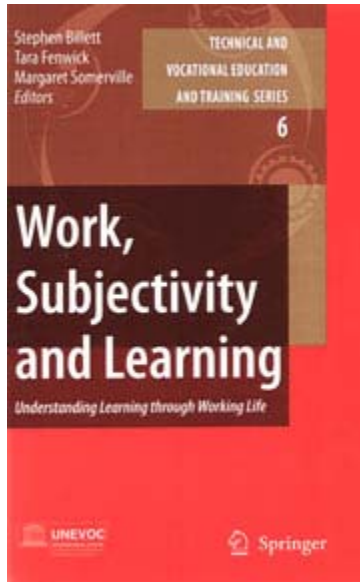


Work, Subjectivity and Learning

Understanding Learning through Working Life



Stephen Billett, Tara Fenwick and Margaret Somerville (eds.).

How do we think about work and working life, particularly in the context of lifelong learning? What role does ‘subjectivity’ play with regard to learning in the workplace? This sixth volume of the UNESCO-UNEVOC Book Series “Current Developments in Technical and Vocational Education and Training: Issues, Concerns and Prospects” explores in what ways workforce learning occurs, be it in the classroom, through on-the-job training or through informal and non-formal means. Although some of this learning is planned, much of it is incidental learning. The chapters present perspectives on the important role of subjectivity in achieving effective learning for work and work practices.

In recent year, efforts to understand learning for and throughout working life have moved away from a focus on workplace training to concerns about learning as a component and outcome of engaging in work and work-related activities and interactions. This shift acknowledges a broader set of workplace factors that shape workers’ learning and development. Yet equally, it acknowledges that this learning through engagement is also necessarily shaped by the diverse ways that individuals elect to engage or participate in workplace activities. Central here is the issue of individuals’ subjectivity and how this is shaped by but shapes engagement in work and, therefore, what learning flows from their participation. It is in considering the relations among subjectivity, learning and work that it is possible to advance both the conceptual and procedural bases for understanding learning through and for working life. Moreover, the focus on relations among subjectivity, work and learning represents a point of convergence for diverse disciplinary traditions and practices that are provided by the book’s contributors. In this way, the contributions represent something of the emerging perspectives that are elaborating the complex relations among subjectivity, work and learning, and circumstances in which they are played out.

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