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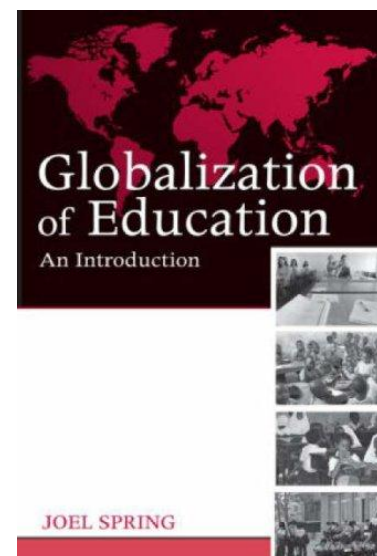
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Joel Spring takes on a daunting task in *Globalization of Education*; he seeks to provide a broad overview of theories, models, and complex economic and social issues surrounding the relation of education and the global economy. The book is meant to be used as a text for courses dealing with globalization and education, comparative education, and education policy.

In Chapter One, Spring describes globalization of education as “worldwide discussions, processes, and institutions affecting local educational practices and policies,” (p. 1). Spring implies that the world education culture has emerged from Western influence and the international flow of Western ideas, creating the view of education as an economic commodity, investing in “human



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capital” to increase earning power (p. 3). The international flow of ideologies can impact local education policymakers and result in a homogeneous curriculum worldwide. Similar educational practices expand beyond the school to create similar global cultures, which Spring describes as world culture theory. World systems theory, or postcolonial theory, views the global flow of ideologies as being imposed by economic power from core countries such as the United States, Japan and European Union nations. The third theoretical perspective Spring describes is cultural theory, which focuses on the notion of “borrowing and lending” of knowledge, or the ability of nations to borrow and adapt global ideals to shape their own educational policies. The three theories Spring describes provide perspectives for analyzing the impact of global influences on education.



Joel Spring

Chapter Two introduces the World Bank, the leading investor in global education. Spring explains that world culture theorists view the World Bank as playing a critical role in developing a global culture while world systems theorists view World Bank’s actions as maintaining the wealth of the core nations and their multinational businesses. Spring’s point of view is clearly evident in this chapter as he explains how World Bank’s definition and plan for the “knowledge economy” and “lifelong learning” are different from other global investors (p. 29). Spring claims that at the end of the twentieth century “the World Bank seemed to uncritically accept the idea that in a knowledge economy investment in education was a panacea for most of the world’s economic problems...” (p. 39). He criticizes the *Lifelong Learning in the Global Knowledge Economy* report from the World Bank which lists acting autonomously as the most critical ability for success in the global economy. Spring argues that cross-cultural psychologists associate traits such as autonomy with individualist societies. He takes this one step further to list personality traits of individualists and collectivists, and includes a ranking of the ten most individualist and the ten most collectivist countries, which is representative of the core and peripheral countries from a world systems perspective.

Organizations such as the United Nations (UN) and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) also support global education. OECD is responsible for the Programme for International Student Assessment, or PISA. This program has been extremely effective in shifting the focus from individualized curricula to a global, unified curriculum. Spring is worried that PISA's ability to define the knowledge required for success in a global economy will result in school systems stressing certain subjects at the expense of others to make their school appear successful (p. 63). He trusts the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) to offer a more "humanistic" perspective of developing lifelong learning, focused on human rights. UNESCO supports lifelong learning as it will develop individuals' ability to "understand the global consequences of individual behavior" (p. 68). Spring continues to emphasize the UN's humanistic focus, describing their use of Cyberschoolbus and Sesame Street as global learning tools. Cyberschoolbus is an information and communication technology that allows students to recognize their individual voice and ability to find solutions to global issues. Sesame Street is now used as a learning tool co-produced with 120 different countries so that it reflects local cultures.

The number of educational tools and services traded globally by for-profit multinational corporations has increased significantly due to the free trade policies enacted by General Agreement in Trade Services (GATS). Spring explains how the World Trade Organization and GATS assume that all nations will benefit from free trade, but questions the economic gains for undeveloped countries. He notes the growing popularity and profitability of for-profit higher education institutions. He attributes the growth of these institutions to the expanding global middle class and youth populations, and government difficulties financing public institutions. In the United States in 2006-07, student tuition accounted for 75% of for-profit institution's total revenue, as compared to 17% for public institutions (National Center for Education Statistics, 2009). Other studies indicate that the rise in for-profit institution enrollment correlates with economic downturns,

simultaneously increasing profits as students are less-likely to dropout considering the lack of job opportunities (Stripling, 2008). Spring believes higher education institutions of the 21st century are operating like businesses, focusing on profits through expanding markets and promising the enhancement of human capital.

Although Spring's inclusion, or mention, of cultural theory is noteworthy, the majority of the book focused on the dialectic between world culture theory and world systems theory. Spring dedicates one chapter of the book to explain the "Culturalist" perspective on globalization of education, in which policies are "interpreted, adapted and changed at the local level," (p. 117). Cultural theory recognizes that global models will not look the same when adopted by a nation because of unique local conditions. In contrast with human capital models, Culturalists use progressive education models, associated with such philosophers as John Dewey and Paulo Freire. Many International Nongovernment Organizations (INGOs) use forms of progressive education in their programs. Ironically, Spring points out that world culture theorists consider INGOs to play a vital role in developing a common global culture. Later in the book, Spring explains how religious organizations and indigenous groups are also opposed to a common global culture supported by world culture theorists. Many religious and indigenous education models are opposed to human capital models; as a result Spring questions whether religious differences will prevent the world from developing a common way of learning.

Spring also includes a chapter on multicultural learning detailing issues associated with migration and language policies. He discusses a common migration trend of skilled and educated people from poor nations to wealthier nations that severely harms the poor nations. The main issue nations face is how to embrace multiculturalism while maintaining social cohesion. The United States has the world's largest percentage of global migrants, creating numerous policy debates about educating students with cultural, religious and language differences.

Spring's use of charts helped emphasize the main ideas in some chapters that covered a great deal of information. Spring mentions numerous times throughout the book that he is "unable to cover" several mentioned topics in depth. For an introduction into global education, Spring could have left out several topics or created two volumes; one focusing on economic issues relating to global education, and the second discussing social issues stemming from global education.

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About the Reviewer

Clarin Collins is a PhD student at Arizona State University in the Division of Education Leadership and Policy Studies. She received an MEd in postsecondary and higher education from Arizona State University and currently works as a research assistant for the Center for the Future of Arizona. Clarin is interested in comparative education and inclusive learning environments for culturally diverse students, and also the impacts of university outreach programs within the community and K12 schools.



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