

Lifelong Education / Learning futures

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Lifelong Learning

- The official hegemonic discourse of education: Lifelong Learning. Different from lifelong education
- LLE: was more expansive and humanistic
- LLL: is more reductionist, strictly connected with market dynamics in a neoliberal vision.
- The discursive shift from LLE to LLL not innocent

- **Once was UNESCO driven, Humanist, Expansive, Left oriented in a Cold War context.**

Very 'geographically majority world' oriented.

Recognised nonformal education; Popular Education

- **We have shifted from education as a public good to education / learning for consumption**

The progressive counter discourse: social justice

- ***A Learning Society* that involves people as social actors and not two dimensional producers/ consumers.**
- **Self and collectively directed learning.**

Towards Neoliberalism

- Two strands (a) utopian (b) empirical
- *Learning Society* at basis of *democracy*
- Little financial Inducements. Petered out
- Taken up in an *ultra-economistic* turn by OECD and EU
- Promoted by EU thru' European Roundtable of industrialists - not educators.
- Very individualising. Learning not education. Different emphasis.
- Neoliberal patterns. *Responsibilisation*. Individual not social responsibility.

Future?

- Can serve to either consolidate what Eisenhower called the 'Military-[Academic]-Industrial Complex' or serve to learn to challenge it.
- There can be no power without resistance.
- Counter currents at every stage. Lifelong learning and education within social movements.
- Counter currents within Capitalist discourse itself
WEF(Klaus Schwab): a broad Humanist education to *serve the economy* more effectively.
- Progressive social movements can seize upon this to serve humanity in general not Capitalist ends.

Ecological factor

- The 1990s+ discourse must be overturned.
- LLE/LLL for people as *relational beings* : relations with the rest of Nature in which we are all immersed.
- The tension of education: between the ecological, relational pole and that which is economically corporate-driven
- Cultural workers operate between these two poles: ends of a Continuum
- Progressives striving towards the ecological end buffeted by the gale force from the other end.
- Accepting the tension involved. Marx: People can make change but not under conditions of their choosing.

Fascism/imperialism

- **Struggle for learning vs the no longer nascent but present 'real time' Fascism with its attack on education and higher education and the struggle for the pursuit of 'truth'.**
- **Critical consciousness is one of the antidotes to the overarching Fascism and Imperialism.**
- **There can be no genuine democracy without critical consciousness, hence critical learning to distinguish fact from fiction, including AI generated fiction, where “foul is fair” and “fair is foul.”**

Education is just one variable

- Education *not* an *independent variable*. It does not change things on its own.
- It is however an *essential ingredient* for effective change.
- So we need *critical pedagogy* including critical historical studies (vs historical amnesia), critical media studies and Ecopedagogy more than ever.