

CHALLENGING THE MASTER'S TOOLS: PEDAGOGIES OF COMMUNITY-BASED PARTICIPATORY RESEARCH

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Abstract

This roundtable follows up the 2014 publication *Learning and teaching Community-based research* with an opportunity for the authors of that book to engaged with conference participants on what we are collectively learning about how to teach about knowledge creating approaches such as participatory research, engaged scholarship and community-based research. Given the primacy of the values-based ethics of participatory research, can we teach these approaches using the pedagogical tools that we have depended on for many years? What does it mean to use decolonized approaches to teaching? How do Indigenous world views influence our learning strategies? Your thoughts welcome.

Keywords: Community-based participatory research, teaching, knowledge democracy, decolonization

Learning and teaching community-based research: Linking pedagogy to practice was published in 2014. It was the first major text to draw attention to the challenges of teaching rather than doing community-based participatory research (CBPR). It brought attention to the dimensions of adult learning and teaching that were needed to create a pedagogical environment where issues of power, identity, gender, ethics, partnership building in communities and more could be learned. Our 2014 book was not framed within an outwardly stated decolonial lens. Nor was it explicitly framed within an Indigenizing frame of reference. As authors we are now drawing upon these frameworks in our various approaches to participatory research.

Since then, two of the authors of that book have gone on to teach CBPR in both on-line and face to face settings. Catherine is Director of the School of Leadership Studies at Royal Roads University (RRU). Budd's main teaching is within the Mentor Training Programme (MTP) of the UNESCO Chair Knowledge for Change Consortium for Training in Community-Based Participatory Research.

As activist-scholars and reflective practitioners, we continue to ask ourselves, *are we attempting to use the master's tools to change the master's house, without even trying to dismantle it* (Lorde, 1984)?

Challenges of Teaching CBPR?

This roundtable will explore what we have learned since 2014 about the principles of CBPR, integrating field and classroom experiences. Effective engaged scholarship, where direction comes from community, workplace, or group settings is complicated. Frustration and failure are commonplace for experienced researchers and students alike. Can the key skills needed to work respectfully in community research be taught in a university course or

workshop setting? Many of us who do this kind of work have learned through trial and error. How do we support a new generation of community activists and activist scholars to acquire the necessary humility and listening abilities?

Catherine's Lessons Learned

The Master of Arts in Leadership (MAL) programme attracts over 150 students per year, all of whom are mid-career leaders across multiple sectors and diverse organizational and community settings. As a graduation requirement, students undertake an action-oriented, engaged leadership project or thesis. In observing how participatory discourses get taken up in traditional, hierarchical settings, I continue to question the extent to which projects confined by workplace parameters can promote values beyond organizational improvement. I appreciate that promoting more engaged, participatory knowledge gathering processes is a radical act in some organizations. Yet, I am curious what more could be done to uproot and transform the intersecting oppressive forces of patriarchy, racism, ableism, homophobia, extractive capitalism, and more that prevail throughout colonial organizations and that continue to cause harm (Etmanski & Newman, under review).

Budd's Lessons Learned

The Knowledge for Change (K4C) Global Consortium on Community-Based Participatory Research is a network of 22 K4C Hubs located in 16 countries in the Global South and working with excluded communities in the North. Each Hub is a partnership between a university and one or more community or Indigenous organisations. The K4C Consortium supports new Hubs by training mentors. The Mentor Training Programme (MTP) is a 21-week combined online and in person programme for experienced community-based researchers who come from both university and community organizations. The MTP is informed by principles of knowledge democracy which include: a) multiple epistemological worldviews b) representation of knowledge in diverse and creative forms beyond the limitations of academic modes c) strategic role that community-based knowledge plays in structural change, d) rights of knowledge ownership by Indigenous and other communities and e) sharing knowledge in a free and open access manner (Tandon et al., 2015).

Our pedagogical model is based on a combination of texts, guest speakers from majority world and excluded communities, the lived experiences of the participants, engagement in participatory research field work, and collective designs of local CBPR training programmes. Our challenges include: finding texts from outside the dominant English-speaking world, responding to pressures from the academic side to adhere to narrow rankings-based approaches to scholarship, imbalance in power and resources between academic and community partners and challenging ourselves as facilitators with our own forms of colonized thinking (Hall & Tandon, 2017).

Provocative Questions

Just as we closed our book by naming a series of productive tensions that continue to propel this work forward, so too would we like to engage participants in a roundtable conversation with provocative questions such as:

- Are decolonization and knowledge democracy even possible in a fundamentally colonial institution such as a University?
- If so, what are some of the actions that will move us along democratic and decolonial pathways?
- Recognizing that most of us here were raised in a colonial worldview, how can we decolonize ourselves?

- For those of us who are descendants of immigrants (non-Indigenous) who might not have immediate access to non-dominant culture, how can we open ourselves to the possibility that there are other ways to know the world?
- How do we create democratic processes of knowledge curation (otherwise known as research) where non-dominant knowledges are not only equal but prioritized?

The roundtable dialogue will provide the opportunity to hear from and co-construct new insights with others who have been teaching various approaches to CBR.

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