

Classroom Action

**HUMAN RIGHTS, CRITICAL ACTIVISM,
AND COMMUNITY-BASED EDUCATION**

Edited by Ajay Heble

CULTURAL SPACES



"Classroom Action offers a range of imaginative and inspiring ideas which both teachers and students will find compelling. The contributors demonstrate in empirical and engaging ways how education can shape human subjects through action/reflection and how that shaping can be accomplished in dialogue with multiple communities. It will be extremely useful for educators interested in critical education and social change and for those struggling to address university/community relations."

—HONOR FORD-SMITH, ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR,
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Cover photograph:
themacx / iStockphoto

ISBN 978-1-4875-2058-8



UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO PRESS



utppublishing.com

Heble

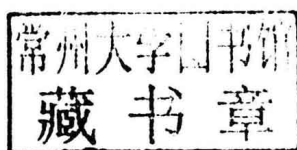
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UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO PRESS
Toronto Buffalo London

© University of Toronto Press 2017
Toronto Buffalo London
www.utppublishing.com

ISBN 978-1-4875-0079-5 (cloth) ISBN 978-1-4875-2058-8 (paper)

Cultural Spaces

Library and Archives Canada Cataloguing in Publication

Classroom action : human rights, critical activism, and community-based education / edited by Ajay Heble.

(Cultural spaces)

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 978-1-4875-0079-5 (cloth) ISBN 978-1-4875-2058-8 (paper)

1. Community education – Canada. 2. Community and school – Case studies.
3. Social change – Case studies. I. Heble, Ajay, 1961–, editor. II. Series: Cultural spaces

LC1036.C63 2017

370.11'5

C2016-907593-1

This book has been made possible with the financial assistance of the Musagetes Foundation, and of the University of Guelph, especially the Community Engaged Scholarship Institute (CESI), the International Institute for Critical Studies in Improvisation (IICSI), the School of English and Theatre Studies (SETS), and Project Re•Vision. Thanks also to The Guelph Campus Co-operative.

University of Toronto Press acknowledges the financial assistance to its publishing program of the Canada Council for the Arts and the Ontario Arts Council, an agency of the Government of Ontario.



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CLASSROOM ACTION

Human Rights, Critical Activism, and Community-Based Education

Building on the concept of a “teaching community,” Heble and his contributors explore what it might mean for teachers and students to reach outside the walls of the classroom and attempt to establish meaningful connections between the ideas and theories they have learned and the broader community beyond campus. Using a case study approach, the chapters in this volume are conceptually and practically useful for teachers and students involved in thinking about and implementing community-based forms of teaching and learning.

Classroom Action links teaching and research in genuinely innovative ways, and provides a range of dissemination strategies to inspire broad-based outcomes and impact among a diverse range of knowledge-users. It marks a major advance on the ways in which the relationships between pedagogy, human rights, and community-based learning have hitherto been theorized and practised. The discussions in *Classroom Action* prompt radically new ways of thinking about what teachers do in the classroom, and how and why they do it.

(Cultural Spaces)

AJAY HEBLE is a professor of English in the School of English and Theatre Studies as well as the director of the International Institute for Critical Studies in Improvisation at the University of Guelph.

for my students

Acknowledgments

This book has been a long time in the making, and, first and foremost, I want to thank all the contributors for believing in the project, and for their commitment, their encouragement, and their generosity throughout the process. I dedicate this book to my students, from whom I have learned (and continue to learn) so much. I can't say enough about the amazing work that has emerged from our classrooms. If this book offers readers even a small glimpse into the kind of energies that have been activated by your creative thinking, your critical questioning, your spirit of experimentation, and, perhaps most importantly, your extraordinary ability to work with others to achieve positive results, then it will have served its purpose.

There are so many people who have taught, mentored, supported, and collaborated with me over the years. I am grateful to them all, but will only have space here to name a few. I continue to learn from the example of two of my mentors and former teachers, Linda Hutcheon and Edward Said. My friend and colleague George Lipsitz, with whom I've had the honour of collaborating on another recent project, has always been a tremendous source of inspiration. My former graduate students, Jesse Stewart, Ingrid Mündel, and Elizabeth Jackson, remain three of my closest friends and advisors. Their attentive readings and helpful suggestions always improve my work. I'd also like to offer thanks to Frédérique Arroyas, Ben Authers, Christine Bold, Russell Brown, Rebecca Caines, Patrick Case, Alan Filewod, Daniel Fischlin, Julie Hastings, Linda Hawkins, Thomas King, Ric Knowles, Mark Laver, Eric Lewis, George Lewis, Kevin McNeilly, Carla Rice, Justine Richardson, Eric Schnell, Winfried Siemerling, Tina Sorbara, J.R. (Tim) Struthers, Sherrie Tucker, Shawn van Sluys, Rob Wallace, Ellen Waterman, Paul Watkins, and Deborah Wong.

This book wouldn't have been possible without the support of my incredible staff and colleagues at the International Institute for Critical Studies in Improvisation (IICSI) and the Improvisation, Community, and Social Practice (ICASP) project at the University of Guelph. Much gratitude, in particular, goes out to Rachel Collins. I've had the privilege to work with Rachel now on several book projects. Her attention to detail, her support in formatting and standardizing the chapters and bibliography, corresponding with contributors, and preparing the index have been invaluable. I have also benefited tremendously from the support of IICSI's Project Manager Kim Thorne. Kim has been a mainstay of the IICSI and ICASP initiatives for many years, and I have come to count on her in so many ways, for so many things. Kim has recently left IICSI to take on another position at the university. She'll be sorely missed at IICSI, but I know she will thrive in her new role. I am hugely grateful to the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC) for their generous support of ICASP and IICSI through their Partnership Grant and Major Collaborative Research Initiatives programs. I'd also like to acknowledge the generous and continuing support I've received for my work through the Office of the Vice President Research at the University of Guelph. Thanks to Malcolm Campbell, Kevin Hall, John Livernois, and Alan Wildeman.

For funding in support of this book, I would like to acknowledge the generous support of the Musagetes Foundation, and of the University of Guelph, especially the Community Engaged Scholarship Institute (CESI), the International Institute for Critical Studies in Improvisation (IICSI), the School of English and Theatre Studies (SETS), and Project Re•Vision. Thanks also to The Guelph Campus Co-operative.

Thank you to the staff at University of Toronto Press, and, in particular, to my editor Siobhan McMenemy, for believing in this project from the get-go, and for her support, guidance, and advice. I'm grateful, too, to the anonymous peer reviewers for their helpful and supportive suggestions throughout the writing and revision process.

There are many organizations and global movements that provide inspiration for a more hopeful future – you can find information about some of these in the webography. All royalties from sales of this book will be donated to Amnesty International, one such organization whose work is making a real difference in people's lives.

Finally, and as always, I want to acknowledge my amazing family, especially my wife, Sheila O'Reilly, my children, Maya and Kiran, my mother, Sushila Heble, my sister, Sucheta Heble, my mother-in-law,

Louisa O'Reilly, and my father-in-law, James O'Reilly (1926–2016), who passed away while I was seeing this book through the final stages of the production process. I continue to learn so much from all of you, and am deeply appreciative of your love, your guidance, your support, and your encouragement. I wish my father, Dr. Madhav Heble, could have been alive to see the publication of this book. Although I grew up knowing that he (and his family) played a role in various activist causes, most notably in India's freedom struggle, my father was always very quiet and humble when asked about his experiences and accomplishments. As a result, the depth of his involvement in these rights-based struggles is something I've only begun to understand since he passed away in 2012. And it's only now, after completing this manuscript, that I'm beginning to understand the ways in which this book has been quietly inspired by his example.

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