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## BOOK AND MEDIA REVIEWS

# A model linking history education and human rights education

Lucke, M. Tibbitts, F. Engel, E. Fenner, L (Ed) (2016). Change: handbook for history learning and human rights education for educators in formal, non-formal and higher education. Schwalbach: Wochenschau Verlag. 205 pp., € 19, 80 ISBN 978-3-7344-0390-3 (Print); € 15, 99 ISBN 978-3-7344-0391-0 (PDF).

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### **A model linking history education and human rights education**

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The *Change* handbook provides a model for designing or adapting a synthesis of history learning and human rights education in different educational contexts across national borders. It is based on a joint project undertaken in 2014-16 by Freie Universitat Berlin Human Rights Education Associates and Right Now Human Rights Consultancy and Training. The handbook draws upon more than 250 examples of research from some 160 institutions. The publication which has emerged from this is intended to provide guidance to a wide range of organisations, all of which are encouraged to look beyond national borders for inspiration. From the outset, it is important to appreciate that combining the study of history and human rights education can be contentious, especially if it is associated with historical determinism or a failure to see historical situations in their own terms. This problem does not arise in this study, which provides a meaningful and well-considered link between past, present and future, based on a detailed consideration of the characteristics of both history and human rights education.

The book is divided into two parts. The first of these relates to its underlying concepts and begins with an exploration of the educational contexts where history learning and human rights education have been combined: e.g., higher education and teacher training; school; museums and memorial sites; and non-formal education. Benefits, challenges and strategies are outlined. Research into existing projects related to history and human rights education indicates that the majority either link the contents of history and human rights education or use additive or parallel approaches. There is limited evidence of any combined approaches. The authors find that a focus on either history or human rights could lead to misusing the agenda of the other subject discipline. For example, there is a risk that human rights education programmes can use history just as a pool of violations in order to highlight how urgent it is to act today.

The authors have developed a model called 'Change', a combination of history and human rights education which attempts to do justice to both disciplines. Outcomes for history involve helping learners to develop their own narratives of the past, as well as being able to deconstruct those of others. This is a multi-perspective approach to the past, which respects both alterity and historicity. Human rights education examines mindsets, values, behaviour and actions. It challenges existing injustices and works towards tangible change. The most useful benefit associated with this intersection of learning is related to the way in which it stimulates a

consciousness of change. The authors argue that this has two dimensions: the first of these is to historically narrate change in the past to provide an understanding of the political dimensions of society; the second strengthens the competence to make changes in the present, changes that are based on an awareness of human rights.

The authors also argue for an inclusive approach to history learning which includes human rights principles, including a critique of power, visualisation of the forgotten, and universal empowerment. Although the handbook focuses on the 20th century, particularly National Socialism and the Holocaust, with some reference to colonialism and de-colonialism, it argues that different histories can be looked at which relate to human rights, with particular reference to race, gender and class.

The second part of the book deals with educational practice that combines history and human rights education. This begins with practical tools for implementing and evaluating this approach to learning, including an emphasis on involving learners in this process. There is also an extensive resource list which includes references to literature, handbooks, materials and organisations. This is followed by chapters which address the needs of secondary school education, higher education and teacher training, education at museums and memorial sites, and non-formal education. Each of these chapters comprehensively deals with the requirements of its constituent audience. There are overlaps between these sectors, such as the fact that schools use museums and some non-formal activities such as study trips or extra-curricular activities. However, the value of this reference to different sectors is that it provides a holistic approach to dealing with issues which society needs to address.

The authors provide a very effective model, which can serve in reviewing existing provision and developing new courses which relate history to human rights education. This is exemplified in the Secondary School chapter, which identifies organisational themes related to power and governance, discrimination, citizenship and exclusion, violence and society, human rights and the international justice system. The focus of the book is the 20th century and the development of human rights structures, organisations and principles. This period provides a context for considering human rights issues such as the Holocaust and more recent genocides. This study focuses on events associated with the emergence of Human Rights during the past century which are relevant to the needs of children of secondary age and beyond. In future it would be useful for this to be extended to include studies of themes such as migration and/or religious persecution which can be exemplified through reference to events and contexts in the distant past. It would be helpful to see the current study supplemented by future publications which exemplify this with respect to migrant groups and/or religious persecution and conflict, as well as a consideration of the ways in which its underlying principles can be applied to the primary education sector (5-11). This said, the study provides a convincing and useful framework for both students and practitioners in addressing human rights issues and bridging the divide between the academic discipline of history and contemporary needs.