

REVIEWS

RESEÑAS BIBLIOGRÁFICAS

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EL ARTE DE ENVEJECER CON HUMOR

Fernandez Solis, J. D. & Limon Mendizabal, M.R. 2012. Málaga. Aljibe, 164 pp.

As everything in life, there are moments more or less appropriate for certain matters, as in this case may be the publication of a book; especially when dealing with two hard issues: old age and humour.

“El arte de envejecer con humor” (The art of ageing with humour) not only comes at a good time, but it is a proposal of reflection and implementation, both personally and professionally.

Without getting out of the academic discourse, it allows an easy, animated and engaging reading. It is considered of great interest for audiences in general, not necessarily old, with clear aims of tackling a stage of the life cycle with physical and emotional health, but above all with the intention of developing a personal project after completing their professional activity.

In the first chapters, the current situation of the elderly is analyzed. With demographic data it puts us with great success in the field of knowledge, where, among others, it makes an analysis of today society in which, if you can recognize it, there are many reasons to be in a good mood. Within a line of thought focused on improving the quality of life from youth, to enjoy old age, it offers a list of keys for aging, not only successfully, but aware that we take charge of our own process.

In its intention to justify the importance of learning throughout life and psychological needs of those who are ageing, it gives us so beautiful words like these:

“The paradigm of active ageing not only benefits to seniors, but to all citizens. It helps the elderly to keep their independence and autonomy, becoming a great human potential for society for longer. But also, because it builds a society in which the values and rights of persons become more possible for everyone” (p. 46)

The second part talks us about the concept of humour and the benefits of laughter, which is identified with “internal massage” (p. 71) at physical level, and of great importance to the emotional welfare and even in relationships. When reading the central chapters, we dive in a sea of options to improve our daily life, regardless of age, getting benefits at a personal level and that may perfectly be the keys

to optimal living. Therefore, “The art of ageing with humour” is a personal and family book that can be helpful to actively live our own process; understanding, participating and supporting our seniors at the same time. A required reading for all professionals in the care and intervention with older, for which, in its block four, offers a wealth of activities that make aging with humour an option available to everyone.

The final reflections are the finishing touch to a book that, not only brings us closer to a reality that, somehow, human being is destined to live or share, but is also able to fill and reach readers, encouraging us to take awareness that growing old is a very good option and giving us the keys to enjoy while doing the road.

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EL EDUCADOR SOCIAL EN URUGUAY: ASPECTOS HISTÓRICOS Y FUNDAMENTOS TEÓRICOS QUE EXPLICAN LA CONSTRUCCIÓN DE LA FIGURA PROFESIONAL

Camors, J. 2012. Montevideo: Grupo Magro, 164 pp.

To explain the historical construction of social education in Uruguay. Thus is the game of words and arguments in which Jorge Camors locates us with his text, adjuring and reinventing the professionalization of those who, for decades, have committed their pedagogical everyday practice with the country’s democratic life, in all its civic geographies.

This is a story of an individual and collective past that fosters the future, in which nothing or almost nothing of what the author narrates is not object of his personal involvement, being a restless protagonist of the many successes and a few errors, as Camors admits and Violeta Núñez advises in the prologue, that Social Education has delineated in the last decades of the 20th century in Uruguay; no doubt, one of the places that has most contributed to recognize and consolidate formation for social educators, aiming their goals toward the ever incomplete search for “the necessary education for the aspired way of life” (p. 76). An eagerness bound to the unequivocal pedagogical and social vocation embraced in the struggle for and in favor of human rights in all its dimensions, beginning with those right to which are entitled the younger generations – adolescent boys and girls – underneath social difficulty or risk.

But this is also a story of acknowledgments and fundamentals: of who thanks and is thankful, giving testimony – in first person – not only of his own experiences and commitments, but of the ones shared with those who, far or distant, but always together, made the journey possible: from the Center for Training and Studies of INAME’s (now INAU) “main committee”, to the Association of Social Educators of Uruguay (ADESU), along with all the teachers, students, alumni, directors and work groups of the practice centers that participated “in different ways in the process of formulating and designing this project this is innovative and audacious as much as it is necessary and convenient” (p. 15) which gave the Uruguay new-old conceptual, theoretical, methodological, ethical perspectives that Social Education evokes. Along with them, the “works done by colleagues in other latitudes” (p. 73), like Violeta Núñez, José Ortega, Toni Juliá, Paco Franco, and José Jesús Sánchez Marín in universities, in former Spanish Ministry of Social Issues, the Association of Social Educators (ASEDES), or in the International Association of Social Educators (AIEJI). Along with them, Makarenko and his pedagogical poem, one of their core sources of inspiration for reflection and action.

Names, circumstances and initiatives that emerge from a testimonial and dissimilar “I’ve been there” , which only the glimpse and reflection of Jorge Camors could express in the way this book portrays: a true act of unveiling – significance, perhaps Jerome Bruner would say; of “taking a step forward” writes Violeta Núñez – where Social Education, with all that embodies what social educators do for and in it, beyond

(re)creating it in the memory of what has already happened, emphasizes what it ought to be, conciliating tradition and change, heritage and transformation. In the precise places and periods, despite adversities, who, if not Camors, to remember us that “the denomination ‘social educator’ comes from the worlds of Reyna Reyes” (p. 38), that “innovation generated much resistance and criticism. First, boldly destabilizing certain practices and standardized values” (p. 42), that “organized and political militancy teaches us in order to obtain resources it is necessary to have objectives and ideas to sustain them; we had a project and went out in search of resources” (p. 44), or that thanks to Professor Oscar Ravecca’s – President of INAME’s Directory in 1989 – “professionalism, political responsibility and human sensibility”, who heard the proposal and sponsored the administration, started much of what soon followed, in “the attic of the uninhabited house risking collapse located at 525 25 de Mayo Street” (pp.43-44)

There are acts or realities of which we can only truthfully remember when felt – or dreamed – on our own skin, making part of the social DNA that traces our biography to the encounter with the ones forsaken by others. Thus is Jorge Camors’ book: his life decision within the lives of others the, vocationally and professionally did Social Education in Uruguay and around the world. It is the testimonial of an educator- animator-professor-citizen that explains, from “presentation” to “final conclusions”, the course of Social Education and its educators: their contexts, their tenets, their proposals, responses, encounters, documents, politics, struggles, practices, events and longings. Within such persons, are the ones that – perhaps latter then expected – situated Social Pedagogy in the horizon of necessary and convenient knowledges for education, regardless of its terms.

This path has its temporal marks, written in the complexity of the well-known development crisis with its economic, social, political, educational, etc., implications in Uruguayan society starting back in the 1950’s and coming all the way up to the third millennium, of which the author in case has participated more or less intensively: 1967-1975, the beginning of the first developments of a policy toward infancy with the assistance of the Children Council; the educational experience of this council’s Martirené School (1969-1975), Camor’s most significant life experience, where he draws inspiration to 15 years latter boost the formation of social educators in Uruguay; the influence of the “specialized education” formation in France; the foundation of the Juvenile National Institute (Servers’ School) in 1989 would lay the foundations for a regular course on formation for the social educator, in higher non-university education; since 2005, the change that transformed this formation into a teaching certification in Social Education, favored by a decisive policy of supporting and including social educators in public education propelled by the General Education Law (no, 18.437) of December, 2008.

This law clearly institutes Social Education, claiming the University Institute of Education (IUDE) responsible for its future curricular developments, complementing the mission of the Center for Formation and Studies (CENFLORES), the Uruguayan Child and Juvenile Institute (IANU) and the National Council on Non-Formal Education (CONENFOR), creating juridical support through article 92 added in 2009. It is the moment to use the guideline proposals of formation (integrated in four knowledge fields – social, psychological, pedagogical and practical) in the continuing revisions, modifications, enlargements and actualizations that shall begin a new period of building the formation and professionalization of social educators in Uruguay starting in 2011.

In the midst of opening the boundaries that enclose the education we have and perpetuate, we are in need of the accumulated knowledge displayed in this book. A true historical and comparative literature: a gem that Jorge Camor’s reflexive and critical generosity have allowed us to share, as footprints “that make part building professional identity, and may it always be so” (p.77). Needless of nostalgia, through new roads, fully conscious – as Antonio Machado would say – that “when looking back we see the trail never to be traversed again”. This is for the best.

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FILOSOFÍA DE LA EDUCACIÓN. CUESTIONES DE HOY Y DE SIEMPRE

García Amilburu, M. & García Gutiérrez, J.. 2012. Madrid: Narcea y UNED. pp. 211.

Education is a field of reality whose study can be undertaken from different perspectives. The volume *Filosofía de la Educación. Cuestiones de hoy y de siempre* faces this challenge from the point of view of philosophy, offering us an interesting description of the essential aspects integral to the philosophy of education. However, this is not simply a theoretical explanation, but it touches on policy and operational issues that must be present in education.

The work is divided into twelve chapters, whose rigorous and gradual organization make it easier for the reader to progressively overcome the difficulties resulting from an analysis of the philosophy of education.

The first chapter introduces the reader to a conceptual approach to the subject, establishing bases and theoretical approaches on what is meant by philosophy of education. Further, the author mentions the sciences that relate more directly to this discipline and the important usefulness that it has for educators, since, as this work argues, “philosophy of education does not have as its main purpose the contemplation of educational reality, but the improvement of this activity (...) it is a field of knowledge that tends to action, because the practical knowledge is established only in practice itself”(p. 20).

The second chapter deals with anthropological assumptions in education, with an emphasis on the necessary education of man in the context of a tradition and a culture. This task is defined as “artistic”, because of the educators’ responsibility to respond to the challenges and needs arising from each person and each particular occasion.

The third chapter explores the knowledge of the educational phenomenon that offered by the philosophy of education. Issues addressed include: definitions of education and its main characteristics, properties of the educational fact, areas and modalities of implementation of the phenomenon of education, concluding with the elaboration of a normative concept of education.

The fourth chapter presents describes who are the protagonists of the educational process, the relationships established between them in its bosom and the educational and des-educational context which, unfortunately, occasionally influences them. Its value lies in providing the clues to the challenge of educating to achieve quality and success during in the educational process.

The fifth and sixth chapters trace the history of thought, which teaches us how education is seen by philosophers. First, we read about classical philosophers such as Socrates, Aristotle, and, secondly, other thinkers such as Newman and Adler, are also given a voice, whose contributions are not regularly included in treatises on education. These two chapters take from the ideas of some philosophers those that will allow us to delve into the philosophy of education today. This is an aspect addressed in the seventh chapter.

The seventh chapter, pays special attention to the author Richard S. Peter and his idea of education as initiation. Then it presents an interesting selection of societies, conferences and scientific journals on philosophy of education today.

In the eighth and ninth chapters, the authors consider the political dimension and the right to education, as well as the importance of education in democratic societies respectively. The tenth chapter stresses the commitment of educational agents in the transmission of values and convictions, since it involves legal and educational responsibilities.

Finally, the last two chapters focus on education professionals, emphasizing the importance of training and the ethics of the educational task, stressing the need and opportunity of ethical codes.

It should be noted that this is both a useful and timely work, with abundant bibliographical references, and widening possibilities in the field of philosophy of education. Its interest derives largely from its clarity and synthetic approach. This work will become-both for students and future professionals or researchers-an excellent reference manual that must be studied and applied to real situations.

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EXCLUSIÓN SOCIAL Y DIVERSIDAD

Amador Muñoz, L. V. & Musitu Ochoa, G. 2011. México: Trillas. Pp. 271.

The accelerated changes to that they face the modern societies have been generators of new variables in the social, economic, cultural, political areas, ... Some of these transformations have relapsed into the social configurations, in that which they have intervened the continuous migrations that are given from a territory to other one.

Groups that have to face new challenges of adjustment the place of destination, looking for a new home, work, school centers if they have children... Those changes would carry to the exclusion and inequality.

To enter into the subject matter and to try to give some answers, this book present us three differentiated parts. On the one hand, more general, that presents the condition of the question and puts us in context, and on the other hand, two part more specifics, dedicated to the migrations and to the diversity and social exclusion, respectively.

The first part, titled *Los senderos de la globalización* [The paths of the globalization] presents two chapters in which the authors describe with great precision the phenomenon globalization from the community perspective and from the vision of the indigenous Latin-American communities, continuing with the second part *Nuevas sociedades: multiculturalidad y exclusión* [New companies: multiculturalidad and exclusion] that along three chapters describes the migratory current movements.

To finish, the third part, *Jóvenes excluidos en el mundo globalizado* [young persons excluded in the world included], he presents four chapters, in which are approached topics so important as the family or education and his relation between them.

This book analyzes the complex process of the social exclusion from a multidisciplinary perspective, analyzing some of the areas in those who are necessary to intervene educationally.

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