

Pinar, W. (2009). *The worldliness of a cosmopolitan education: Passionate lives in public service*. New York: Routledge. Pages: 221. Price: 48.95 USD (paper). ISBN 978-0-415-99551-1.

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William Pinar is most commonly known for his contributions to curriculum studies. *The Worldliness of a Cosmopolitan Education* expands this work while traversing topics as diverse as educational policy studies, teacher education, cosmopolitanism, and queer theory. An intriguing aspect of the book is the balance it strikes between scholarly engagement and worldly action. The discussion is not about defining what a cosmopolitan education consists of, rather it is a subjective enactment of cosmopolitanism as worldliness: after studying the book one is worldlier as a result of the cosmopolitan education it represents. Cosmopolitanism is not explored as a topic but is demonstrated in the study that is this book and is further clarified through the examples of the worldly lives lived in public service of the subjects studied.

The book begins with a challenging question: “What knowledge is of most worth?” (p. vii). Pinar describes the danger of curriculum being hijacked as a means to an end of the market. The triumph of power in collectivism (the erasure of individuality), the lack of academic knowledge in teacher education, and the overt control of standardized testing are presented as manifestations of this instrumentalist agenda. Teaching is often misrepresented as “a business, based on outcomes” (p. 46) with little focus on inputs. Teaching as a profession is threatened by an effort to “teacher proof” the curriculum under the guise of accountability. Pinar provokes teachers and administrators of education, including higher education, by asserting that their “obligation is not to the superintendent or to the school board ... but to the profession, to your colleagues, and to the children they teach” (p. 51).

After rejecting an instrumental approach to curriculum development, Pinar returns to the question, “What knowledge is of most worth?” It is a question best answered by the individual through consideration of their subjective passion, our collective concerns, and structured by academic knowledge (p. 43). A synthesis of lived experience and self-reflective (autobiographically conscious) academic study is the basis for a cosmopolitan education that aims for critical engagement with the world (p. 62).

The subjectivity of the individual is central to Pinar's notion of cosmopolitanism: "Subjectivity enables engagement with the world informed by study and experience" (p. 33). Worldliness, "a state of being between the local and the global, simultaneously self-engaged and worldly-wise, cause and consequence of a cosmopolitan education" (p. 4) is presented as a subjective complement to cosmopolitanism and is a uniting theme throughout the book. Worldliness is commonly seen as a binary that involves a love of the world as opposed to a love of the otherworldly such as religion. Pinar's notion of cosmopolitan worldliness dissolves this binary. Important from an educational standpoint, Pinar describes worldliness as "a retrospective judgment, not an educational objective" (p. 7). Worldliness is realized through a subject's critical engagement with the world. Pinar's worldliness is not a utopian ideal but an engagement with the world as it is; the absence of the ideal is evident in lived experience: "Immanence, not transcendence, informs the worldliness that knows that struggle for global justice is to be conducted from everywhere: from below, from above, from all points in between, working from within to redress the injustice that defines the world" (p. 146).

The worldly subjects of Pinar's biographical sketches—Laura Bragg, an American museum educator and early feminist; Jane Addams, an American pioneer social worker and feminist; and Pier Paolo Pasolini, an Italian film director, poet, and writer—all broke through boundaries of race, class, and gender. The power of a cosmopolitan education is its ability to move beyond the artificial boundaries that create an insider and an outsider, including the boundaries erected by homophobic and other anti-gay discourses. There is much to challenge this boundary in the chapter on Laura Bragg. The autobiographic biographies that appear in this work may cause readers to bump up against some of their own boundaries and reflect on their source. How to go beyond this subjective boundary and reconstruct a worldlier vision is a key question posed by a cosmopolitan education.

Jane Addams' preference for learning about life through life itself is taken up in a chapter where Pinar says: "lived experience, informed by academic study, self-reflectively reconstructed—is primary in the production of worldliness" (p. 60). The combination of study and experience is the foundation of a cosmopolitan education. Addams emphasizes engagement, that is, education as experience, that has the potential to reconstruct the subject. Such education is facilitated by conversation and dialogue between teacher, student, and the world. It is insight into another's lived experience, and the self-reconstruction this provokes, that makes one more cosmopolitan. Other people's autobiographical accounts become the text through which one engages in a cosmopolitan education.

The opportunities for self-reflection, self-critique, and subjective reconstruction that are presented through biography are evident in Pinar's chapter on Pasolini. Pasolini is offered as a champion and example of "a subjectivity that is 'free' and 'indirect' [and welcoming of] the worldliness of a cosmopolitan education" (p. 103). Pasolini's worldliness consisted of "making visible the world others could—would—not see" (p. 112). The epic, the mythological, a sense of awe, need to be restored to the world and Pasolini turned to film as his pedagogic tool. Pasolini's pedagogy was to become the other, to break with social convention, to marginalize himself, an "autobiography of alterity...a form of self-reconstruction through self-shattering" (p. 138), demonstrating the difficult work and discomfort of self-reflexivity and self-reconstruction. This book is "located between biography and autobiography," (p. 127), much like Pasolini's notion of the screenplay. The

text itself strives to become a boundary breaker, a catalyst for self-reflection, and self-reconstruction through the cosmopolitan exposure of one subject's lived experience to another. The reader is prodded to freedom from artificial boundedness by exposure to the completely other, revealed as the same. Pasolini searched for freedom from his homogenizing, smothering bourgeois capitalist roots through the other of the Friuli language of his peasant mother, the Roman borgate (a poor neighbourhood), and the "Third World" (p. 129). Both Pasolini's and Pinar's work, act as bridges to the other as a cosmopolitan search for freedom from the boundedness of a world partially constructed.

With this book, Pinar provides the reader with an example of, and a point of entry into, the worldliness of a cosmopolitan education. Pinar quotes R. Radhakrishnan (2008) who describes "the book" as "a very special point of entry into the worldliness of the world" (p. 145). If Pinar's book is read as autobiography, allowed to challenge and reconstruct the subjectivity of the reader, a glimpse into one example of a cosmopolitan curriculum is the reward. 🍁

References

Radhakrishnan, R. (2008). *History, the human, and the world between*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.