

## ***DEVELOPMENT EDUCATION IN POLICY AND PRACTICE***

Stephen McCloskey (ed.) *Development Education in Policy and Practice*, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

### **Review by Anne M. Dolan**

*Development Education in Policy and Practice* is a new publication which analyses the growth of global/development education in recent decades. It provides the reader with a critical overview of the nature and historical journey of development education. Edited by Stephen McCloskey, director of the Centre for Global Education, the book is informed by ideas and theories from the Centre's journal *Policy and Practice: A Development Education Review*.

Development education is a radical pedagogy which addresses structural causes of poverty, injustice and inequality in our world today. Strongly centred on the global South, development education focuses on empowerment of the learner, groups and society to take action towards social change. Development education provides a space for reflection and this publication argues that development education has an important role to play in interpreting different paradigms of development. The landscape of development education has undergone significant changes in recent decades and as one person who has witnessed many of these changes, I have found this publication thought provoking, challenging and inspiring.

In 1996, two development education non-governmental organisations (NGOs), the Development Education Centre, Birmingham and 80:20 Educating and Acting for a Better World established the Development Education Commission with the core objective of reviewing the state of development education and human rights education in Britain and Ireland. It set about doing this within a 'two-islands approach' i.e. by embracing the experiences of Britain and Ireland comparatively. Almost twenty years later this publication illustrates how development education has evolved both in policy and practice both within and beyond 'the two islands'. It is a

testimony to former and current advocates of this radical educational ideology. Written by a range of development education experts and practitioners from the formal and non-formal education sectors, the book provides a critical overview of the opportunities and challenges facing development education.

Together with a foreword written by Helmuth Hartmeyer the book is divided into four sections. Stephen McCloskey's opening chapters expertly sets the scene by providing the reader with a comprehensive overview of development education. Setting development education in a Freirean context, he documents the evolving nature of development education from the margins to the mainstream. Section One *Soft versus Critical Development Education* interrogates development education and its critical dimension (or lack thereof). Andreotti's chapter illustrates the implicit and explicit differences between 'soft' and 'critical' global citizenship education with a helpful table (28-29). She reminds the reader of the importance of critical literacy, critical citizenship and the inherent concepts of power, voice and difference which need to be addressed unequivocally. She argues that much of the development education discourse in schools falls within the realm of 'soft' citizenship.

Bryan's chapter builds upon this thesis illustrating it with evidence from the post primary education sector whereby she conducted an analysis of text books used for Religious Education (RE) and Civic Social and Political Education (CSPE). Her study highlights the prevalence of the 'personally responsible' and 'soft version' of global citizenship education. This she argues 'reflects the encroachment of neoliberalism in all spheres of life – including education (41). In line with Andreotti's chapter she also argues for the need for reflexive engagement with notions of power, injustice and oppression and the political dimensions of inequality. Bourn's chapter provides a further analysis of development education in schools and further education whereby he produces various typologies ranging from awareness raising to critical global pedagogy. Arguing that all approaches have value, he suggests that one needs to understand the wider context within which

development education takes place including philosophical approaches, school ethos and educational goals. Tormey's chapter explores social, and political philosophical notions of critical thinking and argues that much can be gained from adding insights from the discipline of psychology.

Section two explores developments within various sectors. Adams describes the distinctive nature of global youth work while Waldron addresses the challenges and opportunities of incorporating development education in initial teacher education. Khoo's chapter argues that research and its inherent relationship to development education need to be re-imagined in the interests of potential mutual reciprocity. She states 'some of the most interesting and inspiring examples of critical global pedagogy in practice come from movements for direct democracy in the global South which reposition education centrally in a broader reclamation of politics (135).

Section three examines the relationship between development education and sustainable development with Selby and Kagawa's chapter querying the nature of this relationship and Strachan's chapter examining development education in the context of climate change. Both of these chapters highlight the radical need for a shift in neoliberal practices in the context of the current ecological crises.

Section four discusses new development paradigms from the global South. Kirby's chapter situated in the current global financial crisis critiques our current practices in capitalism which 'have become decoupled from the productive economy' (117). Education he argues has also been complicit as it has failed to provide a critical space to nurture a new social paradigm. He explores some of the tensions and contradictions inherent in new paradigms and draws upon experiences from Latin America. Ronaldo Munck's chapter also draws heavily on Latin America arguing that we need to 'bring politics back in' and he calls for an understanding of Latin American's capitalist development including its inherent contradictions.

Kapoor's chapter examines lessons from development education from subaltern social movements in rural India and their critique of New Social Movements (NSMs) in the global North. Dorothy Grace Guerrero's deglobalisation is provided as an alternative to neoliberalism. Championed by Focus on the Global South it highlights the importance of social, economic, gender and climate justice. Its goals prioritise local needs, sustainable energy production, public transport and peace.

Section five examines the shifting policy landscape for development education. McCann's chapter demonstrates how development education has become mainstreamed into EU policy due to the persistent lobbying of the DE sector. Waituru provides an analysis of the kind of global development framework needed post-2015, the deadline for achieving the Millennium Development Goals. McCloskey's final chapter proposes four possible responses for development education to the financial crisis and he honestly acknowledges some of the limitations of development education to date.

In the current global crisis the glamour of neoliberalism has receded and poverty is an issue for both the global North and South. The global and local crises of finance capital illustrate the contradictions inherent in abdicated responsibility to the capitalist market. For many years development education has constantly challenged the dominant paradigm of neoliberalism and capitalism particularly in the context of an unequal distribution of global resources, environmental issues such as climate change and the implications of an evolving energy crisis. While there is absolute consensus in the book about the need for an alternative development paradigm to neoliberalism, more specifics about the alternative would be welcome. Consumerism, capitalism and neoliberalism continue to inform policies in Ireland and elsewhere even after the shock of the financial crisis. Peterson, Peterson and Liu (2013: 3) describe a situation where we have a global housing bomb due to our addiction to housing. According to the authors, 'the growth in housing numbers is faster than the increase in population in virtually every nation, irrespective of a nation's development status. If the global number of households per capita eventually stabilises at

the current number in developed nations (0.4, or 2.5 people per household), 1 billion new households, would be needed even with no additional population growth'. The implications of this projected growth in terms of consumerism and energy costs are self-evident. Hence, the need for specific visions for the future is all the more important.

*Development Education in Policy and Practice* is an essential reader for those interested in development issues generally and in development education in particular. The book is also of interest to groups and individuals involved in related areas such as human rights, peace education, education for sustainability, citizenship and global learning. Aid agencies, non-governmental development groups, researchers, educationists and individual advocates of justice and human rights perspectives are also urged to read this publication. The chapters together with accompanying lists of references provide multiple perspectives on development education. I strongly recommend this book as a reader for graduate and postgraduate courses on development education or related areas.

### **References**

Peterson, MN, Peterson, TR and Liu, J (2013) *The Housing Bomb: Why our addiction to houses is destroying the environment and threatening our society*, Maryland: The John Hopkins University Press.

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