

## **Abstracts and biographies**

**Dr Linda Morrice, *University of Sussex, UK***

Linda is Senior Lecturer in Education at the University of Sussex. Her research interests include adult and lifelong learning theory, policy and practice - particularly informal and community based learning. She has a particular focus on refugee and migration studies, identity, and issues of diversity and social inclusion. She is currently working on two research projects: "*Optimising refugee resettlement in the UK: a comparative analysis* (ESRC grant) and '*Cultural Values from the Subaltern Perspective: A Phenomenology of Refugees' Experience of British Culture*' (AHRC grant).

### **Adult Education as a Panacea for 'Fractured Britain': A Subaltern Perspective**

The dramatic increase in global migration has deepened and intensified concerns about the extent and quality of cultural diversity in the UK and across Europe. In the UK this shift has been accompanied by a change in the language of public and policy discourse: the old concepts of 'multiculturalism' and 'integration' have been replaced by 'community cohesion'. The emphasis is now firmly on new arrivals, Muslims and minority groups in general, to learn and to demonstrate a commitment to 'common values'. Adult education, in the form of compulsory language testing and citizenship education, has been mobilised to address the perceived social problem of migrants leading to a fracturing of British (and European) society. In these debates there is assumed to be a set of dominant and clearly defined British values, which are presented as being neutral, universal and uncontested. These are set in opposition to migrant values which are left unexplored, but generally depicted as of concern. This paper will report on an Arts and Humanities Research Council funded research project with refugee women in the UK. Through a range of participative methodologies the research

explores the women's experiences of British cultural values, and the complex processes of negotiating and performing identities in Britain today.

**Professor Emilio Lucio-Villegas, *University of Seville, Spain***

Dr Lucio-Villegas' research focusses on Adult Education. From 2008 to 2013 he was *Paulo Freire Chair at the University of Seville*, where he is currently the Head of the Department of Theory and History of Education and Social Pedagogy. He has participated in research at a national and international level and is a member of the Steering Committee of the European Society for Research on the Education of the Adults (ESREA). He convenes the ESREA network 'Between Global and Local: Adult Learning of Development'.

**The Country and the People - Adult Education and Communities: a Participatory Approach**

Starting from a Freirean approach, I consider that adult education is based on at least two major issues. The first is dialogue, meaning that adult education arises from experiences that people share in the educational process; education is a kind of dialogue where experiences are shared with others. The second issue is related to the contexts where people live, love, work, walk, etc. As Freire states, adult education has to begin from the specific context of a group of learners. This context, which we usually call community, is the source of generative themes making it the essence of learning programs.

There are other elements to define adult education and reinforce this idea of collective and relational perspective. Adult

education is based on cooperative work; it is an attempt to reach autonomy to people and communities. Community has been traditionally defined as a place and a space that allows people a feeling of security facing the other. Hoggart claims that community is divided into 'us' and 'them'. Levesque describes community as 'our only insurance'. But community is not only this kind of shelter. It is a heterogeneous place/space where both conflicts and changes are common. In this scope of diversity we need to situate adult education to rescue community as a form to challenge the pressures of Lifelong Learning policies and practices.

What practices can be presented to set adult education inside communities? The Participatory Budget experiment in Seville (2003-2007) was very rich in some experiences linking adult education to the city neighbourhoods and some outcomes remain from this time. Another important source of practices relates to the recovery of the culture, identity, memories of people. Two experiences can be presented here; the first relates to a Historical Memory Workshop; and the second is connected to a current project to build a museum on the Guadalquivir River. I conclude that establishing bonds between adult education and communities is necessary to the undertaking participatory approaches based on methodologies such as Participatory Research or Popular Education.

**Dr Janice Malcolm, *University of Kent, UK***

Dr. Janice Malcolm is Director of the Centre for the Study of Higher Education at the University of Kent. Her main research focus is on academic work and the construction and practice of academic and disciplinary identities. She is particularly

interested in the nature of the academic workplace, and the impact of policy and regulation on disciplinary practice.

### **Adult education as academic work**

In this seminar I will be looking at how the changing sites and practices of adult education and of the university itself present new challenges and possibilities for our understanding of adult education *as academic work*. The seminar draws on two current studies; one on the experience of social science academics who began work in the 1960s and early 1970s, and the other (funded by the Society for Research into Higher Education) on contemporary academic work in social science departments and on a previous study of academic identity among university adult educators. These current projects set out to explore how the experience and practice of academic work varies across time, disciplines and institutional settings, and have uncovered a surprising level of engagement with adult education practices and contexts among academics who do not see themselves primarily as adult educators. The latter study explored the experiences of dispersal and transition with a group of academics who moved from a disbanded adult education department to various university worksites, as part of the general upheaval which characterised university adult education in the UK at the time.

In all of these studies it is clear that the disciplinary affiliations and positionings of the academics are in a complex and shifting relationship with their adult education engagements, pedagogy and practice. In the last twenty years, adult education as a form of practice and as an institutional presence within the university has been transformed. At the same time, 'work and learning' has emerged at the intersection of a number of disciplines and practices and has transformed research in the field. This

provides a rich and revitalising resource for new understandings of what we do as academics and adult educators, and how we want to do it in the future.