

1 Turning work and lifelong learning inside out: A Marxist-feminist attempt

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Introduction

Thinking through the two concepts of 'work' and 'lifelong learning' and the modes and methods through which they intersect, contradict or collude is not an easy task. It is even more daunting to attempt a Marxist-feminist approach, which has a special interest in both work and learning. There are at least two obstacles. First is the proliferation of literature on work and lifelong learning, which is theoretically and methodologically diverse, with much borrowing from disciplinary-based knowledges such as sociology and psychology, and from more interdisciplinary-based knowledges such as women's studies and adult education. It is not possible to cover critically this vast body of knowledge in this chapter; rather, I will limit the scope by engaging in arguments that claim 'critical' as a theoretical positioning. The second barrier is the fierce intellectual animosity towards Marxist analysis, in particular Marxist-feminism, and the declaration of it as an irrelevant and outdated mode of analysis. The two situations are closely intertwined in the sense that the exclusion of radical, critical and revolutionary perspectives is disguised in the diversity of disciplinary and area-studies approaches to work and learning. It is in this complex context that I embark on a journey of self-inquiry on my own intellectual relationship with this topic, which has been uneasy and inconsistent, and even at times ambivalent and unsettling.¹

In this chapter I ground the analysis of the relations between work and lifelong learning in a historical and materialist understanding of the current world order. From this perspective, capitalism, unevenly developed throughout the world, is the material logic of social life and shapes the ways in which people live, learn, work, relate and think. Labour and capital, major building blocks of the current world order, co-exist in unity and conflict. However, it is the contradictions between the two that have shaped political and ideological struggles in adult education.

It is not difficult to see in daily news reports that the ongoing structural transformations in capitalism – for instance, the current round of globalisation – have exacerbated rather than changed the nature of contradictions between labour and capital. This observation challenges the claim that with the emergence of communication technologies, or mobile, flexible, service-oriented labour, capitalist production practices and relations have fundamentally changed and radically transformed. However, the particularity of the current moment of capitalism – that is, globalisation-as-imperialism – cannot be ignored. In its advanced imperialist stage, capitalism today, as in the past, combines the need to cross national borders

(for purposes of 'free trade') with the urge to maintain spheres of influence and even new forms of colonisation through war and occupation. While the borders may be loosened for the flow of commodities, they are tightened in order to exclude unwanted immigrant labour and refugees. Borders within the European Union have indeed fallen down in unprecedented ways, but the continent has emerged as 'Fortress Europe', closing its doors to 'economic migrants' and refugees from African and Asian countries. Similarly, Australia, Canada, the US and other Western states have tightened their borders. At the same time, surveillance of citizens, enhanced by new technologies, has taken unprecedented dimensions. Capitalist states identifying themselves as 'liberal democracies' have turned into 'national security' states. The gap between the rich and the poor has been growing worldwide, and new forms of slavery have emerged in Asia, Africa and Latin America (Bales 2005). The trafficking of women and children, war, poverty, ecocide and global warming pose real threats to the welfare of human beings and all other species. In the midst of an apparent disorder in the world system, the US, as the largest economic power, is able to mount wars (in Afghanistan and Iraq) and shape policy in major international organs such as the G8, the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, and UNESCO and other UN agencies. While the US may be seen as an imperialist power in decline, as Britain and France were by World War II, its hegemony may also be challenged by emerging imperialist rivals such as India, China and Russia.

My goal in this chapter is to engage with a wide range of debates on work and lifelong learning in this specific historical moment. The location of this knowledge is within what is known as 'Western democracies' although similar critical thinking is available throughout the world. In order to organise my thoughts, I present 'three observations' and then propose 'three theses' as a way to push our thinking forward. I hope that through this process of Marxist-feminist self-inquiry and interrogation I will be able to initiate renewed radical/critical thinking on the connections/disconnections or resonances/dissonances between work and lifelong learning.

Three observations

Observation 1: Lifelong learning is a contested concept. In my reading of the existing literature, lifelong learning has been deployed in two ways. First, it is a central concept in the hegemonic claim that lack of skill causes unemployment; it supposes that constant retraining prepares workers to be ultimately adaptable and always ready to acquire new skills as the needs of capital dictate. Second, lifelong learning has been marshalled as an ideological concept in two ways: one, which is intrinsically related to the previous point, is that the concept has become an ideological distraction that shifts the burden of increasing adaptability to the worker, and the other is at the same time a ray of hope for a more democratic and engaged citizenry. It is the responsibility of individuals to make themselves better citizens by participating fully in democracy. This ideological conception of lifelong learning is at the core of the neo-liberal articulation of the relations between education/learning/training/skilling and the project of liberal democracy.

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Despite the knowledge explosion on lifelong learning,² I still find the most comprehensive critique of the concept in Frank Coffield's important article 'Breaking the consensus: Lifelong learning as social control' (Coffield 1999). Coffield notes that despite all the debates, there is a consensus that has developed over the last 30 years to the effect that lifelong learning, on its own, will solve a wide range of educational, social and political ills. He states that this consensus is naive, limited, deficient, dangerous and diversionary. Coffield asks: 'If the thesis is so poor why is it so popular?' (1999: 479). He provides an answer by arguing: 'It legitimates increased expenditure on education'; 'It provides politicians with the pretext for action'; 'It deflects attention from the need for economic and social reform'; and 'It offers the comforting illusion that for every complex problem there is one simple solution' (1999: 486). He calls this policy response to market demands 'compulsory emancipation' through lifelong learning (1999: 489). Nonetheless, Coffield's alternative proposal is framed in notions of liberal democracy which avoid a deeper analysis of capitalist relations of power. It is important to note that a similar critique was provided by Ivar Berg two decades earlier (Berg 1970).

The presence of contestation, as I have observed it, does not make 'lifelong learning' as a policy and practice, irrelevant. It is the circularity of the argument and the illusive nature of the concept that is not being sufficiently articulated in the literature; hence my second observation.

Observation 2: The literature provides a 'critique', without being 'critical', of the policy and practice of lifelong learning and its implications for work, training and adult education. I am borrowing from Teresa Ebert (1996) the distinction between 'critique' as a descriptive process and 'critical' as an analysis for change. There is a sizeable body of literature in lifelong learning that provides a 'critique' of capitalism. While this body of literature is important in understanding relationships between adult education and capitalist social relations, it does not provide the 'critical' tools to engage in a rigorous analysis of the ideological link between lifelong learning and the capitalist mode of labour exploitation. Adult educators have been interrogating the process of knowledge production and the conception of knowledge as an object with the same propositions used in the explanation of commodity. This engagement is best manifested in the critique of human capital theory. The main argument of human capital theory revolves around the positive and direct relations between knowledge and skill attainment and social status and mobility. The theory assumes that people with more years of schooling and training inevitably end up with higher-status jobs and higher wages; therefore, an expanding market economy needs not only the availability of economic capital but also human capital in the form of an educated, well-trained, flexible and skilled workforce. In human capital theory, knowledge is an unchanging, unproblematic object or thing, unrelated to human beings, possessed by some and imparted to others.

The 'critique' of human capital theory directs us to the oppositional discourse of adult education and learning, but this theoretical position obscures the relationship between capital and labour. Ebert argues that this type of analysis will make visible th

effects of social phenomena (training/learning) and will 'hollow out the materialist sense of class as relations of property and exploitation' (Ebert & Zavarzadeh 2008: xiv). The diverse perspectives one finds in human capital theory all converge in their insistence on working *within* the system of capitalism to reform it.

The reformist approach calls for the reorganisation of adult education into a training and skilling enterprise fully responsive to the requirements of the market. Although visions about the goals and directions of adult education are diverse and difficult to synthesise, I will focus here on a significant divide among adult educators. This division appears to be over the relationship between education and economy or work and learning, but in essence the theoretical and practical struggle is about the position of human beings in this rapidly shifting and changing economy. Simply put, it is about class position and struggle. In this economy, the workforce is expected to be adaptable, flexible and able to respond quickly to skill demands of the market under conditions of the unceasing movement of capital in search of more profitable opportunities. The workforce – that is, the majority of people, particularly in the South – is rendered disposable. It is not difficult to realise that capital always finds the cheap labour that it requires, and it is only where capital requires particular labour skills, and particular levels of education, that it might be interested in investing in upgrading, skilling and retraining of workers.

Observation 3: One outcome of the conceptual and theoretical messiness in researching work and lifelong learning has been the normalisation of capitalism. I have argued so far that the descriptive 'critique' of lifelong learning and work renders capitalist relations invisible in lifelong learning and work. Lifelong learning in a 'critical' analysis will be interpreted as the logic of capital. In other words, it is the capitalist exploitation of labour that produces the need for lifelong learning. The policy attention to a skilled labour force and the need for training/retraining is a capitalist response to its own logic. Turning workers into 'learning subjects' or 'learning citizens' is consistent with the politics of citizenship in liberal democracies.

In Canada, there is an important site of scholarship on lifelong learning with a focus on immigrant women. I will use this work to illustrate the notion of 'normalisation' of capitalist relations in the literature on lifelong learning and work. Research on immigrant women and work has produced a credible body of knowledge crossing disciplinary boundaries and encompassing contending theoretical and methodological perspectives. This body of literature is consolidated around the following themes: access/accommodation, training/skilling and work ghettoisation – that is, the prevalence of immigrant women in service work, contingent work and home-based work. My argument is that we have exhausted this topic within the spectrum of divergent theoretical perspectives. I also claim that studying different work settings, diverse immigrant communities or a different region of the world will not significantly add to our knowledge in understanding what constitutes the fundamental contradictions in exclusion, discrimination or marginalisation of immigrant women in the market economy. The dominant discourse has been no more than a liberal-capitalist mystification of what is known in Marxist theory

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as exploitation of labour. Indeed, concepts such as 'access', 'accommodation', 'marginalisation', 'discrimination' or 'exclusion' only reframe exploitation into legal, administrative, managerial, moral or cultural preferences, and limit our understanding of the dynamics of exploitation within the capitalist social and economic formation. What about racialised, gendered, national divisions of labour that enhance the exploitability of sectors of the vulnerable labour force? Are these mere mystifications, or the modalities through which exploitation is achieved?

In the context of Canada, the last two decades have been pivotal in creating a body of credible knowledge that crosses disciplinary boundaries in explaining, analysing, and proposing change in order to improve access, accommodation, inclusion, work conditions and work status of women of colour and immigrant women in workplaces and the labour market. Immigrant women's work has been the focus of this flourishing knowledge production. In the past decade in my institution (the University of Toronto) alone, roughly 50 MA theses and PhD dissertations have taken immigrant women as their object of study. We have analysed how and why immigrant women come to Canada, how they get jobs and what are the processes that determine which ones they get. We have examined the prior experience and learning competency of these women, as well as assessed what kind of skills they acquire. We have also examined the cultural processes that keep them in certain sectors of the labour market, and studied the learning needs imposed upon them by their social placement.

The literature has also developed a set of terms that enables us to identify various trends, structures and social relations. For instance, marginalisation, access/accommodation, discrimination and exclusion, racism and sexism allow us to critically examine the conditions under which labour of a certain kind *remains* labour of a certain kind. Some of the scholarship has used a framework that assesses immigrant women in marginalised sectors against an ideal type of immigrant women, the professionals, and determines the former's needs by proposing how we can make them more like the latter group. I argue that issues of 'professionalisation' and 'accreditation', more than any other issues arising from this literature, have captured the imagination of policy-makers, politicians and those who advocate for and represent immigrant constituencies. The response has been the funding of organisations, sometimes ethnic-specific, or profession-focused service-oriented agencies.

Tracing my own intellectual and epistemological trajectory in understanding this social phenomenon, I have noticed that so far I have been able, at best, to provide a partial explanation and reveal the appearance of a complex social phenomenon but not its essence. In recent decades, with the acceleration of the global neo-liberal agenda, comprising war, militarisation, displacement, increasing population movements and new immigration policies, a series of important changes has taken place in the labour force. One such change is further hierarchisation of the labour force. This complex process is happening, first, through the creation of a highly specialised workforce to serve the demands of the 'knowledge economy'; and second, through structuring a workforce that is contingent, flexible, expendable, disposable and replaceable, in order to engage in shifting and more precarious, scattered,

mobile forms of production relations made possible by technological advances and the rapidity of electronic capital flows. To explain where immigrant women are located in this hierarchy, I contributed to the debate on 'skilling', 'deskilling' and 'reskilling' of immigrant women, where I have also noted that lifelong 'learning', as far as women of colour are concerned, becomes lifelong 'training' in its policy and practice formulation (Mojab 2000). I concluded, based on fieldwork among more than 80 immigrant women, that the waste of the skilled labour force is endemic to the dynamics of the capitalist economy.

To sum up, the literature on lifelong learning and work often normalises the capitalist mode of production and reproduction and therefore fails to analyse capital/labour contradictions, especially exploitation based on race and gender, as the source or cause of capitalism rather than its effect. Based on these observations, I would like to propose the following three theses.

Three theses

Thesis 1: Any adequate theory of work, learning and lifelong learning should give equal attention to the complex relations of production under capitalism. Our understanding of work, especially women's work, continues to be obscured by conceptual and theoretical frameworks that present the capitalist organisation of society as a natural order that can be perfected but never replaced. As argued above, the rather vast literature on the topic is filled with concepts that seem to provide radical insights into the dynamics of work. For instance, concepts such as marginalisation, discrimination or exclusion give a critical direction to our understanding. However, these concepts veil rather than unveil one crucial social relationship between capital and labour – that is, 'exploitation'. Concepts such as 'access', 'accommodation' and 'inclusion' provide a panacea to the more dehumanising aspects of the relationship but fail to envision a systemic alternative to it.

Social theory, especially since the proclamation of the 'end of history', shies away from system-changing concepts and ideas. For instance, it is now appropriate to conceptualise the relationship between labour and capital in any imaginable way except in terms of exploitation, alienation or conceptual frameworks that direct our thinking to the domain of alternatives to capitalism. We are led to believe that capitalist prosperity is created independent of labour. Dorothy Smith lays out a foundation for thinking through these complexities which is important to repeat at length here:

It is important to preserve a sense of capitalism as an essentially dynamic process continually transforming the 'ground' on which we stand so that we are always continually experiencing changing historical process. It is one of the problems of the strategy of the intellectual world that our categories and concepts fix an actuality into seemingly unchanging forms and then we do our work in trying to find out how to present society in that way. This we must avoid. We must try to find out how to see our society as continually moving and to avoid introducing an artificial fixity

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into what we make of it. The society as we find it at any one moment is the product of an historical process. It is a process which is not 'complete' at any one time. The various 'impulses' generated by the essentially dynamic process of capitalism do not come to rest in their own completion or in the working out to the point of equilibrium of systematic interactions. The process of change is itself unceasing and at any moment we catch only an atemporal slice of a moving process. Hence to understand the properties, movement, 'structure' of the present, we must be able to disentwine the strands of development which determine the character and relations of the present in Western capitalism. (Smith 1985: 7-8)

This is a guideline for the analytical frame that I identify as Marxist-feminist. A framework that is feminist, historical-materialist, dialectical and critical leads us to ask these four central questions: Why does the concept of lifelong learning arise at this particular moment? How does work and learning relate to the capitalist mode of production? What are the contradictions within the concept of lifelong learning? How can we uncover the social relations of work and learning that are not visible on the surface? In other words, what, specifically, is it about the current relations of production that fosters a preoccupation with training and lifelong learning?

Thesis 2: A Marxist-feminist dialectical conception of work and lifelong learning is the most productive mode of analysis for analysing immigrant women's work. Employing Marxist-feminist dialectical conceptions of work and lifelong learning, we can see that it is not simply women of colour's class, race, sexuality or gender that is determined by the economic system, but also their whole subjectivity. Immigrant women are 'marginalised' by capital, and we can now see that their 'marginalisation' is not a product of contingent structures such as call centres, but is constitutive and necessary to the capitalist relation. We study women and come to know what particular groups of marginalised women of colour experience or lack training, and we may even develop methods and programmes that facilitate the movement of particular women from peripheral work into professional work, but we cannot ameliorate or improve the precarious nature of their work.

The current literature on immigrant women and work has described their position in the labour market in much detail. This body of research is incredibly useful in describing barriers that lock them into marginalised or contingent work, such as language problems, lack of recognised accreditation and a lack of access to professional jobs. Furthermore this literature, where it has been critical, deals with issues in globalisation, including offshore production, free-trade-zone processing and cheap labour, and has described how present immigration policies result from labour planning rooted in settler-colonialist ideologies. We can assert that the literature has developed a sufficiently deep understanding of the way in which race and gender construct the positions of these subjects and the labour market as a whole.

What has been lacking, however, is an attempt to integrate an analysis of race, gender and class in a Marxist dialectical sense with lifelong learning, work and

adult learning. Where the literature has invoked a critique of capitalist relations, it has done so superficially, by treating these relations as a *thing* that can be separately analysed, rather than as the context that produces not only the barriers and policies under examination, but also the subjects themselves, and our study of them. By leaving aside capitalist relations; or at best by treating them as a force among others, this literature has done little besides explaining the appearance of a problem, rather than explaining the essential characteristics of the social formation that produces this appearance. By treating only the appearance of this force, we have oversimplified the problematic so that research presents a picture in which the amelioration of immigrant women's positions requires no more than the changing of labour, learning and work policies and funding allocations. However, immigrant women's lives are not abnormalities produced by inadequate policies; rather, these policies are adopted in order to reproduce conditions in which capital can thrive at the expense of labour.

It is not surprising, therefore, that the body of academic literature in adult education has produced no perceptible changes either in state or corporate policy, or in the situations of immigrant women themselves. Instead, what we have created is a series of structures, organisations and policies that have revolved around the issue of 'access' to jobs, to education or to training, all of which not only act as an additional layer of bureaucratic control, but also allow further exploitation of immigrant women by charging fees and demanding their time, all the while producing no discernible results. With the kind of analysis I am proposing, one that centres itself on the concept of gender and race exploitation, we can see that these structures are no more coincidental than the forces whose effects they were developed to combat. Now, immigrant women are not only estranged from the products of their labour and their own knowledge, but are also alienated from the possibility ('access') provided by commodified, exchangeable labour power.

Thesis 3: If we relocate and reread the literature on work and lifelong learning in the context of war, occupation, militarism, poverty and patriarchy, new sets of contradictory relations will emerge between lifelong learning and work. I began by stating the obvious: lifelong learning is a highly contested concept. Now I am proposing to muddy these already murky waters by dislocating its pedagogical, theoretical and policy frames to sites of war, occupation, displacement and dispossession. By doing so, we can see that the connecting thread here is the discovery of a universal 'life in transition' as a mode of being and learning. Women whose experience of the actualities of violence falls outside the boundaries of lifelong learning policy, pedagogy, practice and theorisation are women who are or who have been historically excluded as adult learners. But, in addition, learning is happening regardless of this exclusion. Helen Colley, drawing extensively on the results of my research and analysis on Kurdish women's lives and struggles, concludes that '[o]ne lesson we have to learn from studies like that of the Kurdish women is that we may need to devote further attention to learning associated with collective consciousness, resistance and struggle and to the life-course transition associated with that learning, if those power relations are to be challenged or overturned' (Colley 2007: 440).

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The discussion here has so far largely avoided the classification of learning according to concepts derived from the institutional practice and study of lifelong learning. As I have noted elsewhere:

What is lacking... is an attempt to integrate an analysis of race, gender, class, and learning in a Marxist dialectical sense. An inquiry into 'learning', not in terms of its forms – that is formal, non-formal, and informal – but learning as class consciousness will require a merging of Marxist methodology and anti-oppression frameworks. While class consciousness can be thought of in terms of the distance between subjective and objective interests, this does not mean that the goal is to move a group toward a static set of objective interests. (Mojab 2006: 167)

Where to go from here?

In trying to understand what I have been doing so far, I raise two simple questions. First, what is lifelong learning for? Second, how do we understand and explain the relationship between work and lifelong learning? The more likely or more sincere response to both questions would be, 'Lifelong learning is for the purpose of training skilled labour and delivering it to the capitalist market', a response that reduces lifelong learning to an appendage of the market. I realise that most of us do not aim at reducing lifelong learning to the requirements of the market. Indeed, we have for a long time pursued lofty ideals in relation to what we are doing. In 1997, participants in CONFINTEA V in Hamburg reaffirmed 'that only human-centred development and a participatory society based on the full respect of human rights will lead to sustainable and equitable development'. Even more, the participants insisted that

[a]dult education thus becomes more than a right; it is a key to the twenty-first century. It is both a consequence of active citizenship and a condition for full participation in society. It is a powerful concept for fostering ecologically sustainable development, for promoting democracy, justice, gender equity, and scientific, social and economic development, and for building a world in which violent conflict is replaced by dialogue and a culture of peace based on justice. Adult learning can shape identity and give meaning to life. Learning throughout life implies a rethinking of content to reflect such factors as age, gender equality, disability, language, culture and economic disparities.³

Twelve years after CONFINTEA V, I believe that even if we have taken one step forwards, we have taken many steps backwards. The very idea of citizenship and democracy is under attack. In many parts of the world, adult education is not a right; in fact, illiteracy is still a major obstacle to development. About one-fifth of the adult population of the world is illiterate, and 100 million children do not attend primary school.⁴ By the mid 1990s there were about 100 million street children.⁵ The trafficking of women and children has taken unprecedented dimensions (Anti-slavery International 2001; US State Dept 2008).

Is there any trace of 'human-centred development or a participatory society', which the Hamburg Declaration calls for? The neo-liberal regime that emerged in North America and Europe in the last two decades and has been imposed on the rest of the world is based on the supremacy of the market. The market is the arbitrator of relations not only among human beings but also among nations, cultures and countries. Under this economic order, poverty is on the rise while tiny groups get richer and richer.

Capitalism, both liberal and neo-liberal, is the most productive system in history. It produces much more than the population of a country can consume. Yet it does so in part by generating poverty. Furthermore, in order to reproduce itself, it has to expand. This expansion happens both within the borders of a given nation and on a world scale – unceasing globalisation. Capital cannot survive without colonial domination. War is inevitably tied to this economy. Capitalism has created a military-industrial complex that calls for wars even when the need for them cannot be justified; annual military spending is now more than a trillion dollars. Since the 1990s, 44 countries, or 25 per cent of the world's states, have been at war, generating enormous human and ecological devastation. The capitalist ability to produce is at the same time the ability to destroy. It is now argued that neo-liberal capitalism thrives on disaster (Klein 2007). We may take a step further and suggest that capitalism itself has turned into disaster. If early commercial capitalism had thrived on slavery and colonialism, the globalised neo-liberal regime of late capitalism is also reviving slavery. There is slavery of the old style in parts of Asia, Africa and Latin America. Today, Western capitalism prospers on the cheap labour of two billion people in China and India, where workers and peasants are subjected to new forms of serfdom and slavery.

Many of us in adult education have indeed been aware of this evolving disaster. Feminist theory helped us in understanding the ways in which women's labour contributes to the reproduction of both capitalism and patriarchy. Advances in the study of race and colonialism allowed us to understand the racial component of learning, education, work and capitalism. Today, we have rather advanced theorisations of learning. For example, Allman (1999, 2001 and 2007), Colley (2004) and Rikowski (1999, 2001 and 2002) treat capital and labour not as things but as social relations. They see labour and capital as unity and conflict of opposites forming the capitalist socio-economic formation. However, even when we see labour/capital as social relations constitutive of the capitalist system, we do not think about its negation. We critique and often succeed in our critique of capitalism but we do not take the next step. We do not envision the future. And our failure is part of the success of capitalism in reproducing itself.

To envision alternatives to capitalism is a process of understanding it. In other words, looking at capitalist social relations philosophically, it requires a process of understanding necessity and how to negate it. The capitalist world order, as it exists, is given to us by past and present societies. Philosophically, this is the realm of necessity and we are subject to its rules, although it is possible to be free from its constraints if we are conscious of it and if we envision its negation as a condition of freedom. I am confirming here that *freedom* exists in unity and conflict with *necessity* (existing conditions, the status quo).

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Freedom consists in *understanding* and *transforming* necessity. And this is a process of conscious intervention in class interest, religious or ethnic belonging, and gender and racial hierarchy. As a final point, let me suggest a framework for understanding the dialectics of necessity and freedom as it applies to the relationship between work and lifelong learning. To do this I will draw on David Harvey's conception of 'accumulation by dispossession' (Harvey 2003) and name this process 'learning by dispossession', by which I mean that in the process of learning and work something other than 'learning' (which can be measured, evaluated or assessed on the basis of categorisation of 'formal', 'informal' and 'non-formal', or 'paid' and 'unpaid') is happening. Much like primitive capital accumulation, learning, too, has a dual characteristic – that is, it produces learning as well as something 'outside of itself' that is deeply entrenching self/mind/consciousness into a perpetual mode of capitalist social relations; to put it differently learning produces new skills and knowledge as well as alienation and fragmentation of self/community, and confuses 'worker' with the idea of 'capitalism'. Harvey proposes that we take the dialectic of 'inside-outside' relations of capitalism seriously and that in fact 'this helps us better understand what the capitalistic form of imperialism is about' (2003: 142). I also would like to propose that we expand our theoretical and methodological analysis of the relationship between work and lifelong learning to a qualitatively more sophisticated analysis of the materiality of capitalist social relations, one in which these relations are gendered, racialised and sexualised.

Notes

- 1 An earlier version of this chapter was first presented as my keynote address at the Fifth International Conference on Researching Work and Learning at the University of Cape Town, Cape Town, South Africa, in December 2007. I am grateful to Shirley Walters for inviting me. Her envisioning of different approaches to this topic was the impetus for my own rethinking. I am indebted to Linzi Manicom for her usual intellectual care in reading and commenting on an earlier draft of this chapter. Paula Allman's sharp critique is a source of reverence and inspiration; I remain obliged.
- 2 In preparing this chapter I have drawn extensively from my previously published work, including the following: 'Adult education without borders', in T Fenwick, T Nesbit and B Spencer (eds) *Contexts of adult education: Canadian perspectives* (Toronto: Thompson Educational Publishing, 2006); 'Race and class', in T Nesbit (ed.) *Class concerns: Adult education and social class: New directions in adult and continuing education, no. 106* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2005); 'From the "Wall of Shame" to September 11: Wither adult education?', in P Kell, M Singh and S Shore (eds) *Adult Education @ 21st Century* (New York: Peter Lang, 2004); and, with Rachel Gorman, 'Women and consciousness in the learning organisation: Emancipation or exploitation?', *Adult Education Quarterly* 53 no. 4 (2003): 228–241.
- 3 Hamburg Declaration on Adult Learning. Accessed 13 August 2001, <http://www.unesco.org/education/uie/confintea/declaeng.htm>.
- 4 Illiteracy 'hinders world's poor'. BBC News, 9 November 2005. Accessed 25 November 2007, http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/education/4420772.stm.
- 5 Exploitation of children – a worldwide outrage. Casa Alianza, September 2000. Accessed 25 November 2007, <http://www.hiltonfoundation.org/press/16-pdf3.pdf>.

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Learning/Work

Turning work and
lifelong learning
inside out

Edited by Linda Cooper
and Shirley Walters

