



*To Know, To Love and To Heal:
PhotoStory and Duoethnography as Approaches
to Enhancing Social Justice and Self-Actualization
in High School Classrooms*

*Giang Le
Brock University*

*Fiona Blaikie
Brock University*

*Vuong Tran
Nipissing University*

Abstract:

This article explores using PhotoStory to promote social justice in the classroom. Interweaving Photovoice (Wang & Burris, 1997) with story-sharing results in PhotoStory, a unique teaching and learning approach that can empower voices of marginalized high school students. Through PhotoStory, we explore possibilities for self-actualization in high schools, where a primary pedagogical goal is to disrupt inequitable social orders and change oppressive behaviors and perceptions. Coming to critical consciousness for both teachers and students is vital, leading to engagement in dialogical pedagogy (Mthethwa-Sommers, 2014). As bell hooks (1994) asserts,

oppression emanates in and through differences in relation to sex/gender, class and race. Similarly, Freire (1970) highlights the critical role of literacy skills to equip those who are oppressed to speak truth to power. Contextualized by habitus (Bourdieu, 1986), creators of PhotoStory documentaries come to understand their own and others' lived experiences, enhancing individual and collective empathy, and promoting healing, offering holistic ways to connect through culturally responsive learning, and flipped and flattened pedagogies. By applying duoethnography (Sawyer & Norris, 2013), three authors, two graduate students and one professor discuss and critique this art-based pedagogical method via experiences of utilizing PhotoStory as an experiential teaching and learning tool. Although the scholars are different in relation to age, status, gender and sexual identities, they are committed to exploring an ethic of care and pedagogical self-actualization that serves our need "to know, to love, and to heal".

Keywords: PhotoStory; duo-ethnography; self-actualization; art-led pedagogy

References

- Bourdieu, P. (1986). The forms of capital. In J. Richardson (Ed.), *Handbook of theory and research for the sociology of education* (pp. 241-258). Greenwood.
- Freire, P. (1970). *Pedagogy of the oppressed*. Seabury Press.
- hooks, b. (1994). *Teaching to transgress*. Routledge.
- Mthethwa-Sommers, S. (2014). *Narratives of social justice educators: Standing firm*. Springer.
- Sawyer, R. D., & Norris, J. (2013). *Duoethnography*. Oxford University Press.
- Wang, C. C., & Burris, M. (1997). Photovoice: Concept, methodology, and use for participatory needs assessment. *Health Education and Behavior*, 24(3), 369–387.

Biographical Notes

Giang Le is a PhD student in Education at Brock University. Le's work covers visual methods and global youth culture.

Fiona Blaikie is a professor and former dean of the Faculty of Education, Brock University. She has won numerous awards for teaching and scholarship, most recently the 2020 USSEA and InSEA Ziegfeld award for art education. Currently, she is editing an interdisciplinary collection for Routledge on gender, sexuality and visual identity constructs.

Vuong Tran is a PhD student in education, at Nipissing University. Tran's research is central to financial literacy and social justice education.