

## Educating the Disenfranchised and Marginalized

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In preparing this issue of *Global Education Review* on literacy practices in high poverty populations, it is noted that some of the issues pertaining to literacy practices are similar to the issues presented in the inaugural issue which dealt with special education and inclusion. Central to this is the perception that one class of persons is somehow inferior to another class, a question of morality that has been with us for centuries.

Indeed, in discussing the rise of mercantilism in the eighteenth century (and globalization- before the word was coined), R.H.Tawney (1926/1958) wrote, “Granted, I should love my neighbor as myself, [but] the questions which . . . remain for solution are, ‘Who precisely is my neighbor?’ and ‘How exactly am I to make my love for them effective in practice?’ . . . Religion had not yet learned to console itself for the practical difficulty of applying its moral principles.” (1958, p.156)

In a rapidly globalizing society with global communications fueled by around-the clock news channels, the Internet and social media, the “practical difficulty of applying moral principles” assumes greater importance than it had in the not too distant past. This is because “globalization” is characterized by the spread of social, political, and economic activities across borders, migrations and spread of culture, speed

of diffusion of ideas, and increased impact of global intercourse (Held & McGrew, 2014).

In their introduction to the inaugural issue, Kathy Anne Jordan and Sudha Ramaswamy (2014) wrote about exclusion on the basis of presumed difference and special needs because of perceived differences, beliefs about the “outclass,” and perceptions surrounding them. They might have been writing an introduction to the current issue.

In reading Victoria Purcell-Gates’ article about the marginalization of Nicaraguan children in Costa Rican schools because they are viewed as “different,” I could not help but recognize the similarity by which in the United States students with disabilities are marginalized by those who subscribe to the deficit model described in the article by Curt Dudley-Marling and Bridget Burns (2014).

Catherine Compton-Lilly’s longitudinal study describes the experience of a student living in a high poverty community in Wisconsin, and how economic and social challenges affected her over a ten-year period, as described by her mother. Writing about special needs education in Hong Kong, Jeremy Greenberg and J. Christine Greenberg (2014) describe the difficulties of finding placement for special needs students (15 schools for 15,000 students). He recounts the beginning of the school in which

he works, “The Children’s Institute of Hong Kong,” a school that was begun in 2003 by an American family residing in Hong Kong who had two children, both diagnosed with autism. The parents brought in experts in autism from Teachers College (Columbia University) and founded the school. These are only two cases, but who wouldn’t agree that money matters as much in Hong Kong as in Wisconsin.

In the concluding article, Celia Rosenberg and her colleagues offer hope for the disenfranchised in public schools in an article that describes a longitudinal study which began in 2009 and is still ongoing, “From Child to Child: A Tutor-Child Literacy Program,” in Buenos Aires, Argentina. Results to date show significant longitudinal differences in the performance of the activities, with increases in the performance of the tutors and in the learning of the younger child.

Thus, at this time of rapid globalization, these first two issues of Global Education Review explore issues that may support nations as they seek to understand their education issues, problems, programs and policies from a worldwide perspective, and to learn to adapt interesting and important models, methods, and research designs from other nations.

#### References

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