PERSPECTIVES ON COMMUNITY PRACTICES – LIVING AND LEARNING IN COMMUNITY

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Book of Abstracts

Adult learning and wellbeing: Between body politics and the body politic

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Abstract

Wellbeing is a preoccupation of lifelong learning policy internationally and its conceptual slipperiness lends it political appeal across a broad range of ideological interests.

In current public discourse wellbeing is linked to consumerist pursuits, whilst in policy discourse it is used to assess the mind and body as economic resources. Whilst hegemonic frames of wellbeing equate it with individualised body politics, it can also be understood as a collective property of the body politic. The purpose of this paper is to explore different ways of theorising adult learning as an ambivalent process, caught between these two conceptions of wellbeing. Whilst our 'local' inspiration has partly been the potential legacy of the Scottish independence referendum for resuscitating the body politic through informal adult learning, we speak to broader concerns around the wellbeing of the body politic across Europe. Exploring a spectrum from liberal humanism to posthumanism, we present five alternative ways to theorise the function of adult learning in suturing the relationship between bodily wellbeing and the wellbeing of the body politic. Through Sen's work, we can understand the function of adult education as nurturing capabilities so that citizens can fully utilise material resources to participate in the public sphere. In this view, capabilities ensure the wellbeing of both individuals and the body politic. Through Habermas's work, wellbeing can be conceptualised as a contradiction: in looking to the lifeworld to solve intractable issues through communicative learning, the system world subordinates the concept of wellbeing to its own logic and diminishes the very qualities that made it attractive in the first place. Through Foucault, we can we can conceptualise lifelong learning as a technology of the self though which citizens are compelled to attend to their wellbeing as part of a larger living body politic itself produced through the convergence of economic and medical technologies. Harvey's revolutionary humanism dismisses Habermas's neo-Kantian 'lifeworld' spaces uncontaminated by capital, as well as the liberal individualism at the heart of Sen's conceptualisation of the public sphere. Also, whilst admiring Foucault's historical analysis, he deems it too parochial. Through Harvey, we can analyse how the 'common sense' meaning and cache of a concept such as adult learning for wellbeing is related to patterns of uneven development determined by the contradiction of capital mobility/fixity across different spatial regions. Finally, through Deleuze we theorise adult learning as a radical encounter that rips apart both the subject and the body politic, since it is after all, a body politic without organs. Thinking through Deleuze forces us to address serious questions around both the limits of Westphalian politics and what wellbeing might even mean for 'nomadic' subjects, given the limits of embodied cognition. This paper will be co-presented by Ackland and McGregor.

Building a World Unfit to Live in: the deception and seduction of the commodity fetish

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Abstract

The early stages of the 21st Century do not provide a very optimistic outlook regarding the impact of human activity on the non-human world. Although there are some detractors most commentators would acknowledge both the local and global degradation of natural environments. For example, the potential global effects of climate change, peak oil extraction and an exponential increase in hydraulic fracturing to obtain natural gas. While more locally (from an English context), wild flower meadows have declined by 98% since the onset of industrialisation, only 2% of native woodland remains and despite mounting scientific evidence, the UK government continues a policy to shoot badgers in an attempt to reduce the incidence of Bovine TB particularly in dairy cattle. This depressing roll call of, at best, ineffective stewardship and at worst conscious denial, solicits an answer to the question – 'Why are so many, doing so little to change what is a potentially apocalyptic outlook'. This paper seeks to explore what might be happening at local and global levels to have created and maintained such a scenario. An initial focus shall be on the places and spaces where learning takes place, particularly the role of 'formal' education and then the wider arenas for public debate. The global influence of neo-liberal agendas will be noted and how this has led to a commodification of 'formal' educational settings as well as more public spaces. Despite the rhetoric of market force driven improvement, accountability and standards, these spaces for learning are now less likely to be able to support the sustained and difficult thinking that is required to solve complex problems such as environmental degradation. I shall develop Marx's notion of the commodity fetish, where human-made products, take on their own, often beguiling agency. I shall extend the concept of the commodity fetish to the human-made (modern) commodity of education and discuss this in the context of the ever increasing separation of the human and non-human worlds. It is here that the fetish deceives, distracts and ultimately seduces and in doing so obfuscates self and other, producer and consumer, human and non-human and learning and non-learning. Finally, it is suggested that psychoanalytic theory can position the human construction of commodities, the subsequent emerging fetish and disruption to thinking within a framework of unconscious defences that seek to protect the individual from overwhelming anxiety. Anxiety that is grounded in deep shame about what has been done and an acknowledgement that reparation might also require deeply uncomfortable changes to human behaviour.

Slovenian practice model as a contribution to the of community learning conceptualisation

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Abstract

Professional and political attention of once relatively young state, Slovenia, enabled development of different forms of non-formal learning, study circles among them. They are locally embedded and response to (micro)-local problems. They also leave results of their learning to the local level; therefore participants are highly motivated to actively engage. We provide a brief outline of some quantitative characteristics by turning our attention to traditional form of Commons, found after intentional search for autochthonous practices of non-individual learning. The second phase of research was therefore focused to case studies and literature about Commons. The third phase was comparative analysis of organisational model for both forms of community practices in the frame of social learning theory and Ostroms´ criteria of long-lasting communities. Particular attention has been given to community definition and its elementary link to natural resources. Adaptation of communities to socio-political changes and changes of biophysical nature is also taken into consideration. As Commons survived extreme changes, learning was their essential element. Therefore we compare two large-scale practices of study circles and Commons in order to get the key elements of community learning on the basis of Slovenian specific situation.

A feminist cross-national study of women's adult education and community development in public libraries and museums in Canada, England and Scotland

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Abstract

Although often perceived as simply conservers of objects, arts or books, public museums and libraries are foremost educational institutions, providing a variety of adult education activities and opportunities (Taylor et al, 2010; UNESCO, 1997). But these institutions have problematic histories of exclusion, sexism, over-professionalism, political interference and education has had a troubled place. Yet the past two decades have brought pressure to public arts and cultural institutions in Canada and the United Kingdom (UK) to redesign their public education and community outreach mandates to be more responsive to social problems in general, and the needs of people in the communities and neighbourhoods where they are located in particular (e.g. Janes, 2009; Nightingale & Sandell, 2013). Grounded in feminist theory and using a feminist approach, this study explored how these women understood the nature and purpose of their adult education and community outreach work in these troubled, neoconservative times, and the implications for gender and social change. Feminist theory and research were employed because they challenge us to draw attention to gender inequities and aim to empower women by placing them at the centre of the enquiry (Hess-Bider & Leavy, 2007). One finding from observations, semi-structured interviews and focus groups with 70 women in Canada, England and Scotland shows that most had no academic background or training in adult education or community development. As a result, they had trouble articulating a coherent philosophy of education, confused education and learning, simply re-iterated government or institutional 'speak', and/or found it difficult to defend their work within the hierarchy. Another finding showed that adult education in libraries has been pushed almost exclusively towards job-related development and technical rationality. This was accepted and supported by younger, but not older librarians who argued the need for a broader critical/social purpose and orientation to adult education. Many participants in museums saw a focus on adults with learning disabilities or mental health issues as sufficient to meet new 'socially responsive' mandates, yet others courageously tackled controversial issues such as homophobia and racism and reached out to more diverse populations through theatre, video or research practices. These women consistently had some form of training in adult education, participatory research or community arts. Although almost all study participants were conscious of gender imbalances, many had given it little thought and therefore, it did not feature in their philosophies of adult education, ideas around leadership in the institution, or their understandings of community engagement. Yet others articulated a strong feminist understanding and focussed women's issues. Not surprisingly, they too had some connection to adult education and/or community arts and research. There are a number of implications to this study but in particular, adult education and research training and community arts make a difference to how these women understand the place and role of education and the type of change they aim to make.

From face to face to face…book.

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Abstract
Unlike traditional teaching methods (face to face, in which a plurality of individual interfaces with the physical shape of a teacher), the modern technological systems have sparked numerous innovations to improve teaching methods. You hear about blended learning: integrating various methodologies (traditional and innovative) to provide a new pedagogical style to students. An important platform to facilitate the learning of university activities is Facebook: since 2004, the most popular social network in the world, with about one billion active users. In recent years, however, it has also been recognized as a useful e-learning platform. Thanks to Facebook benefits of learning are associated to a better communication among students, a better access to resources and a better management of logistics courses. The social network involves students using technologies which are familiar to the new generations: there is an increase of interactivity and collaboration, flexibility and networking. We must of course pay attention to the critical issues arising from the dangers of stalking, distractions, lack of privacy, but the advantages of a greater access to information, a better way to analyse researching capabilities and many other advantages make Facebook a new and important frontier for modern teaching.

Community building as forum and arena

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Abstract

Drawing from recent research, we want to signal and discuss some shifts in practices of community development and their meaning for urban contexts. We'll focus on the tension between high scale city planning and small scale, local community development practices, more specifically in a neighbourhood in Ghent: Rabot. Rabot is still one of the poorest hoods in relatively wealthy Flanders, the Dutch-speaking part of Belgium. This neighbourhood arises at the end of the 19th century, when Ghent was the only industrialised city of Flanders and simultaneously one of the biggest centres for textile industry in the area. With many impoverished farmers migrating to Ghent, Rabot rapidly became a densely built working class neighbourhood. The catholic side conceived these neighbourhoods as a dam against urbanity and against the rising socialist movement and liberal bourgeoisie. The catholic party thus tried to guard the – mainly catholic – rural population from 'the dangers of the city', through a very specific view on community building, based on a common – in this case catholic – identity. These hoods were therefore modelled and built like a town with a central church. Nowadays the 'classic' associations are all but vanished in Rabot, yet we've found a rise of new, small scale practices. These are in many aspects different from the traditional ones. They aren't institutionalised or focused on one very specific problem or theme, they're much more hybrid. Community isn't conceptualised around a shared identity, but takes diversity as a starting point. In this view, a diversity of people shape a shared future, working with and through all kinds of tensions and conflicts, including those with the ideas of city planners. Many of these big strategic plans turn out to not work as intended. In Rabot a big industrial site's demolished to be replaced with a new residential area. This urban crack (called 'The Site') very soon became the crystallisation point for a bunch of new practices, giving them support and space to grow. These practices often offer a positive alternative to, instead of merely criticising the existing order. Through their actions however they do critique the dominant discourse. Community development practices express the issues relevant to local inhabitants. They're in a way small revolutions and have political meaning – not as 'politics', though. The everyday tactics of resistance aren't articulations of a certain shared ideology. They are actions against the unjust aspects of the dominant order. This 'new way' of political acting requires practices to function as a forum, with enough space for the perspective of inhabitants. This forum, however, will always be an arena of conflicting perspectives and interests, including concepts of city renewal and planning.

Learning in community living the community: intergenerational spaces of experience

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Abstract
Our contribution aims to investigate some ways of learning together to promote democratic spaces, active ageing and community. The research's focus is understand how is possible guarantee to elder people a better quality of life through shared experiences and intergenerational dialogue, to improve social cohesion. Learning and living together can counter isolation and ageism and fight inequality and social fragmentation. So, it's important to rediscover our resources/competences to relate with others, experiencing social innovation towards *a society for all ages*. Education can implements opportunities in which everyone can express in a cooperation's perspective. We need to improve the sense of trust in each-others through welcoming and free places and meetings, not only as an occasional time. Some social-projects could became a start-up for community development, but we must think a bottom-up educational design, involving all the social actors. The social animation's approach can stimulate citizenship's relations, reciprocity and mutuality, but we have to design possibility of participation based on people's interests, needs, dreams, resources. Its important promote actions in which experience an open community where everybody can became involved. To start this process, educators must be present in everyday-life, ready to listen and take care of the context's instances, co-planning occasions to free everyone's life projectuality in a sharing community view. To strengthen this approach we present a biennial Italian project: "*If young knew and elder could*" funded by Department for Family Policies of the Presidency of the Council of Ministers, directed to elder and young people of Piedmont region. In the project there is a multiprofessional team – a social coordinator, a pedagogical supervisor, educators, psychologists, co-dancers, performers and volunteers – that reflects and implements languages/actions useful to increase solidarity and active citizenship by learning together. The initiative is shared between public/private institutions for encourage different community's forms through several activities: codance – community dance; gyms life – bio-psycho-socio-educational method; intergenerational autobiographical laboratory and volunteer experiences. Now we have finished the first year and the challenge is to understand how it's possible to power the greater self-awareness and the desire to create meaningful places of meeting and participation. The project therefore aims to support empowerment of local communities, active citizenship, fight to isolation and inclusive context. Currently we have some significant results to discuss: the difficulty of engaging people in a social innovation and bottom-up vision where the activities aren't entirely fixed, with the need to build trust and define together the experience's sense; a variable involvement as community's movement and change depends by the territory's needs/skills, and the intervention's evaluation/modification, observing what happens ongoing; the need to deconstruct stereotypes between young/old, so the opportunity to

review their own identity in a dialogue between self and others, autonomy and common projects.

Exploring Intergenerational Learning in Indigenous Textiles

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Abstract

A study on intergenerational learning in Indigenous textile communities of practice offers lessons for intergenerational, informal learning that crosses borders of race, place, time, gender, and epistemological understandings. This interdisciplinary project explored informal adult learning in transnational, Indigenous contexts to produce case studies about the ways in which *communities of practice* involved in textile work, specifically beading and weaving, share and understand knowledge between generations. The inquiry with isolated Indigenous communities, situated in Southern Chile and one western province in Canada, demonstrated a perspective where local and global boundaries are blurred and interconnected. The study participants, all women, ranged in age from 23-95 years and represented *Mapuche*, Cree, Dene and *Métis* identities. The research used arts-based Indigenous methodologies including symbol-based story-telling groups with artefacts, community relational networks, and active participation of the research participants in deciding how the results would be shared. The study provided valuable lessons in the resilience of Indigenous communities to discrimination, in addition to creative, perhaps unintentional, resistance to the demands of globalization. Often, for example, the goods produced are used for trade or barter rather than cash. It also provided lessons in working between and within Indigenous communities and suggested challenges for adult educators in the ways younger generations interpreted cultural knowledge. The results also demonstrated ways in which epistemological understandings create different approaches to being in the world. For example, the predominant view of the participants was that the textile work represented cultural identity and social relationships. Among other things the research demonstrated how textile work was integrated into the lives and well-being of the learners and their communities. Conversely, the implications for intergenerational learning when youth were taken away from the community, primarily to attend school or educational institutions, was noticed. Removing the youth, interrupted the informal learning cycle associated with the textile production and created ruptures in the kinds of values and meanings anticipated. Explicit in the results, was the role of intergenerational learning in the sharing of contextual and cultural knowledge. Interestingly and unexpectedly, the validation of this work through the research led to increased involvement of community members in the practice. A key component of the Indigenous research methodologies applied was working with study participants to decide how the knowledge generated would be shared with the public. This resulted in an art exhibition and a publication. Critical reflection on the process, illustrated how this complicated the work of the researcher, but ensured more equitable distribution of power in the research process.

Public open spaces as venues for learning in community: Two case studies from Slovenia

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Abstract
Paper deals with public spaces as open, everyday arenas where people share experiences beyond their immediate circle of friends, family and age group. Public space is understood as a forum for social and personal change, where a system of relations, arising from acting, speaking and learning is created (Harvey 2011; Lefebvre 2013; Arendt 1996; Habermas 1989; 2001, etc). These questions are analysed from the point of view of community members, who are strongly attached to the space and who are interested in belonging and proactive changes of their living environment (Iecovich 2014; Kohn 2004; Mean and Tims 2005). Paper is based on presumptions, that public space has an important role in generating ideas and activities of community members and that it is important venue for informal learning of community members. Learning in public space is experiential (Bourgeois 2002), could be transformative (Mezirow 1997; Mezirow 2000; Illeris 2009), civic (Biesta 2012; Biesta and Cowel 2012; Bauman 2005), but also emancipatory and powering (Freire 1970; Freire 1994; Wildemeersch 2012; Hall 2012; McLaren 2000). With the ethnometodological research we will analyse the use of (and learning in) two public spaces: community Tabor, located in one of the quarters in Slovenia's capital city Ljubljana and a small community (namely a street) in coastal town Izola. We will analyse differences and similarities among both selected public spaces regarding:
- users/participants of both public spaces (according to age, social, cultural, economic status, etc);
- the origin of initiatives for actions and/or organization of activities;
- kind of actions, initiatives, events, which are happening;
- relations between participants,
- environmental influence on the 'atmosphere' in public space;
- the role of acting, speaking and learning and the perception of it by participants in public spaces.

Research will base on active involvement of researchers in selected public spaces. First we will gather all data on activities and happenings in selected public spaces, available on web-page and other databases, then observe activities in vivo in both selected public spaces and finally conduct non-structured (semi-structured) interviews with selected participants in both public spaces.

The significance of music activities for elderly people and their individual development and integration with the local community – a small town example

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Abstract

Nowadays, social and cultural spaces are dominated by young people. Elderly people's participation in local communities is limited to satisfying their basic needs. The marginalization of 60+ people is caused by economic conditions as well as attitudes and values promoted by popular culture. The elderly cease to understand the reality surrounding them and withdraw from social life. The ongoing deprivation causes the exclusion from the public sphere, especially in rural areas and small towns. The outflow of young individuals from these places renders the elderly solitary. Hard financial conditions and underdeveloped socio-cultural infrastructure make it difficult to undertake activities that re-introduce the elderly to social life, integrate them with the community and create favourable conditions for their individual development. Artistic initiatives are very important means of activation that target the elderly. In my talk, I will discuss animation activities in a small Polish town in Warmia. These activities are related to the folklore music ensemble "Warmianki". The research relates to the following issues: To what extent does the cultural animation conducted within the ensemble contribute to the social activation and integration of its members and the local community? What are the effective methods and forms of these activities? To what extent do the social competences, knowledge and skills gained by the ensemble members improve the quality of their individual and social existence? To what extent conducted animation activities are the means of promoting local initiatives? Individuals engaged in the activities of the ensemble positively evaluate its influence on their lives (social activation, improved relations with other people, development of personality, sense of self-esteem, belonging). However, simultaneously, they do not feel fully appreciated by the local community and the authorities, pointing to inadequate financial means allocated to the development of culture, too little interest on the part of young people, and the lack of professional music staff. Despite various difficulties, it is imperative to search for new forms of activating the elderly and promote cultural activities that teach them how to function in the new reality.

DOWN TO THE RIVER. Recovering people's memories and identities.

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Abstract

I this paper I will try to describe an ongoing research undertook to recover the memories about the River Guadalquivir in a village near to Seville, Spain, called Coria del Río. First I will present the theoretical framework and then I will briefly describe the methodology and some outcomes. In a society characterised for Globalisation tendencies, people is losing the feeling of belonging to a both symbolic and geographical territory. A process to recover it can be considered as one of the edification of experiences. These experiences are related to the identity as an element that enables people to understand how individuals establish relationships among them and with the environment. Plus, the identity is always linked to the way through people understand the territory and, at the same time, it is a powerful element to transform it. An important part of this identity regards on the traditional productive system and, overall, in the notion of crafts and craftsmen. Sennett or Gelpì, from different points of view, have studied how the loss of the notion of craft means the loss of cultural identities. To situate the research as a Participatory Research I am going to resume the historical background, and then describe the research team. In the middles of the 90s a project called *Coria del Río Educational City* was launched. This project tried to organize a forum to discuss about the city. In 2013 an event called *Building Rivers from Popular Education* was organized. This event re-joined people involved in the previous project, and other people coming from social movements. From here, the project to recover the memories and traditional crafts related to the river began. The research team is composed by people coming from diverse background: retired adult education teachers; civil servant working in the City Hall: people coming from Social Movements, from the university or the adult education school. Methodology is based on a set of interviews. Informants are people that have worked in professions related to the river such as: fishermen, boat builders, boatmen, sailors, and potters. This is a work in progress. The first outcomes are related to some descriptive categories such as: the crafts associated to the River; the uses of the river to transport goods and people; the fishing, mainly of sturgeons; and the cosmopolitism of people working in the river. Finally, we are in close relation to the adult education school and one of the branches of the project address to elaborate teaching materials to create learning opportunities from the surrounding environment.

Contemporary youth`s musical fascinations as a stimulator of upper secondary school teachers` professional development

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Abstract

Since the moment rock and roll came into existence in the mid-fifties of the 20th century, becoming a generational symbol for the then youth, young people`s musical preferences have constituted a dilemma and a challenge for contemporary education as well as teachers. Research into musical fascinations of students' shows that genres such as hip-hop, rock as well as pop, have enjoyed an undiminished popularity among teenagers for a few decades now. They also perform many essential functions in their lives, they satisfy developmental needs connected with adolescence, shaping their personal, social and cultural identity. Initially, attempts at implementing this type of contents to curricula evoked a great deal of controversy. On the one hand, popular pieces were accused of lacking aesthetic values, evanescence and the negative influence on youth`s musical taste, on the other – they were considered in terms of significant tools for the socialization and informal education of young people or as an area of negotiating meanings, generating cultural borders of sorts between the culture of school and students` everyday life culture. The research material gathered reveals their various attitudes with regard to contemporary youth`s musical preferences as well as dissimilar ways of evaluating this type of music. Sometimes they describe the musical world of their students as "strange", "too noisy" or "vulgar", but they also point to the contents present in the lyrics of numerous pieces which "teach about life" and guide youth to universal as well as aesthetic values. Students` musical preferences constitute a substantial area of pedagogical inspirations, especially for teachers attempting to constructively relate to changes taking place in contemporary culture, striving for active co-participation in creating it and being able to perceive specific benefits for their own development and that of a given student in genres of popular music. Thus, upper secondary school youth`s musical fascinations are a stimulator of teachers` professional development - both in the context of learning community as well as informal adult education – since they comprise the environment for acquiring knowledge of contemporary culture, a field of testing

various educational strategies as well as stimulating pedagogical reflection on one`s own characteristic and practice of teaching.

Legal Communities of Practice as a Space for Reciprocal Learning with the Community

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Abstract

A civically engaged citizen is an informed responsible citizen, who is conscious of the diversity of needs, aware of political and policy implications, and critically reflective of society with respect to others (Boland, 2012; Brookfield, 2005). Professional education, such as law, has the capacity to cultivate scholarship of engagement and social consciousness in students which can transfer into the societal realm. Professionals working to serve the public good may not only persist as engaged citizens but continue increase their knowledge and skills through lifelong learning while contributing to the education of the citizenry (Colby & Sullivan, 2008).

Adult education is central to creating the conditions for democratic participation. Through education, both formal and informal, adults learn how to knowledgeably use these tools to engage in their communities. Reasoned communication and discourse are tools that enable democracy to persevere (Brookfield, 2005), and these tools are part of the skills imparted in legal education. As stated by Brookfield (2005), "learning democracy is a matter of learning to live with ambiguity and contingency as much as it is learning to apply deliberative decision-making procedure" (p. 269). Brookfield (2005) focuses on educating adults to be democratically active; yet he goes beyond basic civic education. Brookfield (2005) posits that adults should learn to critically reflect during the moment as they are engaged. By viewing politics and policy through a critical lens, adults have the opportunity to uncover oppression and fight for social justice. A reciprocal relationship between law students, lawyers, and the community can benefit all by fostering deliberate conversations, accentuating multiple perspectives, and viewing current political agendas through a critical lens. Through the use of communicative dialogue (Habermas, 1989) as a frame for reflection and revision grounded in social justice (Rawls, 1996) and critical theory (Brookfield, 2005), lawyers can actively participate within their community through communicative action to help ensure that oppression is resisted and the social good sustained. This paper posits that Habermas' (1989) idea of the public sphere can exemplify a place of engagement for lawyers to critically discuss the social issues. Critical reflection seems to be a more viable tool for social justice when educated and engaged lawyers convene in a mutual communicative space (Brookfield, 2005). Therefore, the informal (or formal) convening of lawyers in communities of practice with invested citizens would allow for all to be engaged, increase their knowledge, broaden their perspectives, and critically reflect to better serve the public good (Wenger, 2000).

The Influence of European Community on Adult Education in the Context of Europeanisation of Education

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Abstract

As agreed by many authors, the impacts and changes of globalisation to today's education cannot be neither ignored nor denied. Globalisation is not a homogeneous process and as such it is associated with three different forms of regionalisation (in Europe, Asia and America) resulting in various policies and mechanisms. This paper shall focus on understanding European policies and mechanisms. "Europe" is understood as a space for developing European policy that addresses common European issues. Our central interest is the political level of globalisation meaning that the policy area is increasingly determined not within the isolated units, i.e. relatively autonomous states, but it is rather the result of a complex collection of multilevel games that take place above, between and within national borders. The political level of globalisation in Europe is defined with the concept of Europeanisation from which we can understand how different actors – transnational, national, regional and local – shape the European Educational Space and European Educational Policy. By this process, a new community is established being in a constant process of formation encompassing vertical and horizontal networks of institutions, people, ideas and practices across Europe. Having considered this we will use the analytical method and concept of Europeanisation of education as a theoretical reference to show the emergence of European adult education area as well as the established mechanisms at the level of the European community and their impact on the national and local educational policies. Our main thesis is that Europeanisation of education (re)formulates the understanding of adult education at least at the following four levels being: a) the purpose of adult education; adult education is seen as part of a wider economic, social or labour market policy playing a key role in addressing socio-economic, demographic, environmental and other "challenges" within the European community; b) the level of knowledge; the adult education is seen as one of the main contributors to the knowledge based economy, providing "right" skills for competitiveness of European economy; c) the level of governance of adult education; open method of coordination is being implemented to "guide" adult education in commonly agreed direction at European, national and local level; d) the level of subjectivity; adult education should contribute to the development of desirable forms of subjectivity, i.e. flexible workers and lifelong learners. These four aspects shall be critically analysed within the paper.

Applied theatre, gender consciousness and transformative learning

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Abstract:
In the context of the ideological revolutions of the 60s and 70s of the twentieth century, theatre and performance start playing a key role in the demand and exposure of the unequal situation of women across time in society. In the context of performing arts women found alternative forms of expression and therefore theatre has become not only a form of political activism, but also the expression of cultural, social and aesthetic concerns (Carlson, 1997). Besides it is recognized as an important learning tool bringing new views and approaches to social reality. With "applied theatre" and "community performance" models the artistic practice moves away from an institutional approach and spread into unconventional contexts focusing specific social groups or communities and "facilitating creative expression as a means to newly analyse and understand life situations, and to empower people to value themselves and shape a more egalitarian and diverse future" (Kuppers, 2007, pp.5-6). This paper describes a concrete experience of applied theatre: the design and implementation of theatre workshops for two groups of women, university students and women unemployed. The fact that women continue to face multiple forms of discrimination as human beings, citizens and professionals justified the need for alternative training instrument (the *Empowerment Labs*) focused in the amplification of power sense, freedom and action that allow the formulation of individual and collective strategies of denunciation and overcoming. In the core of the approach a fundamental question: "can the theatre raise consciousness and empowerment in the context of gender equality?«. Regarding the analysis of the results and implications, information obtained through different internal assessment tools indicates changes in what concerns awareness and personal empowerment. It is particularly expressive the perception of young and women participants about personal change on "strengthening the personal and social well-being" and "development of critical thinking." We also seek to discuss the limits of applied theatre's focus on certain types of outcome, namely what James Thompson calls "... the shift in focus from effects to affects." (2009: 7).

Challenges and Opportunities for Adult Learning in Learning City – Region Developments in Pécs, Hungary. New Perspectives for Community Development and Co-operative Learning

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Abstract

The University of Pécs and the City Council of Pécs has accepted the invitation of UNESCO Institute of Lifelong Learning to join in for the *Global Learning Cities Network* and, therefore, the University and the City established the *Pécs Learning-City Forum* in 2012.

Accordingly, the Faculty of Adult Education and HRD of the University of Pécs initiated three local learning platforms in the Fall of 2014 as part of the Pécs Learning City-Region Forum, based on the initiative of UNESCO Institute of Lifelong Learning on the *Global Learning Cities Network,* as an umbrella network to get new collaborations started amongst learning organisations. These platforms collects and share best practices around the following themes:

- *Atypical/Non-formal Learning platform* (This platform tires to help cultural organisers, curators, managers be more successful with their educational programmes organised for adults and also for school-teachers engaged in the development of cultural programmes for children)
- *School and Environment platform* (This platform supports dialogue amongst professionals developing specific environment-oriented programmes for local youth and their parents so as to become Nature-friendly, and conscious in protecting their environment. There is a specific focus to help school-teachers as adult learners building such orientations in the classroom and use available sources, programmes and curricula, etc. to achieve that goal based on collected best practises);
- *Inclusion and Handicapped Situations platform*(This platform helps teachers to engage in collaborative actions providing dialogue to understand problems emerging from working with young children with learning difficulties)

This paper and the related presentation will elaborate upon how the *Atypical/Non-formal Learning platform* generates specific adult learning and training of educators in local Hungary based on a global initiative of learning cities. Accordingly, it will examine the challenges and opportunities for the learning city model of Pécs, based on some concrete actions in museums, and other cultural organisations, in engaging more adults in learning and developing their own communities in atypical forms of co-operative learning within and across particular platform-based actions.

The role of adult educators in fostering learning for community resilience

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Abstract

Number and complexity of risks and hazards increase all around the World today. Strategies for prevention and disaster risk reduction (DRR) are being carefully considered within the ongoing redefinition of goals for the future on global level. It is seen as a segment of sustainable development and the role of education and educators in this context is strongly emphasized. On local level, it is expected that people understand their contribution and responsibility in dealing with risks and direct their actions towards community resilience, improving the quality of life at individual, family and community level. Wide agreement about it at the policy level is not being followed by appropriate activities in practice, neither adequately supported by professionals and decision makers. Last decades brought somewhat stronger focus of social scientists in the study and research of interrelations between humans and environment, finally exercising in their work what is declaratively widely promoted – interdisciplinary and integrated approach. It involves modest contribution of adult educators interested in theory and practice of environmental education, education for sustainable development, active citizenship and community learning. Small presence of authors in this arena is clearly reflected in weak integration of sustainability, including DRR issues in all segments of adult education, both in theory and in practice.

In reality, we face strong need and requirements for it. One of the last huge disasters that took place in Serbia and the Region in May 2014, may be seen as another strong reminder of it. Weak response of responsible actors in communities and lack of capacities of all to deal with complex hazards lead to increased vulnerability of communities. In this paper we discuss the role of adult educators in supporting learning for community resilience, starting from interrelated concepts of sustainability and lifelong education, as well as from perspectives of environmental andragogy. Short analysis of education activities in Serbia in this field is presented, as well as needs and characteristics of the system for disaster risk prevention in the country. Results of the study on needs analysis for public education in DRR, done for UNDP

Serbia, as a segment of the ENVSEC Initiative[1], comprising empirical data collected through interviews with representatives of municipalities, nongovernmental organizations and experts' institutions, are summarized and discussed. Reflections of analyzed trends and results of the study are provided in conclusion, opening questions of potential interventions and contributions of adult educators in learning for community resilience.

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[1] The Environment and Security Initiative (ENVSEC) is a partnership of six international organizations – the OSCE, REC, UNDP, UNECE, UNEP and NATO as an associated partner– with specialized and complementary mandates and expertise, providing an integrated response to environment and security challenges.

Sharing knowledge in community spaces: mediating power and pedagogy through university service learning in South African contexts

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Abstract

The purpose of this paper is to explore the extent to which knowledge is co-created or shared between university and community members in different kinds of community spaces. It analyses how power is mediated in those spaces between service learning students and grass roots community members or Non-governmental Organisations (NGOs) through a pedagogy that focuses on listening and dialogue and a curriculum that consists of formal and informal knowledge. The paper draws on recent empirical findings from three small scale community engagement projects which involved students working in pairs or teams in response to a community initiated request for assistance. The case studies included a film archiving task for an NGO resource library, early child development activities in an impoverished township and training workshops on gender and sexuality organized by a gay and lesbian organization. The paper draws on Kolb's experiential learning cycle as a pedagogical tool, a Freirian concept of praxis and Heifetz' concept of adaptive leadership as mediating devices for clarifying competing goals and values in community contexts. The findings suggest that layers of power have to be carefully managed through ongoing dialogue and listening whereby all participants have an opportunity to articulate their needs and expectations. The findings also highlight the challenges of using community spaces for fostering learning in the context of competing curriculum timeframes and targets.

Vacancies - eyesores or/and (new) chances of identification for communities.
How to support successfully initiatives of people and their engagement to breathe new life into unoccupied buildings.

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Abstract

After the social and political transformation, followed by a process of deindustrialisation and a very high mobility of young people the working shortage and demographic change is having an impact on the development of communities in East Germany. People and institutional structures in that regions have to deal with this challenges. In the rural regions of East Saxony the economic and demographic change left empty public spaces and industrial buildings. These buildings lost their social meanings and functions. Until today it seems that this places are not useless for space-oriented identification. Abandoned buildings in the middle of the communities are symbols of change and occupied by negative semantics and referred to them as eyesores for the communities. One solution is to let demolish the buildings. Engaged groups of people try to reanimate such spaces and open them for the public with a project in East Germany offering support and consulting to such initiatives. Six case studies of different initiatives were supported with consultation, network building events and chaired talks with the local governments. Attending to the project a qualitative research was done answering the question what interventions educators can apply, what kind of actions in the field of learning and education are reasonable and necessary and how all members of a community will be able to participate in, enrol in, and prosper. The research yielded important information regarding the motives and formation of this engaged people, their needs of support and communication to allow to (re)create new positive function and identification with the vacancies within the community life. The research objectives were: To describe the history of the initiatives and their needs, to gather success factors for the support and to argue with the impact of this groups for the revitalization of community life. The results were organized into five priority areas: motives and formation of the association, history of commitment and challenges, support needs of the volunteers, project activities to support and success factors of commitment. The research results are providing the opportunity to bring attention to issues of adult education to support local development in the regions of Eastern Germany. Learning a social process is associated with personal and social issues. Seen in this perspective adult education as lifelong learning is to reflect historical and social transformation as a 'searching process' (Schäffter 2003) to find innovative and individual solutions in a transformation society. This contribution presents the problem of demographic change and the situation in East Germany, provides the perspective of how vacancies in rural communities can give an opportunity of new identification with people and their practical engagement. And different examples for the way to breathe new life into unoccupied buildings.

Translating Cultures – Adapting Lives: The Learning Curve for Polish Migrants in the East Midlands, UK

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Abstract

Eleven years after Poland joined the European Union, Polish migrants who settled in the UK have become a significant part of modern British society. The extent of this phenomenon was reflected in the 2011 Census when Polish was identified as a second most spoken language in England. Although Polish communities have attracted much research attention, numerous cultural and educational issues are still underrepresented in research. Although Polish migrants are not racially different from English hosts, in the local context their cultural background can yet be found distinctive. Therefore, although they contribute to the British notion of multi-ethnicity within society, perpetuating issues of language, belonging, identity and inter-cultural dialogue seem to be everyday matters. Since migration projects are strongly marked by learning experiences, migrants' adaptation in a host culture becomes an open-end learn-and-modify curve with diversified personal goals. This paper focuses on elements of social and cultural cognition that Polish migrants have experienced in their lives in the UK. All data presented here comes from a doctoral research project *Translating Cultures – Adapting Lives* conducted on Polish migrants residing in the East Midlands over the period of ten months (May 2013 – March 2014). This mixed-methods study produced a vast array of results; therefore, only on a snapshot is discussed here, with the main focus being on cultural differences noticed upon arrival and socio-cultural cognitive experiences of respondents during their migration project. Moreover, this paper will also construe relations between cultural and national identity and languages, which seem to have gained unquestionable prominence in the collected data set.

Title: Developing Network Practices: Interaction, Collaboration, and Applied Knowledge in Educational Research Communities

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Abstract

This study examines three key issues regarding the development of research networks in education: 1) *Interactional practices*, including face-to-face or virtual teamwork (Cummings & Kiesler, 2005); 2) *Scientific collaboration*, represented by peer knowledge production and publication (Newman, 2001); 3) *Applied knowledge*, namely the potential of networks to create new social, political and economic practices (Peters & Araya, 2007). The three key issues, in which research networks are grounded on, coexist with one another and are significant for the construction and dissemination of scientific knowledge in the society. These ideas are illustrated from a longitudinal case study of the Iberian-American Studies Network on Vocational Education and School Dropout (RIMEPES), established in 2009. The RIMEPES is a network of international education research involving the participation of 33 scholars and 27 educational institutions from 11 different countries in Latin America and Southern Europe. The RIMEPES includes comparative and multidisciplinary research, organization of local and international conferences, exchange programs, and publications. The methods applied to this study include the combination of documentary research and social network analysis. This methodological approach enables the integration of precision and rigor of quantitative analysis with the richness and description of qualitative analysis thereby illuminating the social complexities permeating educational phenomena (Carolan, 2014). From this standpoint, the current study discusses the implications of networks by considering the importance of engaging scholars and educational communities in a perspective of reciprocity to foster scientific development and public policies.

Artistic leisure-time interests being fulfilled during Senior University classes

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Abstract
This paper will address the possibilities Senior Universities offer the elderly to discover and fulfil their leisure-time interests. As for the theoretical background, the present paper is informed with the Herbert Read theory of art as means of education as well as the Howard Gardner multiple intelligence conception. The empirical part will present an analysis of the interviews with a group of Senior University students participating in music workshop activities (a choir), fine arts as well as theatre workshop activities. The research was carried out in Olsztyn – the main city of the Warmia and Mazury region.

Slovenian public libraries and their educational role

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Abstract

This paper deals with the educational role played by public libraries in Slovenia. In addition to the educational function, the informative, social and cultural aspects together comprise the four main tasks that public libraries are required to carry out in their local communities. In the first part of the paper, the theoretical and historical backgrounds of the educational role of (Slovenian) public libraries are presented, followed by an analysis of the legal, strategic and administrative aspects of this role. The aim here is to provide a general overview of the development of the educational function of public libraries, and the information provided on this is relatively well presented in the available literature and, legal and strategic documents. Public libraries, with their collections of various materials, are conventional public spaces with no limits as to who can use them. With library services for all areas of knowledge, they cover areas which are relevant to the everyday lives of individuals, and so should ensure equal access to knowledge and information for all. The question is the extent to which these services actually contribute to ensuring that the mainstream and margins of a community have the opportunity to participate and prosper in society.

The second part of the paper presents details about community learning practices. Using a variety of databases, the emphasis is on a review of the prevalence of various forms of education in Slovenian public libraries. The last part of the thesis deals with a case study on Ljubljana City Library, the largest public library in Slovenia, and its function in fostering community learning. The library covers various aspects of informal, non-formal and formal education for all age groups, and the emphasis of the analysis is devoted to services for adults. The case study focuses on selected educational services for users/patrons that have been carried out over the last 5 years, such as its employment information service, open learning centre, knowledge exchange and learning activities for information literacy. The focus is on what resources, partnerships and knowledge the library requires in order to fulfil its function as a space and place for community learning. This research highlights the advantages and disadvantages of the current situation and the standard of organisation at the national and Ljubljana City Library levels. The results and findings of the research are useful for the adult education and professional librarian communities not only in Slovenia, but also abroad, for further work on the educational roles of public libraries.

The role of teacher professional development into activation of learning community

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Abstract

The international comparative analysis on pre-primary educational policies (COM, 2020; OCSE-Eurydice, 2009; OCSE-TALIS, 2009) highlights the growing importance of learning contexts widened on the redefinition of teacher professionalism, fostering a process of transformative changing that include, alongside traditional skills teaching, other strategic components of social fallout. The research investigates the capability process on professional agency (Sen, 2000; Nussbaum, 2011) of preschool teachers and its correlation with the improvement of professional qualification. The enhancement of dimensions as empowerment (Alsop et al., 2006) and choice for individual fulfilment allows to redefine professional development as a experiential and self-determined learning with transformative value. This allows to build new models of development able to combine the skills acquisition with their activation, through a "capability" agency. A comparative analysis of Italo-Brazilian policies launched the first step about definition of the pre-school teacher profiles: the construction of a Model of Competences and self-assessment questionnaires based-on allows to sound out about seventy Italian pre-school teachers. The second step involves the definition of capability activation processes through an Action Research activity with interviews introduced to three pre-selected teachers, in order to highlight the conversions factors that attend on professional qualification. First data indicate the increasing value acquired by extracurricular dimensions on teacher professionalism, related to Areas of Competences of Networking and Governance. Into the Area of Networking, teachers take account of significant differences into levels of competences' development of: i. Competences of cooperation and joint action into network of peers, ii. Competences of professionalism increase through networking opportunities, iii. Competences to influence the policy making through networking action. Into the Area of Governance, relates to extracurricular planning and joint collaboration with educational stakeholders into the local community, the comparison between owned and wanted competences reveal that the increasing of these competences within professional profile is much significant and desirable for teachers sound out. Its suggests: - the re-think of vocational and training policies, able to include informal aspects of learning contexts widened within learning communities (Krašovec et al., 2014). - the re-define of a new teacher's figure, actively involved into co-design of learning environment as a educational integrated system with inclusive importance (Ellerani, 2011) - the support of professional function of corroboration and dissemination of reflexivity, able to produce community learning in a terms of learnfare1 and active welfare2 (Margiotta, 2012; Costa, 2012). - the creation of communities of practice of politic and pedagogic value, based on participatory processes and democratic negotiation (Marinetto, 2014).

Self-empowerment in adult education for community building

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Self-empowerment in adult education is a key subject for community development. This is particularly articulated in alternative community-based concepts and methodological approaches as the "Ecovillage Design Education" (EDE), a Curriculum conceived and designed by the GEESE—Global Ecovillage Educators for a Sustainable Earth, the "Theme-centred interaction" (TCI), a method for social learning and personal development created a.o. by Ruth Cohen or the "Research Arts" practices a method to self-empower transdisciplinary community knowledge approaches for sustainability. But in which way methods of self-empowerment are valuable in diverse types of communities in North and South (traditional villages, eco-villages, eco-hamlets, eco-enclaves, eco-aldeas, sustainability learning centres, and other variations of intentional community) with different traditions of leadership as communities with a personal leadership or rather grassroots democratic projects? This paper discusses the role of self-empowerment for community building based on learning activities lead by different kind of communities. The focus will rely on identifying the factors that facilitate on individual and social level the self-empowerment capacity and in which way communities benefit best from different adult education methods for their particular processes of self-empowerment.

The role of the counsellor in adult education in fostering community learning

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Abstract

In the paper it will be presented how the counsellor in adult education could foster community learning. The topic of the paper is connected with the subtopic of the Conference »The role of (adult) educators and (adult) education in fostering community learning«. In the paper we will present the theoretical base of educational guidance in adult education and how it is linked to the concept of lifelong learning. Counsellors in adult education have a lot of different tasks in supporting adults before they enter education and learning, during the learning process and also at the end to motivate them for continuing the process of learning or link the learning outcomes with their work and day-to-day life. But one of the most important tasks has to be how to motivate less educated adults, who are not learning actively, to access and participate in a wide range of learning opportunities in the community (which are also for them and not just for more educated adults).

In Slovenia we developed a network of 14 regional guidance centres for adults in education. They operated from 2001 till now and collect a lot of information of their adult customers through which we could show the characteristics of adults who enter in education with the support of the counsellors and how the interests for the different topics of learning in the community have been changed in last ten years. We think the most important thing is how they approach different target groups of adults in the community (especially vulnerable target groups) and how they influence the raising of interest for their learning. The benefits are double: for adults and for the community's development. Counsellors in guidance centres have to constantly analyse the specific needs of adults in their community and respond to them with their approach to guidance and also to fostering development of new learning opportunities.

We have been developing different approaches, so called "outreach guidance":
- some days of the week/month counsellors are going to different organizations to offer information and guidance where adults are coming for different services: in libraries, in employment offices, in community houses etc.,
- for the employees in the companies they offer guidance in the workplace,
- counsellors are visiting Roma villages, prisons, etc.,
- they present and offer information and promotional materials at important events in the community (messes, community celebrations etc.).

In the last two years we have also been developing the concept of voluntary work in guidance in adult education to work with some special target groups in the community which are not yet active enough in learning.

Bridging communities: the role of research in building translocal spaces for intercultural education in a border area

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Abstract

The abstract presents the theoretical framework, methodologies and results of a research project carried out in a border region of south east Europe, between Slovenia and Italy.

The research used qualitative methods and the activities have been carried out in primary and lower secondary schools of different contexts with high percentage of foreign students or schools of autochthon minorities where minority languages are taught and learned in the formal school curriculum. These school environments share the characteristic that they include students belonging at national historical groups speaking minority languages and students belonging at recent minority groups with migration back grounds. The guiding principle of the research activity is based on the idea that Intercultural Education should be an opportunity to continually deconstruct and reconstruct the way in which education is thought and practiced. This implies to create opportunities to re-inventing the class, re-imagining the procedures, methods, contents and contexts of teaching/learning processes, doing research together, teachers, students and researchers (Spivak, 1988, 2002; Zoletto, 2007; Andreotti, 2010; Andreotti & de Sousa, 2008). The proposal focuses on language uses in relation with students' living spaces and everyday practices (De Certau, 1980) investigating in particular the ways languages turn up in unexpected places and considering the relations between languages, practices and locality (Pennycook, 2010, 2012). Qualitative and quantitative data collected observing school practices and questioning teachers, students, families and schools' principals investigate the connections between heterogeneous school environments and local community's identity building process. Research data have been collected and analyzed referring to Banks intercultural education framework (Banks, 2009); results and emerging issues have been commented in the light of globalization theories (Appadurai, 1996; Hannerz, 1992, 1997) and super-diversity framework (Vertovec, 2007).

Living and learning in diverse urban communities (of practice).

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Abstract

This paper aims to offer introductory theoretical arguments in order to plan interdisciplinary research on the role that diverse "communities of practice" can play in everyday processes of "community" education within diverse urban environments (van der Veen, Wildemeersch 2012). We discuss how research in/on diverse communities within postmigrant urban environments should not focus only on those "cultural" or "ethnic" differences which too often are assumed to predetermine community building processes, but on a range of daily practices depending on a multiplicity of affiliations and situations (Rogoff, 2003). As a consequence, we suggest a research approach that focuses on everyday forms of situated learning taking place within diverse "communities of practice" (Lave and Wenger 1991; Wenger 1998), that can be at the same time embedded in very local "power-laden spaces" (Valentine 2007) and in translocal or transnational networks (Ong 2009). In this perspective, diverse "communities of practice" can be researched focusing on three key processes that can be considered as giving an inclusive character to such communities: (1) processes of meaning negotiation. (2) processes of participation and identity construction, and (3) processes of reification of meanings in everyday symbols, procedures, rules and languages. Our research hypothesis is that the way everyday "practices" are actually performed (Biesta 2005) within those diverse communities, not only seem to suggest that traditional boundaries between migrant, postmigrant and native "communities" are blurring, but let also emerge the importance of reframing some of our ideas about what "community" does mean and about the way "community education" can work.

School as the socio-cultural centre of the local community.

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Abstract

Slovenian society has been preserving for a long time a specific model of social organization, rooted in the communal form. The local school and the church were the most important intertwining elements. Functioning as a socio-cultural centre of the local community the school greatly surpassed its primary role of educating children. The process of urbanization that has reached rural areas as well as the secularization of life styles brought very interesting changes to the previously expanded function of local school. We examined how today the schools perceive the need for linking up and intervening in their local environments. We found that 75% of schools either weekly or monthly in some way link up with the local community organizations. At the same time the schools and localities are expressing the wish and the need for collaboration. Quantitative data did not show any significant difference between schools of different sizes and in different localities. This very encouraging results could be pointing to potentially unified pattern of linkages between school and local community. However, qualitative analysis carried out at a later research stage has shown that the perceptions of linkages and their real modalities do differ and that the ways in which schools respond to the needs of the localities (and vice versa) depend on the prevalent model of social organization. Schools in the first place wish and expect the activation of parents and are therefore offering diverse possibilities of educational opportunities. For example, they offer different language or general knowledge courses with an aim to elevate the level of parental education which would in turn ensure more adequate support to children in their education process and/or enable joint learning of adults and children in different extra-curricular and cultural activities. However, the joint learning is mainly limited to parents of school going children. Exceptions are smaller localities where the school might be one of the very few or the only public institution present at the local level. Although the schools also in other environments wish to motivate and engage local residents, they often lack time and energy for it.

The results of qualitative analysis also indicated that merging or closing of local schools could have negative demographic and socio-cultural consequences. At the same time the analysis pointed out to underused potential in the localities lacking tradition, such as new urban areas where the school could be the crucial element in the social organization of the local community.

Understanding and Interpreting Local Architecture and Urban Space for Stimulating Cultural Tourism: Personal Town Tours

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Abstract

Travelling is a valuable activity. Spirit is active all the time, eager to see unknown and new things. There is hardly a school of life surpassing travelling; getting to know the richness of other people's lives, the richness of their thoughts and habits is argued in Journal of Montaigne's Travels in Italy by way of Switzerland and Germany in 1580 and1581. Against today's globalized society grounded on standardized and massive McCulture, local culture and cultural tourism are gaining importance. Moreover, due to new cultural organisation of ages or new social stratification, older people are invited to contribute towards local development, upgrading their cultural and creative capital. They are expected to give an impetus to local creative economy (economisation of culture and "culturalisation" of economy). The study circle "Streets, squares and buildings around us" at Slovenian Third Age University is meant to cultivate older students' competencies of understanding and interpreting local architecture and local urban space. Predominately based on reciprocal and mutual learning as well as action research, it was incorporated into the European project Personal town tours whose participants were collecting and exchanging stories about their towns shaping them into thematic tours, the type of tailored tours where guides reveal their own stories in relation to buildings and urban space. The Slovenian team, however, went beyond the expectations due to the knowledge and motivation they had gained in their study circle. Methodology typical of certain social sciences was applied leading to manifold results for the older students and their personal growth, Slovenian U3A, cultural tourism, publishing houses, national radio programmes, studies of architecture and andragogy, etc.

„To be a heart of the village" – how the school organized the local community in Podmokle

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Abstract
In Poland there are quite a lot small local communities which are developing. To develop they try to get finance from different sources. Some of them get money from local authority, some write projects financial from EU and some try to use they own local recourses. Those communities try to be active and attractive for the locals and for the tourists (global perspective) as well. In my paper I would like to present, as an example of good practice, one of such a small local developing community. The community (the case study) is located in the west of Poland, close to the border of German, named Podmokle Małe. I visited that place and I found it very interesting for research. The centre of the community is small primary school. The Director runs the school but she cares for locals as well. She seems to be the leader of the community who applied for many projects for school and for the community as well. To research such a community I use the ethnographical method (non-structured interviews, participant observation (notes, photos). The research questions are: What kind of activity do the locals participate in? What and how do they learn? What does mean to be a leader? What does help the community to develop? What are the barriers? What does mean to live in that small community? I will present the case study using the category of 'biography of place' and analyse from three perspectives: from objective, historical facts; from stories coming from the locals and from story of the 'other' – the researcher.

Third Age Education and Participation of Older People in the Local Community

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"Older people are interpreters of culture", argues Jung. Older people possess knowledge, pragmatic or experiential knowledge and knowledge about relationships. Older people belong to several cultures simultaneously: culture of the past and culture of the present, their views are important for anticipating the future. In addition to that, there is no active ageing without cultural bridges between generations. These were basic Slovenian Third Age University's assumptions while creating International Festival of Knowledge and Culture in Later Life which has become both an important *community practice* and *a community of practice.* It involves learning as participation in the practice of social communities, constructing both individual and social identity. The participants in the festival (students of U3As, associations of pensioners, members of non-governmental associations) established (1) a common field (culture and knowledge) inspiring them to participate and giving meaning to their activities, (2) a community which functions as a social fabric for their learning and (3) the practice itself which in our case is the International Festival of Knowledge and Culture in Later Life. The purpose of this contribution is to discuss the above assumptions and to present the concept and the implementation of the festival.

Knowledge Democracy: A Global Study on Strengthening Structures for Community University Research Partnerships

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Abstract

The sharing of knowledge between universities and their communities has been a prominent feature of the field of adult education in Europe since the establishment of the extra-mural division of Cambridge University in 1873. The Extra-mural tradition has found counterparts in most of the universities of Europe as Continuing Education, Extension services and so forth. The most recent developments in higher education and community engagement have taken different organisational forms. Science Shops have proliferated in European universities, inspired by the Dutch examples from the 1970s. Community University Partnership Programmes have been initiated in England. Offices of Community Based Research have surfaced in Canada and elsewhere. The UNESCO Chair in Community Based Research and Social Responsibility in Higher Education, a chair shared between Rajesh Tandon at PRIA in India and Budd Hall at the University of Victoria initiated a global study with the support of the International Development Research Centre on facilitative structures used by universities and community groups to create and support effective community based participatory research partnerships. This paper and presentation will summarize the results of this study and raise questions about the implications for the field of university based adult education.

Reading and writing the city through a learning community. A case from Brussels.

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Abstract

The learning community studied in this contribution, is a group of people supported by the non-formal adult education organisation Citizenne (folk high school) in Brussels. Essential elements in the vision of the learning community are empowerment and talent development. This means that learners carry out their own learning process and that they locate and organize activities that align with their own interests, talents and desires. This specific learning community consists of people who can no longer be admitted to courses "Dutch for non-native speakers" in a centre for formal adult basic education, even though they're still motivated and/or need opportunities to practice Dutch by speaking. This group of people with various ethnic-cultural backgrounds, assembles twice a month to exercise Dutch, to explore the city and its socio-cultural provisions together. Through 'connecting learning to the real life', learning communities use non-formal learning as a method to enhance social cohesion and as a means to develop skills in people without automatic access to lifelong and life-wide learning. This shift from formal to non-formal adult education, however, means an experience of exclusion to many of the participants who are already underprivileged and socially vulnerable. Citizenne aims to enhance the access to the city through empowerment in following ways: 1) by influencing other organizations to reduce existing thresholds and promote their accessibility, 2) by exploring Brussels and introducing participants to other places and initiatives and thereby expanding participants' networks and resources, and 3) by making an effort in reading the city and enhancing the public character of the city, through the connection of everyday experiences to a broad and problematizing view on literacy. Analysing this last element in detail, we focus on how individual and collective learning processes are connected (both in discourse and in practice). We distinguish individual learning processes in terms of qualification, socialisation and subjectification (Biesta, 2009, 2011) and on the community level in terms of normative, connecting and interrupting dynamics. We close with some considerations on how adult educators can support these learning processes in the learning community in general and more specific on how adult education initiatives can enhance the opportunities of citizens to appropriate the city through a learning process of reading and writing the city.

Elderly education in our days: the case of the universities of third age

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Abstract

There are more older adults in the world today in relation to the total population than ever before, and this share is still increasing. Education can be an instrument to foster learning and social promotion; apart from that, it allows adults to live in the world that is constantly changing. In Portugal, the participation of adults in learning strongly decreases with age. Among the elderly, the higher number of participants can be found in informal and non-formal learning. There are some obstacles and limitations regarding elderly participation. These problems are related primarily to the priorities of the politics and educational processes directed to the labour market. If we consider that the main purpose of lifelong learning (LLL) is the promotion of skills for employability (Cavaco, 2012), this purpose does not seem to stimulate education for all. Namely, if we follow this logic, it is exactly the population of elderly adults who are being the most excluded from education (Melo, 1997). In many cases, universities of the third age (UTA) emerge from the civic initiatives exactly because of the lack of the educational opportunities for elderly. As such, these are among the few entities that seem to promote education and learning activities for elderly and provide them the opportunity to participate. The main aim of our research is to understand the educative practices developed in the UTA. After some informal conversations to acquire in-depth knowledge about the UTA, we have built a survey that includes a wide range of issues related to the work and practices developed in these contexts. Following the initial literature review and its analysis, we will conduct some interviews with the participants in order to get deeper insight and understanding of empirical practices. We want to understand what activities are adults participating in; who conceives these activities; who makes the design, development and evaluation of them; are older adults merely a part of what is already predetermined by others or are they actively participating in planning and evaluation of such activities as well. And finally, we want to understand whether there are some connections between this social/educational contexts and the emancipation of the individuals?

Involvement of Elementary Schools in the Community: the Case of Slovenia

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Abstract

One of school's most important tasks is to establish its collaboration with the community at the local and wider social and international levels. The present paper focuses on the local community. The paper concerns the partner relationship between the school, parents and the community which authors (such as Epstein 1995; Sheridan, Napolitano and Swearer 2002) define as the collaboration and joint efforts of the school, parents and the community aimed at enhancing a child's learning and development, the three sharing their sources of power and responsibility in the process. Efforts towards harmonized, systematic, planned and regular collaboration with the immediate and wider environment are necessary, as well as with individuals, groups, organizations and communities. The variety of experiences that enables such collaboration enriches all participating partners (Sheridan, Napolitano and Swearer 2002).The school can significantly contribute to learning in a community. Further below, the basic characteristics of school-community partnership will be analysed. There are various aims, forms and methods of school-community collaboration, depending on the agreements between partners and on the possibilities and conditions determining the purposes of collaboration. The following conditions of quality collaboration are particularly emphasized (Sanders 2003): (1) professional preparation of the partnership and competences of the involved partners, (2) selection of the proper partner and (3) partnership evaluation. Constant (self)reflection is an important part of mutual collaboration as it enables the schools, individuals and institutions in the community to analyse their own experiences with mutual collaboration, as well as analyse their own conceptions, beliefs and habits referring to mutual collaboration. Reflection, which take place in the community, in interaction with one another, allowing them to cope with beliefs that hinder their mutual cooperation. This serves as the basis for improving the quality of relationships between the school, individuals and institutions in the community as well as for developing more effective methods of mutual collaboration. The paper presents some of the results obtained in an empirical study on the collaboration of Slovenian elementary schools with various partners. The study, carried out in autumn 2014, included 245 elementary school headmasters (coming from 85 urban and 160 non-urban elementary schools). We were interested in how often schools cooperate with various institutions and individuals from the community, in their estimation of the quality of such collaboration, the most frequent barriers to collaboration and the goals they want to achieve in this area in future. A case of good practice will be presented, which can serve as the basis to extract guidelines for the establishment of quality school-community collaboration and promoting learning in the community.

Vocational Education and Training: An Overview of Dropout Studies in Brazil

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Abstract

This paper presents an overview of the literature on vocational education dropouts in Brazil by considering the knowledge about individual and contextual factors associated with this problem and its overcoming. Utilizing several research databases, the literature was collected through a search of keywords linked to the theme of school dropouts in vocational training. The set of databases contains 100% of the Brazilian scientific journals in Education. The review of the literature indicates an insignificant amount of studies pertaining to dropouts (e.g. Almeida & Barbosa, 2010; M. R. Silva, Pelissari, & Steimbach, 2013). In most of them, the results show that students do not identify with the vocational school or course. Moreover, there seems to be a perceived lack of vocational prospects as well as a low interest in one's particular field of study. A lack of motivation and commitment to the course were also present in these studies. Some dropout factors related to the teaching-learning process are also pointed out by the reviewed studies such as difficulty in the course subjects and course failure. Other dropout causes relate to familial contexts and student challenges such as health problems, pregnancy, drug use, and financial and family difficulties. Factors related to work are also highlighted, for example, labour market entry, and incompatibility of work hours and study. In order to overcome the dropout problem, the studies suggest the need for a collaborative effort involving three important agents: the education system, which should provide proposals to the population to minimize the problem and to facilitate the return of dropout students to school; schools and community, which must seek solutions to their intrinsic problems; public policies for vocational education, which should encourage students to stay and complete their studies. It is also essential that further knowledge of the causes and manifestations of this phenomenon be generated in order to support these agents to face the problem and propose ways to prevent dropouts.

What we have learnt from the local community projects?

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Abstract

We discuss selected projects/initiatives carried out in local communities, targeting inequalities and social exclusion. Our aim here is to identify the framework, barriers to and opportunities of individual and collective community learning in the local environment. For a number of reasons, the issues of social inequality are less emphatically present in the public discourse in Poland than is the case in Western European countries; they are nevertheless very frequently addressed in research (Podemski 2009). While in the socialist period, social inequalities, though undeniably existing (Małgorzata Dziubińska-Machlewicz, 2002; Szacka 2003), were being specifically "concealed," in the period of systemic transformations, "highlighting the diversification of incomes and living standards could be treated as challenging the implementation of the Neoliberal economic reforms" (Podemski, 2009 p. 8). Consequently, the theme was in a way suppressed in the public discourse, but in recent years the scholarly and, in particular, public attitudes have been evidently changing and the time seems ripe for revealing and analysing social inequalities. Ambiguous outcomes of projects carried out in various communities' fuel debates and encourage further educational action in local communities. At the same time, many scholars observe that the Polish education system and lifelong learning practices do not promote equal opportunities, but contribute to the reproduction of social inequalities (Szkudlarek 2009). While marketization of education is often regarded as one reason for these adverse phenomena (Potulicka, Rutkowiak 2010), one-sided evaluation of community development in terms of economic effectiveness only may be cited as another one. The case study in our paper concerns two projects which aimed to promote pro-active behaviours of the unemployed in small communities. The projects targeted people from two age groups: people below 25 years of age (with no experience of the socialist past) and 50-plussers (who lived half of their life in the socialist period). Both age groups face the risk of social exclusion. The projects are interesting insofar as they provide a focalized view of the system and local community that the projects participants inhabit. As such, these projects tie in with the arguments and explanations presented in the first part of the paper.

"It's a cyclopean task (…) all of us are (too) few": adult educators consider the relationships between adult education providers and the community

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Abstract
The latest Eurydice report on adult education and training in Europe (2015) informed that 60% Portuguese adults between 25-64 years have completed, at most, lower secondary education, whereas 38,9% have lower qualifications. These numbers place Portugal at the bottom of the table of European countries in terms of qualifications of the adult population. Hence the choice of the title of this paper, which echoes one of the adult educators who were interviewed. The goal of this paper will be to explore their visions on the relationships between adult education provision and the community. Included in a broader study which aimed at capturing and discussing the impacts of adult education and training in the development of psychological empowerment (Zimmerman, 1995), and based on the nomological network of organizational empowerment proposed by Zimmerman and Peterson (2004), a semi-structured interview script for adult education "agents", as they are commonly termed in Portugal, was developed (Gomes, 2011). Zimmerman and Peterson's notion of empowerment relies, first and foremost, on the crucial distinction between empowering processes and empowered outcomes, and defines three components of organizational empowerment: intra-organizational, which includes the internal structure and its functioning, and provides the context for the involvement of its members in achieving goals and completing the organizational activity; inter-organizational, which relates to the linkage between various organizations and joint actions; and extra-organizational, which refers to the actions taken in order to exert control, i.e. organizational endeavours that affect the larger learning environment they are part of. In this paper we intend to capture how the adult educators interviewed perceive organizations of adult education provision. Through a reconsideration of the testimonies emerging from the interview talk, this paper will present the views of educators concerning the participation of their members in carrying out the mission of education provision, the provider organization's position in the community, and, finally, the impact of adult educators' on the creation and transformation of community adult education programs and activities. Analysis based on micro-analysis of interviewee language is used to interpret the interview data collected. In attempting a careful analysis of the interviewees' voicing of the difficult task of achieving empowerment for adult learners in tune with our notion of what empowerment can signify, we follow the advice given by Perkins and Zimmerman (1995), according to whom it is imperative to create research contexts that stimulate the development of common narratives and give space to people promoting empowerment, listening carefully to the voices that tell such stories. We share Rappaport's view (1995) that

the voices of those people we seek to represent remain all too often voices "offstage", even when we attempt to analyse the phenomenon of empowerment as reflexively and sensitively as possible. For this reason a collaborative research approach must be the basis of any action that wishes to develop the concept of empowerment, and this in turn indicates the need for relationships of equality and solidarity between the researcher and co-researchers (Fetterman, 2002), and for sensitivity to the social, political and natural contexts of our work.

Barriers to formal and non-formal education in urban and rural communities

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Abstract
In our paper we examine barriers that influence adults' possibilities to participate in non-formal education in Slovenia and Europe and differences that comes from living in urban or rural communities. We base our analysis on Labour Force Survey data (Eurostat) from several time periods, and are especially interested to reveal the differences in barriers and participation in 2008 and 2014 – before and after economic recession. We will build our understanding of differences in participation in adult education and barriers that hinder this participation on differences in socio-political structures of countries that will be included in analysis. We assume that the welfare state characteristics affect the type and severity of barriers, as well as the ability of individuals to overcome their influence. Structural conditions play an important role in creating the circumstances faced by individuals, and limit the feasible alternatives from which individuals can choose, and can therefore in some way "restrict" an individual's actions.

Adult Learning Festival, a global initiative in the regional prism

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Abstract

After UNESCO launched an initiative for the internationalization of Adult Learners' Week and the extension of International Literacy Day with the promotion of education and learning in adulthood, then Adult Learning Festival began to develop around the world in similar and different forms. The aim of this paper is to examine common characteristics and influence of the Adult Learning Festivals on the communities in the SEE region. Under the characteristics in this research the following elements of event management were examined: organizational and program structure, leadership, and promotional techniques. Financing the festivals and demographic characteristics of the researched countries were used as independent variables. This descriptive research belongs to the field of adult education management. The set research tasks were realized using a comparative study case approach. Furthermore, the detection the influence of the Adult Learning Festivals required analysis of each festivals' vision and mission statements, applying content analysis. Data collected through in-depth interviews with coordinators of festivals in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Slovenia, and Serbia and research of documentation archives. The cause of testing sustainability and resistance of the festivals at the diachronic level in the analysis included events organized in 2001, 2008 and 2014. The results show that the Adult Learning Festival is an independent organizational format with a specific structure, which consists of special events, educational fairs and meetings of professionals. The network organizational structure was identified as a common organizational type for the managing the Adult learning festivals in the region. This mean that the hierarchy is decentralized between the national and regional coordinators. The division of work tasks is based on expertise and organizational structure consists of a network of organizations. Moreover, this finding corresponds the identification of a group leadership type, where the position of the leader is shared between members of the national organizational board and local coordinators. Promotional activities are based on PR, organization of spectacles, dissemination of attractive and practical promotional gifts. An analysis of control variables shows that demographic characteristics do not influence the resistance of the festival as independent organizational format, but funding does. Magnitude, program and sustainability is influenced by Adult Learners Festivals' financing, as well as support of governmental and EU funds. The conclusion about influence of the festivals is dedicated to its multiple characteristics. Social-cultural, personal and political influence were recorded as the most important for the community of the coordinators. In a nutshell, the Adult Learning Festival is international initiative which at the same time strengthens and expands the community of the adult educators and learners at the local level.

Learning in Community Through Mobile Storytelling and Location-Based Games

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Abstract:
Although the notion of community learning is not sharply defined, the goals and achievements of non-institutional approaches toward education and social development within communities have been widely recognized and have received international attention as a research area. Due to the desired and necessary interconnection of community learning with local culture and initiative there is a great variety in educational community practices. Still many approaches share similar purposes and methodologies. For instance, typically the activities are developed using participatory methods such as dialogue techniques, and informal methods of creativity elicitation, knowledge acquisition and distribution play an important role. Also, quite typically we find inclusive learning in groups (as well as individually) and addressing all ages as common themes of community practices.

In this paper we present localized storytelling and learning practices through mainly outdoor mobile gaming where our research pattern basically follows the digital storytelling approach by Joe Lambert, co-founder of the Center for Digital Storytelling (CDS) at UC Berkeley, California (Lambert, 2013). Over the past years we have gathered experience in the development and application of gaming-style spheres of learning in various social settings. Mobile Location-Based Gaming and in particular Mobile Storytelling are well suited to encourage and support community learning. We present our authoring system *GeoQuest* briefly and explain by means of some concrete pedagogical projects how such systems can meet the demands of modern community learning. While our focus here is to give a fair introduction and appraisal of *GeoQuest* (along with *EduQuest*) as mobile storytelling system and serious game platform, we shall also mention practical examples and perspectives of future work.