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Reviewed by Marc Felizzi

Engaged Scholarship: The Politics of Engagement and Disengagement. Lynette Shultz and Tania Kajner (Eds.). Sense Publishers: Boston, MA, 2013. IAP-Information Age Publishing: Charlotte, NC, 2009, 200 pages. Hardcover. ISBN 978-94-6209-290-7.

Rather than dryly delineating what community engagement is and should be, editors Lynette Shultz and Tania Kajner add life to this concept in their wide ranging compilation *Engaged Scholarship: The Politics of Engagement and Disengagement.* The editors attempt to move the discussion of academy involvement in the community from a description of how to engage the citizenry to one of how to comprehend and develop awareness of the socio-political aspects of the community, as well as the importance of service-learning and the scholarship of engagement. Shultz, an associate professor and co-director of the Centre for Global Citizenship Education and Research at the University of Alberta, and Kajner, a Ph.D. candidate in Educational Policy Studies at the University of Alberta, have extensive experience in the scholarship of engagement, global policy, and international education. Shultz and Kajner have included contributions from writers in the areas of global citizenship, community engagement, educational policy, sociology, anthropology, and human services to produce a compilation of studies and essays that address various perspectives of community engagement, service-learning, educational policy, media studies, deliberative democracy, and more in a lively and incisive book.

They offer articles that review the community engagement movement of the past 20 years. Struggling under a constant push and pull to define the ethereal concepts of community engagement, both editors hold that effective engagement requires a move away from an economy of knowledge (often held within the halls of higher learning) to a citizenship of knowledge, whereby the public contributes heartily to scholarship and academia.

This concept of knowledge as a privilege has been addressed in earlier literature, for example, Whitford and Strom (2013), state that

"…engaging with communities is not the way universities have functioned traditionally. More often universities have been physically embedded in the geography of the local communities, but not in the real world lives of their residents. This split, sometimes referred to as the 'town and gown' separation, was often a reflection (and cause) of mutual distrust and dislike" p. 73). Shultz and Kajner attempt to address this ideological gulf by providing active examples of not just engaging through pedagogy, but of learning from community members, which in turn enhances praxis and builds relationships between universities and communities.

Several chapters were particularly intriguing and thought provoking. In "Beyond the Binary," Kajner challenges the assertion that most scholarship is the primary fiefdom of the university. She asserts that scholarship must be viewed in the context of a new paradigm, one that encompasses Boyer's (1990) "four interlocking functions of the scholar;" discovery, integration of these discoveries in the larger social and intellectual contexts, sharing of discovery, and application of this knowledge to the problems faced by individuals and society. Consistent with the perspectives on engaged scholarship articulated by other (Boyer, 1990; Frey & Carragee, 2007; Peterson, 2009). Kajner elaborates on her concept of a citizenship of knowledge by stating that information gathered and shared experiences in the community is research owned by the academy and the participating citizens and students, not solely the university. Kajner's concept of community engagement extends beyond a unidirectional focus of outreach to fully embrace the idea that engagement is an exchange of ideas, data, and knowledge, a bi-directional flow of learning, not simply telling the community what is best.

To wit, in order to bridge the academy-

community gap, Su-Ming Khoo asserts in her chapter, "Between Engagement and Citizenship," that there indeed is a space between the two, and this space is best crossed by integrating a service component into university curriculums by encouraging and expecting students to disseminate what they have learned into the community. This expectation of sharing what is learned builds upon the reflexive component and opens the learning process to enable students to learn from one another and from those to whom they deliver newfound information. Additionally, Khoo contends that such a paradigm allows students and universities in developing countries to promote the use of digital technology in learning and pedagogy and allows universities to work with groups that may be especially interested in engaged scholarhip, specifically non-traditional and geographically isolated students.

Co-editor Shultz, in her article "Engaged Scholarship in a Time of the Corporatization of the University and Distrust of the Public Sphere," addressed the trend of the "commercialization of learning" often promoted by multinational corporate interests. Shultz maintains that research emanating from corporate sponsored departments is often, not surprisingly, driven by the agenda of the funding conglomerate. Such research may be suspect, and Shultz contends that desires by universities to ally with corporations is troubling and may lead to an over commercialization of knowledge and a colonization of communities. Indeed, if the university is providing resources, data, and knowledge driven by a corporate agenda, how can the community truly benefit or remain independent? Shultz discusses various corporations that have disrupted local communities and environments, in the name of "furthering education." She asserts that in order to be truly engaged, the scholar must push back and "disrupt the logics of discipline pressing corporatism onto the universities" (p. 43) by engaging in scholarship within a paradigm of "pluralversality," which enables the university to attend to the options of a true global vision.

Several chapters address civic and community engagement in both sub-Saharan and South Africa. Both Ali Abdi and Catherine Odora Hoppers examine the role of the university in deconstructing colonialist and apartheid-based epistemologies in the African community. The potential to merge the concepts of African thought and ontologies into an educational system that encompasses traditional and emerging beliefs is unlimited. Abdi mentions that despite the best efforts of developed countries, the educational systems foisted upon African nations may have done more damage, and may have caused more civic disengagement than engagement. These essays are strengthened by Makkawi's (2013) assertion that "In post-apartheid South Africa, many university departments have been intensively involved in community engagement initiatives, devoting their academic knowledge and expertise to various community-focused development and processes of reconciliation and reconstruction in a post-conflict society" (p. 91). This statement is reinforced by Catherine Odora Hoppers' work, which discusses the creation of the South African Research Chairs Initiative (SARChI) in order to develop a more community engaged and knowledge based pool of instructors and students in South Africa. Hoppers analyzes the role of SARChI in creating such learners and teachers and discusses what South Africa's universities must do in order to engage the richness of their village and tribal culture into their curriculums. Rather than relying on new technology to promote the university, Hoppers writes that "the information revolution is not a revolution of technology, machinery or techniques, software or speed, but a revolution in CONCEPTS and thus THE WAY WE THINK" (p. 150).

Linda Herrera and Peter Mayo in "Digital Youth, the Arab Revolution and the Challenge of Education of Work," provide vivid and intimate portraits of the protagonists of a revolution that toppled several oppressive regimes in the Middle East. The editors included this powerful essay to describe engagement in a larger sense, in this case, a revolution that was largely created and fashioned out of the use of social media and digital technology.

The role of social and electronic media in pedagogy and engagement is addressed in Paul Carr's essay "The Mediazation of Democracy." While most universities promote the idea of critical thinking and the development of students who use such skills to analyze society and history, Carr maintains that modern media is actively engaged with democracy and education, and therefore, the media play a role achieving more evolved and ethical forms of self-government in the community. Rather than negatively criticize

social media and downplay its utility, Carr writes that society should embrace it as a vessel to promote democracy and to engage, enlighten, and energize the community at large.

Shultz and Kajner have done an admirable job in presenting the work of a diverse group of scholars and writers who together add a critical piece to the epistemology of pedagogy and community engagement. The articles within this collection bring forth many questions and opportunities for rich and stimulating discourse both in the classroom and community.

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About the Reviewer

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