



Section 4.4

Unpaid Work and Learning

Work and Lifelong Learning Resource Base (WALLRB)
Materials for Teaching, Research and Policy Making

Principal Investigator: **David W. Livingstone**

Team Members: **M. Raykov, K. Pollock, F. Antonelli**

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Ontario Institute for Studies in Education of the University of Toronto

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1. Barnes, H., Parry, J., & Lakey, J. (2002). Forging a new future: The experiences and expectations of people leaving paid work over 50. Bristol: Policy Press.

Increasing numbers of people are leaving employment before standard retirement ages, through a combination of factors such as choice, redundancy, health difficulties and increased care commitments. This study by Helen Barnes, Jane Parry and Jane Lakey of the Policy Studies Institute examines the experiences of people in their fifties and sixties who have left paid work. The research looked at how people came to leave their jobs, how they had adjusted to life outside the labour market, and how they were spending their time in retirement. The study found that most of those interviewed continued to make identifiable contributions to society after leaving paid work through voluntary work, learning activities, domestic work, caring for family members (including elderly relatives and grandchildren), helping out friends and neighbours, and leisure pursuits.

KEY WORDS: Older Adults; England; Scotland; Wales; United Kingdom; 50+; Middle Aged; Young Old; Work Attitudes; Retirement Attitudes; Daily Activities; Retirement; Retirement Reasons; Qualitative Research; Economic Security; Outside United States.

2. Cox, E. (2002). Rewarding volunteers: A study of participant responses to the assessment and accreditation of volunteer learning. *Studies in the Education of Adults*, 34(2), 156-170.

This article brings attention to the assessment and accreditation of learning for volunteers in the United Kingdom. It recognizes the perceived need for training in the voluntary sector, but presents evidence that many volunteers are not motivated by the need to attain qualifications. The study outlines the current policy context for the trend towards providing certificated training for volunteers. Four accredited training schemes are identified, each revealing the same completion and retention dilemmas.

KEY WORDS: Volunteering; Volunteer Learning; Assessment; Accreditation; UK; Volunteer Work.

3. Dickie, V. A. (2003). The role of learning in quilt making. *Journal of Occupational Science*, 10(3), 120-129.

An ethnography of quilt making in North Carolina where learning was identified as one of the central activities of individuals and quilt guilds. Described is learning in terms of its formal and informal characteristics and whether it is more or less social. Eight clusters of learning are developed: learning the making of a specific quilt, learning about tools and using them, learning about aesthetics, learning how to make a quilt, learning to be part of the quilt making culture, learning that one is a quilt maker, and learning to stretch oneself. Different structural elements of quilt making and quilt groups promote this learning, but taken as a whole learning is socially situated. Wenger's (1998) concept of a "community of practice" is used as an explanatory frame for the quilt maker learners in this study. In conclusion, learning is central to occupation, and may be a basic human need.

KEY WORDS: Crafts; Learning Strategies; Learning; Social Facilitation; Ethnography.

4. Eichler, M. (2005). The other half (or more) of the story: Unpaid household and care work and lifelong learning. In N. Bascia, Cumming, A, Datnow, A., Leithwood, K., Livingstone, D. (Ed.), *International Handbook of Educational Policy (Vol. 2)* (pp. 1023-1042). Dordrecht, The Netherlands: Springer.

It is clear that studying lifelong learning through unpaid housework is both an interesting and important topic. It will also shed new light on our understanding of lifelong learning in the paid labour force, by providing a test site for the generalizations that have been made in that setting. For instance, we need to reconsider how incentives interact with motivations to learn given the vast amount of learning that happens without subsequent job advancement. We can explore the benefits to civil society if we were to provide non-formal training on housework-related issues (oriented to members of both sexes, of course!). We can investigate what knowledge has been gained and lost with respect to both paid and unpaid work. Drawing on Butler's (1993) work, we can test for and recognize knowledge that has been acquired through running a household, both for credit at educational institutions and for paid work. We need to explore the capacity to adapt to changes that is generated through involvement in housework and caring work, and utilize it in the paid labour force. This could become a potent argument for fostering the advancement of women into managerial positions.

Clearly, then, extending the investigation of lifelong learning to include unpaid housework and care work is not only valuable for understanding for its own sake, but also for understanding the whole process of lifelong learning better. (From conclusion)

KEY WORDS: Lifelong Learning; Housework; Adult Education.

5. Eichler, M., & Matthews, A. (2004). *What is work? Looking at all work through the lens of unpaid housework*. Retrieved September 25, 2006, from <http://www.wallnetwork.ca/events/WhatisWork.pdf>

Without any doubt, work is one of the most important issues for sociology to grapple with. Sociologists have long been concerned about the type of work we do, the conditions under which we perform it, the social relations that both create these conditions and arise from them, etc. But what is work? Various sociological dictionaries define work in a manner that includes paid work as well as unpaid housework, only to proceed to immediately exclude the latter from consideration.

KEY WORDS: Lifelong Learning; Housework; Adult Education.

6. Eichler, M., & Spracklin, K. (2002). *Case study: Housework and care work as sites for life-long learning*. Retrieved September 25, 2006, from <http://wall.oise.utoronto.ca/research/Eichler5pager.pdf>

This study will focus on household work – unpaid as well as paid – and the learning that occurs through performing it. We will explore what counts as work and why, for example, bottlefeeding an infant is usually regarded as work, but is breastfeeding? (Esterik 2002; Knaak 2002) Why or why not? How does the nature of household work, and the learning associated with it, shift with macro-structural changes as well as changes at the micro level? How does performance and learning shift depending on whether the work is performed without pay or for pay?

KEY WORDS: Lifelong Learning; Housework; Adult Education.

7. Eyler, J. (2002). Reflection: Linking service and learning - Linking students and communities. *Journal of Social Issues*, 58(3), 517-534.

While research on service-learning has been mixed, there is evidence to suggest that service-learning programs that thoroughly integrate service, academic learning and reflection promote development of the knowledge, skills, and cognitive capacities necessary for students to deal effectively with complex social issues. While there is little research in the service-learning literature that specifically addresses techniques of reflection, evidence from studies of problem-based learning, situated cognition, and cognitive development maintain that approaches to reflection will enhance the power of service-learning in attaining goals which facilitate full community participation. Concrete suggestions about this type of program are also presented.

KEY WORDS: Service-learning Programs; Students; Community Participation; Community Work.

8. Fitzgerald, J. (2001). Can minimally trained college student volunteers help young at-risk children to read better? *Reading Research Quarterly*, 36(1), 28-46.

This study explored the growth of 144 at-risk 1st and 2nd grade students' who were tutored by minimally trained college students. The college students consisted of volunteer work-study students who participated in the recent national America Reads initiative. 39 tutors used a 4-part instructional lesson with the students. 64 children who received the full complement of tutoring sessions were compared to 19 who received fewer sessions. The main conclusions were: (a) children made statistically significant gains in instructional reading level that could be attributed to the tutoring. (b) The greatest impact of tutoring was influencing children's ability to read words. (c) Patterns of growth in instructional reading level varied between low- and high-gains groups of children.

KEY WORDS: At Risk Populations; College Students; Reading Ability; Reading Education; Volunteers; Volunteer Work.

9. Fowler, C. (2002). Maternal knowledge: Beyond formal learning. *Australian Journal of Adult Learning*, 42(2), 155-168.

Interviews with first-time mothers indicate the importance of informal, incidental, and experiential learning with peers and mentors such as their mothers. Although not always recognized as such, material knowledge is a crucial learning resource.

KEY WORDS: Incidental Learning; Informal Education; Mothers; Parent Education; Parenting Skills; Peer Teaching; Bourdieu, (Pierre); Household Work.

10. Kohn, M., & Slomczynski, K. M. (2001). Social structure and self-direction: A comparative analysis of the United States and Poland. In A. Branaman (Ed.), *Self in society* (pp. 198-210). Malden, MA: Blackwell.

Effects of one's social structural position are examined, hypothesizing that this position affects psychological well-being; particularly, individuals who occupy higher social structural positions experience better cognitive functioning because they are capable of exerting greater control over their life conditions. It is demonstrated that social structural position significantly influenced an individual's occupational self-direction & the educational self-direction of his/her children. As well, it is demonstrated that the performance of complex or physically demanding housework and educational

achievement both had a significant influence on one's self-direction. It is argued that the experience of self-direction itself, not occupational self-direction, is necessary for positive psychological functioning. Concluded, performing complex activities, not experiencing freedom, leads an individual to value self-direction.

KEY WORDS: Social Status; Work Orientations; Well-Being; Housework; Academic Achievement; Social Structure; Comparative Analysis; United States of America; Poland; Social Stratification.

11. Ledwith, M. (2001). Community work as critical pedagogy: Re-envisioning Freire and Gramsci. *Community Development Journal*, 36(3), 171-182.

Complex times, defined by rapid sociopolitical change, call for a coherently articulated critical pedagogy concerned with issues of "social difference, social justice, and social transformation" (Mayo, 1990, p. 58). A pedagogy of transformative change, or liberation education, is rooted in praxis, and located in educational sites of resistance, such as, community work, youth work, social work, community education, adult education, and schooling. The political nature of education situates educators either as agents of the state or as agents of transformative change, either perpetuating the status quo or creating the context to question. An argument is made for community work as critical pedagogy, located as it is in the very essence of people's lives, at the interface of liberation and domination. Some of the key concepts of Gramsci and Freire are explored in the current context of globalization and within the notion of difference.

KEY WORDS: Social Change; Political Change; Education; Change Agents; Gramsci, Antonio; Freire, Paulo; Globalization; Community Involvement.

12. Livingstone, D. W. (2001). Worker control as the missing link: Relations between paid/unpaid work and work-related learning. *Journal of Workplace Learning*, 13(7/8), 308-317.

Explores relations between workers' extent of control over their paid and unpaid labour processes and the incidence of different types of organized and informal learning. Activity theory is used to posit relations between power and knowledge acquisition in different spheres of work. The sources of evidence are recent Canadian national surveys. Implications of the findings for more democratic organization of paid workplaces and educational institutions are briefly noted.

KEY WORDS: Employee Attitudes; Employee Benefits; Learning; Salaries; Working Conditions.

13. Livingstone, D., W. (2003). Hidden dimensions of work and learning: The significance of unpaid work and informal learning in global capitalism. *Journal of Workplace Learning*, 15(7/8), 359 - 367.

Over the past two centuries capitalist social relations and their underlying dynamics have become increasingly pervasive in the spaces of human life, and in particular in the relationships between employment and organized forms of education. The massive scope of this commodification has tended to obscure the enduring significance of other aspects of social practice, especially unpaid work and informal learning and their interrelations with education, employment and each other. These hidden dimensions continue to constitute large parts of our social lives and represent very substantial resources for progressive change in established forms of paid work and formal education. This paper develops this argument and provides some supportive evidence from a Canadian national survey on learning and work.

KEY WORDS: Working Class; Adult Education; Cultural Production; Critical Learning; Capitalist Systems; Industrialized Economics; Learning; Underemployment; Ethnographic Studies; Social Surveys.

14. Mündel, K., & Schugurensky, D. (2005). *Volunteers' informal learning in community-based organizations: On individual experience and collective reflection*. Paper presented at the Canadian Association for the Study of Adult Education (CASAE) National Conference. On-Line Proceedings. University of Western Ontario, London, Ontario. May 28 to May 31.

The data emerging from this study indicate that volunteers involved in community-based organizations engage in learning that is diverse, intense, and sometimes also transformative. It was beyond the scope of this piece to give an exhaustive account of all learning. However, we identified significant learning in at least five areas, which we labeled instrumental skills, process skills, factual knowledge, dispositional learning, and political/civic learning. Uncovering this learning repertoire was not a straightforward process; a large portion of it is tacit and unconscious, and thus we employed techniques to elicit it and make it explicit. We also found that most of the learning was acquired "accidentally", and confirmed Kolb's (1984) claim that learning mode preferences were related to learning styles. Some volunteers reported learning best from doing, others from listening to experts, and others from group interactions. The data suggest that, by and large, the learning experience became more relevant, meaningful and long-lasting when it was connected to a process of collective reflection and critical analysis. They also suggest that mentoring relationships play a particularly important role in the learning process. With a broad range of informal and formal modalities, mentoring relationships are especially suitable to the varying contexts of volunteer organizations and more able to adapt to varying conditions than many other facilitators of learning. (From Conclusion)

KEY WORDS: Voluntary Work and Learning; Canada; Volunteer Learning; Survey; Community Work; Informal Learning.

15. Ohsako, T. (2000). Counselling and demand-driven adult learning. *International Journal for the Advancement of Counselling*, 22(2), 103-118.

This paper advocates various roles for counselling in order to promote lifelong adult learning. Demand-driven adult learning underlines the importance for counsellors to recognize the wide diversity that is evident in adult learning. The paper argues that counselling for adults must fully take into consideration adult learners' psycho-social demands and economic realities: the need for adults to learn throughout life, the economic contributions of unpaid work by adults, and the sense of social responsibility manifested by adult learners. Counselling faces formidable challenges when assisting the adult learning process: learner-focused information services, psychological techniques to stimulate and support adult learning, a self-efficacy approach to adult learning, a gender-sensitive approach to adult learning, support for workplace adult learning activities, school violence management by adults, an active and productive approach to ageing, intergenerational learning, and psycho-social measures to remove barriers to adult learning.

KEY WORDS: Adult Learning; Counseling.

16. Schugurensky, D., & Mündel, K. (2004). Volunteer work and learning: Hidden dimensions of labour force training. In K. Leithwood, D. W. Livingstone, A. Cumming, N. Bascia & A. Datnow (Eds.), *International handbook of educational policy* (pp. 997-1022). New York: Kluwer.

The chapter presents a historical perspective on voluntary work and learning and addresses current conceptual questions related to volunteering and learning. In Canada, volunteer work contributes the equivalent of over 575,000 full-time jobs per year, which represents 11% of the total labour contribution, and an addition of about \$13 billion to the national economy. Moreover, volunteers contribute to the economy in out-of-pocket expenses (\$841 million in the late 1980s) that are not reimbursed. In the analysis of volunteer learning, a particular emphasis is placed on community volunteer work-related informal learning. A key finding of the last NALL survey (1998) is the existence of a much stronger association between community volunteer work time and community-related informal learning than between paid employment time and job-related informal learning. The survey also found that people involved in community work devote about 4 hours a week on average to community-related informal learning, and that the most common learning activities include interpersonal skills, communication skills, social issues and organizational/managerial skills.

KEY WORDS: Voluntary Work and Learning; Canada; Volunteer Learning; Survey; Community Work; Informal Learning.

17. Schugurensky, D. (2006). "This is our school of citizenship." Informal learning in local democracy. In Z. Bekerman, N. Burbules & D. Silberman (Eds.), *Learning in hidden places: The informal education reader* (pp. 163-182). New York: Peter Lang.

This paper examines the informal civic and political learning that occurs in local processes of deliberation and decision-making. The paper has two main sections. The first advances a conceptual discussion on informal learning, and the second part, drawing on situated learning theories, participatory democracy theories and my current research, analyzes the pedagogical dimensions of the participatory budget of Porto Alegre, Brazil, an experiment in local democracy that has been in place since 1989.

KEY WORDS: Voluntary Work and Learning; Canada; Volunteer Learning; Survey; Community Work; Informal Learning.

18. Serafino, A. (2001). Linking motivation and commitment through learning activities in the volunteer sector. *Journal of Volunteer Administration*, 19(4), 15-20.

Volunteer motivation and commitment are linked through learning about the organization, the job, and oneself. Volunteer managers should (1) identify volunteer motivations and establish conditions to support them; (2) identify learning activities appropriate for motivations and learning styles; (3) ensure congruence between volunteer learning and their jobs; and (4) accommodate short-term and long-term commitment.

KEY WORDS: Learning Activities; Motivation; Volunteers; Adult Learning; Staff Development; Commitment; Volunteer Management.

19. Smith, D. (1998). The underside of schooling: Restructuring, privatization, and women's unpaid work. *Journal for a Just and Caring Education*, 4(1), 11-29.

Discusses declining commitment to education as a public good, addressing contemporary changes in economic organization, the correlative reorganization and

design of institutions, and the discourse of privatization. Privatization emphasizes the traditional family and the importance of women's unpaid work for children and schools, despite most families' dependence on two incomes. A new capital-accumulation regime is turning public school systems into engines of inequality.

KEY WORDS: Capitalism; Dual Career Family; Economic Change; Elementary/Secondary Education; Equal Education; Females; Privatization; Public Support; School Restructuring; School Support; Neoconservatism.

20. Smith, E., & Green, A. (2001). *School students' learning from their paid and unpaid work*. Leabrook: The National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER).

A project carried out in New South Wales and South Australia examined ways in which Year 10, 11, and 12 students experience workplaces. A questionnaire administered to students in 13 schools received 1,451 responses. Case studies in five schools included interviews and focus groups with students and teachers. Interviews and focus groups with employers in both states were carried out. Findings indicated about 60 percent of students had formal part-time work; about two-thirds had done work experience, and about 11 percent had undertaken vocational placements; paid work was highly concentrated in retail or fast food; work experience was widely distributed across a range of industry areas; and the major reason for part-time work was for extra spending money. The three major forms of workplace activity had different purposes. Work experience was seen as a process of career sampling and familiarization with work habits. Vocational placements were seen as sites for developing specific skills. Paid work was a way of earning money, although significant learning occurred. Skills best developed in all three forms of workplace activity were verbal communication, how to behave at work, and using initiative. The most common specific skills mentioned by students were also common to all three forms of workplace activity: dealing with customers, communication skills, and operating a computer.

KEY WORDS: Career Education; Career Exploration; Case Studies; Developed Nations; Education Work Relationship; Experiential Learning; Foreign Countries; High School Students; High Schools; Job Placement; Job Skills; Part Time Employment; Questionnaires; Skill Development; Student Attitudes; Student Employment; Work Experience; Work Experience Programs; Australia (New South Wales); Australia.

21. Stoecker, R. (2003). Community-based research: From practice to theory and back again. *Michigan Journal of Community Service Learning*, 9(2), 35-46.

Explores the theoretical strands being combined in community-based research, charity service learning, social justice service learning, action research, and participatory research. Shows how different models of community-based research, based in different theories of society and different approaches to community work, may combine or conflict.

KEY WORDS: Action Research; Community Involvement; Higher Education; Participatory Research; Service Learning; Theory Practice Relationship.

22. Van Berkel, M., & De Graaf, N. D. (1999). By virtue of pleasantness? Housework and the effects of education revisited. *Sociology*, 33(4), 785-808.

Explores how combined educational attainment levels of spouses affect the division of housework, taking into account the relative pleasantness of particular tasks & using

1992/93 Dutch data. Results stress the relevance of discriminating between different sorts of tasks. Men's contribution tends more to the preferred tasks of shopping or cooking than to the less enjoyed cleaning or laundry. Generational differences suggest, however, that change toward equalization permeates all tasks. Types of housework vary between couples with different educational compositions. The effects of education are such that an explanation based on egalitarian values fares better than one based on human capital. Among spouses, the results indicate that the influence of wives' education dominates. However, among highly educated wives this does not hold true when it comes to cleaning.

KEY WORDS: Housework; Educational Attainment; Spouses; Sexual Division of Labor; Netherlands.



The Research Network on Work and Lifelong Learning
Resource Base Development Office
Centre for the Study of Education and Work (CSEW)
Ontario Institute for Studies in Education of the University of Toronto (OISE/UT)
252 Bloor Street W, #12-256, Toronto, ON, M5S 1V6, Canada
Tel (416) 923-6641 ext. 2392, Fax (416) 926-4751
E-mail: wallnetwork@oise.utoronto.ca