

# **Much in Little? Revisiting ‘lifelong education’, ‘recurrent education’, and ‘de-schooling’ in the age of ‘lifelong learning’**

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## **Abstract**

*Recent contributions to the literature have postulated the very different significations of the policy narratives of ‘lifelong education’ in the Faure Report for UNESCO in 1972 and OECD’s 1973 report on ‘recurrent education’. It has also been argued that the Faure Report incorporated the policy narrative of the ‘de-schooling’ of society. Furthermore, it is sometimes claimed that ‘recurrent education’ in the 1970s laid the foundations for the core elements of the ‘lifelong learning’ narrative that has emerged worldwide since the mid-1990s. This paper critically examines the empirical foundations of such arguments. Based upon a re-reading of primary texts and secondary sources, the analysis demonstrates that these widely accepted arguments constitute a problematic interpretation of the historical relationships between the key policy narratives in the 1970s. The conclusions identify a number of significant areas for further empirical research into the relationships between first generation policy narratives.*

## **Revisiting first and second generation policy narratives**

Revisiting the world of ‘lifelong education’ in the early 1970s is a well-established habitus among those interested in policy formation processes from the 1970s into the current age of ‘lifelong learning’ (see for example: Pineau 1977; Rozychi 1987; Wain 1989; Guigou 1979, 1992; Field 2001; Medel-Anonuevo et al 2001; Tuijnman and Boström 2002; Forquin 2004; Schütze 2006; Billet 2010; Moosung and Friedrich 2011; Field 2012; Haddat and Aubin 2013; Jarvis 2014; Elfert, 2015). When revisiting the policy landscape of the 1970s the policy narrative of ‘lifelong education’ has been compared with other policy narratives such as ‘recurrent education’, *éducation permanente*, ‘permanent education’ and ‘paid educational leave’, and less frequently to the ‘de-schooling’ narrative (see for example: Alenen 1982; Duke 1982; Gelpi 1984, 199; Giere 1994; Boshier 1998; Istance et al 2001; Hager 2011; Laot 2009; Molyneux et al [1988] 2012; Zaldivar 2011). More recently, the policy narrative of ‘lifelong education’ has been compared with the emergence of the policy narrative of ‘lifelong learning’ since the mid-1990s. A feature of this discussion is the identification of a major paradigm shift from lifelong ‘education’ to lifelong ‘learning’ (Barros 2012; Biesta 2011; Boshier 2014; Milana 2012; Elfert 2015).

The concept of ‘policy narrative’ used here is informed by the theoretical perspective of ‘narrative policy analysis’. This perspective focuses on policy-formation processes in terms of ‘policy narratives’ that articulate different interpretations of social reality in specific policy discussions (Hake 2011). Narrative policy analysis examines policy narratives in terms of their articulation of policy strategies, policy measures and specific policy instruments (Hake and van der Kamp 2002). These policy narratives are constructed by diverse policy-relevant actors engaged in policy debates in the public sphere. Empirical research examines the concrete social-historical conditions of the ‘policy practices’ of different policy actors that generate and disseminate policy narratives (McBeth et al 2007). Policy narratives are understood as social-historical phenomena embedded in the practices of policy actors including international organizations, trans-national polities, governments, ministries, parliaments, political parties, social partners, and educational organizations, together with more diffuse policy-relevant actors including social movements, public intellectuals and grass-roots activists. Research is not limited to official policy documents or the reports of advisory committees. In articulating their policy narratives, advisory committees work in ways different from public intellectuals and direct action groups (Jones and McBeth 2010). Research into the articulation of policy narratives subsequently involves study of policy proposals in reports, documents, submissions of evidence, books, pamphlets, posters, messaging on social networking sites, protests, demonstrations, and indeed the occupation of public spaces. Such analysis can identify ‘official’ and ‘oppositional’ policy narratives (Hampton 2009) in socio-political struggles that result in dominant ‘meta-narratives’ in policy debates.

This paper specifically focuses on recent studies that propagate particular interpretations of relationships between the policy narratives of ‘lifelong education’, ‘recurrent education’ and ‘de-schooling’ during the 1970s. These studies take the 1972 Faure report *Learning to be: the world of education today and tomorrow* (Faure et al 1972a) as their common point of reference for interpreting these narratives. They formulate four related arguments: a) there has been a fundamental shift in policy vocabulary from lifelong ‘education’ to lifelong ‘learning’; b) ‘lifelong education’ and ‘recurrent education’ constituted two quite distinctive and indeed mutually exclusive policy narratives; c) ‘lifelong education’ *à la Faure* incorporated the critical narrative of ‘de-schooling’; and d) ‘recurrent education’ in the 1970s constituted the core elements of the ‘lifelong learning’ narrative that has emerged since the mid-1990s. This paper critically examines these representations of the ‘iconic’ Faure report with particular reference to the relationships between lifelong education policy, recurrent education and de-schooling

This paper does not seek to offer in-depth reconstruction of the socio-historical origins, reception, and implementation of the policy narratives associated with ‘lifelong education’, ‘recurrent education’, ‘de-schooling’ and ‘lifelong learning’. It has the much more limited and specific purpose. It investigates the empirical basis of recent contributions to the literature with reference to the Faure report.

Following this introduction, section two comprises a review of recent studies with reference to two generations of policy formation in the 1970s and since the mid-1990s. In section three, the Faure report is critically examined in terms of the supposedly different policy significations of lifelong education and recurrent education. Section four offers a critical re-reading of the Faure report with regard to arguments that it incorporated the criticism of institutional education articulated by the de-schooling narrative. Section five discusses that the historical lacunas in the recent literature and recommends a return to primary sources and further empirical research in a number of significant areas.

### **Interpreting relationships between two generations of policy narratives**

Recent studies follow Rubenson (2006, 2009) in postulating that the 1970s constituted the first of two ‘generations’ of policy narratives. In similar vein, Hager (2011) refers to first and second ‘waves’ of policy narratives. These studies have focused on genealogies of different policy narratives and their specific policy significations (Boshier 1998, 2012; Biesta 2006; Barros 2012; Milana 2012; Fejes 2013). One particular focal-point is cross-polity ‘policy borrowing’, ‘policy attraction’ and ‘policy lending’ of policy narratives (Steiner-Khamsi 2004; Steiner-Khamsi and Waldow 2012). In the context of globalization, the roles of international organizations – such as the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), Council of Europe, International Labour Organization (ILO), and the European Union – are interpreted as significant policy actors, indeed as ‘policy entrepreneurs’ (Corbett, 2003), in the propagation of policy narratives (Hake 2003; Schütze 2006; Moutsios 2010; Holford and Milana 2014). Many studies analyze policy documents emanating from such organizations as important in setting global neo-liberal policy agendas and the adoption of lifelong learning policies by national governments worldwide (Hake 2003; Biesta 2006; Jakobi 2009, 2012; Barros 2012; Milana 2012).

Recent studies postulate a shift of policy vocabulary between the two generations from lifelong ‘education’ in the 1970s to lifelong ‘learning’ since the mid-1990s (Biesta 2005; Barros 2012; Milana 2012). Biesta (2005, 55) asserts that, ‘*One of the most remarkable changes that has taken place over the past two decades in the way in which we speak about...education, is the rise of the concept of “learning” and the subsequent decline of the concept of “education”*’. With reference to the two generation thesis, Barros (2012, 120) observes that, ‘*There has been a shift in paradigms from lifelong education, where the concept of education is seen as a collective entity and a state obligation, to lifelong learning, where the concept of learning is seen as an individual entity and a personal duty*’. Likewise, Fejes (2013, 99) asserts that ‘*During the 1990s, we can see how the concept of lifelong education was replaced by lifelong learning within the policy texts*’. This paradigmatic shift from ‘education’ to ‘learning’ is explained in terms of the neo-liberal ‘...*mantra of lifelong learning...*’ (Milana 2012, 105) involving ‘...*learning*

to earn...’ (Medel-Añonuevo et al 2001, 1), ‘...adaptability and employability...’ (Fejes 2013, 104), and lifelong learning policies as ‘...flags of convenience...’ (Boshier 2012, 701). Nicholl and Olesen (2013, 104) postulate that ‘*Lifelong learning was launched into public discussion in part through the international political and economic jet-set; those business managers, politicians and experts who participated in the annual alternative summit meetings of the “World Economic Forum” in Davos*’. With reference to this shift in policy paradigms, Boshier observes that the neo-liberal tendency of ‘...flying a flag of convenience signals the fact that educational planning has drifted far from the utopian yearnings of the 1970s...Since the 1990s, lifelong education systems have collapsed and mostly been replaced by ad hoc and disconnected manifestations of lifelong learning’ (Boshier 2012, 701). This historical tendency is identified by Barros (2012, 131), quoting Boshier, ‘...if lifelong education was an instrument for democracy, lifelong learning is almost entirely preoccupied with the cash register’ (Boshier 1998, 5). More recently, Boshier (2012: 711) argues that ‘*By the 1990s, utopian, festive and democratic notions of lifelong education had been replaced by individualized and technologically-mediated notions of learning*’. Lopez (2014; 44) suggests that ‘...Faure sought to defend an education aimed at the emancipation of the individual and his fulfilment as a human being, and yet, in the decades that followed, such vision has succumbed to the dictates of the neo-liberal state’. The 1972 Faure report *Learning to be* is obviously held in high esteem by critics of the neo-liberal inspired lifelong learning now propagated by the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the European Union since the mid-1990s. This leads Biesta (2006, 172) to conclude that ‘*In about three decades, then, the discourse of lifelong learning seems to have shifted from “learning to be” to “learning to be productive and employable”*’.

The studies cited argue the case, furthermore, that there were fundamental differences between the policy significations of ‘lifelong education’ and ‘recurrent education’ as key first generation policy narratives. Milana (2012, 110-111) argues ‘*The first of these [generations], from the 1960s to the 1980s, was strongly bound to the emerging notion of “lifelong education” as developed by UNESCO, as well as the conception of “recurrent education” launched by the 1969 Conference of the European Ministers of Education and soon afterwards adopted by the OECD*’. Fejes (2013, 99) remarks that ‘...during the late 1960s and early 1970s, the concept of lifelong education attained a central position within policy discourse’. Significant here is recognition of the 1972 Faure report as ‘...the canonical text of the lifelong education movement’ (Wain 2001, 184) because it ‘...represented not only a universal principle, but a concrete step towards a democratization process in education that should lead to the improvement of the quality of life for all’ (Milana 2012, 109). Biesta (2006, 171) remarks that the Faure report formulated ‘...lifelong education in terms of solidarity, democracy and “the complete fulfilment of man”...’. For some, the Faure report constituted the expression of lifelong education as a ‘humanist project’ that ‘...embedded strong social-democratic liberal ideas...’ (Milana 2012: 108) and embraced a ‘...view of education in its totality as a socio-political and cultural utopia for a more

*humane society*' (Wain 2001, 184). As Fejes (2013, 99) observes, '*In the report, we can see how lifelong education is related to a positive humanistic notion of progress and personal development*'. In line with such interpretations, Biesta (2011, 60) concludes that *Learning to be* was a remarkable historical document because the views expressed '*...stand in such sharp contrast to the policies and practices that make up the world of lifelong learning today*'.

The Faure report is frequently interpreted as standing in marked contrast to the policy narrative of recurrent education propagated by OECD during the early 1970s. The core argument made is that the policy narratives of lifelong education and recurrent education were '*...embedded in quite different significations*' (Milana 2012, 111). While the Faure report was published in 1972, '*...OECD was adopting "recurrent education"...as was first stated in the report Recurrent education: A strategy for lifelong learning...in 1973*' (Milana 2012, 110-111). Boshier (1998) postulates that OECD spent a decade elaborating recurrent education in competition with UNESCO's notion of lifelong education. According to Milana (2012, 111) '*...critical analysis suggests that "recurrent education" was a pragmatic response by the OECD, aimed at securing a "good fit" between educational profiles and the skills and competencies required on the labour market...*'. Furthermore, this line of argumentation suggests that, '*While "recurrent education" restricts education to formal activities deliberately undertaken in a distinct institutional sphere, "lifelong education" identifies education with life*' (Milana 2012, 111). The conclusion drawn is that '*...the OECD and UNESCO differed markedly....as a frame of reference for policy purposes*' (Milana 2012:112).

These studies argue, thirdly, that the Faure report incorporated the critique of institutionalized education articulated by 1968 activists, anarchistic-utopians, de-schoolers such as Illich (1971) and Reimer (1971), and neo-Marxists. With reference to the revolutionary events on the streets, in factories and educational institutions in 1968, Lopez (2014, 44), posits that '*The Faure report of 1972....seems to have finally embodied many of the concerns and ideals that had paraded down the streets of Paris in 1968*'. In more general terms, Moosung and Friedrich (2011, 157) argue that, '*Inspired by radical social democrats such as Freire and Illich, the Faure Report mentioned the pedagogical meanings of de-schooling and de-institutionalization in its critique of conventional educational system*'. Boshier (1998, 2004, 2012) persistently argues that Faure was influenced by critics of institutional schooling including Freire, Goodman, Holt, Illich, Ohliger, Reimer, and Tough. Even Faure himself is identified as a representative of the first-generation of '*...anarchistic-utopianism and neo-Marxian perspectives*' (Boshier 1998, 9). Along similar lines, Moosung and Friedrich (2011, 157) state emphatically that '*Arguably, this accommodation of radicalist voices is the most distinguishing feature of the Faure Report*'. Milana (2012, 109) reiterates that the Faure report was remarkable because it '*...incorporated radical stands (de-schooling, de-institutionalization)*'. The dominant neo-liberal agenda of lifelong learning in the 21<sup>st</sup> century is regarded as indicative that '*There has*

*been a shift from a neo-Marxist or anarchistic-Utopian template...*' Boshier (1998, 29) embedded in the Faure report.

Fourthly, the recurrent education narrative of the 1970s is regarded as still alive and doing well in the hands of OECD as the now ageing progenitor of lifelong learning. The 1973 OECD report on recurrent education is identified as the source of the neo-liberal mantra of lifelong learning. Lifelong learning constitutes '*...a disguise for recurrent education...recurrent education in drag*' Boshier (1998, 4). Likewise, Barros (2012, 125) asserts that '*Promotion of the lifelong learning paradigm is especially linked to...the OECD report published in 1973, Recurrent Education – a strategy for lifelong learning*'. In the words of Medel-Añonuevo et al (2001, 1), '*...this present situation is a continuation of the OECD lifelong learning discourse made public in its report, Recurrent Education: A Strategy for Lifelong Learning (1973), which reframed the lifelong education discussion in largely economic and employability terms*'. According to Milana (2012, 107) '*OECD's 1989 report Education and the Economy in a Changing Society led to the forging of closer ties between the economy and education, and saw a reinterpretation of the "recurrent education" conception*'. Along similar lines, Biesta (2006, 172) observes that '*The idea that lifelong learning is first and foremost about the development of human capital – an 'investment in human resources' – so as to secure competitiveness and economic growth for Europe clearly echoes a central tenet of an influential document published in 1997 by the OECD, called Lifelong Learning for All*' (OECD, 1997). With reference to this OECD report, Milana (2012, 111) argues that it '*...brought back the recurrent education conception, now presented under the new guise of lifelong learning*'. Boshier argues that '*Look closely at the OECD rendering of lifelong learning and the name "recurrent education" is clearly visible under the new paint on the bow*' Boshier (1998, 14). European Union policies since the mid-1990s suggest that, '*Lifelong learning was the emphasis in 1996, after the European Commission declared that year as the European Year of Lifelong Learning*' (Nicholl & Olesen 2013, 104). The subsequent *Memorandum on Lifelong Learning*, published by the European Commission in 2000, is regarded as manifesting the neo-liberal ideology that distorts the original UNESCO discourse on lifelong education in order to accommodate the needs of contemporary capitalism (Borg & Mayo 2005). The all-encompassing interpretation of European Union policies put forward by Barros (2012, 125) postulates that

*...the promotion of the lifelong learning paradigm is especially linked to the OECD and the EU, as both produced in several policy documents, such as the OECD report published in 1973, Recurrent Education – a strategy for lifelong learning, (OECD, 1973) and after that, the document entitled Memorandum on Lifelong Learning published by the European Commission in 2000, one of the most important and disseminated policy documents in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.*

The studies cited construct an interpretation of the two generation thesis based, on the one hand, upon a paradigm shift from lifelong ‘education’ to lifelong ‘learning’, and, on the other hand, on lifelong learning as the perpetuation of the recurrent education narrative of the 1970s. Within this overall interpretative framework, these studies argue that: a) the 1972 Faure Report on lifelong education and the 1973 OECD report on recurrent education differed in terms of the policy significations of their respective policy narratives, and, b) the Faure Commission’s report incorporated the de-schooling narrative. These two specific arguments with regard to these policy narratives in the early 1970s will be subjected to critical scrutiny in the following two sections.

### **Ambiguous architectures: ‘Lifelong education’ embraces ‘recurrent education’?**

Appointed by UNESCO, the International Commission on the Development of Education, chaired by Edgar Faure<sup>1</sup>, was responsible for *Learning to Be: The world of education today and tomorrow* (Faure et al 1972a). The Faure report comprised a long and turgid thesis about the ontological problems of mankind – always a ‘he’ – in modern society and it promulgated the promise of ‘scientific humanism’ for the reform of education and society (ibid. 1-159). More pertinently, it went on to address policy implications (ibid. 160-234). Its core policy principles of ‘lifelong education’ and the ‘learning society’ (ibid. 180-181) – the French version (Faure et al 1972b) referred to *cit   educative* or ‘learning city’ – involved the need to expand formal, non-formal and informal learning with specific reference to adult education. Recommendation 12 of the report argued that ‘*The normal culmination of the educational process is adult education*’ (Faure et al 1972a, 204). This section identified ‘illustrations’ of innovations – ‘good practices’ in current policy vocabulary – including such well-trodden paths as workers universities in Yugoslavia, study circles and folk high-schools in Sweden, functional illiteracy campaigns, multi-medial second-chance programmes in Quebec, and self-directed learning.

Despite the widely proclaimed humanistic signification of the Faure report, it nonetheless embraced the so-called ‘human resource signification’ more often associated with recurrent education. Indeed, the concept ‘recurrent education’ was systematically employed throughout the Faure report. The French-language version referred to *  ducation r  currente* and *  ducation it  rative* (Faure et al 1972b, 214-215, 223). Faure’s policy recommendations for the implementation of lifelong education explicitly appropriated and incorporated the language of recurrent education. Policy recommendation 4, out of a total of twenty-three,

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<sup>1</sup> Faure was a careerist French politician in the centre-right Radical and Gaullist parties. He was Minister of Education 1968-1969 in the immediate aftermath of the 1968 uprising. A political pragmatist, Faure was responsible for the *Loi d’orientation* in November 1968 that reformed the universities and introduced the right of adults to return to higher education and the establishment in 1969 of regional university associations for adult education and training to promote *  ducation permanente*. He was dismissed in late 1969 following the resignation of General de Gaulle.

proposed that *'...recurrent education should be gradually introduced and made available in the first instance to certain categories of the active population'* (Faure et al 1972a, 188). With reference to formal, non-formal and informal learning, the report pointed out that *'This conception – recurrent education – may resolve the contradiction between institutionalized and non-institutionalized education by integrating them into a coherent system in which they compliment and supplement each other harmoniously'* (ibid. 189-190). The report proposed that recurrent education would encourage participation in education throughout an individual's lifetime *'...in successive but discontinuous periods'* (ibid. 119). Having recognized the need for flexible forms of *recurrent* participation in learning throughout the life course – the first of three core principles of the recurrent education narrative – the report proposed that *'Each person should be able to choose his path more freely, in a more flexible framework, without being compelled to give up using educational services for life if he leaves the system'* (ibid. 186). Especially at the university level, the report argued that *'It will become increasingly acceptable to interrupt studies between one cycle and another or even during one course'* (ibid. 189). Faure emphasized that *'The application of the idea of recurrent education as a consequence of this would lead, in particular, to recognition of every worker's right to re-enter the educational circuit in the course of his active life'* (ibid. 190). This comprised hesitant recognition of the third core principle of the recurrent education narrative involving the *postponement* of automatic transfer from secondary to higher education for people in front-ended models of conventional education. With reference to higher education, the report argued that recurrent education would involve *'...opening higher establishments to a greater range of people than the usual "regular" students: former, returning graduates and professional people of all kinds requiring advanced training and retraining'* (ibid. 201).

Explicit appropriation and incorporation of the recurrent education narrative by the Faure Commission was expressed in principle 8 that addressed *'educational action for work and active life'* in terms of promoting *'...maximum vocational mobility'* (ibid. 196). This recognized the significance of the second core principle of the policy narrative of recurrent education with regard to the *alternance* of periods of engagement in learning, work, leisure and retirement, although its own analysis was largely focused on 'work' and 'jobs'. It argued that *'educational action'* to prepare young people for work and active life should aim at *'...equipping them to adapt themselves to a variety of jobs, at developing their capacities continuously, in order to keep pace with developing production methods and working conditions'* (ibid. 196). The report suggested that *'It should help achieve optimum mobility in employment and facilitate conversion from one profession or branch of a profession to another'* (ibid. 196). Recommendation 8 proposed that vocational preparation *'...must be followed by practical training at places of work, all of which must, above all, be completed by recurrent education and vocational training courses'* (ibid. 197). *Recyclage*, or 'vocational recycling' – a key concept at the time in educational and vocational guidance and counselling circles – spoke the 21<sup>st</sup>-century language of 'employability'



particularly when the Faure Commission encouraged the ‘soft skills’ of ‘...positive attitudes to work and the morale of work’ (ibid. 197).

Principle 9 argued that ‘...lifelong education, in the full sense of the term, means that business, industrial and agricultural firms will have extensive educational functions’ (ibid. 198). It proposed that responsibility for vocational education and training should not reside solely with the school system, but should be shared with businesses and other enterprises, out-of-school activities with educators, leaders of commerce and industry, workers and governments, co-operating together for this purpose. The report pointed out that ‘Economic circles in industrialized countries have realized the need for improved training and generally agree that expenditure on it is a worthwhile investment’ (ibid. 198). There was explicit recognition that ‘...business companies, whether privately or publicly owned...constitute a key element in the overall educational system’ (ibid. 198). Given the need for education to meet the needs of the economy, the Faure report argued that ‘...it is imperative for educational institutions to work hand in hand with industry’ (ibid. 199). As for the funding of recurrent education, the Faure Commission observed, albeit without reference to ongoing initiatives to implement paid educational leave at the time, that ‘In many countries both privately and publicly owned enterprises allocate a portion of their profits to educating and training their employees and managerial personnel. This practice should be more widely adopted’ (ibid. 199). Elsewhere the report recommended that ‘...we should endeavour to reduce the length of studies necessary acquire a given qualification (without reducing standards)...by combining study with work, either directly or in successive phases’ (ibid. 230). It remarked, ‘There is certainly no more effective way of economizing in education than to avoid wasting the pupils’ time. We may be sure there are fortunes waiting to be picked up here’ (ibid. 230). It was not made explicit, however, who would make these ‘fortunes’.

Echoing the policy narrative of recurrent education, the Faure report argued that a comprehensive political strategy demanded the integration of educational, social protection, and labour market policies. The Faure Commission expressed the conviction that

*Whatever power education has, or has not, to alleviate in its own domain inequalities among individuals and groups, a resolute social policy to correct unfair distribution of educational resources and effort is the obvious pre-condition for any progress in this respect. Highly complex socio-economic processes govern these phenomena and, to a large extent, they are not immediately determined by educational policies (ibid. 73).*

Given the report’s recognition that ‘Individuals must be able to leave and rejoin the educational circuit as it suits them’ (ibid, 189), and that both young people and adults must have practical opportunities for combining work and education, it

proposed that '*Education and labour law must be made more flexible*' (ibid. 189). Faure talked the neo-liberal language of employability and flexibility among the workforce, or 'learning for earning'.

Despite its basic tenet of 'scientific humanism', it would indeed have been disingenuous if the Faure Commission had not addressed the application by enterprises of new technologies to production processes and the responsibilities of employers for the education and training of the workforce. The Faure Commission clearly recognized the case for close co-operation between educational institutions, enterprises and the world of learning in the workplace. It did so quite explicitly in terms of the recurrent education narrative; albeit selected parts of this narrative if not in its entirety. It expressed the need for a new architecture for lifelong education involving integration of public and private provision of recurrent education that embraced the core principles of recurrent exits and returns to learning together with the alternation of involvement in education, learning, work, leisure and retirement throughout the individual life course. The key remained the promotion of '*maximum vocational mobility*'.

It is quite remarkable, however, that the Faure report failed to provide systematic examples from policies and practices let alone references to any sources of such ideas, for example *éducation permanente* in France during the 1960s, the work of the Council of Europe on 'permanent education', or OECD and 'recurrent education'. Nonetheless, it explicitly incorporated recurrent education into its own policy narrative.

### **Roots of radicalism: 'Lifelong education' as 'permanent inadequacy'?**

If the Faure report was the humanistic child of its times, the Faure Commission clearly had problems in making friends. The introduction refers to four categories of 'major trends' in educational development in the highly volatile policy environment: '*The fact remains that many developments show a general consistency which is all the more remarkable in that they have sprung from very diverse ideas, criticisms and protest movements*' (Faure et al 1972a, 19). These trends included, firstly, '*educational reformers*' involved in '*...reforming and reorganizing existing education structures and modernizing teaching methods*' (ibid. 19). Secondly, it identified '*structural transformations*' observed '*In countries which more or less recently have gone through social and political upheavals, events have often led to profound structural changes in the educational world, affecting the student base, access to education at various levels, curricula revision and, although to a lesser extent, modernization of methods*' (ibid. 19). A third category identified '*radical criticism*' expressed by proponents of the de-schooling of society. Fourthly, the report referred to student and worker activists associated with the events of 1968 in terms of '*dissent*' (ibid. 20).

'Radical criticism' applied in particular to anarchistic-utopian, de-schooling and neo-Marxist critics of conventional education and the reproduction of social inequality. Well-known critics, including Friere, Goodman, Illich and Reimer, were invited to submit papers as evidence to the Faure Commission. Papers by Friere, Goodman and Reimer, papers 36, 37 and 39, carried the emblematic identical titles of '*Unusual Ideas about Education*', while Illich's paper, number 38, was entitled '*On the Necessity to De-school Society*'. Among the 81 documents prepared for the use of the commission, as recorded in appendix 5, these papers were placed together in *Section B: Opinions*. In the text, Freire was referred to in three footnotes on pages 75 and 139, while references to Illich were restricted to three footnotes on pages 20 and 21. There is uncertainty as to whether members of the Commission visited Illich in Mexico to interview him as suggested by a footnote on page 21. Zaldívar (2011, 64) reports that the Russian member of the Faure Commission, Petrovsky (1976), referred to Illich as 'unoriginal' and an 'ignoramus'.

The Preface to the Faure Report expressed the Commission's position with regard to aspirations to de-school society: '*Views of this kind are usually presented as progressive and even revolutionary, but if they were put into practice on any scale, their effects would certainly be of a reactionary nature...*' (ibid. xxxii). In the Introduction, de-schoolers were described as the '*...proponents of "deinstitutionalizing" education and "de-schooling" society*' (ibid. 20). The Commission argued that '*Such theses, which as yet have no experimental basis, accordingly remain intellectual speculation*' (ibid. 20). They were regarded as '*...grounded on an outright condemnation of "institutionalised" education and lead either to intermediary formulae or radical plans for a total "de-schooling" of society*' (ibid. 20). De-schoolers were regarded as supporters of '*...this extreme thesis...*' and '*...these novel theories...*' (ibid. 21). Recommending the Faure report, the Director-General of UNESCO referred indirectly to Illich: '*If the report sometimes evinces sympathy for what might be called the "libertarian myth" in education, the fact remains that the "de-schooling" theory is expressly rejected as Utopian*' (Maheu 1973, 5). In distancing itself from these critics, the Faure Commission and UNESCO did not seriously question the role of formal educational institutions in relation to the broader landscape of non-formal and informal learning. The report argued that '*...schools, that is to say establishments devised to dispense education systematically to the rising generations, are now and will remain in the future...the decisive factor in training men to contribute to the development of society, to play an active part in life, of men properly prepared for work*' (Faure 1972a, xxxii).

Faure's formulation of lifelong education encountered vigorous criticism from the proponents of de-schooling for its fundamental tensions and contradictions (Bengtsson et al 1975; Hake 1975; Pineau 1977). Ohliger, regarded by Boshier (2004) as one of the key north-American anarchistic-utopians in adult education at the time, remarked that the Faure Report was '*...just another example of international bureaucratise, although in places the book has a haunting quality*

*strangely akin to a tale of unrequited love*' (Ohliger 1974, 47). He commented '*...much more adult education was the only basic reform the report recommended*' (ibid. 52). Carnoy (1974) voiced the neo-Marxist critique of the promise of science and technology in solving social and educational problems. In his opinion, Faure took '*...one step forwards and two steps back in thinking about the crisis in education*' (Carnoy 1974, 54). He called instead for a 'defensive education', especially in the developing nations demanding political consciousness and social action as effective solutions to the educational problems of society.

Responses by anarchist-utopian critics were imbued with a radical critique that lifelong education would extend the compulsory nature of schooling into adulthood. Potentially sinister consequences of totalitarian lifelong education were fed by Faure's argument that '*School education must be regarded not as the end but as the fundamental component of educational activity, which includes both institutionalized and out-of-school education...Briefly, education must be conceived of as an existential continuum as long as life*' (Faure et al 1972a, 233). This led Ohliger (1974, 56) to remark '*If I must be oppressed, I don't want to be oppressed by educators. Can you imagine what it would be like with educators, such as the authors of this report, running our lives in a "learning society"*'. Verne (1974), Guigou (1975), Illich and Verne (1976), Dauber and Verne (1977) and Pineau (1977) referred to the threat of imprisonment in the global classroom of lifelong education. They feared that lifelong education, and notions of permanent education, would extend the 'educational system' by incorporating non-formal and informal learning, autonomous alternative learning networks and community learning resources. While a recent study argues that the Faure report was significant because '*...lifelong education identifies education with life*' (Milana, 2012, 111), critics at the time regarded lifelong education as '*...a widely dispersed social process that threatened to engulf all social life outside of schools and would guarantee permanent inadequacy*' (Ohliger, 1974, 54). Gueulette (1972, 92) asked '*Is there school after death?*' and addressed widely expressed reservations in terms of the need to exorcise the spectre of permanent schooling (Gueulette 1976, 1981). Frese – a contributor to the Council of Europe's work on permanent education – warned that '*...lifelong education would reinforce the established social order, rightly or wrongly; controlling and manipulating the destiny of whole populations*' (Frese 1970). Questioning whether permanent education was a dream or a nightmare, he expressed reservations about the Faure Commission's ambitions for mass media to expand educational provision – at the time distance education was embracing 'open' learning on a broad front – combined with neo-liberal technocratic control, emergence of commercial interests in the educational market-place, and monopolies in producing learning materials. Likewise, Bengtsson et al (1975, 37) argued that '*...the dominance of economic and technological factors in formulations of permanent education give rise to fears that it could become a nightmare of compulsory alienation and adjustment problems*'. Pineau (1977) was of the opinion that lifelong education

effectively incorporated non-formal learning experiences into the formal institutional structure, and that it threatened to constitute *aliénation permanente*.

Perhaps most telling, however, was the Cuernavaca Manifesto entitled *The Price of Lifelong Education* (Cidoc 1974). Twenty-five public intellectuals from 14 countries met at the Centro Intercultural de Documentación, Cuernavaca, Mexico, 22 July-16 August 1974, to discuss 'present trends towards lifelong education' in response to the Faure Report (Guigou 1975). Signatories were well-known public intellectuals including Carnoy, Guigou, Gorz, Illich, Lister, Ohliger, Pineau, Reimer, Verne and von Hentig. They argued that:

*...we oppose the trend towards compulsory lifelong education, compulsory by law or by social pressure...We do not need more school systems. In societies where a few people who 'know more' give orders and the great mass of people who 'know less' carry them out, formal adult education will only give those few greater power over the many...The promoters of lifelong education believe that this crisis of the schools can be overcome by extending education beyond the school years, in particular by different forms of adult education....We maintain, however, that continued education can only improve the position of adults to the extent that unskilled and frustrating jobs are abolished...unless the working process is made very different, continued education can only be a way for a few to escape at the expense of others....(Cidoc 1974, 1).*

This critique of Faure focused on expanding the architecture of lifelong education in order to promote scientific education and technology in support of economic growth. It argued that the Faure Commission adopted the framework of human resource development in linking education with work-based training. This required workers to become more adaptable, flexible and eager to learn in response to changes in technology and the demands of the workplace. While *Learning to be* demanded that education should respond to the needs of learners throughout life, the Manifesto viewed lifelong education as fundamentally shaped by economic requirements. It envisaged collective rather than individual emancipation through the reorganization of production and conditions of working life such that learners no longer need to develop themselves to match labour market demands. Rather than *Learning to be*, critics of the Faure Commission argued for autonomous social spaces where 'unlearning to be' could take place in opposition to dominant economic forces and 'learning to earn' in the then emerging neo-liberal 'information economy' of post-industrial society. Lynch (1979, 6) observed succinctly that '*The concept of lifelong education is not necessarily a danger though it may offer unlimited scope for further subjugation of man to the world of work, in the effort to combat increasing unemployment and to legitimate stubbornly unchanging wealth and income distributions within society and internationally*'.

## Revisiting first generation policy narratives: a research agenda

This paper has examined a number of contributions to the recent literature which postulate that: a) lifelong education *à la Faure* and the policy narrative of recurrent education constituted two distinctive policy significations, and, b) the Faure report incorporated the critique of institutionalized education voiced by the de-schoolers. The findings demonstrate that the Faure report made explicit use of the term recurrent education and selectively incorporated key elements of the recurrent education policy narrative. *Éducation récurrente* and *éducation itérative* were structural features of the French-language version of the report. With regard to implementing lifelong education, the Faure Commission systematically, albeit selectively, appropriated core elements of recurrent education in its own policy recommendations. The Faure report explicitly made the case for close co-operation between educational institutions, public and private enterprises, and the world of learning in the workplace in order to promote ‘*maximum vocational mobility*’ through flexibility, employability and the work ethic. The analysis also shows that the Faure Commission did not accommodate critical arguments against institutional education and its contribution to social inequality. On the contrary, these critics and their arguments were explicitly dismissed in the Faure report. The Faure Commission, and later UNESCO itself, explicitly distanced themselves from these so-called ‘radical influences’ and their ‘utopian ideas’. There is overwhelming evidence that the Faure report was subjected to rigorous criticism by 1968 activists, anarchist-utopians, de-schoolers, and neo-Marxists alike.

These findings have escaped the attention of recent studies cited in section 2 of this paper. But they will be no surprise to those who have actually read the Faure report and the secondary literature of the period. In short, the empirical foundations of the cited studies demonstrate considerable shortcomings. Firstly, there is a well-established habit of referring to the Faure report as evidence, but this is overwhelmingly based upon reiterative cross-referencing to other recent secondary sources. Secondly, there is a disturbing nonchalance with regard to consulting primary sources to provide empirical evidence. Conclusions drawn are more often based upon the reiteration of recently published secondary sources rather than consultation of relevant primary sources such as the Faure report. This must give rise, furthermore, to reservations about the broader interpretative framework based upon arguments that a major shift of policy paradigms from lifelong ‘education’ to lifelong ‘learning’ has taken place. These findings establish no more than a minimal empirical point of reference for more nuanced understandings of the relationships between the policy narratives of lifelong education, recurrent education and de-schooling in the early 1970s. Nonetheless, these outcomes do indicate a number of specific areas where further empirical research, based upon primary sources and secondary sources from the 1970s, is required.

Firstly, most studies of the lifelong education and recurrent education policy narratives have tended to focus on international organisations and advisory

committees as policy actors in the 1960s and early 1970s. However, the day-to-day policy practices in international organizations – whether via ‘external’ advisory commissions or ‘internal’ bureaucratic procedures – constitute sites of struggle between different social, political, economic and cultural forces that articulate contesting policy narratives with regard to policy strategies, policy measures and specific policy instruments. Given the highly volatile political environments of the late 1960s and early 1970s, proponents of lifelong education were confronted with policy narratives articulated by a rich array of ideological-political forces at the international, national and local levels. Research needs to address how the Faure Commission went to work in negotiating complex and diffuse policy arenas where other policy actors held divergent standpoints with reference to the widespread loss of faith in conventional education systems and the global crisis of capitalism. In particular, more research is required with reference to the Faure Commissions relationships with oppositional forces – ‘radical criticism’ and ‘dissent’ in its own terms – including 1968 activists, popular education movements, community education activists and public intellectuals.

Secondly, empirical research is required that examines the dissemination, reception and interpretation of the Faure report within UNESCO itself. Such research is to a large degree dependent upon reports of UNESCO world conferences<sup>2</sup>, internal institutional accounts, and personal reflections of significant policy-relevant actors within the UNESCO bureaucracy. Research needs to address the dissemination and reception of the Faure Report within UNESCO in different continents, the developmental work by UNESCO Institute of Education (UIE) in Hamburg during the 1970s, publications in house-journals such as *Prospects* and *Convergence* together with the *International Review of Education*. Furthermore, little research is available with regard to the UNESCO National Commissions<sup>3</sup> in the dissemination and reception of the Faure Report at national level. New Zealand is an exception in this regard (Benseman 2005; Bone, 1972; Boshier 1980, 1998; Dakin 1988; Haines, 1974; Methven and Hansen 1997; Simmonds 1972).

Thirdly, empirical research is needed that addresses radical critique of the Faure report that still resonates in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. In *Postcards to the new prisoners in the global classroom*, Aitchison (2000) refers to the de-schoolers opposition to the repressive dominance of lifelong education in the 1970s and the continuing relevance of the anarchist-utopian and neo-Marxist critique of the Faure Commission. The de-schooling narrative constitutes an untapped seam of research into alternatives at the local level to institutionalized forms of lifelong education

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<sup>2</sup> See for example item 16 on the agenda of the UNESCO General Conference in Nairobi, 1976, with reference to the ‘results of completed studies and progress undertaken by UNESCO in the domain of lifelong learning’.

<sup>3</sup> Activities related to the Faure report and reviews of national policies are reported to have taken place in Australia, Canada, Chile, France, India, Iran, Lebanon, Madagascar, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nigeria, Peru, Switzerland, Syria, Yugoslavia.

in different countries. It continued to permeate ‘anti-state’, ‘anti-institutional’ and ‘anti-authoritarian’ local initiatives well into the late 1970s and early 1980s. The de-schooling narrative was itself subjected to serious critique by neo-Marxists (Gintis 1972; Bowles & Gintis 1976) on a broad front. Suspicions about lifelong education as an illiberal and repressive ideology associated with conservative educational practices continued to reverberate well into the 1990s (Bagnall 1990; Gelpi 1994; Matheson and Matheson 1996). Finger and Asún (2001), argue that the Faure report presented itself as voicing an anti-institutional discourse but did not fundamentally reject the role of educational institutions. Zacharakis (2003) and Forquin (2004) reiterate that the Faure Commission was fundamentally dismissive of the practices associated with de-schooling. Forquin (2004) also refers to the widespread disquiet in the 1970s about alienation, permanent inadequacy and the *école à perpétuité*. Recent contributions to the recovery of such critical strands include Grace and Rocco (2009) and Zaldívar (2011). Comparative historical research must also be extended to include critical cultural initiatives associated with social-political opposition to military dictatorships and fascist regimes worldwide. Within Europe, research needs to address successful critical opposition in Greece, Portugal and Spain during the early 1970s, together with the ‘underground learning’ organized by political and cultural movements in the then socialist countries of Baltic, Balkan and Central Europe.

Fourthly, researchers need to address the overwhelming dominance of English-language contributions to the current literature (Fejes and Nylander 2014). Overwhelming dependence upon secondary references in the English language contributes to problematic understandings of the dissemination and reception of policy documents, policy-making processes and local activism in different countries. An abundant literature exists in the French, German, and Spanish languages with reference to the historical reception and critique of the Faure report not only in the European context, but also in Africa, South and Central America; while evidence concerning the reception of Faure in the Soviet bloc remains largely under-researched. A particular lacuna is the absence of references in English-language publications to French-language sources relating to the development of *éducation permanente* in France from the mid-1950s onwards (Forquin 2002, 2004; Laot 1999, 2009), its adoption within UNESCO in the late 1960s, and its transformation by the Faure Commission into lifelong education. It is also necessary to recognize the significant ‘temporal gap’ in the translation of texts from other national academic communities into English.

Fifthly, there is a need to revisit and recover the policy narratives articulated by the rich veins of ideological-political forces identified in the literature of the 1970s. These included ‘anarchist’, ‘libertarian’, ‘syndicalist’, ‘liberal’, ‘neo-liberal’, ‘social-democratic’, ‘communist’, and ‘corporatist’ policy narratives (Bengtsson et al 1975; Forquin 2004; Guigou 1971, 1973a, 1977, 1992; Hake 1975, 2011; Laot 1999, 2009; Pineau 1977). Research should address how these diverse socio-historical ideological tendencies engaged in policy formation processes not only close to ministries, advisory committees, and the social partners but also at some



distance in the wider public sphere of educational institutions, workplaces, local communities, and indeed on the streets of cities, towns and villages (Guigou 1973b, 1977). This calls for further research into the nature of the relationships between these socio-historical forces and their efforts to mobilize specific ‘publics’ (de Montibert 1973; de Sanctis 1984; Hake 2011) to actively participate in oppositional adult learning beyond ‘schools with walls’. The history of *éducation permanente* in France in the late 1950s and 1960s is a classic case of a social-political programme and a *projet social* to change society.

Sixthly, research also needs to address evidence of shifting coalitions between public authorities, the social partners – employers and trade unions – political parties, social movements, voluntary associations, popular education activists and public intellectuals engaged in policy debates in the public sphere throughout the 1970s. More nuanced historical analysis of socio-political policy narratives and programmes for educational reform in the 1970s would also serve to question frequent references in the recent literature to the social democratic pedigree of the Faure report. On the one hand, grass-root initiatives in adult learning in the late 1960s were characterized by shifting alliances involving social-democrat reformers, trade unionists, women’s groups, and community-based initiatives in civil society. During the early 1970s, social democrats promoted adult education as an instrument of public policy in the form of compensatory mechanisms for second chance general education for adults, establishment of open universities and open schools, and support for community-based learning networks (Alheit 1999; Hake, 1999). On the other hand, research also needs to address the emergence in the early 1970s of social democratic and communist trade unions as key policy actors in vigorous campaigns promoting rights to benefit from collective arrangements for paid educational leave for low-qualified employees, the unemployed and women in unpaid caring work, together with entitlements to education and training in enterprises. Such research must also re-investigate the roots of recurrent education as a key element of the social democratic political programme for reform during the late 1960s and early 1970s.

Finally, there is a need to critically examine arguments in recent studies with regard to the paradigmatic shift in policy vocabulary from ‘lifelong education’ *à la Faure* to ‘lifelong learning’ under the influence of neo-liberal ideology since the mid-1990s. Research needs to re-examine evidence in the late 1960s and early 1970s of the articulation of a ‘neo-liberal technocratic’ political programme based upon the transformation from industrial society towards ‘post-industrial society’ and ‘knowledge economies’ (Hake 2004). This neo-liberal programme was formulated in terms of scientific progress and technological change towards the automation of production processes and the labour-market’s demand for the renewal of ‘skills’. In the policy sphere, research needs to address the emergence of a coalition between neo-liberal technocrats and the social partners – employers and trade unions – in response to the crisis of capitalism and the capitalist need to modernize both itself and above all society. This coalition focused on the drive to deregulate labour markets, liberalization of working conditions, individualization of

educational and training rights, and recognition of enterprises as ‘private spaces’ for the development of ‘learning for earning’. It was manifest in the French 1971 law on continuing education – considered by many as the final defeat of *éducation permanente* and as a collective social project. This law introduced individual entitlements to paid educational leave, for those in work, as the basis of *éducation permanente*.<sup>4</sup> Henceforth, public policies became increasingly associated with a more limited focus upon lifelong education in the regulation of access to the labour market, diversification of education and training from the public to the private sphere of enterprises, and deregulation without scrutiny by governments. These are questions that now reverberate in the current age of lifelong learning with regard to collective and/or individual rights to education and training, and the complex political issues surrounding public, private and individual funding of structures of educational opportunity throughout the life course.

### **Conclusions: Does education still have a future?**

This paper has challenged recent interpretations of the relationships between first and second generation policy narratives with particular reference to ‘lifelong education’, ‘recurrent education’, ‘de-schooling’ and ‘lifelong learning’ from the 1970s into the 21<sup>st</sup> century. More specifically, the paper has questioned the empirical foundations of recent studies which argue that: a) the Faure report’s narrative of lifelong education and the recurrent education narrative constituted very different policy significations, and, b) the Faure report’s policy narrative incorporated the criticism of institutionalized education articulated by anarchistic-utopians, de-schoolers and neo-Marxists. In order to explore these issues, the paper focused on a critical re-reading of the 1972 Faure report in terms of the positions it adopted with regard to recurrent education and the critique by the de-schoolers. The findings identify serious empirical shortcomings with regard to the historical foundations of widely shared interpretations of the relationships between first generation narratives. Faure explicitly incorporated the recurrent education narrative in its policy recommendations for the implication of lifelong education, and it resolutely rejected the radical analysis of institutionalized education formulated by 1968 activists, de-schoolers and neo-Marxists. These fundamental empirical lacunas indicate the need for further empirical research in specific areas of concern.

Revisiting ‘lifelong education’ in the age of ‘lifelong learning’ appears to be a hazardous process. This paper suggests that overarching questions about the historical relationships between first and second generation policy narratives still have to be posed. While Centano (2011) asserts that lifelong learning is a policy concept with a short history but with a long past, Leon (1978) pointed out that the historical development of both *éducation permanente* and lifelong education was a question of understanding ‘...le long passé et la courte histoire’. Recent contributions addressing the two generations of policy formation have failed to

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<sup>4</sup> See the article by Guigou (1971a) and the exchange of letters between Guigou and Delors in the left-wing newspaper *Combat* in March 1971; Delors, J. (1971), Guigou, J. (1971b).

generate the rigorous historical research needed to explore issues of continuity and discontinuities. On the one hand, there has been a tendency to focus on the first generation of policy narratives in terms of the normative categories of the 'good', the 'bad' and the 'ugly'. The Faure report on lifelong education is all too often reconstructed as an humanist, idealistic and utopian norm of almost mythic status, while recurrent education is deconstructed as the fore-runner of neo-liberal human resource development. On the other hand, the second generation narrative of 'lifelong learning' is widely held to be a recent dystopian neo-liberal perversion of the utopian aspirations of the 1970s perpetuated by the clerks of the World Bank and the EU.

The history of policy formation since the early 1970s has been shaped by the very diverse efforts of a rich variety of policy actors articulating distinctive and often conflicting socio-political narratives that addressed the social organization of the provision of education and learning opportunities throughout the life course (Hake 2009). As Bélanger (1994, 354) observes '*Lifelong education...is not a norm to prescribe, but an empirical reality to analyse and reconstruct*'. Policy formation is historically characterized by identifiable sites of struggle between contending social-political forces. From the Faure report onwards, this long history has involved significant shifts, breaks, coalitions in the articulation of conflicting programmes of political and ideological forces. These have addressed divisive issues such as reform of the role of the state in public provision, the neo-liberal assertion of the market and private provision, together with the elaboration of alternative forms of autonomous provision beyond both the state and the market. From the early 1970s onwards, these ideological forces and their political programmes have made quite distinctive contributions to policy debates and have arrived at a series of albeit temporary agreements. These have focused, on the one hand, on the acquisition of 'skills' in terms of individual labour market needs in contrast to broader issues surrounding collective socio-cultural development and citizenship. On the other hand, there are persisting tensions between the responsibilities of the collective or the individual in organization of learning opportunities, whether in the workplace or in civil society. Such issues constitute recurring themes in the historical development of the contested diversification of socially organized learning in public and privatized spaces since the early 1970s.

Unresolved questions confronting historically informed comparative policy research call for further empirical research as to how policy narratives were put to work in the 1970s; and how they are put to work in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. In both cases, 'by whom?' and 'in whose interests?' are the key questions still to be answered. Research needs to re-examine how the crisis of capitalism in the early 1970s became the source of the long-term reconstruction of the work place as the legitimate neo-liberal learning space. It is all too evident that the Faure Commission recognized the crisis of 'mature' capitalism in terms of its formulation of education and training policies with reference to 'scientific progress', 'technological innovation', 'refreshing of skills', and 'maximum vocational mobility', together with its neo-liberal technocratic understanding of recurrent

education. The Faure Commission was there! But, where was it in relation to the prognosis of the transformation towards the global post-industrial society, the information economy, and need for a 'learning society'?

Empirical research now needs to focus on policy narratives in terms of historical struggles between those who have articulated the respective arguments for and opposition to policy narratives that spoke the language of vocational 'skills' and now speak the contemporary vernacular of the 'employability' agenda. Research is needed that can contribute to more historically informed understandings of policy narratives that articulate and give body to past and contemporary strategies to establish the socio-political conditions for social justice in the organization of adult learning throughout the life course. This demands further research of historical and contemporary struggles to collectively organize structures of equal opportunities to promote engagement in 'really useful learning' throughout the life course in the tough times of the crisis of 21<sup>st</sup> century financial capitalism.

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