



### **Gertrude Cotter – 2017 Update**

Research Title: Co-Creating Development Education: Learning from stories of students and communities collaborating for local and global social justice, through community-based-learning, technology-enhanced-learning and storytelling.

The core question is “What impact does the use of community based learning experiences and technology enhanced learning, have on third-level student engagement with Development Education issues and what is the impact of this work on communities of interest?”

Using a Critical Ethnographical approach to my research, I have been exploring how working closely with students individually and in small group, using community-based-learning methods, and exploring how these can enhance the student learning experience. This provides evidence of the importance of deeply student-focused and also community-based-pedagogy.

I have been running workshops with students at UCC in Global Citizenship and with community partners. Community and international partners include refugees, family carers and people with disabilities living in Cork and online with Action Lesotho staff in Lesotho.

I’ve used a blend of innovative digital tools and radio to engage my research participants including digital storytelling, radio production, digital archiving, online intercultural exchanges and online forums. The result is a holistic framework for engaging participants in the generation of the research data.

We are learning that the human connection (students, partners and lecturer) is at the heart of good pedagogy and that new technologies and radio can enhance this if used with integrity. The co-creation approach to education which is student-led is effective in engaging students in Global Citizenship. What is often unseen when creating digital artefacts, is the deep relationship that can be built between a community partner and a student. Students should be encouraged to reflect upon these relationships.

The teacher needs to learn how to weave academic frameworks into this collaborative relationship in a way which helps students find their voice. There is a dialogue with this student and not a “one size fits all”.

For community partners this learning-approach is positive but particularly for more experienced groups. There are ethical issues around power and autonomy which are important with less experienced groups.



## **Publications and Conference Papers since starting the PhD**

### Book Chapter

Cotter, G., Olaniyi Kolawole, 2015. Parenting in a Multicultural Society: Migrants and their Experiences of Parenting in Ireland, in: Learning on the Job: Parenting in Modern Ireland. Oak Tree Press.

### Conference Presentations

October 2016 Oral History Conference UCC: “Behind the Curtain Digital Story Telling Project: What can Oral History learn through student engagement with Family Carers”?

25th May 2016: Presentation through Video Link to Hickory North Carolina Seminar “The Refugee Crisis in Europe”.

Africa Day, Cork 2016: Presentation on “The History of African Peoples’ Contribution to Ireland”

Social Sciences PhD Symposium UCC 2016: Presentation on PhD Progress

14th October 2015: Refugee Symposium, Department of History, UCC - “Learning from the Past, Planning for the Current Crisis”

King’s College London, 30th October 2015 – Conference: Biopolitical Ireland: Parenting in a Multicultural Society: Migrants and their experiences of parenting in Ireland

### **Upcoming Conference Talks and Papers**

1. Paper to be presented at the Institute of Education, University College London

At a conference on 11th May 2017 entitled: Evidence Based Research for Policy Development in Global Education

Title of Paper: Connecting communities: exploring the Global learning journeys of university students and community partners in Cork and Lesotho, using ethnographical approaches to service learning, online intercultural exchange, radio and digital technologies.

This paper examines the experiences of students and partners over two years as they explored social justice issues in Cork and Lesotho through a series of workshops, service-learning and an online intercultural exchange. The work included a digital story telling workshop with refugees, six workshops on Global Citizenship and radio, service learning work with Family Carers and People with Disabilities resulting in a digital story-telling and digital archive projects and an online intercultural exchange with participants in Lesotho.

The paper provides evidence of the value of deeply student-focused and community-based-pedagogy. It shows how the human connection (students, partners and educator) is at the



heart of good pedagogy and that story-telling through new technologies and radio can enhance this if used with integrity. It explores the intersection between the “global” and the “local” in the context of global inequalities and in the context of online connectivity.

The Educator needs to learn how to weave academic frameworks into this collaborative relationship in a way which helps participants find their voices. There is a dialogue with this student and not a “one size fits all”. There are ethical issues around power and autonomy which are important with less experienced groups.

## 2. Paper to be presented at the Ubuntu Network Dialogue Day on 26th May 2017

The Ubuntu Network is an Irish Aid funded network for Teacher Education for Sustainable Development. It supports the integration of Development Education (DE) into post primary Initial Teacher Education (ITE) in Ireland. It is made up of teacher educators from Higher Education Institutions, NGO representatives and partner organisations with a commitment to education for social justice, equality and sustainability. I hope to and hoping to publish later this year.

The title of this Dialogue Day is: Curriculum, Policy and Advocacy: The Increasing Need for Development Education ...an invitation to teacher educators to explore and discuss approaches to enhancing curriculum and policy for Development Education.

The title of my presentation is: “Student Teachers as Critical Researchers: Learning from student stories of using Development and Multicultural Education Frameworks in their masters' research papers”.

## 3. Presenting a paper at the 2nd International Paulo Freire Conference (Tuesday 5th September to Thursday 7th September 2017). Conference entitled: ‘Education is an act of love and thus an act of courage’ – Paulo Freire. Location: The University of Central Lancashire’s Cyprus Campus, Pyla, Larnaca, Cyprus

Abstract: Exploring Development Education with University Students and people with Intellectual & Neurological Disabilities, using community-based-learning, digital-story-telling and radio.

This paper is based on a critical ethnographical research project carried out with university students in collaboration with people with intellectual/neurological disabilities. It asks “what can educators learn about student and community-partners’ engagement in Global/Local Social Justice issues, through community-based-learning, technology-enhanced learning and radio”? Residents from care services attended six workshops on Global Citizenship Education with UCC students. Two students were also on work-placements alongside the researcher for six months. Participants developed radio shows, digital-stories and an archive based on a move out of institutional care into the community. They made links with projects in other countries and with asylum-seekers.



The research formed part of a wider Phd research programme which used critical ethnographical and narrative approaches to explore deeply student- and community-focused pedagogy.

During the workshops the group made contact online with a partner organisation in India and also had guest speakers from Kenyan community radio and from a person who had lived in the system of Direct Provision in Ireland. In addition to the workshops the researcher and students worked closely with two individuals moving out of institutional care after approximately twenty years and into their own homes in the community. Together all participants created digital stories about the move out of care and a digital archive which included historical documents about disability care services in Ireland and individual stories. Students also used an online forum and blogging to document their experiences. All participants also made radio programmes about their learning which were aired on a community radio. The result is a holistic framework for engaging participants in the generation of the research data.

We are learning that the human connection (between students, partners and educator) is at the heart of good pedagogy and that new technologies and radio can enhance this if used with integrity. The co-creation approach to education which is student- and community-led is effective in engaging students in Global Citizenship. What is often unseen when creating digital artefacts, is the deep relationship that can be built between a community partner and a student. Students should be encouraged to reflect upon these relationships. The educator needs to learn how to weave academic frameworks into this collaborative relationship in a way which helps students find their voice, analyse their real-world experience within a development education framework and learn how to take action for change. There is a dialogue with students and not a “one size fits all”. For community partners there are ethical issues around power and autonomy but the over-riding experience is deeply empowering.

I hope to publish all three papers.

Digital Artefacts Related to the PhD

The stories of the two people moving out of institutional care can be found at this website:

<http://movingonireland.com/>

The stories of the family carers can be found at this website:

<http://behindthecurtain.info/>

Refugee and student stories are available here:

[https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC9fzesCaja1ou-\\_kAx6NlnA/videos?shelf\\_id=0&sort=dd&view=0](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC9fzesCaja1ou-_kAx6NlnA/videos?shelf_id=0&sort=dd&view=0)



My emerging social enterprise, resulting from the PhD work can be found at:

<http://globalcitizencontactpoint.com/>

This includes the model used to run the course and online intercultural exchange with the Lesotho group

The conference I co-organised with my supervisor Dr. O Brien is here:

<http://representing-education.gertrudecotter.info/>

Relevant Radio Programmes will be uploaded shortly.