
Title	Book review [Review of the book <i>Comparative and International Education: An Introduction to Theory, Method, and Practice</i> , by D. Phillips & M. Schweisfurth]
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Comparative and International Education: An Introduction to Theory, Method, and Practice by David Phillips and Michele Schweisfurth
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Second, the focus on faculty life sheds light on the practical value of China's world-class university initiative. China essentially triggered the worldwide competition to create world-class universities, being among the first to pour massive resources into the push for research capacity building and world-class university standing for selected universities. This move provoked heated debates over the impact on higher education differentiation and equity issues. Yet it has indeed boosted China's position in the global brain race and explains why internationalization sits at the core of China's world-class university scheme. Together with reforms in faculty recruitment practices, as well as faculty evaluation, assessment, and promotion processes, the world-class university initiative has acted as a powerhouse for China's global brain-race strategy and helped reverse the country's brain drain. At the present stage, brain gain might be the most important practical value for China, suggesting that the world-class university initiative has been a wise investment.

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Comparative and International Education: An Introduction to Theory, Method, and Practice by David Phillips and Michele Schweisfurth. 2nd edition. London: Bloomsbury, 2014. xiv+222 pp. £22.49/\$33.20 (paper); £24.99/\$36.89 (e-book); £67.50/\$99.65 (cloth). ISBN 978-1-4411-7648-6; 978-1-4411-7454-3; 978-1-4411-2242-1.

Comparative and International Education: An Introduction to Theory, Method, and Practice, now in its second edition, continues to live up to its name. Comprised of nine short chapters, *Comparative and International Education* offers an authoritative basic introduction to the essentials of the field's history, theory, and methods, its relationship with education and national development, and the value of comparative studies. It is a fascinating introductory textbook for newcomers to the field of comparative and international education, as well as a handy volume for veteran teachers and researchers.

Compared to its 2007 edition, I find the present version equally engaging, informative, and fresh. As the authors affirmed, much of what they wrote in the first volume is even more salient than ever (xv). David Phillips and Michele Schweisfurth, both highly respected scholars in the field, have elegantly and actively engaged with the shifting societal and educational discourses that are reshaping comparative and international education. This includes the increased visibility of PISA (Program for International Student Assessment) studies and their impact on national educational policy makers' search for the "holy grail" of educational success. It is thus timely that this volume has a new chapter on cross-national policy transfer. New directions and research foci are couched within a succinct and clear explication of the fundamentals of comparative research. Discussions are presented in an easily readable yet thought-provoking way. While simple to read, the book is not simplistic in erudition.

I particularly appreciate the historical lens that subtly illuminates this entire work. As Jeremy Rappleye suggests in his scintillating foreword to this second edition, “its authors repeatedly pull back historically, then shoot us forward into the present . . . and our global future” (xiii). Throughout the book, but especially in the first two chapters, readers are initiated into both classic and contemporary texts on the origins and definitions of the field, nested within a brief biography of their authors, and highlighting their cross-cultural (and polylinguistic) capital as well as historical knowledge. These are essential ingredients in our field in order to counter ethnocentric biases (chaps. 4 and 6) and historical amnesia. Robert Cowen argues that the field is shaped by the intersection of personal biography, the internal sociology of universities, and the national political work agenda vis-à-vis the geopolitical and domestic contexts.¹ Definitions of the field are thus positional.² In this respect, Phillips and Schweisfurth are to be commended for contextualizing the discourses on comparative and international education’s nature and purposes. The authors also efficiently give an overview of the institutional infrastructures of the field, naming a few of its professional societies, specialist journals, and databases. They may have wisely refrained from an extensive discussion, as these are dealt with in other publications. Histories of the World Council of Comparative Education Societies (WCCES) and its member societies (numbering 36 in 2007, 42 as of December 2014) are elucidated in an authoritative volume,³ and a parallel work focuses on teaching comparative education at universities worldwide.⁴ There are also useful online databases on who’s who in comparative and international education (CIEclopedia)⁵ and on instructional materials in teaching the course (see, e.g., Comparative and International Education Course Archive Project [CIECAP]⁶ and the Comparative Education Instructional Materials Archive [CEIMA]⁷). These contribute to the growing international literature on the actors and knowledge production in the field.

The new chapter on policy transfer (chap. 3) is welcome in view of its growing importance “as an area of inquiry and a *de facto* reality” (xv). The discussion is instructive, offering perennial lessons on the analysis of policy transfer processes. Two historical examples serve to illustrate policy “borrowing” (Meiji Japan from

¹ Robert Cowen, “The Place of Comparative Education in the Educational Sciences,” in *Les Sciences de l'éducation: Perspectives et Bilans Européens. Actes de la Xe Conférence de l'Association d'éducation Comparée Pour l'Europe*, ed. I. Cavicchi-Broquet and P. Furter (Genève: Section des Sciences de l'éducation, Faculté de Psychologie et de Sciences de l'éducation, Université de Genève, 1982).

² Maria Manzon, *Comparative Education: The Construction of a Field* (Hong Kong: Comparative Education Research Centre, University of Hong Kong, and Springer, 2011).

³ Vandra Masemann, Mark Bray, and Maria Manzon, eds., *Common Interests, Uncommon Goals: The Histories of the World Council of Comparative Education Societies and Its Members* (Hong Kong: Comparative Education Research Centre, University of Hong Kong, and Springer, 2007).

⁴ Charl Wollhuter, Nikolay Popov, Karla Skubic Ermenc, and Bruno Leutwyler, eds., *Comparative Education at Universities World Wide*, 3rd expanded ed. (Sofia: Bureau for Educational Services, and Ljubljana University Press, Faculty of Arts, 2013).

⁵ See <http://www.nie.edu.sg/research-publications/cieclopedia.org>.

⁶ See <http://www.ciestcesig.org/ciecap>.

⁷ See <http://www.ciestcesig.org/ceimahome>.

the West) and policy “lending” (nineteenth-century Germany), respectively. The terms “borrowing” and “lending” are misnomers because “borrowed” policy is actually taken and used without any intention of returning it to the “lender” and vice versa. Nevertheless, they are widely used in the scholarly literature. What is particularly interesting in this chapter are not only the “new patterns of policy movement” (41) owing to the intensification of globalization, but also the *new directions* of policy movement. Whereas the East (Meiji Japan) looked toward the West (Europe and the United States) in the late nineteenth century, the points of reference have somewhat changed in the twenty-first century. Partly influenced by the East Asian success in PISA and the strong economies in that region, the West is now looking to Asia for educational inspiration. It is thus ironic to reread Postlethwaite’s supposition that “it is highly unlikely that a national ministry of education will allow an international test to dictate its national curriculum” (141).⁸

The chapter on education and national development (chap. 5) is enlightening and relevant to our times. It views education as contributing to national development in all its forms, economic, social, and holistic approaches. Paradoxically, the holistic approach, which supposedly embraces both economic and social, presents some contradictions. While the holistic approach to development promotes basic freedoms for full human development (85), the example on social development of educated mothers having smaller families and thereby reducing population growth rates and facilitating economic development (83–84) masks an encroachment, through education, on basic human (and women) freedoms, putting them at the service of economic growth. While the myths about the world’s (over)population have been debunked,⁹ the discourses in educational development, possibly promoted by certain global powers, seem to remain static. This is a defect neither of the book nor of its authors but an important issue that calls for alternative discourses. If we are to be coherent with the ethical principles advocated by the book, for example, in donor-recipient relationships, and avoid top-down and ethnocentric stances by respecting cultural values, voices, and agency (136–37), then some rethinking and reimagining are imperative in order to grasp what full (and integral) human development means and to translate this into our educational development programs.

During my initiation as a graduate student of comparative education, it was hard to find a suitable introductory textbook that contained the essentials of this area of study, and one that was global enough in its coverage of the extant literature. This experience motivated me to undertake a thorough study of the field, the outcome of which was a volume on the construction of the field of comparative education (see note 2). Nowadays, graduate students need not complain anymore. This introductory book by Phillips and Schweisfurth contributes to the growing quality literature of this genre. Education students, researchers, seasoned teachers, and the growing community of users and producers of comparative studies will find

⁸ T. Neville Postlethwaite, *Monitoring Educational Achievement* (Paris: UNESCO International Institute for Education Planning, 2004).

⁹ See, e.g., Nicholas Eberstadt, “Five Myths about the World’s Population,” downloaded from http://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/five-myths-about-the-worlds-population/2011/10/26/gIQAjSWmM_story.html.

in this book an excellent vademecum. The authors sincerely deserve to be commended for writing it.

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Understanding the Constructions of Identities by Young New Europeans: Kaleidoscopic Selves
by Alistair Ross. London: Routledge, 2015. 218 pp. \$168.00 (cloth).

Civic identity seems to be a hot topic of late; maybe it never wasn't. Questions of who we are, and who we are not, who *they* are, and who they are not permeate the porous borders of our countries, nations, and states; our discourses; and our politics. Alistair Ross's exquisite study of collective identity of young people on the borders of the European Union (EU) makes an important and timely contribution to this contemporary discussion. Ross raises critical questions to young people on the liminal edges of Europe about what it means to be European while simultaneously citizens of countries seeking membership in the larger political entity of the EU. Ross further explores how those multiple collective identities are differentially understood in cultural and civic terms and in relation to birth country and "Europe," to internal and external others, and to parents' and grandparents' generations. In this (rather large) comparative qualitative study, Ross talked with 974 youth over 3 years in 97 schools in 49 locations in 15 countries. These countries include "candidate" states for EU membership Turkey, Croatia, and the former Yugoslav Federal Republic of Macedonia; states that joined the EU after 2004, Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania; as well as the central European states of the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, and Slovakia; and the south-eastern Europe states of Bulgaria, Cyprus, and Romania.

The study is grounded in a theoretically rich discussion of the social construction of civic identities. Empirically, the research draws on transcripts of 159 focus group discussions organized in twos (one of 11–13-year-olds and one of 15–18-year-olds) at each of two schools in most of the 49 locations. In substantial excerpts of focus group discussions and direct quotes of 540 young people, the young people in Ross's study raise questions and implications for the construction of identity; the possibilities for multiple, fluid, and elective identities and the tension with what is fixed; the meaning of being European; and current manifestations of patriotism and nationalism among a new generation of young people. The questions are timely, their salience heightened by recent shifts in the dynamic interactions among the local, ethnic, national, European, and non-European. The young Europeans in *Understanding the Constructions of Identities* are "new," in terms of age and generation—the first born after the political changes of 1989—as well as new in terms of being citizens of states new to the EU and thus the larger political and cultural project of Europe. Ross is intentional in the use of focus groups, relying on them to allow young people to self-identify the critical terms of their identity. He begins with the broadest of guiding questions: "How would you describe yourselves/your identity?" "Do you sometimes describe yourself as having other identities?" "How do you think your parents (and then grandparents) identify themselves?" "Would everyone in this (part of your) country say the same, do you think?" "Do you see your life as having a

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