources

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Justin Rami,
Dublin City University, Ireland
Anne Walsh,
NUI Galway, Ireland

For the first time in Ireland the further education & training (FET) sector and the higher education (HE) sector have formally come together to address access, transfer and progression for learners between to the two sectors.

This paper draws on research and discursive work of a recently formed network of higher education institutions (HEI's), further education and training providers (ETBs), and State bodies such as SOLAS (National Further Education & Training Authority of Ireland) and QQI (Quality and Qualifications Ireland) meeting as a working group to produce working papers on progression barriers to higher education to facilitate the Higher Education Parity (HEA) reach its increase of 10% target for progression from FET to HE by 2016. The symposium also draws on the collaboration of 8 HEIs all delivering initial teacher education (ITE) for FET teachers under n the number at the structure of the Association of Qualifications Providers for FET Educators.

The paper will address issues of Questions of Power and Resources in the emerging fourth sector of further education and training. This dynamically developing sector faces significant challenges in provision, in recognition, in establishing appropriate practice, in quality assurance, in sustainability, but particularly in achieving equality of power and resourcing relative to the well-established first (primary education), second (second level education), and third (higher education) sectors.
Social Worlds Theory as Heuristic. Uncovering Power and Creativity: Working in Continuing Higher Education in Germany as Research Field

Maria Kondratjuk,
Otto-von-Guericke-University Magdeburg, Germany

The objective of the paper is to demonstrate the suitability of the social worlds theory – to analyse sections of adult education by means of presenting a research project which examines the action strategies of actors in Continuing Higher Education (CHE) in Germany while using this theory.

Methodologically the research is oriented on the Grounded Theory (Glaser & Strauss 1967, 1998; Strauss & Corbin 1990, 1996; Clarke 2005, 2012) and based on:

- an analysis and description of organisational structures of CHE in Germany,
- problem-based interviews with actors of continuing higher education and
- interviews of experts outside and inside the universities with special expertise in the field of CHE and Adult Education.

The result is a model with a typology of action strategies of actors in CHE which is focusing the different handling with the given conditions of the working field and the structures in the organisation ‘university’: some are addicted from structures, some design their structures and some show interdependency. Between the actors and the organisation permanent negotiation processes take place. Results show that there are relations between power and creativity which influence the options and scopes of action. The actors have different working careers and within occupational socialisation like their reference science, ethics, customers and clients, sphere of activity, knowledge, profession, standards, values etc. They have diverse beliefs of continuing education – which is very important for their professional self-conception.

The conceptional framework is the social worlds theory. Social worlds are “groups with shared commitments to certain activities, sharing resources of many kinds to achieve their goals and building shared ideologies about how to go about their business” (Clarke 1991: 131). Actors in social worlds are persons who act in social coherency. Important is the participation in more than one social world. “Instead of being a full-time member of one ,total and whole’ society, modern man is a part-time citizen in a variety of part-time societies. Instead of living within one meaningful world system to which he owes complete loyalty he now lives in many differently structured’ to each of which he owes only partly allegiance” (Luckmann 1978: 282). The analytical focus lies on the commitment to action’- which were fought out in arenas. Arenas are the places for discourse and negotiation and “exist at every level of organization, from microscopic to the most macroscopic. As whirlpools of argumentative action, they lie at the very heart of permanence and change of each social world. By the same reasoning, arenas are central to the creation and maintenance of social order, in the traditional sense of that sociological concept” (Strauss 1993: 227).
Social worlds theory is suitable for the examination of complex research situations like changing segments of the society including the prevailing discourses, commitments and history, status and power, professional and technical work and occupations, nonhuman actants, social action and change as well as boundaries. This seems to be very interesting for the adult education research – to get new and deeper insights.

The (new) educational role of academic and scientific institutions vis-à-vis the public

Martin Kopecký
Charles University in Prague, Czech Republic

The following paper is theoretical in nature. The current difficulties of academic institutions are, as I try to outline, associated or at least associable with problems faced by democratic policies. It is here where I locate one aspect of the motto, knowledge is power. Diverse social institutions (here science and the public) may either follow different ways or try to collaborate. There are more than just practical-utilitarian reasons for collaboration: the ability to think critically and search for new ways of solving problems should be the natural common denominator of both spheres.

Reconsidering the significance of critical thinking for the modern challenges of adult education

Effrosyni Kostara
Hellenic Open University, Greece

The aim of this paper is to re-establish the significance of critical thinking within the new challenges in adult education, as they are now shaped under the rapidly changing conditions and to explore the possibility of a more humanistic character in adult education. In particular, we aim to explore this theoretical framework within which critical thinking is valuable for the position and the purpose of adult education. The methodology for this approach will be based on the exploration of the offered theoretical models regarding firstly the relationship between adult education and the modern society, and secondly the role of critical thinking within the practices of adult education.
Self-Directed Learning of Doctoral Candidates in Educational Science in Germany: Opportunities of Designing the Own Qualification Processes in Times of Reconstruction

Eva-Christine Kubsch,
Justus-Liebig-Universität Gießen, Germany

Since the doctoral education is in the middle of a changing-process towards giving doctoral candidates more guidance and a stronger frame, the question of the remaining freedom for self-directed learning rises. Based on a qualitative, longitudinal study that has been realized with ten doctoral candidates of educational science, the article takes a closer look towards hidden power relations that doctoral candidates come across trying to realize their doctorate. The article concentrates on two major phenomena where power relations can be illustrated: The first phenomenon is about conditions that seem immutable, but interrupt and disturb the PhD-process. Being talked into additional jobs by the supervisor, which take away time for the PhD; being surprised by a sudden change within a project development without having been consolidated concerning those important decisions; being reliant on the supervisor's positive feedback and prompt report in order to be able to apply for a scholarship - are three different shapes of power relations the interviewee had to deal with. The second phenomenon is about factors that influence the PhD-deadline which has to be postponed over and over again. Is it a lack of self-discipline or more a matter of power-relations that lead to even more challenges within the doctoral education?

Learning Solidarity? Learning processes within the refugee crisis

Brigitte Kukovetz,
Annette Sprung,
Karl-Franzens-Universität Austria

Since summer 2015 big refugee movements, formerly only observed at the Southern borders of the EU, challenge politics and public discourse in Europe in an unprecedented way. Our research project is situated in Austria, one of the countries that have received most refugees so far. Besides offering appropriate educational programs for migrants and refugees (‘Integration’) adult education is also challenged to contribute to the development of a democratic and peaceful society. As the atmosphere and attitudes towards refugees have become rather negative and aggressive in Austria and other countries within the last months (e.g. stricter laws, anti-refugee protests, etc.) the task of anti-racist work has to be put on the agenda more clearly.

Aim and research questions
The aim of our current research project is to explore the relation between solidarity, power, and adult education in a globalised world. Citizens who are in a position of power towards refugees, often feel powerless in the face of both, social change due to migration and
national policies. We thus ask how and why people get started to act in solidarity nevertheless and what the contribution of adult learning and education could be in this context.

Beside personal and biographical aspects the study focuses on the influence of structural conditions and the public discourse around personal decisions to get (and stay) involved in refugee relief. Research questions include: What do people learn in terms of social self-understanding, political attitudes, images of ‘the other’, solidarity, empowerment and participation against this background? How do external influences like the media and political discourse shape these processes and their outcomes?

We also examine the intersections of political developments and actions/attitudes of volunteers by exploring changes over time. People help refugees despite a lot of constraints (e.g. lack of time and resources, racist attacks and legal restrictions) and are creative in their handling of new situations. How do volunteers learn to be that creative and which role does informal learning play in fostering this creativity?

Theoretical framework and methods
We analyse learning processes within movements that have formed during the refugee movements to Austria in 2015/16. The theoretical framework is built on theories of justice and concepts of solidarity. A central challenge for the future will be the development of an idea of solidarity with individuals and groups who are seen as being ‘different.’ In this context power relations play an important role.

The empirical study analyses experiences and (mostly informal) learning processes of volunteers who supported refugees in 2015/16. The analysis will be based on qualitative interviews and on written accounts and reports of refugee relief volunteers. At ESREA we will be presenting preliminary results of the research project which started in January 2016.

Financing and institutions as key elements of the future of adult education – some empirical observations

Lorenz Lassnigg,
Stefan Vogtenhuber,
Institute for Advanced Studies (IHS), Austria

A main aim of the study was to acquire comparative and comprehensive information about the levels of financing in states from different welfare regimes (Nordic: Sweden, Finland; liberal: UK/Scotland, Australia; Austria as a continental country), and to observe the different sources of the expenditure by broad categories of actors (individuals, the state, enterprises).

The results were unexpected in some ways: first the overall expenditure per capita was highest in Austria, with the highest expenditure by individuals, signifying rather a neoliberal
policy approach than a corporatist one; second, there is no overall relationship between participation and expenditure in the selected countries, except that higher state expenditure are related to increased participation in formal AE; third, in terms of policy strategies the results do no point towards deliberate systematic patterns: Austria shows the most ‘neoliberal’ pattern, despite none of the actors does follow deliberately this strategy; in the liberal countries high state expenditure are combined with low overall expenditure and high participation.

Crafts of our fathers: a research project for recovering people's memories and identities.

Emilio Lucio-Villegas.
University of Seville, Spain

The aim of this paper is to describe an ongoing research for recovering the memory of the Guadalquivir River where it passes through a village called Coria del Río, 12 km. from the city of Seville in the south of Spain. One of the goals of this research is to create a museum about the river and its influence on people’s life. In the paper I will describe in detail the process of research based on both collecting pictures and interviewing people to regain their experiences connected to the river.

This is a work in process. The first outcomes are related to some descriptive categories such as: the crafts linked to the river, the use of the river to transport goods and people, the contradictory feelings associated to it, the role of women, and the lost of specialised languages. Preliminary conclusions address us to consider the importance of recovering the creativity that resides in traditional crafts.

The role of Embodied Movement in orienting one's self towards the future.

Luraschi Silvia,
“R. Massa” University of Milano-Bicocca, Italy

This paper illustrates an innovative workshop that explores the reflexive, transformative, orienting effects due to active involvement of the body’s perception and movement in vocational guidance. The idea behind this work, from a constructivist point of view (Bateson, 1972), is that action is the result of artistic – aesthetic and relational acts. Starting from this premise, the workshop became a setting for research where it was possible to cultivate alive and vibrant democratic relationships (West, 2016) through an experience that is both formative and artistic. The pilot case study highlighted the importance of dialogue and learning in public spaces in order to acquire creative resources for thinking, feeling and acting in new ways, towards diverse futures.
The power of moving on ...

Ester Mackey
Tipperary Education and Training Board, Ireland

Multiple bereavements have challenged the staff and students of an education centre for young people in Ireland. This happened at a time of restructuring of the Further Education and Training sector.

The aim of the research is to explore the impact of the changes and to explore what a holistic response might look like. It is an ethnographic case study. The research identifies the importance of individual and community identity and how this is influenced, shaped, shattered, reclaimed/recreated and used to move forward in creative ways.

The theoretical frameworks provided by Kübler-Ross and Kessler in relation to bereavement and the perspective of education as posed by Parker J. Palmer were used to position the research within an academic field. The current Irish context in relation to education and mental health was also explored as part of the academic framing.

'And then a Plank in Reason, broke': Language, Time and Knowledge in the Education-Research-Politics Nexus: Re-membering Temporalities of Struggle.

Siobhán Madden
Maynooth University, Ireland

The central theme of this conference, “Imagining Diverse Futures,” opens up for me the notion of time as a fundamental ontological question for a critical, hopeful imagination of new possibilities. In this paper, I argue that hegemonic assumptions about time as a neutral and linear phenomenon are fundamental to producing the neoliberal imaginary. I further argue that such assumptions are sustained by the binaries of a gendered symbolic order rooted in a platonic imagination. My specific focus is on how these rationalities are carried in the interstices of language.

Over the course of my paper, I negotiate the ontological boundaries of written and spoken words in order to disrupt linear narratives of research, education and politics, attending to ‘a temporality of struggle’ (Mohanty, 2003). My argument is framed through the specific issue of violence against women, and is structured through an exploration of three very different text genres: (1) an Irish government policy text, the National Strategy on Domestic, Sexual and Gender-based Violence 2010-2014 (Cosc, 2010); (2) a poem by Emily Dickinson ‘I felt a Funeral, in my Brain’; (3) transcribed research narratives of conversations with ‘Alice,’ a feminist community educator. I conclude by drawing out the central ontological, epistemic
and political possibilities of feminist community education as a necessary critical practice for imagining diverse futures through neoliberal times.

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**An empirical and conceptual analysis of non-formal non-vocational adult education in Europe**

**Jyri Manninen,**
University of Eastern Finland

Non-vocational adult education (NVAE) cover a wide range of learning activities, from basic skills and liberal arts to civic and community education and more radical forms of adult education. It generates many benefits for individuals and society, and has historically played a central role in the development of democratic societies and equality especially in the Northern Europe, and more recently in Latin America through Freire and popular adult education movement. Nowadays NVAE’s challenge is that it lacks clear concepts and definitions and is, therefore, less systematically covered in statistics, research and surveys. Its current role in the development and change of the society is also unclear. This paper seeks to tackle these problems by providing (1) a mapping and analyses of 14,063 NVAE courses in 10 European countries and (2) a conceptual framework for NVAE based on genealogical analysis; the three political options of adult education (Picon 1991) are used to analyse what kind of role NVAE have nowadays in societal change. The results show that majority of the course provision found in this study fall into category of ‘maintenance and conservation’, very few courses into ‘reform to improve the system’, and none into ‘structural transformation’. It seems that non-vocational adult education have lost the reformist and especially the transformative role it once had in the society.

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**Creativity: a training need of health workers**

**Francesca Marone,**
Marianna Capo, -
Maria Navarra,
University of Naples Federico Italy

Creativity has a transversal value; it is a process that in an unpredictable and original unifies a subject and a context, a form and an idea. It concerns to transformative, innovative and associative actions (Mezirow, 2003). It is not represented as the ability to create out of nothing but rather as the ability to transform the existing in an innovative way, by manipulating a function of a real or practical goal by identifying the elements that go beyond its immediate appearances or meanings.
The aim of this study was to study creativity with regard to the professional adult education. Furthermore, the research focuses on the relationship between reflexivity and creativity. The variety of educational situations in which adult individuals may find themselves and which involve, to be such, some "change", are inherently creative and into adulthood many growth experiences are accomplished "in self-managed forms." In this sense the multiplicity of the notion of creativity, intersects with the complexity of the notion of change in adulthood. So creativity does not imply the necessary presence of intentional paths but are sufficient experiences that, together with a reflection in the course and on the course of action (Schon, 1987), give rise to creative and transformative situations.

Specifically, here we present the results of a study that had the aim of identifying, through a questionnaire, the needs of trainers in health care throughout Italy. The exploratory study involved 179 trainers, who works and lives in two geographic areas (North Italy / South Italy); the data were analyzed by SPSS software for counting the frequencies and the calculation of the chi-square. The following research question was explored: "what are the teaching methods which would deepen or consider relevant to own background?" The preferences are around two methodologies: Problem Based Learning and Case Study. These methods are considered suitable to stimulate problem-solving skills, to teach accepting the ambiguity, the absence of ready-made answers. In other words, to tolerate the uncertainty which requires the development of creative and solver thinking, and the disruption of previously established patterns.

The analysis showed that the training methods, as part of continuing medical education, are deemed inadequate to learning needs of individuals; follow to this, the lack of interest in relation to the courses and to the proposed themes. Those issues are linked because using inappropriate methods, brings a greater distractibility, while the creativity in learning is more facilitated as much as self-criticism and self-evaluation processes are included. Therefore, the creativity is the vertex of a global intertwining between internal motivation and external demands, needs, curiosity and emotions that arise from having discovered and realized something new.

An adult training can enable the restructuring of a perspective of meaning, understood as creative inversion process, through which we become critically aware of what influences the way we perceive and interpret the world, takes place where the educational planning assumes a not rigidly structured configuration. The aim is to reach a new andragogical methodology that, starting from needs and desires, intercepts the training of professionals (Knowles, 1985, 1989).
Participation in Adult Education and Gender: Analyzing Individual Barriers across Different Welfare State Regimes

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Britta Gauly
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Lifelong learning is becoming increasingly important in today’s societies. Individuals have to maintain and develop their skills in order to cope with changing demands. Our research focuses on participants of adult education as well as non-participants across countries with different welfare state regimes. In our analyses, we consider gender differences and family composition.

We analyze countries according to the “classical” welfare state typology by Esping-Andersen (1990), extending it by Southern countries. Welfare policies are directed at the working population and affect the reconciliation between employment and family responsibilities differently. As women are less engaged in the labor market, welfare policies also indirectly affect the participation in adult education as most of it takes place at work (Desjardins, 2015).

Data from the Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC) offer the opportunity to analyze participation in adult education across different welfare state regimes. We use multiple logistic regressions in order to estimate the likelihood to participate for women in comparison to men. We adjust our results by controlling for employment status and family structure. Furthermore, we analyze perceived barriers to adult education while focusing on having young children.

Different welfare policies have an impact on the extent women and men take part in further education. Our results show that in all countries besides the Nordic countries, men are more likely to participate in adult education. However, this inequality is ruled out once we control for employment status. We find that the most important barriers reported by both men and women are being too busy at work and family responsibilities, while there is less gender inequality in perceived barriers in the Nordic countries. Our research provides insights into better understanding why adults are deterred from engaging in further education and which policies might increase the opportunity to participate for both women and men.
The preparation of legal professionals to provide voice and power to vulnerable populations in society

Paula E. McBride, Ph. D.
University of Georgia, United States

The foundation of public interest law is social action in which legal professionals work in service to society (Davis, 2007). The primary purpose of the study was to identify and describe characteristics of preparedness needed to educate law students for the practice of social action. While this qualitative multicase study addressed the problem of preparedness for public interest lawyers, one emerging theme was public interest lawyers dedicated to working for social justice at the individual and systemic level. The overall study was framed by the theories of learning from experience, social action, and reflection in action. The study was conducted with seven public interest lawyers working full-time for a non-profit public interest organization in the United States. Data from interviews, observations, and documents were analyzed using the constant comparative method. In this paper, a brief description is provided for the three highlighted cases. This paper presents the concept of actively educating legal professionals to work for the public interest through a dedication to policy reform; addressing inequities within the law, and community education and outreach.

An exploration of family literacy programmes and their enhancement of parental engagement with children's literacy.

Lána McCarthy,
Waterford Institute of Technology, Ireland.

This research on a set of evidence-based family literacy programmes has been carried out in a socio-economically disadvantaged area of Dublin. This investigation looks at parental perspectives of the programmes and includes their voices to generate the theory of what works for them, what enables their participation and what are the outcomes for the children, parents and families. The aim of the research is to identify a framework for family literacy programmes that reflects a range of backgrounds and dispositions towards the role of the parent in relation to the education of their children. This presentation describes the methodology of grounded theory, the data collection process, the context of the practice, and outlines an Irish family literacy framework.
The Thingamajig that fits the Yokimaboke that makes the Whirlimagig go round: Further Education by every other name

Eileen McPartland

Maynooth University, Ireland.

Finding a distinct place within an educational paradigm is a fundamental in any epistemological analysis of education and this paper looks at the possibility that the distinctly Irish concept of Further Education is a chameleon used by socio, economic and political discourses within the European and Irish educational agendas, which have impacted on every aspect of Further Education in the Republic of Ireland. In what appears to be neoliberal systemic practices within Foucault’s (Foucault, M. 1978-89) descriptions of neoliberalism, these attempts to mould Irish FE may have somehow been unsuccessful. This paper examines how this might have happened from a practitioner’s point of view. It examines the distinct uniqueness of Irish Further Education from the point of view of actors within. It will examine how different actors have attempted to label FE by many acronyms such as AE/FE/VE/PLC/LLL/VET/IVET/CVET and laterally FET and how its very history may have created a malleability that could perhaps be a source of power with the potential to generate for Irish FE a position which may not be understood by those currently molding it to their own ends but which could protect it conceptually.

The paper does not purport to suggest alternative solutions, which might ground FE, but seeks to understand how its actual power may be its saving grace. This power however is not centred on the student in FE but on the lack of understanding of where the powerbase actually lies. In seeking to identify where the power actually lies in FE, the paper will touch on Wendy Brown’s discussion of “homo politicus” (Brown, W. 2015 p86), which is indirectly identified as possibly Foucault’s Achilles Heel in his analysis of neoliberalism (Foucault, 1978-79).

Global and comparative policy studies on adult education: Research trends and future hopes

Marcella Milana,

University of Verona, Italy

This paper will present and discuss some trends in global and comparative policy studies on adult education, as they emerge from the literature, mostly (though not exclusively) produced and in circulation in the ‘global north’ (i.e. Europe and North America).

Policies studies in adult education that adopt ‘global’ lenses or assume a comparative perspective are growing in number end extent (among others: Desjardins and Gordon 2013, Hamilton 2014, Jacobi 2009, Milana and Nesbit 2015, Nesbit and Welton 2013, Tett 2014). Some originally borrowed from comparative and international education an understanding
of what a comparison is (i.e., country-to-country) and how comparisons can benefit policy (i.e., by learning from other national experiences). But since the education and learning of adults has gained new policy momentum under the lifelong learning regime, researchers have increasingly engaged with global policy studies that analyze the efforts by international organizations to legitimize specific political interests and shape international agendas through new governance mechanisms, and the promotion of a monitoring culture.

In reviewing relevant literature, this paper argues that at least three trends can be found, depending on the research aim, to: 1) describe changes and evolutions along a temporal continuum; 2) compare (horizontally) policies by different actors, either at a certain point in time or from an historical perspective; or 3) juxtaposing (vertically) policies by international organizations with those of their member states and assess whether they converge or diverge. Often these different aims concur. Through a discussion of these trends, each with strengths and limitations, this paper argues for further nurturing diverse trends in policy studies on adult education, rather than privilege the one or the other, in order to complement our understandings of national and global transformations in adult education policy.

In so doing, the paper also addresses issues of power in policy transformations that research helps bringing to the fore, and questions whether policy research may represent a resource for imagining diverse futures for adult education.

Experiential Education: the Simulation of "EUropa.S" at the T.E.I. of Epirus

Christina Mitsopoulou

Technological Educational Institute (T.E.I.) of Epirus, Greece

The fulfillment for the development of the human being is due to the education that is considered to be the driving force that determines his “integration” intellectually, ethically, mentally, and emotionally. Learning through experience is one of the highest authority that one has. Is there a teaching method for adults in order to “discover a closer approximation to truth as it is in the process of becoming in him”? Roger's quotation is to be applied with the European Project “EUropa.S” to students in the Dept. of Business Administration at the Technological Educational Institution of Epirus.

Using simulation and the principles of “EUropa.S”, the students learn the main functions of the European Union by playing role games such as Chairpersons or Heads, Members of the Parliament, etc. They develop their ideas and they empower their imagination, creativity, so that they show competency and ability in dealing with their future and the progressive changes observed in societies nowadays.
**Power Binaries and the Evacuation of Humanity from European Migration Debates**

Linda Morrice,  
University of Sussex, UK.

The dramatically increasing number of refugees entering Europe is one of the defining social, political and economic issues of the 21st Century. This theoretical paper problematizes some of the binaries underpinning migration debates across Europe and the role assigned to adult education. It takes the concept of integration as its starting point to explore the ideological constructions and assumptions underpinning the binary of ‘host society’ and ‘migrant’. The paper then turns to consider the framing and construction of migrants in both education and migration discourses. The key argument running through the paper is that the ideological contours in public and policy discourses are drawn in such a way as to mask the operation of power and relations of dominance, enabling inequalities to become cemented. Furthermore, such binaries enable the erasure of compassion and humanity in public discourses, and consequently serve to justify a lack of political action.

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**Springboard – Success or Failure? Creatively Bridging socio-economic disadvantage to generate power and resources for the future adult-learners**

Lorna Moloney  
University College Cork, Ireland

This paper examines the educational legacy of ACE at UCC through an assessment of the administration of the Springboard HEA programme.

Springboard provides opportunities to unemployed adult learners to retrain, upskill or develop new skill landscapes to aid national economic recovery. This paper explores the creative challenges involved for adult learners taking springboard programmes within UCC. In operation since 2010, Springboard statistics show that 49% of adult springboard learners undertaking an undergraduate degree are in employment nine months after course completion. 71% adult springboard learners undertaking a postgraduate course are in employment nine months after course completion.

This paper seeks to analyse the success of the employment statistics for Springboard participants because of a number of outputs. Unusually, on analysing employment statistics for those springboard students who fail to complete the course, figures still continually show high rates of employment. As Adult learners frequently leave springboard course before completion because they gain employment quickly due to a hidden advantage of university Springboard course enrolment and the prestige of a university place on profiles;
this part of the paper examines diverse power outputs resulting from gaining a place at University and the social capital enjoyed by participants as a resource of new educational approaches.

Therefore, the benefits of enrolling on a springboard course for adult learners highlight hidden beneficial outcomes and this paper provides core statistical outputs showing these value of adult education entry for those socio-economically disadvantaged through educationally diverse platforms of power.

This research demonstrates statistical outcomes for past alumni UCC springboard students by evaluating the core goals of the Springboard programme, one of which is the provision of stable long-term employment for socio-disadvantaged candidates. It assesses the value of such bespoke programmes to the adult learner when united to national recovery. It analyses these programmes and explores how creative educational programmes empower adult learners across many diverse spheres.

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**Resources of Creativity in Adult Environmental Education**

Tatiana Mukhlaeva  
Russian Academy of Education, St Petersburg, Russia

The paper shows the mission of environmental adult education and reveals the problems it faces today. It substantiates significant opportunities for opening up adults’ creative potentials in institutions of non-formal education which avoid the managerial control and the pressing influence of educational policy mainstream. The paper justifies humanization in the contents of environmental education on the base of integrating scientific, humanitarian and social knowledge, reveals the potential of learners’ project activities, which influence their cognitive motivation, promote acquiring environmental knowledge, developing behavior based on environmentally sensitive decisions, critical thinking in considering environmental information in mass media, civic responsibility and experience of creative social participation.

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**Learning Power: A Collaborative Action Inquiry Study**  
"Wait we’re not all on the same page"

Aliki Nicolaides  
University of Georgia, Athens, USA

This action research study contributes to the exploration of power dynamics in academic and practitioner engagements. The author invited eleven leadership practitioners to join as co-inquirers in a collaborative action inquiry group. The purpose of the inquiry was to learn new ways to develop leadership capacity for adaptive challenges faced by communities and
organizations of all kinds. Although the consent form described the group sessions as a place “where we share personal experiences, engage in dialogue, give and receive feedback with co-inquirers,” the group lacked trust necessary for deep engagement and a collaborative space did not emerge. Researchers reviewed data from seven group sessions, eight research team meetings, and ten in-depth interviews. Key findings include (1) importance of creating and nurturing organizational readiness prior to undertaking collaborative action inquiry; (2) old power dynamics disrupted engagement; and (3) notwithstanding discomfort and frustrations with the process, co-inquirers identified several learnings about leadership practice.

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**Working the boundaries of spaces for agency in adult education – how European social inclusion policy challenges adult educators’ creativity.**

Beatrix Niemeyer
Sebastian Zick
University Flensburg, Germany

The paper will elaborate on the tension field of power and creativity by examining the relationship between supranational, i.e., European governance and regionally or locally situated educational practice. Over the past 30 years European governance has increasingly influenced the way how adult education is provided by ever intensified strategies of governance (Schemmann 2007). The European Social Fund is one instrument by which the EU has become a powerful actor in the field of education. At the first sight tight funding regulations and controlling instruments appear as specific features of power limiting the space for agency in adult education, for adult educators as well as for adult learners. A closer look however, reveals creative strategies of the actors in the field who have engaged in the complex business of European project work.

Our paper will focus on this connection between supranational (European) governance of adult education and regional realities of adult learning by analyzing how educators and program planners negotiate, develop, maintain or change their space for autonomous agency within the tight conditions set out by European funding regulations of social inclusion programs for unemployed school leavers. For our analysis of the impact and usage of the European Social Fund in adult education we build on the findings of the ongoing research project, funded by the German trade union foundation, Hans-Böckler-Stiftung, titled *Europäisierungseffekte in der Übergangsgestaltung zwischen Schule und Beruf - effects of Europeanisation on school-to-work-transition programming*. The reconstruction of the games of power inherent to European social inclusion policy as a complex relation between supranational governance and local practice methodologically has been approached by a multi-level analysis and historical comparison over the last 30 years. Building on the heuristic model of actor centered institutionalism (Mayntz/Scharpf 1995) the paper will contrast the findings of the document analyses of funding regulations and EU-social inclusion and employment strategy papers with the analysis of expert interviews conducted with actors in the regional field. This contrasting mixed-methods approach allows to reconstruct how ESF-funded youth unemployment programs are forming into a transition
regime which can be considered as a construction element of the European education space (Lawn/ Novoa 2002).

Furthermore the increasing tendency towards regulating and ruling the educational work the field of ESF-funded school to work transition may be read as a specific EU knowledge policy, engendering specific knowledge on youth unemployment, the target group of unemployed young people and adequate pedagogical approaches to support transition into employment. According to this logic quality equals funding and funding equals quality. However, actors in the field are challenged to reflect, re-consider and re-formulate their educational approach, to reconcile it with “social inclusion talk” (Steiner-Khamsi 2012). Hence the expert interviews give evidence to the creative potential of negotiating work ethics and educational mandate within this tension field.

The folk high school as a contemporary educational pathway for Swedish parliamentarians

Henrik Nordvall,
Charlotte Fridolfsson
Erik Nylander
Linköping University, Sweden

The aim of this study is to explore the contemporary role of the folk high schools as an educational pathway for Swedish MPs. Statistics from the folk high school register at Statistics Sweden is analyzed. In summary, there is still quite many former folk high school participants in the Swedish parliament (27 percent 2014). The MPs’ folk high school-participation consists mainly of short courses. There are differences in terms of level of participation between parties, and over time the folk high schools have increasingly come to be used by members of the parties on the left side of the political spectrum. The folk high schools are to a significant extent used as a meeting place during the political career, not only as an educational pathway to power as emphasized in earlier research.

Who cites whom? Mapping out citation clusters by means of bibliographic network analysis

Erik Nylander,
Lovisa Österlund,
Andreas Fejes,
Linköping University, Sweden

In this paper we introduce and apply a novel approach to the study of citation patterns in research that, henceforth, will be called bibliographic network analysis (BNA). We build on
some of our previous bibliometric studies on the research field of adult education (Fejes & Nylander, 2014; 2015) in order to map out citation patterns in five leading journals. Our empirical case is based on articles published between the years of 2006 and 2014 in five different journals listed in Scopus: Adult Education Quarterly, International Journal of Lifelong Education, Studies in Continuing Education, Journal of Education and Work and Journal of Workplace Learning. The sample includes all references in the reference list of all articles published in the above journals during the time period, in total 151,261 citations from more than 33,000 individual entries.

By means of bibliographic network analysis, we analyse the collegial composition of the full volume of citations gathered from this sizable database. Our overall research question concerns how the field of research for adult education and learning is being shaped through standard referencing. More specifically we ask: who is citing whom? Which research is seen as belonging together based on citation practices? What kinds of research uphold key positions in the field based on the number of citations?

Our results partly confirm prior research on adult learning as a scientific field. They illustrate, for instance, how scholars within the sociocultural paradigm are positioned at the core, surrounded by other rivaling clusters of scholarship, with transformative-, critical- or post-structural orientations. The results also confirm the image of Anglophone scholars as being treated as standard references par excellence within the field. However, comparing the different journals reveals great variety among them and highlights the importance of both institutional and national connections to the distinct editorial boards for the work to gain wider recognition. Thus, our overall results indicate that as a research field, adult learning is diverse, yet at the same time highly segmented with rather limited circulation of standard referencing across its leading journals. There are a limited number of boundary-crossers, i.e. individuals whose work is prevalent regardless of journal. Furthermore these references mostly belong to researchers who are not publishing in these journals, but whose scientific contributions are drawn upon in adult learning, e.g. Freire, Bourdieu, Foucault or Lave and Wenger.

These latter findings are exposed through our methodological approach that, we contend, overcomes some previous limitations within bibliometric research. Firstly, our method (BNA) allows us to take into consideration the full scope of scholarly citations, including those directed to books, debate and enlightenment literature, and not only, as is commonplace within bibliometrics, other peer-reviewed journal articles. Secondly, BNA allows us to give a synthetic and telescopic view of the internal structure of these citations, i.e. to and from the authors upholding the dominating positions within any particular field. The method thus allows us to analyse the field both in terms of the groups or clusters that pertain to the field as well as grand scholars whose influence on the field is substantial but indirect.
Professional learning through simulation. New wine in old wineskins?

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Johanna Dahlberg,
Samuel Edelbring,
Håkan Hult,
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During the last decades, simulation training has world widely become one of the most common teaching methods for learning for and in work. The use of simulation training comes from the major changes are taking place in the work and education of professionals. First, professional face complex and multilayered problems, and simulations are employed to prepare professional to face such problems. Second, the rapid development of technology and digitalisation in the 1990s enhanced the use of simulations both at work and in education. Third, simulations are believed to offer a new kind of learning opportunity, compared to traditional learning methods. This has led to significant growth to use simulation both in undergraduate professional education and in continuing professional development of health professionals. This paper explores how simulation is enacted to support professional collaboration. More specifically, the study focuses briefing and debriefing as phases critical for learning in simulation. By drawing on a sociomaterial perspective, professional learning is seen as always more than individual: as embodied, relational and situated in social and material arrangements. This implies a relational view of practice, focusing on sayings, doings and relatings aiming at exploring emerging patterns of relationships between interactions and arrangements in the simulation practice.

We draw on empirical data gathered through standardised video recorded sessions (briefing, simulation and debriefing) of simulated acute emergency settings where professional health care workers train together to improve interprofessional collaboration. Data have been analysed through an iterative and layered process, combining in-depth analysis of particular scenarios, with comparative analysis across them.

The key findings of our analyses show that the ways briefing and debriefing are done are interconnected with and governed by historical traditions of institutional teaching practices as well as simulation practices. The findings show that the way the instructors conduct the briefing and how they relate to the participants, are connected to the institutional teaching practices or “this is how we teach here”. The debriefing, on the other hand, are influenced by the historical traditions of simulation and how that should do the debriefing. Therefore, we argue that different teleoaffective structures are emerging and materialised in sociomaterial arrangements and in how the instructors conduct the briefing and the debriefing sessions.

The implications of the study are discussed in relation to pedagogies for professional learning with simulation, and how identification of patterns of collaboration in simulated work situations can contribute to enhance learning.
Feminist pedagogy in neoliberal times

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An Irish independent women’s community education organisation has experienced the struggles of surviving in a hostile climate. The purpose of the research is to reconceptualise the meaning of the work of the organisation. The findings from ethnographic research with participants and practitioners produced a social map of the Women’s Centre, and identified elements that contribute to their transformation such as making new connections, groupwork, the physical environment, the challenge and support, the pace, and the participatory management structure. The research has reframed an understanding of the political nature of the work and concludes that feminist pedagogy has an important role to play in enabling disadvantaged women move through different ways of knowing.

Participatory research as a tool to understand resilience of young Muslims

Helena Maritta Oikarinen-Jabai
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In my presentation I will discuss my two research projects that deal with belonging and identifications of second generation immigrant youth in Finland. The first project A Finn, a Foreigner or a Transnational Hip-hopper? Participatory Art-Based Research on the Identification Negotiations and Belongings of the Second Generation Finnish Immigrant Youth I conducted with different teams of participants, artists, art educators, museum staff and cultural and media workers in 2009-2016. The other project Young Muslims and Resilience: A Participatory Study will be conducted with a group of young participants, three researchers and other actors in 2016-2018. In this second study I also lean on data and material produced in the previous study.

In the earlier research participants were from different age groups, in the present study the participants will be young adults between 18-30. Both research projects are using performative creative and visual methods and are based on idea of participants being go-researchers, and their voices and perspectives are an important part of research reporting and research findings (Denzin 2003; Liebenberg 2009; O’Neill 2008).

During 2009-2016 I have produced photo and video several exhibitions together with different teams. With a group of Somali youth we have conducted Two documentaries Minun Helsinki/My Helsinki/Waa/ Magaaladeydii Helsinki and Soodewow//Come closer, books Mun stadi/My town and Toisin silmin/By different eyes, a video installation By my eyes/Minun silmin and a radio programme Where is my space/Mis on mun tila?
It was obvious that the participants negotiated and rearticulated their cultural citizenship status within their cultural productions (Oikarinen-Jabai 2015). By the side of other subjects, especially the participants with Somali and Muslim background dealt with the issues connected to religion. In my presentation I will focus on the presentations of religion in youth’s productions. I will also ask how these presentations are connected to their cultural citizenship and diasporic imagination (Brah 1994; Hua 2011).

Furthermore, I also evaluate how their religion (or religious identity and identifications) possibly support their resilience. According to Michael Ungar (2004), when researching resilience of young people, the concept should be understood as socially constructed and by leaning on the expertise of researched. It is important to ask does our theoretical approach account for the experiences of those we study. Even though in participatory research all participants encounter challenges, this kind of approach helps all participants to address power relations and ethnocentricity embedded in the research context. I think that when researching Young Muslim and their relationship religion, this will be a very important issue to discuss within research actors when conducting field work and productions. (Liebenberg & Ungar 2009).

Assessing adult learning: a trace ethnographic investigation of Education & Skills

Cormac O’Keeffe

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Educational and economic data are increasingly produced by digital agents. Much of the work of data this data production is delegated to software and code that deployed within assessment events. This paper is part of on-going investigation into the OECD’s online, pay-per-use version of the Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies called Education & Skills Online. This three-stage test is sold with the stated aim of providing employers and universities with data on the cognitive and non-cognitive skills of their team members and students. First, I demonstrate some of the work done by coded agents and how they manage both human and other coded agents during assessment events. Second, I argue that Education & Skills Online is also a test of itself and used to fine-tune digital testing techniques as part of a wider strategy to normalise assessment methodologies in adult learning and the management of ‘human capital’.
The Concept of Competence and the Challenge of Competence Assessment

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In order to promote new lifelong learning opportunities you need practices of assessing and recognizing individuals’ competences across different regimes of recognition, in particular business/industry and the formal education system. Recognition by business and industry applies an instrumental perspective and refers to structures and mechanisms of the labour market, assessing the perceived ability of the subject to function in the work situation. Recognition by the educational system is based on documented completion and description of formal curricula, based in an academic worldview.

Assessments have been introduced in European countries under slightly different headings - competency assessment, recognition of prior learning, the Danish “realkompetencevurdering” (an assessment of competencies from all previous experience), the French “bilan de compétence”, etc. Assessment criteria are completely different, shaped by their specific institutional histories.

Independent of institutional set-up it remains a crucial challenge is to develop a new language of competence which enable us to mediate between these different regimes – and also understand the logic of individual life experience. Competence assessment is primarily a counterpart to or replacement for the dominant system of diplomas and certificates from formal education. But it also represents a broader and more general alternative to the narrow and one-dimensional job-oriented view of work qualifications, such as is used in, for example, labour market statistics. In Europe a common (universal) framework of (international) competence comparison is pursued by defining European/national qualification framework, assigning institutional and labour market categories to a unified system, described by competence levels.

The notion of “Competence”, borrowed from social psychology, is supposed to serve as the new “general equivalent” of human capability. My paper will argue that the notion of “competence” implies some fundamental challenges, but also explore how the process of competence development and re-configurations are embedded in life history processes. In a couple of empirical projects about specific educational trajectories leading to professional education we have been studying the individual experience of the continuities and re-configurations of experiences from former work life, education and other life experiences take place in individual careers. The analyses are based theoretically and methodologically on a psycho-societal interpretation of life histories. The acknowledgement of the subjective nature of competencies means that the assessment must also be sensitive to subjective diversity and the contextual nature of informal learning. Different careers and life experiences must be contextualized in relation to societal practice as well as individual lives. In this way the concept of competence must be theorized in relation to conscious as well as unconscious dimensions of individual identity processes.
Democratization of Family Relations in Poland: Towards Gender Equality and Social Change Through Learning

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Power in marriage depends on the social and cultural norms regarding gender roles and expectations directed to spouses and families. In European societies the men are culturally provided with family power, and are called "heads of families". Such a scheme of power relations is transmitted both in the process of socialization, and gained by women and men in the process of learning, understood as active and social behavior in which meanings are created in order to better understand the reality. Those meanings are formed through interactions with others in the process of learning (Bron, 2006). In this perspective, marital relation becomes one of the space of learning.

That learning can be a process running in different types of families. The one possible is democratic family as A. Giddens (1998) calls it. He argues that contemporary family has democratized in a manner corresponding to the processes of democratization in public sphere. The democratization of the family assumes equality of family members, their mutual respect, autonomy of each of them, no violence in their relations, and decision-making through communication, negotiation and dialogue. In such a family, a spouse is considered as autonomous value and independent subject, regardless gender.

The processes described by Giddens can likely be seen in dual-career families from so-called Polish middle class - professionally active and highly educated couples. The main aim of this paper is to analyze the intimate relations within such marriages in terms of changes in spouses’ relation as well as development opportunities that this change may create. Those changes will be analysed with reference to two contexts: the wider one, which is connected with social and cultural changes in Poland regarding gender system, and the narrower one, connected with “hidden knowledge” of the family; knowledge about spouses relations derived from my own empirical data - narrative research based on in-depth interviews with dual-career family spouses. The main aim of it was to reach the ways of understanding and interpreting the phenomenon of equality between spouses, as well as to grasp the different meanings of egalitarian everyday family life as manifested by different narrators. The research results shows, that the main goal of the actions performed by spouses in the relation, within the family and on the boundary between the space of the professional life and the space of the family life, is deepening the mutual relation and its continual maintenance by means of (self)reflection and self-understanding.

The article argues that family relations and a family as educational environment must follow the challenges of contemporary changes in Polish society and culture, and open its boundaries to “educational democracy”. Equality, however, does not refer merely to the range of roles and positions within a family. Nor is it limited to a fair division of household chores and responsibilities. Rather, equality is a wide family discourse based on specific groups of values and norms, which I reconstruct in the paper.
Enabling a professional identity in FE teachers: The importance of dialogue in developing practice

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This paper is purporting to explore ways in which FE teachers professional capacity can be enhanced within the further education (FE) sector in Ireland. Demirkasimoglu (2010) synthesizes several definitions of professionalism among teachers as a ‘…multi-dimensional structure consisting of one’s work behaviours and attitudes to perform the highest standards and improve the service quality’ (pg.2048). This paper will explore the positioning of professionalism as a creative act in the context of neo-liberal influences that powerfully shape professional practice. The rationale for the research is to generate empirical research in the FE sector in Ireland in relation to the enhancement of teaching and learning practices and processes. The central purpose is to explore ways that creatively inform the strategic goal of quality enhanced professional practices, an agenda which can be directly ascribed to the prevailing neo-liberal influences.

An adaptation of assessment for learning (AfL) theory which involves the introduction of suggested feedback strategies within the FE classroom is the case study intervention. The objectives of the study are to answer the following key questions;

- What experiences unfold in the learning process among FE teachers and FE learners?
- What happens to the professional engagement for the FE teacher as a result of the focused intervention?
- What happens to students’ engagement with their learning?
- What experiences unfold for the case study FE institution as an educational organisation, as a consequence of the teaching and learning focused intervention?

This paper will outline the theoretical framework on which the research is based. The literature review focuses on the theoretical areas of learning, teaching, assessment for learning and change in professional practice. The paper will discuss the creative use and application of feedback strategies in FE teaching methodologies and how this contributed to enhancing the professional practices of the FE teacher. While data collection is still ongoing, this paper will present some initial findings. One emerging outcome for FE teachers engaged in this study is that it has led them to engage with reflection in a more proactive and meaningful way and so their practice deepened and became more creative in response to the needs of the learners. The teachers began to ‘think’ outside their subjective teaching habits and be creative in giving feedback to learners and addressing their individual needs. FE teachers in the study were observed as moving away from ‘subjective’ practice towards more open, teaching strategies aimed at enhancing learning. As a consequence of this movement is a constant coping and grappling with the forces of ‘neo-liberal’ influences and agendas that permeate the environment of practice.
Bumping into adult education: How professionals become adult educators and their perceptions of their work

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The aim of this paper is to discuss the personal and professional pathways that lead to adult education and the perceptions of adult educators about this field of practices. Firstly, I will discuss how adult educators started to work in adult education, mainly in recognition of prior learning. Secondly, I will discuss how adult educators look at this field of practices in adult education. The data used are from PhD research I’m conducting in Adult Training. This is a qualitative study and the empirical data consist of 32 biographical interviews of adult educators who have worked in recognition of prior learning.

There are several motives that led these professionals to work in recognition of prior learning. The analysis of the adult educators’ discourses allows for the making of a typology composed of five motives: invitation, opportunity, chance, continuity and the need to pay bills. In general, adult educators had the perception that their work was important and very valuable, contributing to the restoration of social justice of a part of the population who had no opportunity to continue their education during their childhood and youth for several reasons.

Dealing with social inequality – cooperative learning and memory framing as creative strategies for social change

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Based on an empirical study of the highlands of Chiapas in Mexico, this paper highlights learning processes related to experiences of social inequality. The empirical data contains narrative biographical interviews with people in precarious living circumstances. The biographies make the dynamic of trajectories of suffering visible which need to be addressed. Of interest are strategies for dealing with social exclusion, disadvantage and vulnerability. In particular, the paper focuses on cooperative forms of learning and memory framing as creative strategies for social change. Cooperative structures function as a reflexive learning space and the knowledge that is generated interactively is recognised as a collective benefit. The research findings reveal that social problems are also framed as a supra-individual challenge. Cooperation can be described as a successful practice to widen perspectives and patterns of interpretation in order to influence social structures and conditions.
Renewed models for the analysis of paraplegic people's experience of gender and disability: some instruments for peer coaching

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We are currently leading a doctoral research project on the vocational rehabilitation of paraplegic people. At the rehabilitation centre, paraplegic people build their first individual vocational project towards their reintegration in the labour market. The individual project is managed with the support of a vocational counsellor. We claim that the discourse of vocational rehabilitation conveys stereotypes about the socio-sexual division of labour (English et al., 2006), and about disabled people’s employment in the paid workforce (Roulstone, 2004), and that these representations may impact on the quality of paraplegic people’s self-determination (Deci & Ryan, 2002) in their vocational gearing.

We have collected 11 vocational life narratives (5 by women, 6 by men). Our method of analysis consists of understanding the meanings given by our informants to their existential trials (Baudouin, 2012), which are gendered. These bodies of interpretations are articulated by the subject and shape a life experience, a vocational life experience especially. The subject might resort to these explanations to solve future existential trials. The meanings repeatedly attributed to resembling life experiences constitute experience models (Van Dijk, 2010).

Experience models are useful in peer coaching, as a peer coacher can physically or discursively display them for a peer coachee. We propose experience models based on the vocational lives of our 5 female informants; if appropriated – or even rejected -, these models can support the ‘peer coachee’s’ approach of vocational life as an impaired person by making them aware of (self-) attributions of gender and of disability.

The porous university: re-thinking community engagement

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This is a concept paper, rather than a report on empirical research. The main goal of this paper is to stimulate a conceptual re-think about the nature of community engagement. The paper questions some of the ideological rhetoric of community engagement whereby the university is presented as a collaborative partner and co-creator of knowledge, particularly through strategies such as service-learning. It highlights issues of power relationships, ownership of the engagement process and knowledge generation. The paper offers a theoretical framework for community engagement, drawing on the capabilities approach, asset based community development and dialogue. The framework is then presented as a diagram which can be used as an evaluative tool for assessing how community-university
engagement can be more community-led and build on community assets, rather than following a deficit model of intervention which is premised on community need.

**Risking Hope! Exploring spatial ecologies of disruptive and unruly adult education pedagogies**

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Hope is a risk. But if the point is to change the world, we must risk hope.  
(Munoz & Duggan, 2009: p279)

The move to corporatisation and managerialism within our knowledge institutions is widespread (Lynch et al., 2015). The adult and community education sector in Ireland, despite its radical origins, democratic principles and destabilising and rupturing intentions, is unfortunately no exception. Exposed to the policies and practices of austerity, the sector has seen unparalleled levels of decimation, coinciding with increased levels of surveillance through rigid performance policies and funding models. For those of us living, teaching, being within such challenging times it could be argued that we have adopted a rather ‘presentistic’ (Lasch, 1978) mode of being. We have become so self-involved in surviving the present that we seem to have forgotten the past or, are unable to imagine the future. We might consider presentism as a form of hopelessness or a manifestation of one of the conference provocations, namely power, or specifically the ‘private powerlessness which can exist in the face of seemingly intractable public issues’. Simultaneously, however, it is the case that we continue to survive as adult educators and create new and challenging adult learning environments. I suggest that our resilient capacity to defy such powerlessness can be understood through a second conference provocation, creativity, as we harness the resources of hope which ‘reside in our capacities for reflexivity, imagination and creativity’. I will consider this relationship between power and creativity through the particular lens of hope-full pedagogies. I will interrogate the potentiality of hopeful creativity as it informs ‘disruptive’ and ‘unruly’ pedagogies within adult and community education.

‘Disruptive’ and ‘unruly’ pedagogies can also be read as constituents of a dynamic spatial ecology in which performative action, intervention, and perhaps transformation can occur as students participate in remapping their material and curricular landscapes (Kitchens, 2009: p240). Crucially, these spatial ecologies take into account not only knowledge, content, conceptions and acquisitions, but also values and beliefs, uncertainty and complexity (Savin-Baden, 2008). Locating such pedagogic provocations as spatial ecologies reinforces the power-full notion that the local and geopolitical conditions in which we ask questions, disciplinary, pedagogical, intellectual and institutional matter (Wiegman, 2002).
Thus, our actions as adult educators, hopeful and otherwise, must take into account the concrete, material situations of our realities, and the historic, economic and social contexts that explain them. Such spatial ecologies speak strongly to hope’s relational character as ‘a practice of discovering, creating, or enhancing relationships whereby others are invested in our hopes and we in theirs...communities form a vital component of the life of hope’ (Shade, 2006). However, this hope-full work is also challenging: the ‘hoped-for is not attained by dint of raw hoping...it must be conceived in relation to doing’ (Freire, 2014: p3). The inevitable tensions associated with ‘doing’ hopeful creativity, in these precarious, austere times means that doing hope is risky. Nevertheless, I argue that resources of hope, articulated through creatively ‘disruptive’ and ‘unruly’ adult and community education pedagogies, support a spatial ecology in which social change becomes possible. As adult educators, surely hope is a risk we must continue to take.

Police bodies and police minds: Occupational socialisation through sport

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This paper reports on a study of Swedish police officers’ sport participation as a form of occupational socialisation. Previously, questions of how sport functions as socialisation for work practice has been largely overlooked in the literature. The police are an interesting case, as policing is permeated by ideas of bodily prowess. The study seeks to answer how ideals of work practice are enacted through sport participation and how such socialisation has excluding effects. Using a practice theory framework, the concept of teleoaffective structure guides the analysis. Twelve interviews were conducted with police officers who have experience in police sports and policing. The analysis targeted symbolic manifestations of teleoaffectivity, and the findings indicate five overlapping ideals between sport and police practice. In addition, one police specific ideal was constructed. Based on these findings, we discuss how participation in sport practices subtly shape occupational norms.
Cultural and Intercultural Education between Creativity, Cultural Participation and Self-Optimization: Theoretical Conceptualizations and Empirical Findings

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The paper refers to the idea of the conference that in a period of crisis characterized by deepening inequalities, a rise in racism and xenophobia, adult education faces demands in conceptualizing offers, programs and projects that support resources of creativity on different scales for all milieus and groups of the population.

Cultural education and intercultural education get a new social impact caused by current public and political discourses, recently also caused by migration and refugees. According to these discourses and also scientific discourses cultural education meets the increased demands of aesthetics, cultural participation, self-optimization and creativity (vgl. Reckwitz 2012) by offering education and learning forms in different study areas (i.e. music and singing, painting, dancing, literature, fine arts, intercultural dialogue etc.). These offers seek for expansion of perception, improving art techniques and practices, enhancing experiences and possibilities of recreation. In the field of intercultural education we identify a rapid rise of offers and topics, revealing on one side tendencies of radicalization (anti-semitism, racism) but on the other side also a new approach to cultural understandings, which is named transcultural education (reflecting ones own position in changing connected cultures, reflecting hybrid identities and sense of belongings, affiliation, consequences of migration).

The discourses of cultural education especially point out the educational goals creativity, creative acting, optimized self, improved performance – also in increasing context to business demands but also to ways of living and lifestyles.

The contribution shows current theoretical conceptualizations and empirical findings in the area of cultural and intercultural education that show the wide range and differentiation of these area by analyzing topics, understanding of (cultural) education, goals, functions, learning forms, target groups.

Our own empirical studies in the field of cultural and intercultural education base on these theoretical and empirical studies: Gieseke/Opelt/Börjesson/Stock (2005) and Gieseke/Kargul (2005) that reveal three approaches to (inter)cultural education (participation portals): systematic approach (i.e. lectures and courses offering knowledge of art, culture and the relation of different cultures), creative approach (being creative, learning practices and techniques like drawing, dancing), communicative” and „intercultural“ approach (i.e. communicative experiences of other cultures, intercultural training, intercultural communication).
Our empirical findings show the development and differentiation of cultural and intercultural education. They have been conducted in these two studies:

- Robak/Fleige/Sterzik/Seifert/Teichmann/Krueger 2015 on developments of topics in „cultural education“ as an area of study in different institutions of (adult) education (a study by order of the Council of Cultural Education)
- Robak/Petter (2014) on developments of topics specifically in intercultural and transcultural education (as a subarea of cultural education) exemplifying the program structures in the federal state of Lower Saxony.

The method that has been used and will be discussed is program analysis (Gieseke/Opelt/Stock/Börjesson 2005; Gieseke/Kargul 2005; Käpplinger 2007; von Hippel 2011).

The results will be interpreted to further discuss how professionals in the field of adult and further education develop and design programs in these fields, how they conceptualize creativity and its functions and forms, how they balance learning needs that are either formulated by different social groups or according to local living conditions or labour markets, social and cultural challenges and interests and needs of individuals and other institutions.

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**Identity and Power: Building a marginalized field in mid-20th century United States**

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This paper outlines the principal issues facing adult education as a new academic field. We have traced the development of thinking about what adult educators need to know and how they envisioned the field. Of necessity, we also needed to understand how individuals viewed the constant tension between the demands of their own institutions and their desire to help the field. Ultimately, this tension resulted in a growing gap between the practice of adult education as understood in the U.S. and the academic discipline. Much of what happened in the U.S. was mirrored in Canada, where the early adult education professors were trained in U.S. institutions. There has been an increasing isolation within U.S. professoriate and a growing distinction between U.S. and Canadian concerns. There are both similarities and differences between the U.S. development and the European one. Although this paper is not comparative, we hope that it will stimulate future cross-cultural dialogue.
Ambiguities of “collaborative competences” in adult education: the case of Animacoop program.

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This paper presents two aspects of a doctoral research on collaborative competences in innovative organizations and training systems: (1) a literature review that identifies the existing work and the ambiguities in the use of these terms in French and English research; (2) an exploratory analysis of a specific training program, called “Animacoop”, which intends to develop cooperation between actors both face to face and at distance. Thus, the discussion examines theoretical and empirical approaches of the terms of cooperation and collaboration and their appropriation in this training program.

Occupational and educational biography of older workers and their participation in further education

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The adult cohort the German National Educational Panels Study (NEPS) offers data derived from 6778 adults that has been asked to participate in the study for six times so far. For a better understanding of learning activities of older workers, we used the NEPS data to look at the effects of formal education in adulthood and occupational changes on participation in further vocational education and training. Therefore, we differentiate between upwards mobility, downwards mobility and changes on the same level of occupation. In a multi-regression-analysis we control for well documented predictors – like level of schooling and vocational education, job status, gender and age as well as for company size. Descriptive results show the expected effects, but these effects disappear when the other variables are taken into account.
Adults’ Readiness to Learn and Basic Skill Acquisition and Use in English-Speaking Nations: An Analysis of PIAAC Data

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The focus of this research is adults’ readiness to learn and its’ relationship to their literacy skills and uses. We analyzed data from 24,000 respondents with low skills in four English-speaking countries surveyed by the 2012 PIAAC – a large-scale cross-national assessment of adult competencies. Readiness to learn may be key to understanding how adults having low skills approach and gain from learning. We also examined the relationship between adults with low skills’ acquisition and skill uses of skills. A series of linear regression analyses were conducted to address our research questions. We found readiness to learn to be statistically significantly related to the literacy skills of adults with low skills and their uses of skills at home/community and the workplace. Several cross-national differences were observed regarding the relationship of readiness to learn to skills uses. Further research is needed to understand the role readiness to learn plays in increasing or improving adults’ skills and uses of skills in different learning contexts.

Educational programmes for adults accompanying museum exhibitions: programmes providing access to arts education beyond traditional guided tours

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The paper discusses two aspects of adult education, which had previously received little attention in some countries but may provide broader perspectives for adult education research: programme analysis as a research approach and adult educational programmes offered accompanying museum exhibitions provide access to arts education. For this purpose, promotional texts for 709 educational programmes for adults accompanying museum exhibitions offered by German museum education services were systematically
examined by using programme analysis. One analysis finding is a system of portals to adult arts education in museums. The system provides a theoretical and empirical framework to clarify the role of participants of educational programmes in museums and illustrates the wide range of possibilities participants have to take an active part in educational offers during museum exhibitions. Results, limitations and possible implementation will be discussed.

Learning spaces as bases for adult learning

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In adult education, research and development on both learning and teaching often focus on didactic concepts or a new understanding of professionalism. In the last few years, however, more and more attention has been accorded to the role of physical and digital spaces in learning processes. Against this background, two key questions of research arise: At institutions of adult education, how are learning environments structured? And how can these environments are restructured to suit particular learning preferences?

In the respective research, the physical space for adult learners is of particular interest and relevance. Over the last ten years, said research has relied on case studies. One of the research methods applied is the interpretation of photos taken of learning spaces. This interpretation reveals very similar group space layouts e.g. in seminar rooms. If we widen the view to other institutions, e.g. (public) libraries, we discover new forms of learning spaces, which support learning for both groups and individuals.

Spaces for academic teacher-researchers’ intellectual work and creativity?

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Päivi Siivonen
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Karin Filander
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According to the academic capitalism the context of ‘enterprise university’ can be described as a place where continuing change and competition prevail instead of slow and committed basic research and teaching. The present day project of university is to deliver outstanding economic, social and cultural benefits and innovations to secure the competitive edge of the nation state. The out of breath change and competition at university have become signs of
efficiency and success, and, on the other hand, a context of stress and pressure for university researchers and teachers. The requirements of neoliberal policies are replacing critical intellectual academic work with such vocabularies as ‘business’, ‘product’, ‘evidence-based’, ‘accountability’ and ‘quality’.

In this study, which is currently in its early stages, our purpose is to analyse how the neoliberal discourse and its practices shape academic subjectivities and the sense of agency of the teacher-researchers. Moreover, we are interested in personal meaningfulness of academic work in the contemporary ‘enterprise university’ context. The target of our examination is to analyse teacher-researchers’ social positioning in two units in two Finnish universities. We strive to analyse and identify the ways of consent in relation to the dominant development rhetoric of ‘enterprise university’. In addition, we also seek traces of counter discourses and individual spaces for agency at ‘enterprise university’. We will examine what kinds of aspirations teacher-researchers have in their work and how those aspirations seem to match the prevailing logic at university. What are the spaces for personally inspiring projects and creative intellectual work that render academic work meaningful amidst the neoliberal managerialist agenda?

The research data consist of an inquiry on work welfare conducted in one target unit, answered by 78 members of the staff. In addition, interviews of staff members in two units in two universities will be used to deepen the understanding of the positioning of the target group. In our analysis of the data we will apply a narrative-discursive approach.

The preliminary analysis of the data suggests that there is a strong strive for continuous learning and development among the teacher-researchers in the spirit of involvement and communality at enterprise university. Teachers and researchers are reacting to the external pressures to meet the expectations of the present day university. But is there any place left for the traditional and passionate ethos for independent academic attachment and the appreciation of slow research work amidst the increasing pressures of efficiency and performance? How do the actors try to balance between the academic autonomy and freedom of their own work, strong management and the beautiful promises of communality of new corporate culture?

Adult literacy programmes, policy and social justice

Lyn Tett,
University of Huddersfield, UK

This paper discusses different approaches to equality and their impact on pedagogy. It then uses the lenses offered by Nancy Fraser’s (2008) concepts of redistribution, recognition and participatory parity to investigate if participation in family literacy education contributes to alleviating social injustices. It draws on data from case studies of three family literacy programmes in Scotland to demonstrate that these learners have experienced changes that have lessened social injustices in all three areas. However, it points out that
there are many countervailing forces that privilege a narrow, skills-focused, pedagogy that reinforce an individual deficit approach to learners. It concludes that although education is not a panacea for all social ills and cannot compensate for the inequities of society it can make a difference in creating more equitable conditions for those that have already experienced the greatest injustice.

Citizenship in an English Study Circle: Individual Responsibility through Personal Investment
Annika Turunen,
Åbo Akademi University, Finland,
The aim of this paper is to shed light on how the democratic ideal of institutionalized Nordic popular education is realized through a participatory ethnographic field study in an English as a foreign language study circle. I focus on if and how the participants conceptualize their citizenship when taking part in the study circle. Citizenship is understood to be comprised of ‘being’ and ‘acting’; it is changeable and linked to educational processes. The study circle is arranged as a classroom setting: the teacher organizes the activities, while the participants take notes, engage in exercises and struggle to learn correct usage. This seems to be a way for the participants to take personal responsibility for what they see as their lack of sufficient knowledge of English. In order to take responsibility, and make an investment in themselves, the participants temporarily give up their responsibility in the study activities and do not intend to influence the study circle in any particular way.

Nurturing solidarity in diversity. The super diverse shop floor of Tower Automotive in Ghent
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Faculty of Psychology and Educational Sciences (K.U. Leuven) Belgium
Pascal Debruyne
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The quest for solidarity in diversity is of increasing relevance in many of the Western societies. The powerful forms of solidarity that were institutionalized in the post-war welfare state derive their legitimacy from being grounded in a nationalized community with a shared imagined history. Yet, these strong forms of group loyalty and willingness to share resources are challenged by the reality of super-diversity. Moreover, the possibility and desirability of extending solidarity to newcomers and migrants who embody different historical trajectories is openly questioned. This has led prominent social scientists as well as policy makers to conclude that solidarity in diversity is perhaps a contradictio in terminis.
Against such gloomy perspectives, we try to understand how social workers, community workers, teachers, volunteers, delegates of trade unions and many other engaged citizens do create solidarity among people who do not have much in common apart from the school, the park, the factory, the sports field or the neighborhood center they share.

**Exploring Criticality and Creativity in Leadership and Management Education: Towards a Conceptual Model**

Andreas Wallo, Gun Sparrhoff, Henrik Kock

Linköping University, Sweden

The purpose of this paper is to describe and discuss the role of creative learning in performative and non-performative critical management and leadership education. The paper is theoretical and aims at developing a heuristic conceptual framework to be further explored in empirical studies. In the paper, two different traditions of research are outlined, denoted critique for improvement and critique for emancipation. Critique for improvement takes a performative stance and asks questions about how to use critical reflection as a tool for improving current practices. Critique for emancipation represents a critical performative approach that uses critical theory to question repressive ideological and social conditions that place unnecessary restrictions on the development of human consciousness. The two notions of what it implies to be critical is paired with theories stemming from the field of workplace learning research, particularly theories concerning the concept of creative learning. By combining these two types of literature, a heuristic conceptual model is developed that illustrates the role of creative learning in critique for improvement and critique for emancipation respectively. The paper concludes with suggestions for further research and a discussion about potential impactions for practice.

**Constructing an online collaborative learning space for ABE**

Margot Walsh

Limerick and Clare Education and Training Board (LCETB), Ireland

The aim of this study was to design a Computer Supported Collaborative Learning (CSCL) environment in an adult basic education (ABE) setting and to examine the learning that resulted. Design-based research was the methodological approach used to design the environment which was based on recommendations from existing literature and the Community of Inquiry framework. The study used a mix of interaction analysis and perceived satisfaction survey to assess the learning. The findings revealed that CSCL can be designed for ABE. Additionally, Higher Order Learning was facilitated through the CSCL
environment, making it a realistic and achievable objective for ABE. Other equally important learning outcomes were also indicated – increased confidence, self-regulation and an equalisation effect. Significantly, the trial elicited a positive participant perception of CSCL indicating its potential as a pedagogical approach for ABE.

Arts-based pedagogies in environmental education for adults: Indigenous Science, public eco-art and environmental protest

Pierre Walter,
University of British Columbia, Canada

This paper examines how creative, arts-based pedagogies have been employed in informal environmental education for adults in three areas: Indigenous education, eco-art and public pedagogy, and adult learning in the environmental movement. This conceptual inquiry reviews three bodies of literature on arts-based adult environmental education, primarily in North America. Theoretical perspectives include 'arts-integrated' Indigenous Science and decolonizing education, eco-art as public pedagogy, and arts as cultural codes for conscientization and educative activism. Arts-based pedagogies are credited with promoting holistic, critical understandings of place and their relationships to colonization, bridge the dualism of science and arts, allow sensory, visual and non-textual re-imagining of space, provoke an awareness of environmental issues, and promote collective conscientization and action for socio-environmental change. The paper concludes with directions for further research.

Back to the future: learning democracy, across difference, at a time of crisis

Linden West,
Canterbury Christ Church University, England

This paper considers the marginalisation of popular education under the impact of neoliberality. However, in multi-cultural societies of growing inequalities in which racism, xenophobia and fundamentalism have strengthened, we need new educational spaces in which different groups can learn the habits of democratic fraternity and exchange in the company of friends. The paper draws on historical and contemporary narrative research in a particular distressed city to examine the past, present and potential future role of adult education. It uses the psychosocial theory of self-recognition to illuminate the importance of relationship in profounder forms of learning and in building cosmopolitan psyches and new social solidarities, across difference.
Silence – A Matter of Public Concern
Reconsidering Critical Environmental and Sustainability Education

Danny Wildemeersch
KU Leuven Belgium

The paper analyses the contribution of critical pedagogy to the reflection on environmental and sustainability education. It links this reflection to a case of a Flemish/Belgian citizen movement that sensitizes the public for the issue of silence, through various educational and community-based practices. These practices inspired me to try and find out how the narrative of the organisation could be framed in terms of critical pedagogy. He therefore investigated how scholars on environmental education, particularly in this journal, have discussed over the years several theoretical and practical approaches of community-based environmental education. In addition I also explored how the notion of equality of intelligence developed by Jacques Rancière, and the concept of plurality developed by Hannah Arendt, could inspire that debate. It helped me to take a stance in the tension between individual and social transformation and connect it to the democratic practices of the citizen’s movement on silence. These investigations eventually resulted into an attempt to redefine good practices of critical environmental and sustainability education.

UN SCHOOLING FOR WORK
Moving between education and labour markets in digital creative work

Rebecca Ye
Stockholm University, Sweden

Newness in new forms of work has been the focus of research around the “digital revolution” and how it will transform labour markets. The trouble with focusing on what is new is that the minute we try to write about it, it becomes a little older. In this study, I pose old sociological questions on what are viewed as new forms of work. Questions on the role of schools in cultivating aspirants within evolving institutional systems, questions about occupational rhetorics and legitimacy. I choose to raise these questions in the area of digital creative work because of an increasing attention it is receiving not just in policy but also in academic research - the attention itself, a cause for study. The research site is Sweden. I use a well-regarded digital creative adult educational institution as my launchpad. For this paper’s analysis, I draw specifically from empirical material that I have gathered via longitudinal qualitative interviews with a cohort of individuals who have been trained there, as well as campus observations. I follow these aspirants over various time-points to collect individual experiences of significant, collective events such as undergoing training, looking for work, and being in work.

Themes that are emerging from preliminary analyses of the data reveal how aspirants are constantly shuffling between moments of uncertainty and certainty. The uncertainty they
face comes partly from fuzzy expectations around skills expectations and the mode(s) of evaluation used to scrutinise them. Yet, these shared narratives of uncertainty are set against the backdrop of the educational institution’s “unschooling” pedagogy that stresses taking responsibility for one’s own learning. Unschooling for work becomes a way for them to navigate through the ambiguity of evolving expectations, with structuring rituals in place within the educational institution to provide a framework from which they learn how to learn. Through the accounts of these aspirants, the school comes across as grooming the aspirants, not with technical or academic know-how, but to become contesters in this new space, carving out a stylised image of a group (Boltanski, 1987). Additionally, the strength of the educational institution in connecting its participants to vital networks in the working world functions both as a safety net that aspirants seem to fall back on and in spurring collective effervescence that stimulates cooperative social production (Durkheim 1912; Mears, 2015). Whilst a fair amount of attention in the economic sociology and sociology of professions literature has centred around studying the framing practices of occupational groups in situ (e.g. Fine, 1996; Koppman, 2014), or the jurisdictional struggles over professional boundaries (e.g. Bechky, 2003; Suddaby & Greenwood, 2005), much less has been dedicated to the study of educational institutions in preparing individuals to receive, believe, react towards or shape occupational rhetoric. This study ultimately seeks to contribute to our understanding of the “rise” of this occupational group by focusing on aspirants in this system of work, the institutions that train them, and how they relate and make sense of the representations of work that surround them.
The politics of publishing in research journals within the field of adult education and learning

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David Boud,
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Leona English,
St. Francis Xavier University, Canada
Mary Hamilton,
Lancaster University, UK

Current research in the field of adult education and learning (Fejes & Nylander, 2014, 2015; Harris & Morrison, 2011; Larsson, 2009, 2010; Rubenson & Elfert, 2015; St. Clair, 2011) has illustrated how the field, as represented by journals in the Anglophone context, is very much biased in terms of geography of authorship, as well as in terms of citations. Such situation is problematic in several ways.

Firstly, in relation to the emergence of an economy of publication and citations, researchers in countries where English is not the native tongue (as well as scholars from Anglophone countries), are more or less forced to publish in journals published in English speaking journals that often originate in an Anglophone country. Thus, these journals, no matter how they construe themselves, become positioned as “international” in the global economy of research. This is especially the case for journals indexed in the database ISI the Web of science, and to some extent Scopus, as these databases in several locations are used as basis for bibliometrical calculations, that in turn are used to define research “quality” and as a basis for dividing research funding.

Secondly, the bias in terms of authorship, most likely could be expected to influence what kind of intellectual work, theories and methods that are made visible, and positioned as important. Not the least taking into account how the editors and members of editorial boards of “international journals” in the field of adult education are largely from an Anglophone country (see Fejes & Nylander, 2014). Scholars in the field, thus have to
convince the Anglophone gatekeepers that a certain phenomenon, maybe from a very different cultural and historical practice than those in Anglophone countries, authored in one's own second language, is of interest to the “international” audience.

When comparing current analyses of “key” journals in the field, i.e. Anglophone journals (Fejes & Nylander, 2014, 2015), with an analysis of conference papers at the ESREA triennial conferences through the years (Käpplinger, 2015), it becomes evident that although similar intellectual traditions are at play, there are differences, not the least when focusing on who is picked up and cited, and thus positioned as important (or at least acknowledged). In light of the current economy of publication and citations, this raises concerns regarding the future knowledge production and developments in the field.

This symposium aims to bring issues of politics and power in publishing in the field of adult education and learning to the fore. By inviting editors from three journals in the field, the following questions will be reflected upon:

- How is the “field” construed as defined through the different journals (i.e. what is published/submitted to the journal) as well as in relation to the editors’ experience/reflection?
- Connecting to the above – what are the “trends” in the field?
- How do the journals view themselves in terms of “international”, and what is the meaning of such statement/epithet?
- How do journals approach geographical, and linguistic issues? What are the policies and practices regarding these?

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**Citizenship education, democracy and the market**

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Magnus Dahlstedt,
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Maria Olson,
Dalarna University, Stockholm University, Skövde University, Sweden

Fredrik Sandberg,
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Lina Rahm,
Linköping University, Sweden

Education is not only a matter of knowledge and skills provision, but also of training – of formation of citizens. Education is characterized by an ambition to secure two historically
established principles; that of democracy and that of the market. These two principles interact and mobilize both collective and individually oriented notions of what it means to be a citizen in different educational levels. Taking Sweden as a case, although far from entirely or exclusively, the former can be seen as more collective and the latter more individually adapted in this respect (Carlbaum 2012; Dovemark 2004; Olson & Dahlstedt 2014).

The centrality of the two principles of democracy and the market, and their tension-filled relationship in educational citizen formation over time, has lately been problematized (cf. Molnar, 2006; Sandlin, Burdick and Norris, 2012). Not least the historical change in which the market increasingly has come to be denoted as a situation in which several educational providers compete to accomplish public tasks (cf. Ball and Yodell, 2008). The vitality of the principles and of the tension between them has been identified as being particularly influential in post-war Swedish education policy (Englund 1999; Lundahl 2006; Dahlstedt 2009; Lundahl and Olson, 2013). However, less emphasis has been put on the role of this tension-filled relationship in education in relation to its commissioned task of citizen formation in policy and practice. This is not least the case in adult education, and educational practice that is assigned to live up to practically the same commissioned objectives as compulsory and upper secondary school.

In this symposium the focus is directed at how these tensions between democracy and market is played out in contemporary Swedish adult education. More specifically, the focus is put on the formation of citizens within formal (municipal adult education [MAE]) as well as non-formal adult education (folk high schools [FHS]). How do students construct themselves as citizens? What are the material and discursive conditions for such constructions? How does such constructions relate to the ways in which teachers construct students as citizen subjects?

The symposium is based on an on-going research project on citizenship education within and beyond adult and popular education. The data consists of 67 interviews with students and ten interviews with teachers within one school for MAE and one FHS. Students were asked to document their daily citizenship activities with a pen camera for 1-2 weeks, after which they were individually interviewed with a focus on what they had documented/not documented, and why. Interviews with teachers’ focused on their work with citizenship education within their teaching. Interviews were also complemented by collection and analysis of policy documents on adult and popular education.

The papers in this symposium, problematize different aspects of issues of citizenship education, drawing on post structural theorisations inspired by the work of Michel Foucault, as well as more critical theoretical perspectives inspired by authors such as Beverly Skeggs.
Vulnerable adults and their contexts in the European framework: which models for education and research?

Laura Formenti,
Andrea Galimberti,
Mirella Ferrari,
Milano Bicocca, Italy
Rosanna Barros,
Algarve University, Portugal
Agnieszka Bron,
Ali Osman,
Camilla Thunborg,
Stockholm University, Sweden

Vulnerability is often invoked, especially in EU programs and calls, when speaking about adults and young adults in present times. A critical appreciation of the concept itself, informed by empirical research, and a shared analysis of policies, practices, and their outcomes, in different parts of the EU, can help researchers to make a difference for educational systems in Europe, and to suggest ways to enhance social justice and citizenship.

The symposium presents and discusses 3 different examples of educational research projects aimed to vulnerable adult learners, in three European countries: Portugal, Sweden, and Italy. These presentations cast a light on “what matters” in research and education addressed to ‘vulnerable people’: recognition of prior learning, contexts of life, a meaning-full and care-full biographic narrative, connections with space, with others, reflection and reflexivity... The aim is to interrogate the power of research (and to reflect on what kind of research) in illuminating the complexity of vulnerability, as a condition that involves psychological as well as social aspects (as biographic research in adult education has shown), but also to understand how individual ‘vulnerability’ trajectories intersect with the features, resources and limits of contexts and proximal systems (families, groups, institutions, local communities etc.), of the territory (with its history, conformation and ‘intelligence’), and of larger systems (region, nation, the EU, and the planet itself), not least with the myths and dominant discourses in society. An integrated ‘micro, meso and macro’ model for research and intervention needs dialogue among researchers, and with external stakeholders.

The symposium will invite participants to a shared reflection on the connections of past, present and future in the evolution of policies, educational practices, and lived lives of adults in different countries, and how to build a common basis (among researchers, but also potentially involving policy makers, professionals, stakeholders, and citizens), to open possibilities for the future.
Stories that make a difference: resources of hope from biographical research

Laura Formenti,
Milano Bicocca, Milano, Italy

Linden West,
Canterbury Christ Church, UK

This symposium is meant to celebrate the richness, diversity, and relevance of biographical and narrative research in adult education in addressing questions that are political, epistemological, methodological, and (not least) urgent in human life, individually and collectively. There is a long and deep tradition in European studies and within ESREA of biographical and narrative research and scholarship (see Alheit et al. 1995; West et al. 2007; Monteagudo, 2008; Merrill & West, 2009; Horsdal, 2012). The search to understand struggles for identity, meaning, agency and the values to live by, cannot be neglected, in times when research and scholarship are increasingly orientated toward ‘evidence’ and outcomes while a-critically characterizes the dominant discourse of adaptation and flexibility in adult learning. The narrowing of the imagination shaping research objectives is part of a rampant neo-liberal orthodoxy, that constructs the world according to the doctrines of homo economicus and rational choice theory (West, 2016). Biographical research brings us back to a focus on learners (Formenti, Castiglioni, 2014), in a critical and reflexive way, “beyond a potentially reductive, one-dimensional rhetoric of people as ‘leaders’ and change agents, which may characterize contemporary educational discourse. We are given access, instead, to narratives of resilience but also of difficult emotional experience and constraints, when working in troubling contexts” (Merrill & West, 2009: 88).

We celebrate the amazing vitality of the Life History and Biography Network (LHBN), one of the oldest of the 13 ESREA networks. The key questions at the heart of the Network’s recent conferences became more explicitly political as well as epistemological, in times when mainstream research is more orientated toward empirical results, and an under-evaluation of the impact that researchers have on their worlds, under the continuing, scientistic gaze of ‘evidence-based’ imperatives and a mantra of ‘objectivity’ as an unquestioned good (Formenti, West, 2016).
Trajectories of Power, potentials for creativity: How PIAAC is shaping lifelong learning and literacy

Mary Hamilton  
Lancaster University UK  
Marcella Milana  
University of Verona, Italy  
Pia Cort  
Anne Larson  
Aarhus University, Denmark  
Kjell Rubenson  
University of British Columbia, Canada

The aim of this symposium is to explore the implications of international standardised assessments, specifically the PIAAC (OECD, 2013), for power relations and creativity in the field of lifelong learning and literacy. The symposium takes its departure from science and technology studies and socio-material theory (Fenwick and Landri, 2012) in that it treats PIAAC as a newly developing technology of governance, backed by powerful interest groups, which can be interrogated for its effects on the field it claims to represent. It contributes to a growing literature that documents the shaping effect of international surveys in the European policy space (Grek, 2010) and beyond (Beiber and Martens, 2011; Tsatsaroni & Evans, 2014).

Literacy is a central dimension of international surveys of educational achievement and the PIAAC itself builds on the literacy measures previously developed for PISA and for the International Adult Literacy Survey, framing these within notions of lifelong learning and adult skills. It is significant, therefore to look at how our understandings of literacy are shaped by such surveys and at what kind of literacy is imagined for adults in the globalised world of the future.

Contributors view literacy and learning as part of situated social practice, located in diverse social and political relations and an integral part of culture (Street and Lefstein, 2007; Tett et al, 2012). From this theoretical position we therefore assume, that the effects of PIAAC on literacy and adult learning will be indeterminate given the diverse contexts into which it is inserted and the variety of power relations at play in these contexts.

In the symposium we will examine the trajectory the PIAAC has taken to date, the ambitions its creators have for it and the potential it offers for creative educational change. The symposium will consist of three papers and a discussant who will respond before we open the floor for a general discussion. The three papers will each consider a different aspect of the PIAAC in relation to the conference theme.
Past Futures – Learning from Yesterday’s Imaginations

Maren Elfert
University of British Columbia, Canada

Bernd Käpplinger
University Gießen, Germany

Cornelia Maier-Gutheil
University Heidelberg, Germany

A multiplicity of imaginations lie in the past. Some become reality, but most never come to fruition. This symposium will look at some of these once hoped for futures in adult education, which can be regarded theoretically as a multilevel system between global governance and local action (Schrader 2014), despite its increasing fragmentation as a scholarly field (Rubenson & Elfert 2015). At the level of global governance, different actors are engaged in power struggles in order to influence policies and practices with their ideas. At the level of learning institutions, planning staff is seeking to position their own institution in order to meet learners’ demands and to survive in the context of frequent political, economical and social changes. At the level of professionals and practitioners, careers are re-negotiated and re-interpreted over life courses, and individual aspirations are in tension with work structures.

The symposium will consist of three complementary presentations, which bring together different types of data and different methodological approaches. The first presentation will build on archival research and interviews conducted for a PhD dissertation, which examined the history of the concept of lifelong learning in UNESCO (xxx 2015a, 2015b, 2016). The second presentation will draw on archived printed adult education programs (such as brochures and leaflets) in Germany. Specifically, the author will analyze how public adult education institutions presented migrants and their assumed educational needs from the 1950s until the present time (xxx 2015). The third presentation will present a unique longitudinal study of practitioners for which the author analyzes the narratives gathered by two interviews with the same participants over a time span of 25 years (xxx 2011, 2012, 2015).

This symposium will raise the following questions: What can we learn from these different pasts? Which (good) ideas have been lost, and why? How does engaging with the past impact how we think about our own time and its ideas for the future? What kind of mechanisms, dynamics and developments might be generally inherent in any kind of attempt to put imaginations into practice? For example, which dynamics exist in political agenda setting? How do adult education institutions construct images of learners? How do the careers of individual practitioners develop over time?

We will take a shared analytical perspective by asking for similarities and differences in the tensions and pressures that we have examined at different levels. Thus, links and interrelations will be established across all three presentations. For example, how is the influence of international policy discourse felt at the level of institutions or practitioners?
How individually or organisationally creative is “acted-on-context” (stimulating innovations and change) and “acted-in-context” (following the mainstream Zeitgeist) (Cervero & Wilson 1994)? What are the constraints on creativity on those who shape adult education policies and those who work as practitioners?

“The socially unconscious and the sources for social change”

Henning Salling Olesen
Roskilde University, Denmark

Linden West
Canterbury Christ Church University, England

Thomas Leithäuser
Roskilde University, Denmark

Regine Becker-Schmidt
University of Hanover, Germany

Lynn Froggett
University of Central Lancashire, UK

Karsten Mellon
Roskilde University, Denmark

This symposium will present papers and discuss psycho-societal approaches to adult learning. This is a stream of theorizing and empirical research which has taken inspiration from psychoanalysis. Without really becoming a mainstream orientation in adult education and learning research it represents a characteristic interdisciplinary orientation in ESREA. The idea for the symposium was an impulse to recognize the work of our colleague Kirsten Weber, who died last year, who was an inspiring pioneer in this approach. The interest in psychoanalytical approaches to social life and cultural analysis has had a much broader interest outside ESREA, and the particular interest of critical theory in the analysis of the culture of profane everyday life has its own networks. The International Research Group for Psycho-societal analysis, which was co-organized by Kirsten Weber, has remained in a critical dialogue with ESREA, with several overlapping participants. Shared interests have been the empirical studies of life histories, identity processes, professions, and also social work interventions as well as artistic activity. Organizational experiments have played a significant role.

The research of adult education and learning has historically been growing out of educational practices and community organization and has mostly adopted academic discourses that were aligned with the conscious and intentional stream of empowerment through enlightenment. Psychoanalytical understanding of people, individual lives and social relations has by default been addressing the unconscious, the unintended and contradictory
aspects, and has to some extent been perceived as a therapeutic rather than an analytical and reflective framework. But if we with critical theory theorize the individual unconscious as socially produced – as a flip side of the socially and culturally visible - then the awareness of the individual unconscious in profane social and cultural life become a key to discover what is held at the margins of mainstream culture – and it may release dynamics of learning and social empowerment.

The psychoanalytical inspiration has mainly consisted in two interrelated aspects: Development of methods in interpretation of empirical material, and a theoretical assumption that psychodynamics have their origin in culture and social relations, mediated in individual interaction experiences. From this theoretical assumption follows the interest in tracing socially unconscious dynamics in specific experiences and interactions, because they can be decisive resources in individual development (learning) as well as social change processes. In this way the symposium will seek to respond to one of the triennial conference subthemes: “Where are the new paradigms of practice and inquiry in adult education that combines the critical and the creative and challenge to epistemologies and psychologies that erase the endless complexity and intrigue of subjectivities?”

Litsting in the times of PIAAC—Looking at adults’ literacy practices from alternative and critical points of view

Virginie Thériault,  
University of Strathclyde, UK  
Tony Capstick,  
University of Reading, UK  
Klaus Buddeberg,  
University of Hamburg, Germany  
Vicky Duckworth  
Edge Hill University, UK  
Barbara Nienkemper  
University of Hamburg, Germany  
Lyn Tett,  
University of Huddersfield, UK  
Anke Grotlüschen,  
University of Hamburg, Germany  
Charline Vautour,  
Université de Moncton, Canada
The past twenty years have seen a growing trend towards assessment and international comparison in the field of adult education. As Hamilton (2012) notes, literacy is nowadays seen as an important variable to compare individuals and countries. Currently, the Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC) plays a central role in this international trend and influences the media coverage and public policies for adult learners (Hamilton, 2014). The increasingly important role that survey data play is also in line with the neoliberal turn observed in the field of adult education (Barros, 2012; Milana, 2012).

The aim of this symposium is to question and in our exploration unsettle the rising hegemony of ideologies driven by the power of international literacy surveys such as PIAAC in the field of adult education. The symposium includes papers from different national contexts (Canada, Germany, Pakistan, and the UK) that present alternative views on adults’ literacy practices. The papers focus on aspects that are generally not considered in large-scale literacy surveys such as multilingual literacy practices, emotions, and social contexts. Drawing on the New Literacy Studies (NLS), the papers adopt a “literacy as social practice” perspective (Barton and Hamilton, 1998; Street, 1984). This perspective recognises that there is more to literacy than skills. Accordingly, literacies are looked at in terms of what people do, as part of social interactions, as multimodal, and as situated in complex and layered social contexts. The papers use a variety of methodological approaches to look at adults’ literacy practices and learning: narrative methods, secondary analysis of quantitative data, discourse analysis, ethnographic fieldwork, research interviews, and participatory approaches. The symposium hopes to shed new light on adults’ literacy practices, on the creativity needed to research these practices, and on the obstacles researchers and practitioners face in trying to confront the dominant skill-oriented perspective on literacy (Duckworth & Hamilton 2016). Finally, the implications of the papers’ findings for the future of adult basic education will be discussed.
Building critical visions on employability in European higher education: listening to students' voices

Barbara Merrill
Scott Revers
University of Warwick, UK
Fergal Finnegan
Jerry O’Neill
Maynooth University, Ireland
Ewa Kurantowicz,
Adrianna Nizinska
Magdalena Czubak-Koch
University of Lower Silesia, Poland
Antonio Fragoso,
Sandra Valadas
Liliana Paulos
Universidade do Algarve, Portugal
Agnieszka Bron
Camilla Thunborg
Stockholm University, Sweden

This roundtable will present the preliminary findings of a European research project entitled ‘Enhancing the employability of non-traditional students in higher education’ (EMPLOY) involving six European countries (Ireland, Poland, Portugal, Spain, Sweden and the UK). Discussion will focus on the voices of non-traditional students (both younger and adults) and their experiences of transition from higher education into the graduate labour market. Research (for example, Brown & Hesketh, 2004) and our findings indicate that non-traditional students encounter specific difficulties and inequalities such as class, gender, ethnicity, and age in making effective transitions into the labour market. In recent years there has been a policy push for the widening of access and participation by non-traditional students to higher education across Europe. Policy-makers have assumed that once in the system non-traditional students, for example working class students, experience a level
playing field but this is not the case. Inequalities persist and are reproduced within the university institutions and which continues into the labour market. This situation has been exacerbated and sharpened by the economic crisis (Edvarsson et al 2010 & Tholen 2012) with some European countries such as Portugal and Spain experiencing this more severely.

Policy-makers across Europe, particularly since the Bologna process (EHE 2012), are concerned with pushing employability as a strategy within European universities for economic reasons and encouraging greater links between employers and universities seeing this as a ‘good thing’. This roundtable discussion will look at these issues critically by using the voices of undergraduates. Theoretically we will draw on critical theory (Bourdieu, Honneth), symbolic interactionism and feminist theory. We will also highlight similarities and differences between the partner countries.

The research uses biographical narrative approaches to gain rich, in-depth material and understanding of the experiences from the student perspectives. We will illustrate, using the student stories, how inequalities are experienced within higher education and beyond into the labour market. The stories reveal struggles, hopes and resilience and also the potential for the formation and transformation of identities. We will at the role of agency and structure in these processes.

This roundtable session will involve presentations from five of the country partners (Ireland, Poland, Portugal, Sweden and the UK), We will focus on the preliminary findings of our student interviews but each partner will present a different perspective. The aim is to develop a critical discussion based around inequalities and power differentials within higher education, the labour market and society at a national and European level. We aim to also encourage discussion between partners but also with participants at the session.

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**Rethinking education: Towards ”better socio-economic outcomes” and/or ”a global common good”?**

Marcella Milana,
University of Verona, Italy (Organiser & Chair)
Sobhi Tawil,
UNESCO, Paris (Presenter)
Georgios Zarifis,
Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Greece (Presenter)
Carlos Vargas,
UNESCO, Paris (Panellist)
Martina Ní Cheallaigh,  
European Commission, Brussels (Panellist)  
Lyn Tett,  
University of Huddersfield, United Kingdom (Panellist)  
Budd Hall,  
University of Victoria, Canada (Panellist)  
Julia Preece,  
Durban University of Technology, South Africa (Panellist)  

At times the world, and Europe particularly, are experiencing prolonged economic and socio-political crisis, and facing the challenges of migration flows, and increased terrorist attacks, the aim of this roundtable is to contribute insights from Policy Studies for imagining diverse futures for adult education in support of social integration, democratic participation and citizenship.

In Rethinking Education: Towards a global common good? (2015) the UNESCO has recently reaffirmed a humanistic vision of education and development, identifying issues likely to affect the purpose of education and the organization of learning in a world of increasing complexity, uncertainty and contradiction. This normative document encourages public policy debate among education stakeholders. In the meantime the European Council and European Commission’s joint report about the New priorities for European cooperation in education and training (2015), which set the Union’s strategic objectives in these areas, has acknowledged broad aims such as active citizenship, personal development and well being. Despite their different nature, both policy documents are concerned with the future of education and training globally and within Europe.

This roundtable brings together representatives of the UNESCO and the European Union, and members of three ESREA research networks (Policy Studies on Adult Education; Between Global and Local: Adult Learning and Development; Adult Educators, Trainers and their Professional Development) to present and debate:

What thinking underlies recent education policy by the UNESCO and the European Union? What are their implications for the future of adult education?
Migration and the emergence of new axes of power and inequality

Linda Morrice
University of Sussex, UK

Hongxia Shan
University of British Columbia, Canada

Annette Sprung
University of Graz, Austria

Europe has been thrown into turmoil by the speed and scale of refugees crossing its borders. Not since the Second World War has there been such a movement of people; but this current movement involves people coming from the global south, often from very different cultural backgrounds, moving to Europe or North America, an assumed land of freedom, safety, and equality. Lives and livelihoods become dislocated through migration and have to be rebuilt and reimagined in ways which often do not reflect previous social class, status or professional identities. Communities have to find ways of living together in and with difference, often having to manage poverty and real (or perceived) competition over scarce resources. Increasing racism and rising violence towards migrants is on the increase: the Brexit vote in the UK has triggered a five-fold increase in race hate crimes; across Europe right wing parties are gaining momentum on similar anti-migrant platforms; in the US we see similar rhetoric and gains for anti-migrant and anti-Muslim views. Those who speak out and defend the rights of migrants are also finding themselves vulnerable to attack, as witnessed by the murder of UK Member of Parliament Jo Cox and recent assaults in Austria at art performances and a university lecture. The need for debate and reflection on the ongoing erosion of democratic principles and the role of adult education is urgent.

Dominant discourses refer to the refugee or migrant ‘crisis’, and implicitly people are classified as refugees (good) and economic migrants (bad); or good refugees (Syrian) and bad refugees (others); distinctions that may be replaced by new ones anytime and which create hierarchies of ‘deserving’ and ‘undeserving’. What is occluded from the media headlines and the current focus on Europe, is firstly that the vast majority of refugees remain in the global south. Secondly, alongside the ‘crisis’, wealthy countries in the global north are using migration as a strategy to compete for the most skilled and talented workers to fill gaps in their labour market and to replenish an aging workforce, draining resources from the south. In short, migration creates, reinforces, consolidates and disrupts power relations and inequalities. This roundtable aims to facilitate a space for adult educators to reflect on how these different movements are giving rise to new and emergent axes of power and inequalities on a local, national and global scale. Contributions come from Austria, Canada and the UK. Against the backdrop of the above comments, our main themes for discussion will include: The role of adult education and civil society organisations in the context of migration; what are the challenges and learning processes to civil society organisations and, particularly in the case of Europe, what can we learn? How do states and resettlement policies shape activities and agendas of civil society organisations, and the future which can be imagined for refugees and migrants? What are the strategies and
pathways forged by migrants and how do they negotiate the barriers they face in different spheres of life? Each of the short presentations in this roundtable will draw on a national or transnational context to discuss a different aspect of migration; our aim is to open a space for exchange and dialogue with the hope that we can develop modes of solidarity and ways of addressing what is an inevitable fact of life: the transnational migration of people. Finally we also want to open a space to develop perspectives of scholarly networking in this field and therefore also share ideas about the future of the ESREA network on Migration, Transnationalism and Racisms.

Democratic citizenship: a once and future theme of adult education research

John Field
University of Stirling, UK

Leona English
St. Francis Xavier University, Canada

Michael Schemmann
University of Cologne, Germany

Anni Turunen
Jenni Patari
University of Helsinki, Finland

Henrik Nordvall
Linköping University, Denmark

Fergal Finnegan
Maynooth University, Ireland

The purpose of the roundtable is to open up debate around varying conceptions of democratic citizenship in adult education and to explore the salience of this longstanding and constitutive theme of adult education today. This will be delve into both the past and present research in the field of adult education and in particular chart how this has been approached in ESREA through the activity of the network on Active Democratic Citizenship (ADC). In ‘looking back and looking forwards‘ in this way we hope to trace some of the continuities and shifts in the way democratic citizenship has been approached inside and outside ESREA over the past thirty years and also to outline the importance of this topic in the present conjuncture.

Democratic citizenship has been a recurring and defining concern in adult education literature (Crowther, 2005; Freire; 1972; hooks, 1994; Horton; 2003; Lindemann, 1926; Mezirow, 1991 inter alia). These various traditions- progressive, radical and feminist-continue to inform a good deal of adult education practice and research. There are of course substantive differences in the way this is imagined – particularly in how this is
understood in relation to social movements, civil society and the state and the ultimate 
goals of such activity- but there is a significant overlap in that adult education in formal and 
non-formal settings can provide space for deliberation, opportunities for meaningful 
participation and praxis.

The democratic revolutions which took place in the late 1980s and 1990s inspired a 
generation of adult education researchers in Europe to establish the network on Active 
Democratic Citizenship (ADC) and to explore these issues empirically and theoretically and 
extended and problematised our understanding of democratic citizenship. In fact in a 
certain form this network predates ESREA and is an important part of the society’s ‘prehistory’.

In contrast to the democratic ferment of the 1990s in Europe, we see widening inequalities, 
a rise of fascist movements, growing racism, and a situation where democratic and 
humanitarian ideals are facing serious challenges.. The social democratic guarantees of 
bounded nation states- in terms of work, welfare and education- that helped to shape 
dominant notions of democratic citizenship have been eroded. There is also widespread 
disaffection with political elites at European and national levels and a rise in populist 
movements of the left and right. In a time of economic, social, and political crisis in Europe 
we see a pressing need to return to the issue of adult learning in relation to a democratic 
citizenship.

With this context in mind the roundtable is intended to open a dialogue between a past and 
present convenors of the ADC network. But we also want the roundtable to involve voices 
and experiences from outside of this network. We specifically want a discussion of 
democratic citizenship to involve people from outside of Europe to ensure that the 
exchange is genuinely critical and reflexive. Besides which democratic citizenship has to be 
approached as a properly global issue . Certainly there has been a marked renewal of 
interest in the themes of citizenship and democracy in progressive movement and the limits 
and possibilities of democracy across the globe (Wainwright, 2009). Does an increasingly 
fragile and interdependent world require a new conception of active democratic 
citizenship? At the very least we think we need to find new ways of thinking and researching 
democratic citizenship on local, national and global levels and we hope the roundtable can 
draw to this wider conversation to map out possibilities for future research. In addressing 
this we think critical debate is vital and roundtable includes a range of diverse voices will 
explore varying and divergent ways of thinking about adult learning in relation to citizenship 
and democracy.
The future of working life and learning research: Challenges to Adult, Professional and Vocational Education and Learning

Sandra Bohlinger,
Dresden University of Technology, Germany

Henning Salling Olesen
Roskilde University, Denmark

Camilla Thunborg
Stockholm University, Sweden

Christian Helms Jørgensen,
Roskilde University, Denmark

Ola Lindberg,
Umeå University, Sweden

Hanna Toiviainen
University of Tampere, Finland

Andreas Wallo
Linköping University, Sweden

Research on Working Life and Learning is a contested field of adult education. Its relevance vis-à-vis institutionalized education is regularly questioned yet the knowledge concerning adults’ learning in an uncertain work life and its boundaries with society seems to be more acutely needed than ever. The Roundtable seeks for new insights and answers to the fundamental question: What is the future of working life and learning research? In a recent publication by the ESREA Network on Working Life and Learning Research (Bohlinger et al., 2015), several challenges to adult, professional and vocational education and learning were identified and discussed based on conceptual and empirical contributions from the network participants. We now invite a larger forum of ESREA scholars to join the work and outline an agenda for future research and the future activities of the network, respectively, to generate new and creative ideas for research collaboration and dissemination.

The aim of the Roundtable is, thus, to gather researchers within the ESREA community to discuss future challenges for working life and learning research in terms of new research themes and interesting theoretical and methodological developments. Three specific goals of the session are formulated:

1. State-of-art addresses by invited scholars: Is Work and Learning research still an emerging, vibrant, and innovative field (and if so what future challenges are there on the horizon)?
2. Sketch agenda for future activities within and across the ESREA networks.
3. Attract new members to the research network on Working Life and Learning.
WORKSHOPS

"A Short History of Feminism'

Marja Almqvist
Brid Connolly

An exploration of the Performance-lecture as a creative methodology to explore gender, power and learning.

1. To facilitate a discussion on the question of the historical and contemporary impacts of gender and feminism on power/powerlessness in relation to life-long learning and agency in processes of social change.

2. To explore the Performance-lecture as a creative methodology in facilitating adult learning in the context of a critical, narrative and discussion based approach to adult education.

EM:POWER – Participatory Approaches in ALE and Research: On the example of perceptions of adult learners with low reading and writing skills on their learning and learning outcomes

Irene Cennamo,
Monika Kastner,
Ricarda Motschilnig

The workshop „EM:POWER“ will look at participatory research approaches in Adult Learning and Education (ALE) and Research, based on the example of participatory research in adult literacy. As leading workshop questions serve: How can ALE and research in adult literacy make social and cultural empowerment (Freire, 2007) possible and a reality? How can participatory research serve as a source of creativity in ALE and research, especially in terms of research methods? What kind of impact can participatory research as transformative learning have on learning environments and learning processes (in relation to the research team)?

The ultimate goal of participatory research processes is to enhance the knowledge of social realities and, in the best case, to initiate changes (Neumann, 2011). Measures promoting
individual self-competencies and empowerment (including participation in the society) set out participatory research (Unger, 2014). As a consequence for ALE and research, the adult learners work as equal partners in the research team. From „researched objects“ they become „subjects“ of the research. Hence, the perspectives and expertise of the learners are crucial for the planning and implementation of the research process.

Therefore, this workshop will
- give an overview of participatory approaches in ALE and Research,
- present a research project in the area of adult literacy, using a participatory research approach as an example,
- and foster the exchange of experiences with empowering research methods between ALE researchers, experts and peers from various countries.

The results and findings of this workshop will give input to a forthcoming Austrian ESF (European Social Fund) project, which focuses on the perceptions of adult learners with low reading and writing skills on their learning and learning outcomes. As mentioned in the conference call, learning outcomes and learning has become a key concept in today's society. We refer to Faulstich's (2013) 'critical-pragmatic learning theory', for it offers connectivity to a concept of 'Bildung' (self-development and empowerment) and it is a learner-centred theory, corresponding to our understanding of adult literacy. Furthermore, the theory is accessible for empirical studies. Learning achievements and outcomes in adult literacy is a question hardly treated so far (cf. Aschemann, 2015 for an international research overview). Our research project is based on the empirical findings on low learning progress in reading and writing in German adult literacy classes (Rosenbladt & Lehmann, 2013) and on corresponding insights from adult literacy providers (our ESF project partners), that a group of learners shows low progress in reading and writing. In this ESF research project, adults with basic educational needs are integrated as co-researchers, because they are seen as experts in their own learning (cf. Belzer & Pickard, 2015). They participate in the planning, data collection and analysis. Thus, the learners’ position as "the researched" is dismissed (a problem widely discussed in the Austrian community of adult literacy providers). In further reference to the conference themes, we want to present and learn from the participants of this workshop and jointly discuss how creativity in research methods can influence (trainer and learner) relationships as well as enhance adult learning. The target audience of this workshop are experienced researchers in ALE from all European countries as well as adult educators interested in different approaches to ALE research.

__Creative explorations of adult educators' values, challenges and hope.__

Camilla Fitzsimons
Jerry O'Neill

Adult educators are working in challenging times. Many are navigating shifting structural and discursive landscapes - thinking and working hard to forge an ethical and critical way to create spaces for individual and socially transformative education. The backdrop for these
actions are the significant neoliberal pressures of labour market activation discourse and policies that seek to influence adult and community education at international, national and local levels. At the same time, adult educators are under significant pressure to ‘professionalise’ - a normative expression, the meaning and politics of which is largely under-examined.

Amidst this changing landscape, are many adult educators, working in a diverse and heterogeneous field. Each country, each region, each centre will have its own dynamics – present its own challenges and opportunities for adult educators. At the same time there are similarities such as how this work is increasingly done in the context of a precarious occupational existence. The convergence of adult educators from across Europe presents an important moment to reflect on our collective experiences: to make visible our common values as well as our common struggles.

In this workshop Camilla and Jerry will draw on creative, critical and hands-on methods to explore the challenges that cut across contexts for adult educators in Europe. The workshop will be a moment to reaffirm educators’ core values and, importantly, to identify opportunities for hope for critical adult education in challenging times.

Mindfulness and care of the self in a world under threat:

David McCormack

This workshop begins from the standpoint of recognising the deepening inequalities and alienations that characterise post modern living. Adult educators are highly attuned to a critical understanding of, and agentic engagement with, such threats. In this context of a passionate concern for social justice, equality and care for the earth and for others, it can seem an individualistic indulgence to engage in self-care. A critical understanding of the impact of increasingly alienating aspects of social life can leave us with a clear analysis of issues of power, but short on practical forms of self-care that are empowering and replenishing.

In this workshop I present Mindfulness as a method of self-care that acknowledges the depth of connection between how we care for ourselves and how we care for others. The purpose of this workshop is to introduce and experience Mindfulness meditation and to explore the possibilities it holds for participants for themselves in the first instance in their own development as adults, and also in their role as adult educators. The dominant discourses around mindfulness have been heavily influenced by contemplative practices (Morgan, 2015) and more recently by perspectives around self-care and stress management (Williams and Kabat-Zinn, 2011). The popularisation of mindfulness has catapulted it into the popular and public sphere leading to a concern among practitioners and critics alike that the mindfulness practices have become a commodity like any other in modern culture and have been colonised by mainstream culture, thinned out and slimmed down and repackaged as panacea (Chisolm, 2015) of sorts – a way to be rid of personal distress while ignoring the social and cultural origins of much of that distress.
Drawing on the work of Milner (2011) I would like to present a view of mindfulness as a process of both experiential and transformative adult learning, one in which we can recognise how strong internalised injunctions, the “must, should, ought, have to, need to, if only” of our everyday lives (Teasedale and Chaskalson, 2011, p. 94), can leave us depleted and disempowered. Care for the self in this view, involves learning to relate to stressful aspects of experience in a different way – one characterised more by being than by driven doing (Teasedale and Chasalson, 2011). This shift of perspective can allow us to respond more creatively to our own demanding lives, and as a result we can make a stronger contribution to the care of others in our teaching lives (hooks, 1994; Palmer, 1998).  

None of this is unproblematic, however. There are legitimate objections to this kind of work and the questions it raises, for example, about selfhood and “self” development (Newman, 2008). Mindfulness, though, is primarily a way of relating to experience in a particular way; and so the primary approach of the workshop is experiential inquiry. This workshop will involve an explanation of the key ideas and methods behind mindfulness meditation, an opportunity to experience these and a processing of these experiences in dialogue with others. The workshop will also involve a conversational exploration of the potential that mindfulness holds as a resource for adult educators and learners alike. This exploration will be informed both by my own experience, by the experiences of those present and underpinned by relevant literature.

The workshop then will include:

- An introduction to mindfulness as an approach to experience
- An opportunity to experience mindfulness and to reflect on that experience
- An exploration of the potential of mindfulness to support reflexive practice in adult education for learners and educators
- An opportunity to explore how this potential might be integrated into the practices of those present

No prior experience of mindfulness is assumed but experienced mindfulness practitioners are also welcome.

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‘Dropped Out of Kicked Out?’
A Forum theatre play based on early school leavers’ experience of school exclusion and oppression.

Sarah Meaney

The proposed workshop would present an interactive overview of research underway which investigates early school leavers’ experience of school exclusion and oppression, using Augusto Boal’s Theatre of the Oppressed (TO) and Forum Theatre. Boal’s TO was employed as a research methodology and used to provoke dialogue on this exclusionary aspect of early school leaving with research participants in second-chance education. The research is
being conducted as part of a PhD with the Adult and Community Education Department in Maynooth University, and is supported by the Irish Research Council.

A filmed dramatization of a school exclusion created by Kildare Youth Theatre, which followed Boal’s format for TO and Forum Theatre workshops, was shown to focus groups who were asked to comment on how the performance should be changed to make it more realistic or reflective of their own experience. The theatre piece is in the process of being modified and re-made based on this feedback. It is proposed that the revised dramatization be performed as a ‘Forum Theatre’ workshop, both as part of the dissemination process of this study, and as a creative approach to make visible this aspect of adult learners’ education background.

The main objective of this workshop would be to present in dramatic form, aspects of participants’ experience of exclusion and oppression in mainstream school and the emerging themes from the research. A second aim would be to actively involve the audience in seeking solutions to the issue of school oppression through a ‘forum’ of the dramatization, whereby members of the audience would be invited onto the stage to ‘transform’ the performance and to attempt to alter the outcome. A third objective would be to highlight the critical and emancipatory potential of TO in adult education, both as a practice tool and as a creative research methodology with which to explore facets of power and oppression.

**Dancing with Woolf: Feminist creative pedagogy in LGBT+ times.**

Brid Connolly

A workshop on feminist creative pedagogy in learning environments which take into account the new LGBT+ awareness. This is inspired by the novel by Virginia Woolf, Orlando, as a device to open conversations about feminist writing, LGBT+, issues and the intersections that adult educators encounter in the field.

**Using Arts Based Learning to Transform the Heart Attitude of Adult Education**

Sinead Cunningham, Amy M. Baize-Ward

Creativity within adult education transforms the heart attitude by becoming aware of self as one receives and shares knowledge. While dialogue is essential to providing key concepts, creation within an arts based activity assists in solidifying the learning objective. Heart attitudes transform when provided a means to express self creatively.
Decolonizing and Transforming Adult Education through Indigenous Knowledge, Critical Reflection and Social Action

Margaret Knickle

George Orwell once said that; “History is written by winners” (Nicholls, 1978). My presentation centers around the bias that exists in current mainstream based history taught across all levels of education (Silver, 2013) as a result of power in society.

Stemming from my ongoing research I am concerned that current mainstream history does not present Indigenous legacy as an integral part of colonial history. My presentation is concerned with the intentional inaccuracies of the history of colonization as it relates to the Aboriginal Peoples and has been written from the perspective of the European conquerors (Battiste, 2013). The objective of my presentation is to show that this bias is purposely manipulated by dominant powers in control.

"Mandalas for Peace"

Cathy Mullett
Alice Bennett

“Mandalas for Peace” is a 1.5 hour workshop designed to help participants consider their personal understandings of peace through the use of mandala design. This meditative practice employs an arts-based method of connecting the outer world with the inner self. Those interested in being creative as they develop their ideas about peace are invited to attend. Participants will spend time creating their own mandala visualizations of peace, followed by a group dialogue. Plenty of ‘interesting’ tools will be available, since each mandala design is unique and individual.

Designing an Open Online Course using a Low-cost Approach

Brian Mulligan,
Institute of Technology Sligo, Ireland.
Janine Kiers,
Delft technical University, Holland
Jorn Lovischach,
Fachhochschule Bielefeld, Germany
Matthias Uhl,
Fachhochschule Bielefeld,
Miquel Duran,
University of Girona,
Silvia Simon,
University of Girona,
Gráinne Conole,
Bath Spa University, UK

Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) have gained significant press attention in recent years and have been hailed by many as having the potential to be revolutionary in the provision of education, particularly in relation to adults (Conole, 2013). This revolutionary aspect is often expressed as either the potential to undermine existing providers of adult education as a “disruptive innovation” or radically improve access to education, particularly for disadvantaged groups (Woruba, 2015). Indeed it can be argued that the “unbundling” or separation of assessment and accreditation from free online learning could unleash a wave of creativity and innovation in the provision of learning opportunities as well as transferring power from educational providers to learners in regards to their choice of learning experiences.

However, much scepticism has been expressed on the sustainability of Massive Open Online Courses. This scepticism is generally based on the high cost of course development reported by many prestigious institutions who have developed MOOCs with very high production values (Hollands and Devayani, 2014). However, many believe that such high production values are not necessary for the development of good quality MOOCs (Mulligan, 2014). The Erasmus+ funded LoCoMoTion project started in February 2015 with the stated intention of collecting and disseminating information on low-cost approaches to producing educationally effective MOOCs. The project, with higher education partners from Holland, Germany, Spain, the UK and Ireland, is disseminating outputs in the form of web-based resources for MOOC developers, a Webinar series, conference workshops and, of course, a MOOC called “Making a MOOC on a Budget”. This MOOC which was trialled on the edX pilot platform (edge.edx.org) in the summer of 2015 and again delivered in June 2016, will be openly delivered to a wider audience on the canvas.net platform from October 2016 and continue to be delivered on a regular basis after that. It is project based and is designed to guide participants through the process of building a MOOC.

This workshop will consist of an overview of the key activities in the MOOC. The objectives are:

1. To illustrate how online courses can be developed with minimal financial resources and with limited effort from the subject matter expert.
2. To persuade participants to develop open courses themselves and/or disseminate information to their colleagues.
As well as describing and discussing low-cost approaches, it will bring participants through a simple institutional process for developing a MOOC (or any online course) on a limited budget. It will also discuss the potential for impact of such courses in relation to the themes of the conference; Power and Creativity. After a brief overview, the workshop will be divided into three sections covering the following topics:

1. Rapid content development and the use of Open Educational Resources (OER)
2. Institutional workflow for low-cost development.
3. “Unbundling” and the implications for Power and Creativity in adult education.

Thinking Together: Exploring Creative Research Collaborations

Ellen Scully-Russ,
Karen R. Nestor,

This workshop invites conference participants to engage in mutual reflection on creative new approaches to scholarship and practice in adult learning. At ESREA Berlin, keynote speakers (2013) called for commitment to reflection and action (Wildemeersch), indignation (Mayo) and a focus on goals, meaning and values in adult education (Popovic). In short, that conference aligned with our growing awareness of the need to seek new ways of responding to the increasing complexity of adult learning theory and practice.

In 2014, we engaged with others in a yearlong Symposium on Lifelong Learning in the 21st Century at George Washington University, reviewing literature and adult education practices and initiating dialogue among scholars, practitioners and students. The overarching question was Do current theories, methodologies and practices provide what we need in the field to respond to the increasing fragmentation in adult education research and practice? (Fees & Nylander, 2015; Rubenson & Elfert, 2015; Scully-Russ, 2015).

These efforts led us to create a new discussion framework of interrelated learning imperatives for adults, rooted in growing social disintegration and deepening inequalities that suggest the need for new theoretical conceptualizing and different approaches for research. This framework includes, but is not limited to, (1) social structures: issues of equity and access; (2) evolving patterns of marginalization; (3) individualized patterns of biography/learning; (4) economic pressure on/for adult learning; and (5) varied ideological forces impacting learning decisions.

Those imperatives have served as a starting place for further conversation to explore the need for what Mezirow (1981, as cited in Kitchenham, 2008) called a perspective transformation of our current theories of adult learning, to challenge our underlying assumptions of who learns, where, when, how and why in an emancipatory process that frees us from our false assumptions in ways that will shape our future research and enhance our understandings of the world. The workshop organizers seek to provoke dialogue about how we can move beyond theoretical and geographical silos to develop creative new
In this workshop, participants will first discuss the imperatives and explore whether or how they correspond with their insights from their own work as adult educators and researchers. Workshop participants will join together in dialogue around the following questions: What are the implications of these learning imperatives (or others) for the future of scholarship and practice in adult education? Do our current theories, methodologies and practices provide what we need now to respond to contemporary learning imperatives? What are workshop participants currently doing to address questions of power, equity and change embedded in contemporary learning imperatives? Perhaps most importantly, the session seeks to explore what participants wish they could do in their research or practice to develop more nuanced responses for the future of adult education. The goal is to initiate or strengthen relationships that will lead to innovative ideas for shared research topics and evolving research agendas, as well as varied approaches to conferences that we may plan, in alignment with the themes of this ESREA conference.

“The Politics of Responsibility” revisited: Beyond the analysis of power in program planning

Bernd Käpplinger,
Justus-Liebig-Universität Gießen, Germany

Thomas J. Sork,
University of British Columbia, Canada

Adult educators are continually planning courses, seminars and other educational events. This might be considered by some as primarily a routine and straightforward “management” activity only vaguely connected to pedagogy and quite distant from politics and ethics. But while planning, adult educators can encounter various major challenges connected to power relations and conflicting interests. For example, superiors within one’s organization object to the core idea behind a program. Colleagues put forward their alternative—and incompatible—approaches. External stakeholders such as politicians, administrators or sponsors have different ideas about what should happen and may forcefully put forward their own agendas. Prospective participants expect something different than what is offered and fail to attend, drop out, or resist the proposed learning goals.

Planning is far from an interest-free, neutral or solely managerial practice. It is social and often requires creative action performed within power relations that may be clearly visible or hidden. How do adult educators make decisions and act responsibly within these relations? What helps them theoretically to read and respond to such power relations? Explore with us some of the extraordinary and complicated fundamentals of daily practice within this workshop.
ESREA has been established to foster the exchange of research on adult education and learning in the European space through the establishment of networks, through conferences and publications in books and journals. An important aspect of the ESREA activities is the support of early career researchers to present their work and to stimulate them to have their research published in academic journals. That is one of the reasons why ESREA has established RELA, which is aimed at promoting the work of European scholars in this field. We all know that publishing in academic journals is not an easy task, particularly for new researchers. There often is the language barrier, since most journals require publications in English. Then there is the fact that these academic journals are often very selective. They receive many papers and select rather few. And even when a submitter obtains a positive response, still hard work is needed to meet all remarks, comments and suggestions of the reviewers. If a scholar wants to be successful in publishing internationally s/he needs to be well prepared and well informed about how to deal with the requirements, challenges and opportunities of writing for peer reviewed journals.

The workshop will offer a framework and practical suggestions for successful academic publishing. The framework is inspired, amongst others, by the book ‘Writing for Peer Reviewed Journals: Strategies for Getting Published’ by Pat Thomson and Barbara Kamler. These authors systematically describe the steps and considerations to be made when preparing, writing and improving journal articles, but also on how to collaborate with others, on how to engage with reviewers, editors and peer academics. In particular, they present a very relevant and practical tool for writing abstracts which they call ‘the tiny text’. Their suggestion is not to wait with the writing of the abstract until the paper is finished, but to consider both the title of the paper and the abstract already from the beginning of the work. This is very helpful for the writer to clarify the focus of the contribution. The authors suggest, when preparing the abstract, to consider four moves: first the author locates the paper in the chosen discourse community; in the second place, the focus of the paper is delineated; in the third place the report is clarified, which means outlining the research, sample, method of analysis; the final move is the argument, which summarizes the point of view of the author regarding the findings to be presented in the paper.

Priority will be given in the workshop to early career researchers who have the ambition to publish internationally but who have little experience. More experienced participants are also welcome. The facilitators of the workshop will present the general framework and will focus particularly on the tool of the ‘tiny text’. They will ask the young researchers to enrol

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in the workshop on beforehand, and to include in their enrolment a short abstract of an article, or a presentation in preparation (maximum 350 words). These abstracts will be used as the basis for the practical part of the workshop. The participants will be asked to rework their abstract with the help of the tool presented at the workshop. The reworked abstracts will be presented and then commented by the facilitators of the workshop. The workshop will last two hours.
Recognizing teachers and trainers psycho-pedagogical competences in adult education in Germany – developments in the project “GRETA”

Stefanie Lencer
German Institute for Adult Education
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Anne Strauch

Teachers, lecturers and trainers play a key role in the success and quality of courses in adult and continuing education. So far, their training and access to their work have remained largely unregulated. Teachers’ competences in adult education are based very much on non-formal and informal learning processes, are unstandardised and are rarely systematically recognised. Only a few countries, for example Austria and Switzerland, have a coherent national system for the professionalisation of teachers (see Unesco, 2013, page 143 et seq.; Schläfli, 2012; Heilinger, 2007). These are processes that should initiates a learning process of the adult and continuing education in many other countries. A standardised system has not yet been established in Germany due in part to the heterogeneity of the adult education system and different interests in the field. Standardising competences requirements and sustainable ways of professionalisation of teachers and trainers are challenges for adult and continuing education as a whole around the world.

The three-year project GRETA (basics for a standardise process for recognising teachers’ competences in adult and continuing education) currently aims to systematically create the basis for an interdisciplinary competence model encompassing all tasks for teachers in adult and continuing education, as well as suitable validation processes to prove those skills (Bosche et al., 2014) with close cooperation between theory and practice.

In our presentation we will focus on the objective, question and methodology of the project “GRETA“. In addition to the question of how this kind of plan could improve the professional situation of teaching staff, the poster presentation primarily aims to present the study's mixed-methods structure. This includes the challenge of a bottom-up professionalisation strategy based on the empirical development of important process steps, particularly the skills model, using communicative validation (Mayring, 2002) to feed back into practice. In this respect, the participation of a wide community plays an important role in the project. This includes the professional associations, the teachers themselves, (institution) managers and experts. Outcomes of different pre-existing projects deal with professionalisation processes are be taking into account and be integrated. The following image shows the process for data collection and communicative validation carried out regularly during the project.
OTHER EVENTS

Monologue
Kildare Youth Theatre
Newbridge, Co. Kildare, Ireland.

Monologue at the opening of ESREA 2016 Triennial Conference - Kildare Youth Theatre presents a short monologue for a teenage male that shows what happens to young people when community services break down. This piece is 25 minutes. It will be followed by a short plenary session from the audience.

Stuck in Neutral
Kildare Youth Theatre
Newbridge, Co. Kildare, Ireland

About
Short plays from everyday life about power and paralysis performed in parked cars. The performances were devised and scripted by young adults working with theatre-maker and educator, Peter Hussey. They reflect concerns with power, and are drawn from the lived experiences, values and research of the learners.

Venue
An outdoor car park within easy walking distance from conference centre
Booking: as there are only 18 places per show booking is essential. Please use the separate Booking Sheet when registering to book your place.

Details
Each show is composed of 6 short plays performed in 6 cars. Combined they last for 1 hour and 10 minutes. An audience of 3 people begins with one of the plays and they move around in rotation from car to car until they have seen all six plays.

Times
There are 4 performances on Saturday 10th September at the conference at: 11.10, 12.30, 15.00 and 16.30pm
**Company**

Kildare Youth Theatre is a non-formal education project that uses theatre to create meaning about the world. It is based in Newbridge, and is run by Peter Hussey from Crooked House Theatre Company. Further information, including an online reading room of research and articles, can be had by visiting [www.kildareyouththeatre.com](http://www.kildareyouththeatre.com)

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**KCAT Art Exhibition**

Kilkenny Collective for Arts Talent  
Callan, Kilkenny, Ireland.

Exhibition of paintings by members of KCAT (Kilkenny Collective for Arts Talent) studio.

KCAT aims to create a new situation: an environment in which artists and students from different backgrounds and abilities can work and create together and in which life long learning is an opportunity for everyone.

The KCAT (Kilkenny Collective for Arts Talent) Art and Study Centre is an open access Arts and Life Long Learning initiative promoted by the Camphill Communities. Founded in 1999, after a pilot phase under the EU Horizon Program. KCAT delivers visual art and theatre courses, and is home to the KCAT Studio and the Equinox Theatre company.

The KCAT Studio and Equinox Theatre Company combine artists with learning disabilities and other disadvantages with professional arts practitioners. The course elements are funded through the Vocational Education Committee structure and the Back to Education Initiative, the Studio and Equinox Theatre are part-funded by The Arts Council. The centre has developed interactive partnerships with comparable projects in many countries in Europe, Japan and Australia. Strongly engaged in the arts community both locally and internationally, KCAT challenges the “Insider/Outsider Arts” debate.

The Studio Artists are supported by mentors and a facilitator in all aspects of their professional development. There is a strong sense of community and mutual support between artists and mentors, which extends beyond the walls of the studio. Working individually, all share, inspire and motivate each other. The group has executed commissions and exhibited in Australia, Japan, the United States and a number of European countries. They have collaborated on projects with other arts organisations in Ireland and abroad and advocated their own work and that of KCAT.
Publications and Recorded Readings

Maynooth Creative Writing Group,
Maynooth, Co. Kildare, Ireland.

Publications and readings by members of Maynooth Creative Writing Group.