



Critical Theories of Education: An Introduction

Greg William Misiaszek, Janna M. Popoff, and Ali A. Abdi

In our conceptualizations of putting this reader together, one major question was the role of education as effecting active transformative change for a better world and sustainable planet. It was main perspective in mind that we invited the contributors to the handbook so as to provide diverse possibilities of using critical theories in the broader social and educational and address this important query. With contemporary, dominant Western-centric systems of education basically reproducing societal contexts in their hegemonic and colonial ways, new critiques of the situation are as important as ever. Indeed, with the classic ethnographic study of Paul Willis (1981) in the United Kingdom, later reconfirmed by Dolby et al. (2004), and the continuities of cultural and cognitive imperialism (Battiste, 1998; Said, 1979) in almost all colonized spaces, the possibilities of critically transformative, decolonizing, and actively developing education are as limited, even absent in more locations across the globe than otherwise (Abdi, 2008, 2020). Therefore, and unfortunately, the

G. W. Misiaszek (✉)

Faculty of Education, Institute of Educational Theories, Beijing Normal University, Beijing, China

J. M. Popoff

Thompson Rivers University (TRU), Kamloops, BC, Canada

e-mail: jpopoff@tru.ca

A. A. Abdi

University of British Columbia (UBC), Vancouver, BC, Canada

e-mail: ali.abdi@ubc.ca

hopeful goals of education are too frequently subverted to serve and sustain intensifying hegemonic political and economic systems that serve modernist and rationalist technocratic goals that align with the globalization and neoliberalist goals of education as a measurable and outcome-driven commodity. Such education, as has been the case, disregards and devalues, and deliberately counteracts justice, sustainability, and community well-being.

It is with this appreciation of the critical (as interactively and when needed, contrapuntally critiquing the normative locations and contents of the educational) that we also attach this focus to critical pedagogy, that is, teaching and learning contexts grounded upon critical theories with its inherent goals of designing and auctioning the conceptual, theoretical, and the practical into emerging possibilities of social justice praxis. Such praxis shall be globally inclusive and locally contextual (Freire, 1998; Gadotti, 1996), as it could also serve the primacy of planetary sustainability for the human world and beyond the narrowness of anthropocentrism (Freire, 2004; Gadotti, 2008; Misiaszek, 2020). The essence of praxis is using theories as diversely explanatory and analytical lenses to view the world for reflectivity that guides one's actions. Paulo Freire (1992, 2000), arguably the most influential critical philosopher of education for the past 60 or so years, argued that education's vital role is to overcome *limit situations* which are the gaps (or barriers) between current realities and what the world 'should' be. Other critical thinkers of education including Julius Nyerere, the philosopher-statesman and first postcolonial President of Tanzania, forcefully spoke about and planned, with limited success, the problematic, colonial decontextualization of learning projects that excluded the history, experiences, and needs of Indigenous populations (Nyerere, 1968). Such decontextualization created a situation where the critical roles of contextual education in social well-being in precolonial traditional societies, which has been the reality of human life for millennia (Abdi, 2008), were derided and destroyed for the sake of cognitive imperialism and replaced colonial systems of training that actually acted as de-culturing oppressive practices for underdevelopment (Achebe, 2000; Rodney, 1981).

It is with this backdrop and the continuing clashes of monocentric learning systems and ongoing reemergence of critical education and critical pedagogies that currently situate the world's current status of practical hope and its refusal to diminish the utopic possibilities that must sustain our subjectivities which also contextualize one's historical and socio-political positionalities. All of these aspects of immediate, as all mediated by the learning and instructional designs and actions, should be constructed through democratic dialogue and critical literacy to "read the word through a reading of the world" (Freire, 1992, p. 29). It is these possibilities and potential complexities in mind that we hope that this handbook will aid readers in understanding how the deliberate and bold *criticalization* of educational contexts can help them achieve these noble learning and teaching goals, which shall also help them disrupt the type of schooling and education that counters and diminishes such aims. It is important to note that 'education' does not only include schooling and higher

forms of learning but also beyond the proverbial classroom walls comprise of non-formal and informal education (i.e., lifelong learning and its public pedagogy continuities). Across its contents, with some not specifically using these terms, the general thematic focus of this handbook aims to highlight the presence of interactive topical situations that, at different emphasis, discuss these and related educational issues.

To be sure, this handbook is far from being all-inclusive in the topics covered, contextuality, epistemological diversity, and theoretical as well as analytical positionalities. This is with the recognition that no book, book series, or even library can provide globally, all-inclusive work of this nature, and there are certainly some important subjective, geographical, and topical omissions, thus making us realize that we could be indirectly silencing some voices and attached critical claims. What we did strive for is providing diversely *deepened* and *widened* perspectives on critical theories through a vast array (in relative terms) of topics and perspectival positionalities. The term ‘deepened’ here signifies learning and teaching to better understand our world within others’ more localized situations and perspectives. As a transformational praxis to end oppressions and domination via actionable bottom-up approaches (Freire, 2000; Gadotti, 1996), deepened understandings are essential for critical analysis of education. As such, critical theories and theoretical frameworks can allow us to better understand perspectives and positionalities which have not been self-experienced, as well as problematizing one’s own reflexivity to recognize the limitations of ‘knowing’ others’ lifeworlds. *Widened* perspectives, on the other but related hand, indicate both the diversity of experiences and knowledges which shall be critical theories vital for global and planetary inter-understandings, as well as better understanding of the local through critical comparisons.

Deepened and widened understandings cannot be taken as isolated but are interconnected contextually, historically, and politically. Take for example the contested terrains of globalization which could be, from critical readings and possibilities, undertaken both from above and from below and thus re-termed as pluralized ‘globalizations.’ As the term ‘globalization’ itself suggests its widening perspectives (in extensity and intensity formats, see Held & McGrew, 2003), a key critical and continuing question is how the processes of globalizations affect local populations, which calls for deepened understandings at multiple, intersectional sub-global levels. More inclusive and better understood globalizations indeed occur by critically reading the similarities and differences of the processes’ effects upon diverse human populations and on Earth overall situation.¹ Such re-doings of globalization can problematize the coloniality that entrenches globalization by applying critical historical de/reconstruction and the introspectively examining the influences of transnational corporations upon curricula within its political, policy, cultural, and related learning deconstructions and reconstructions (Stromquist & Monkman, 2002; Torres, 2009). In addition, critical theories of globalization can be also thought of as anthropocentric analysis of the planetary sphere

when understanding environmentalism and environmental pedagogies (Misiaszek, 2020). Globalization is problematized in/directly in many chapters of this handbook.

The importance and reemergence of critical theories after World War II can be exemplified by scholars' (Adorno, 1998; Illich, 1983; Pongratz, 2005) arguments that we must educate for the holocaust to not reoccur and we do not eradicate the human population by using atomic bombs, which were newly invented. Unfortunately, there have been several genocides since the war's end and, although these as the cases of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945, atomic bombs have globally proliferated. Currently, we have too many situations and political circumstances that call for critical pedagogy including, but not limited to, intensifying post-truthism that lacks all truth-seeking, extreme nationalism that systematically distorts 'citizenship' to focus singularly on blaming and suppressing the 'non-citizen,' epistemicide with language and cultural extinctions, increased terrorism at different levels, and potential acceleration to complete environmental devastation. As such, critical theories of education and their analytical as well as practical learning and teaching pedagogies are needed more now than ever to counter these and other forms of oppression and domination that are increasingly complex and systematically hidden, but extensively damaging, even existentially threatening.

FIVE GROUNDINGS OF CRITICAL THEORIES OF EDUCATION

There are five groundings that we conceptually and theoretically considered for the thematic constructions of the book which are the following: praxis-oriented, fluidity, radical, utopic with countless possible futures, and using bottom-up approaches.

We will begin with the second grounding of *fluidity* as we have already discussed praxis as the essential goal for critical theories of education and praxis will be further discussed throughout this introduction. *Fluidity* signifies numerous aspects, but overall fluidity signifies that critical theories cannot be ahistorical with the past as nonconsequential of current and future happenings, nor static for future usages. This coincides with Freire's (1992, 2000) essence of reinvention. Without recognizing fluidity, critical theories become almost sacred, untouchable texts from scholars such as Hegel and Marx. And, possibly no Marxism as Marx could be seen arguably as reinventing, radically in various ways, Hegel's work. As critical theoretical work centers on disrupting unjust hegemonic powers, Freire argued the "key problem was not 'taking power' but 'reinventing power'" (Morrow, 2019, p. 449). The following quote by Raymond Morrow and Carlos Alberto Torres (2019) on reinventions within education helps to explain how we see fluidity a bit more specifically.

The criteria of adequacy are thus not based on the growth of knowledge, but the capacity to generate diverse contextual "reinventions" that provide validating justifications and reconfigurations of the core concepts. The outcome

is a praxis-oriented program, hence a generative framework of general concepts and questions for informing and motivating transformative pedagogical practices. Thus, the relatively stable core categories become activated pragmatically through their interpretation and translation as social practices in particular “applied” context of learning. (p. 246)

Fluidity of critical theorizing (in education) comes with various cautions, first of which are concerns if specific reinvention of a theory is truly representing its essence rather than superficially touting critical terms and accompanying scholars’ names. The following are some key questions. When are (and/or previously has) critical theories (been) used to justify oppressions? For example, sustaining Orientalism as Edward Said (1979) argued that legitimized/es Western scholarship to justify (neo)coloniality. Providing a very current example, how has systematic perversion of critical theories’ essence of subjectivity and problematizing, as well as post-modern theorizing, give false authority to intensifying post-truthism (see Peters et al., 2018). An important caution to endlessly problematize is if critical theoretical groundings are Western/Northern and, if so, are they tethered to epistemologies of the Global North—coloniality, patriarchy, and capitalism as Boaventura de Sousa Santos (2014, 2018) argues. As such, is praxis emerging from these inherently oppressive and domineering? This epistemological concern leads to the third grounding of critical work as being innately radical in disrupting oppressions and domination.

The radical nature of critical pedagogies is in disrupting learned ideologies that lead to injustices and planetary sustainability schemes that are fatalistically normalized without any viable alternatives. Many incorrectly view critical theories/pedagogies as ‘negative’ by shallowly viewing these as only deployed to critique, this over-simplifying the root wordings of the case. However, we argue quite the opposite in that critical work is practically hopeful, even utopic and saturated with viable radical transformations, that even if not easy to attain immediately are nevertheless possible. Critical work in education is intrinsically radical in that it epistemologically disrupts long held and rigid ideological justification of oppressions and forms of domination. In other words, critical work disrupts fatalistic knowledges and ways of ‘knowing’ the world as innately dehumanizing and Earth overall as unsustainable. Here, we blend in the fourth critical education’s grounding of being inherently utopic with countless possible futures.

Social and educational transformation to counter oppressive, domineering systems can only emerge from utopic possibilities of what the world can and should be. These changes are inherently radical as they counter hegemony along with fatalistic ideologies that sustain and justify hegemony. Teaching to disrupt fatalistic ideologies rooted in, and sustained by, oppressions and domination helps students to recognize the world as political and socio-historically constructed and contested—or, as Freire would term it, ‘unfinished’ (Freire, 1992, 2000). In short, if our histories have constructed the world as it is

currently, we have unlimited ability to transform it toward a better world.² Critical teaching helps students to dream of possible utopias to determine their action toward achieving their dreams (Freire, 1992). Disrupting/unlearning epistemologies of the North are essential in critical work for liberation and sustainability because Northern groundings have the world as fatalistically ‘finished’ with hegemony sustained and intensified. Connecting previous arguments with this, Ali Abdi’s Chapter 2 “African Philosophies of Education: Colonialist Deconstructions and Critical Reconstructionist Possibilities” provides critiques of being ‘critical’ is falsely seen as only emergent from the West and the need to problematize many of the iconoclasts of monocentric thought systems and related theorizations including some from those so-called Western luminaries including Hegel. This, of course, is not detached from questioning the essence of critical theories without placing the specific “critical” term upon local/Southern theories, philosophies, and pedagogies.

In contemporary terms, so many designs and dispensations of education are fatalistic and even justify the resulting hegemonic relations and outcomes on such assumptions. The difficulty of having hope is because “hopelessness paralyzes us, immobilizes us,” and prevalent banking teaching has students (and teachers) “succumb to fatalism, and then it becomes impossible to muster the strength we absolutely need for a fierce struggle that will re-create the world” (Freire, 1992, p. 8). As the essence of Freire’s argument here in *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (2005), resistance to hegemony needs massification of education to overcome injustices that are normalized within the psychosomatics of the oppressed, who over a long period of time internalize them as ‘natural’—an essential grounding of banking education. Without hope and being able to dream for a better world and sustainable planet, oppressions and domination saturate ‘realities’ without possible goals of justice and sustainability to strive for, thus entrenching hegemony.

We have previously utilized the term ‘limitations’ not to limit utopic goal-setting (e.g., realizing possibilities of futures) but rather in recognizing of one’s own limitations of self-reflexivity to then lessen their reflective restraints. This includes continuous problematizing of one’s own epistemological groundings and positionalities in trying to deepen and widen understandings, as well as identifying what needs to be unlearned as epistemologies of the North have become unconscious ideological foundations for too many globally (Santos, 2018). Recognizing Freire’s influences on this need in teaching, de Sousa Santos (2018) argued for the “very important reflection on the centrality of listening in the act of [good] teaching” (p. 176).

Limitations of positionality are closely connected with the fifth and final grounding of needing bottom-up approaches for critical educational work for praxis, as well as self-reflectivity of positionalities for all three. Never-ending reading and re-reading of one’s own positionalities are essential for authentic and effective self-reflexivity, as well as recognizing and often problematizing positionalities of those being called ‘authoritative,’ ‘expert’ voices. In other words, problematizing whose voices are heard, whose voices are not heard,

and what are the politics of their non-/selection and de/legitimization. Such problematizing must be realized through the critical understanding of socio-historical oppressions (e.g., (neo)coloniality, racism, patriarchy, heteronormativity, xenophobia) in order to disrupt them. Successful praxis for social justice can only emerge from bottom-up approaches—from those who are oppressed by the issues at hand and those who continuously strive to better understand oppressions from others' perspectives, with the recognition that absolute understanding will never be fully achieved (i.e., reflectivity of limitations) (Freire, 2005; Gadotti, 1996). Moreover, planetary sustainability, as within critical, Freirean ecopedagogy, includes the recognition of the impossibilities of fully understanding that which is beyond the anthroposphere (humans and human populations, the 'world') and the static laws of Nature returning to equilibrium (see Chapter 17, p. 299; Misiaszek, 2020).

Successful praxis for social justice education also explores how we change the way knowledge is acquired, considered, and actualized. Therefore, engaging with methodologies that are holistic, inclusive, and participatory are areas that research/ers should seek to reflect on. Progressive methodologies such as visual methods of data collection aim to create an environment for participants where they are less objects of a study (i.e., that knowledge is extracted from, and more participants in co-creation of knowledge which is democratic and inclusive). Some prescriptive and oppressive systems of research are predicated on knowledge hierarchies (researcher vs. researched) that need to be challenged and inclusively reconstructed through critical participatory research methods. Changing the role of the research participants from one of passive to active and engaged, and changing the tools of data collection from ones of prescriptive and leading, to ones of co-creation, dialoging, and sharing are important steps toward the emancipation of oppressed people that are often the subjects of Northern conceived designed research studies that more often locate them as exotic, with hegemonic analytical gazes monologically applied. For example, in Janna Popoff's chapter (Chapter 20, p. 353) on visual and creative means of data collection, the method of photography is utilized to engage participants actively in co-creation of knowledge and mitigating the hierarchies of power relations between researcher and research participates.

SUMMARIES OF THE CHAPTERS

This book is separated into the following nine topics of education making up sections: (1) critical perspectives and philosophies, (2) critical race theories, (3) comparative educational approaches and global citizenship, (4) critical literacies, (5) critical media culture and information studies, (6) community-engaged learning and research, (7) sciences and mathematics, (8) gender and feminism, and (9) Indigenous and epistemologies of the South. As stated previously, this is not an all-inclusive list of topics and the chapters are far from including all the aspects and contextualities for each topic. However,

these nine topics provide a selection of key current topics important to critical theories of education with the chapters giving the topics' historical foundations, needed discourses, real-world examples, possibilities and challenges, reinventions for today's educational work, and needs for educational futures for socio-environmental justice and planetary sustainability.

Part I: General Critical Theoretical Perspectives and Philosophies of Education

Douglas Kellner and Steve Gennaro compare and contrast critical theories, philosophies of education, and critical media studies throughout their first chapter "Critical Theory and the Transformation of Education in the New Millennium," as well as other fields and disciplines. In very detailed and comprehensive approaches, they deconstruct the histories of critical theories to reconstruct (or possibly better termed as Freirean 'reinventing') education within the current fast-paced world of endless technological advancements. As Kellner and Gennaro stress, it is essential to note that 'advancements' here calls for problematizing their implications upon (de)(neo)coloniality, (anti-)racism, (de)gendering, globalizations, and planetary (un)sustainability, among numerous other (anti-oppressive framings).

The third chapter "The Philosophy and Politics of Educating Emotions" by Liz Jackson analyzes and problematizes the lack of caring for others learnt from 'education for well-being' entrenched by (neo)liberalism and associated over-valued individualism. The need and importance of emotional well-being are unquestionable in education, but its inclusion and viewed importance are eroding through intensifying neoliberalism. Through international, comparative, and feminist lenses, she gives possibilities on how her analysis can provide guidance on students becoming more politically, collectively informed and engaged.

In the fourth chapter, "African Philosophies of Education: Colonialist Deconstructions and Critical Reconstructionist Possibilities," Ali A. Abdi unpacks the dominant Western roots of critical theories and philosophies within education to argue the need of, and hidden influences from, African philosophies. Problematizing the dominance of epistemologies of the North which views Global South as a-philosophical, Abdi provides descriptions and analysis of decolonialized Southern philosophies of education that is essential contextual usage in both the South *and* the North. He utilizes a wide range of diverse Southern scholars including Julius Nyerere, Walter Rodney, Ngugi wa Thiong'o, Chinua Achebe, and Walter Mignolo.

Part II: Critical Race Theories of Education

George J. Sefa Dei (Nana Sefa Atweneboah I) and Asna Adhami argue the need for decolonial, anti-racist, and de-epistemicide scholarship to transform education in their fifth chapter "Educating for critical race and anti-colonial

intersections.” Paralleling Albert Memmi’s (1991) argument that the worst fate forced upon a population is taking away their histories, Dei and Admani argue that critical scholars are aware (or scholars must become critically aware) “of the erasure of our histories and the violences that we and those before us have stood up to, spoken out about and fought against” (Chapter 5, p. 81). Analyzing and deconstructing white supremacy, coloniality, and Southern epistemicide, the authors call for education to de-marginalize socio-historically suppressed authentic voices, histories, epistemologies, and spiritualities for needed praxis for transformation within social justice models.

Magnus O. Bassey argues the need to ground critical teacher pedagogies in “democracy, citizenship, equity, fairness; and is capable of conceptualizing the connection between social justice and education” (Chapter 6, p. 95). However, a majority of teacher preparation courses lack critical dialogue and pragmatic skills for what Freire (1993, 2000) termed as *conscientização*. In his sixth chapter “Critical social foundations of education: Advancing human rights and transformative justice education in teacher preparation,” he calls for courses of critical social foundations of education and provides rich descriptions on needed curricula, learning objectives, and pedagogical practices, among other aspects. Bassey argues that these changes are crucial for skilling teaching toward praxis to end violence caused largely from shallow, uncritical, and, too often, false understandings of oppressions.

Critically deconstructing ableism in schooling, Bathseba Opini argues for reconstructing education through contextual, intersectional approaches that disrupt deficient-grounded perspectives within and from schooling and practices from ‘solutions’ that falsely homogenize populations who have disabilities. Both further marginalizes these populations. Her chapter seven titled “Students with Disabilities in British Columbia’s (Canada) K to 12 Education System: A Critical Disability and Intersectional Perspective” focuses on policies and practices in British Columbia; however, the lessons learned from the chapter can be lent and borrowed through other contexts through critical comparative methods.

Part III: Critical International/Global Citizenship Education

Shibao Guo and Yan Guo’s eighth chapter entitled “Contesting Canadian Exceptionalism in the Internationalization of Higher Education: A Critical Perspective” analyzes the effects of Canadian educational systems’ rhetoric of exceptionalism both internally and externally. The implications that Guo and Guo argue are important not only for the Canadian context, but also other systems touting exceptionalism (e.g., United States, United Kingdom, Australia, Europe) through contextual, critical comparative approaches. The chapter provides critically rich narratives and analysis of Canadian international students’ experiences that counter exceptionalism myths.

In recent years, the call for global citizenship education (GCE) has increased tremendously, helped by, but also well beyond, UNESCO's initiatives and influences. GCE's contested terrains that have aligning *and* contrasting goals are analyzed within South Korea by Hyungryeol Kim and Sung-Sang Yoo in their ninth chapter "Global Citizenship Education in a Banking Model?: Emancipatory Potentials and Entrenched Realities of GCED in Korea." Challenging the frequently touted idea that GCE is unproblematically grounded in social justice and sustainability, they critically analyze data of interviewing teachers to reveal that GCE is too often entrenched with neoliberalism.

Chouaib El Bouhali's tenth chapter "Diversifying Schools with Global and Indigenous Knowledge: Inclusion of Internationally Educated Teachers (IETs) in Schools and Teacher Education Programs" critically problematizes what are the framings, depth, and in/exclusionary aspects of when 'multiculturalism' is lauded, as well as the politics of absences in multicultural initiatives. Examining these issues within the Canadian educational system, El Bouhali discusses the possibilities and challenges of utilizing Southern epistemologies within local schools from policy-to-learning spaces through critical theorizing and pedagogies. He disrupts shallow touting of 'being multicultural' without the depth of its Southern essence which includes, in turn, disrupting oppressive Northern epistemologies.

Wenchao Zhang critically analyzes the contested terrain of democracy within China's educational systems in the eleventh chapter "Rebuilding the connection between politics and practices of democratic education in China: Critical reflections." Zhang's analysis is through her extensive qualitative research on teachers and students in China on their understandings and practices of 'democracy' inside and outside classroom walls. She provides in-depth analysis on countering what many outside China and Chinese diasporas see falsely as a contradiction—democracy in China. Zhang gives readers her analysis through various participant quotes, pedagogical influences in China such as from Dewey and Freire, various constructs connected to democracy such as citizenship, and the socio-historical politics of China.

Kathy Bickmore and Rim Fathallah's twelfth chapter, "Teaching Social Difference: Planned and Enacted Curricula in Canada, Bangladesh, and México," draws from a multi-year comparative school-based study on curricula's approaches to social diversity leading toward (or away from) cohesion, tolerance, and peace. The authors compare and contrast curriculum approaches on diversity between the three nations by looking at aspects such as poverty, gender, and relations between settler and indigenous communities. Bickmore and Fathallah unpack various critical aspects of differing value-laden teaching within diverse learning spaces to give possibilities and challenges within, and also beyond, the three nations they focused upon.

Part IV: Critical Pedagogy/Critical Literacy Studies in Education

Robert J. Tierney and Robert V. Morgan's thirteenth chapter entitled "The Indigenous Imaginary and Tertiary Institutions" examines efforts to challenge the domination of Western epistemologies as the only ways of knowing and legitimize all 'scholarship.' They investigate higher education practices that have Indigenous scholarship anchored by western assimilation. Their chapter reveals a polity unwillingness to respect, recognize, and trust Indigenous peoples rather than claims of reconciliation, apologies, and policies. Tierney and Morgan argue that while the rhetoric suggests a repositioning of Indigenous engagements within tertiary institutions in Australia and Canada, the institutional forces reflect a lack of commitment to truly indigenize programs rooted in decolonial Indigenization.

Utilizing Marxist theory, David Hill's fourteenth chapter entitled "Critical Education, Social Democratic Education, Revolutionary Marxist Education" explores critical education within and between relationships of power. He scrutinizes the global assault in this current era of neoconservative/neoliberal/neofascist right-wing authoritarianism. Hill investigates and differentiates between three types of socialism that are integral to his arguments: social democracy, democratic socialism, and revolutionary Marxism. He discusses various educational aspects of pedagogy including curriculum, organization of students, and ownership and control of schooling. Hill concludes with analyses of social democratic reforms and possibilities of replacements of capitalism with socialism through Marxist educators.

Melody Viczko and Candace Brunette-Debassige's fifteenth chapter entitled "Critical Perspectives for Educational Leadership and Policy in Higher Education" explores the field of higher education policy research that is dominated by a concern for administrative processes in the midst of neoliberal reform and priorities. They provide an overview of higher education governance to showcase how leaders in academia come face to face with oppressive structures of (neo)colonial politics and practices in their institutions. Viczko and Brunette-Debassige's work addresses new analytical and critical voicing in Canadian research, policy and practice within academia, and well beyond Canada's borders.

Zehila Babaci-Wilhite's sixteenth chapter entitled "Critical Pedagogy in Language and STEM Education: Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics Education" focuses on the language of teaching STEM subjects 'successfully' within Africa and Asia in comparison with the United States. Babaci-Wilhite argues that the incorporation of language as an art into open and investigative processes, based on inquiry-based approaches that use local languages and cultural references, will improve learning and strengthen educational rights. She concludes by discussing the importance of (inter)national discourse to promote collaborative learning and pedagogical models that expand traditional STEM to include an 'A' for 'Arts'—STEAM.

Greg William Misiaszek argues the importance of teaching ecopedagogy, grounded in the work of Paulo Freire, in his seventeenth chapter entitled “Critical Environmental Pedagogies to Disrupt Falsely Touted Sustainable Development.” He delves deeply into investigating how environmental teaching must focus on deepening and widening students’ understandings on how our actions affect the rest of Nature and, consequently, upon ourselves—as we (i.e., humans) are *part of* Nature. He puts forth that *unsustainable* violent environmental actions are inseparable to social violence and injustice, as well as devastating to Nature beyond anthropocentric interests. Misiaszek’s chapter posits how critical theories are essential within environmental pedagogies, as well as research upon them, for true praxis for planetary sustainability to emerge.

Part V: Critical Media/information Studies and Education

The framings, possibilities, and needs for ‘postdigital critical pedagogy’ to reinvent (critical) education are discussed by Petar Jandrić and Sarah Hayes in their eighteenth chapter (titled the same as the pedagogy). They argue that the rapid pace of technological innovations and students’ use of technologies largely disrupts the effectiveness of continuing traditional teaching, including critical pedagogical teaching, without paradigm-shifting reinvention. This chapter could be read as a radical reinvention of Ivan Illich’s (1983) pedagogical and technological warnings in his *Deschooling Society* book. Jandrić and Hayes provide rich descriptions on what are postdigital critical pedagogies throughout their arguments, including giving critical, philosophical foundations of them and numerous examples.

Toni Samek explores deeply critical librarian and other information workers who participate in political movements and discourses to actively engage in the ‘global education enterprise.’ Samek’s nineteenth chapter titled “Contemporary Critical Library and Information Studies: Ethos and Ethics” offers an analysis of critical library and information studies and practices to interrogate their roles of conventional education and advancing of social (in)justice. Samek closes with calls to fight for structural changes within these studies as the politics’ global economics upon education are integrally intertwined with the ethical implications of artificial intelligence, networked learning, critical pedagogy, social responsibility, and philosophies of technology.

Aligning with Susan Sontag’s arguments in her seminal book *On Photography* (1977), Janna Popoff’s twentieth chapter, “Critical Methodologies and an Art-Based Method of Research in Higher Education Institutions,” describes how art (more specifically, photography) can critically inform/teach us from the eyes (i.e., self-perspectives) behind the camera (or, those who make the art). Popoff argues the need, possibilities, and challenges of conducting research through art-based critical methodologies to better understand participants’ understandings which are often difficult, or even impossible, to fully understand through traditional oral and written means of

communications in the research field. She provides rich details and analysis from her research on international students in a university within China.

Juha Suoranta, Marko Teräs, and Hanna Teräs investigate the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic which has caused ‘shock effects’ worldwide in educational institutions. In their twenty-first chapter “Rise of a ‘Managerial Demiurge’: Critical Analysis of the Digitalization of Education,” they explore the unexpected closures of educational institutions and the different digital solutions in teaching and learning they have resorted to. This rapid move to online has set aside the more profound questions about the role of digitalization in national and international educational policies. In this chapter, Suoranta, Teräs, and Teräs problematize the role of digitalization in the discourses of education’s futures.

Part VI: Critical Community-Engaged Learning/Research

Tony Jenkins investigates peace education in his twenty-second chapter entitled “Critical Comprehensive Peace Education: finding a Pedagogical Nexus for Personal, Structural and Cultural Change.” He delves into the cognitive imperialism of colonialist pedagogies as impeding on critical and reflexive thinking, social imagination, and possibilities of peace and social justice. The emphasis on reproducing Eurocentric/Western knowledges, ways of knowing, and pedagogies inherently impose a finite set of deterministic social and political values that serve to instill our current world as non-transformable. The chapter develops this critique and explores the possibilities and potential of peace education as a counter-hegemonic force for knowledge decolonization and personal and social liberation. Jenkins explores these possibilities in the tradition of Paulo Freire seeing individuals and societies as ‘unfinished’ to, in turn, disrupt fatalistic education that justifies and normalizes violence as ‘normal’ and ‘natural.’

In the twenty-third chapter, “Showing up for the rat race: Beyond human capital models of higher education,” Allison Taylor addresses questions surrounding the relationship between higher education and graduate work. In particular, Taylor examines how purposes of higher education are framed in terms of preparing graduates for work in a knowledge economy. She explores the contested roles of universities providing information and opportunities for both paid and unpaid work. Taylor focuses her chapter on students’ unpaid work that challenges economic ideas about learning for earning, highlighting instead an expanded role for universities in promoting *meaningful* work.

Salma Ismail’s twenty-fourth chapter titled “The Challenges of Doing Radical Pedagogy in Social Movements in South Africa” investigates the practices of radical/popular pedagogies in community contexts by exploring them within poor black communities in South Africa. Radicalness is essential within critical education as it challenges oppressive relations and takes the knowledge of the oppressed as its starting point. Ismail, in part, redefines what

radical/popular pedagogies' contributions can be within a neoliberal context of unfolding climate and environmental crisis plus the pandemic which has exacerbated economic and social disasters worldwide.

Part VII: Critical Perspectives on Science and Mathematics Education

Samson Madera Nashon's twenty-fifth chapter, "Decolonizing Science Education in Africa: Curriculum and Pedagogy," focuses on how science curricula and pedagogies are often overly exam-driven, teacher-centered, and entrenched in coloniality, including colonial languages. Such static nature of curriculum and pedagogy is due, in part, to emphasis on grading and 'innovative,' contemporary pedagogies so that, in turn, understanding science through local African contexts and epistemologies is considered time wasting (Sifuna & Otiende, 2006). Nashon highlights ongoing research where specific local contexts in an African setting have been successfully used to develop curricular units that truly engages students in unpacking and understanding scientific phenomena embedded in their local context, thus constructing decolonizing science curricula and pedagogies.

Edward Shizha's twenty-sixth chapter "Indigenous Epistemologies and Decolonizing Sustainable Livelihoods in Africa" explores how the continent's nations continue to mirror colonial education and, thus, argues that Indigenous epistemologies decolonize dominant narratives in curricula. Such education should be reflected through critical approaches anchored by Indigenous worldviews, epistemologies, and ontologies. Shizha seeks to advance decolonization and encourage discourse to reclaim African culture and Indigenous epistemologies meaningfully in higher education.

The twenty-seventh chapter "Centering Race, Racism, and Black Learners in Critical Examinations of Mathematics Education: Forging Ahead to Achieve Liberation" by Julius Davis investigates how STEM knowledge plays a significant role in promoting and advancing global capitalism, gentrification, and international warfare to protect and advance whiteness (Morales-Doyle & Gutstein, 2019). STEM education fields are too frequently falsely viewed and incorrectly operated as race-neutral, culture-free, and objective disciplines. Davis explores and investigates powerful and important themes in of critical race theory to center issues of race, racism, and critical examinations of mathematics education to achieve liberatory outcomes in Black scholarship.

The twenty-eight chapter, "Mobility of Syrian-Canadian Students and Continuity of Math Education: A Comparative Curriculum Mapping Approach" by Dania Wattar and Emmanuelle Le Pichon, delves into the complexities of increased mobility of students which pose new and unique challenges to schools. Watter and Le Pichon argue that welcoming students into Canadian schooling requires a more constructive strategy than which usually occurs. They argue it should include a thorough, critical exploration of students' home country's curricula. They conclude that this approach may

help both teachers and parents to understand the different curricula and to rethink how mathematics can be taught in a way that builds on students' cultural and linguistic knowledges and experiences.

Part VIII: Critical Gender/Feminist Studies in Education

The twenty-ninth chapter, "Transforming Sub-Saharan African Universities: Transnational Collaborations at the Intersections of Gender as a Viable Pathway?" by Philomina Okeke, explores the roles that transnational scholarly collaborations, with gender as an entry point, could play in addressing the challenges faced by sub-Saharan African universities as they transit into the twenty-first century. Okeke offers critical reflections on how institutional cultures and systemic inequities in Africa, on the one hand, and global trends in research funding, on the other, might shape future research collaborations. Her chapter is enriched by two decades of researching gender issues in Africa and in new African diasporas, and partnering with funding agencies to undertake capacity building, build research clusters and mentor graduate students and emerging scholars.

The thirtieth chapter, "Revisiting Francophone Sub-Saharan Africa's Eurocentric Education System Through a Decolonial Feminist's Lens" by Gertrude Mianda, explores the contemporary education system in most of Francophone sub-Saharan Africa that continues Eurocentric legacy of Western education and, in turn, disadvantages women. Using a decolonial feminist lens, Miranda critically revisits Francophone sub-Saharan Africa's Eurocentric education systems to bring to light the need for Indigenous education, including its gendered patterns. Miranda argues that, in contrast to the Western Eurocentric education system, African Indigenous education systems did not exclude women from mastering knowledge in diverse domains.

Part IX: Critical Indigenous and Southern Epistemologies of Education

Utilizing phenomenological *and* participatory approaches in his thirty-first chapter, "Critical Theory as Lived Meaning: Exploring Anti-Racist Practice in Post-Secondary Education," Derek Tannis explores essentialness and possibilities of this methodology for anti-racist policy analysis and research. Especially important for this book focused upon critical theories of education, Tannis discusses the innate tensions between critical and phenomenological approaches. While respecting their differences, he argues to also view and utilize their commonalities and intersectionalities within critical race theories and phenomenology toward achieving, what Gayle Salamon (2018) termed as, 'richest possibilities.' He weaves this argument throughout his chapter's poignant narratives and his own self-reflexivity to provide rich stories of such possibilities, as well as their challenges.

Dip Kapoor critically analyzes the ontology of land in thirty-second chapter, "Land Ontologies and Anticolonial Social Movement Learning in the

Neo/Colonies,” which advances an anti/decolonial critique of Euro-American materialist ontologies of land, wherein land is construed as private property and a trade-able market commodity. In this chapter, Kapoor explores the main proposition that a materialist ontology of land as a (fictitious) commodity to be bought and sold to the highest bidder to extract surplus at the expense of a resident population has enabled colonization, dispossession, and impoverishment in the (neo) colonies to the present day as “land grabbing.” To contrast the materialistic ontologies of land, Kapoor discusses La Via Campesina, a globalizing indigenous and peasant movement network that advances such an epistemology of food and land sovereignty in a counter and/or parallel project to the corporate agro-industrial capitalist agricultural model.

Exploring the possibilities of Shintoism within and between critical theories, Southern/Indigenous theories, decoloniality, and ecofeminism in Japan (and Japanese diasporas) are Keita Takayama’s work described in the last, “Southern/Indigenous epistemologies for education: Promises and challenges of Shinto for Japanese education and beyond.” Utilizing critical comparative education (CE) methodologies to disrupt Northern CE (aligning with Boaventura de Sousa Santos’ (2007, 2018) calls for determining and disrupting *absences* for *emergences* in scholarship), Takayama poses what are/can/should be possibilities of Shintoism that allows, as he cites Taylor (2017), “for transgressive space where children disrupt the nature-culture binary and where children interact with the more-than-human worlds” (InHBPageNumNeeded). Although his chapter is contextualized in Japanese socio-histories and Shintoism, Takayama’s arguments have contextual, epistemological significance on education and research upon it, as well as widened implications on justice and planetary sustainability.

CONCLUSION

Together, the thirty-three chapters should represent a somewhat comprehensive (if never topically totally complete, as we said above) of conceptual, theoretical, and attached practical undertakings and propositions that minimally situate this handbook at the expanding lines of educational and social well-being debates that certainly require more epistemic and epistemological counter-conventional boundary crossing and expansions. To be sure, the rhetorical locating of education, in both global and concerned localized situations, as normatively constructed and accepted, often with dangerously camouflaged horizontal benignness, needs robust critical interventions that unpack the hidden philosophical, curricular, cultural, and linguistic exclusions that marginalize, in all these categories, a majority of the world’s population. In situating the term ‘marginalize’ here, we are using the construct comprehensively in that the majority of educational programs, especially as these are designed and practiced in the so-called postcolonial world (as inherited from colonialism) but also selectively in so-named Western pluralistic democracies, adhere to the continuities of colonialist monocentric, power analysis-averse

realities. Here, even when some measured capitalist ‘benefits’ (credentials, time–space controlled employment, etc.) are drawn from these programs, they do not serve, in critical learning and pedagogy terms, the interests of most people on earth, and certainly not responsive to the emergency ecological sustainability. As such, the boundary expansion and crossing via this work and future one shall continue for critical educational development and critical social well-being.

NOTES

1. “Earth” is purposely de-objectified without the article “the” and having an uppercase “E.” As well, Nature is capitalized. See Misiasek, Chapter 17 “Critical Environmental Pedagogy for Disrupting Falsely Touted Sustainable Development.”
2. ‘(Our) Histories’ indicates the world’s histories throughout its existence, including the endless complexities of and between positive/negative, oppressive/empowering, un/sustainable, de/selected, and de/legitimized histories.

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