

1

2

Journal of Teaching in Physical Education

3

4

A book review of diversity, difference and social justice in physical

5

education: Challenges and strategies in a translocated world

6

7 Running Head: Book Review

8

9

10

11

12

13

14

15

16

17

18

19

20

21

22

23

24

25

26

27

28

29

30

31 A book review of diversity, difference and social justice in physical education: Challenges and

32 strategies in a translocated world

33

34 A book review of diversity, difference and social justice in physical education: Challenges and
35 strategies in a translocated world

36

37 Diversity, difference and social justice in physical education: Challenges and strategies in a
38 translocated world, by Bonnie Pang and Tony Rossi. Routledge, 2022, Oxon, England, £39.99,
39 132 pp., 9781032119083.

40

41 Reviewed by: Shrehan Lynch, University of East London, England & Rebecca House,
42 Staffordshire University, England.

43

44 **Relevance and thesis of the book**

45 The authors of diversity, difference and social justice in physical education: Challenges
46 and strategies in a translocated world have collated research data gathered over five years (2014-
47 2018) with minority ethnic teachers, Physical Education Teacher Education (PETE) educators,
48 and the authors' lived experience within the field to create an academic book aimed at scholars
49 specifically in PETE. This book is well-cited, theoretically dense, and ambitious in its scope.

50 The book critically examines the term 'diversity,' highlighting its use, overuse, and
51 misuse. The authors describe diversity as our relationship with difference and sameness,
52 suggesting that the need to be 'the same' or the defensiveness against 'difference' undermines
53 true diversity. They argue that 'otherness' becomes a psychological manifestation of our fear of
54 difference (see p. 19), which is a particularly insightful and useful definition for those using the
55 term within the field.

56 The second main term introduced in the book is the concept of translocality, defined as a
57 form of sustained place-making brought into existence through practice, which includes
58 reciprocal links to family networks, friends, countries of origin, or historical connections that
59 transcend national borders and nation-states. Essentially, in our understanding, translocality
60 means being connected to multiple places, transcending geographic and political boundaries. As
61 PETE is in ‘the context of normalised whiteness’ (p. 2), ethnic minority teachers are those that
62 embody translocality. Student teachers are unprepared for diverse PE environments and ethnic
63 minority teachers are othered within the PE space.

64 The authors' research suggests such ethnic minority teachers have lived experience of
65 various barriers that still exist within the context of diversity, including credibility, respect,
66 language, accents, skin colour, and academic qualifications. When discussing these systemic
67 biases, the authors describe them as symbolic violence, quoting Bourdieu, particularly noting
68 how systemic biases can devalue the cultural contributions of non-white educators (c.f. p. 51).
69 Such an assertion reminded us of Bettina Love's (2019) scholarship, perpetuating norms rooted
70 in whiteness can perpetuate harm, likening it to 'spirit murders' within an oppressive system that
71 fails to value their lived experiences and contributions. Thus, diversity, difference and social
72 justice in physical education underscores the ongoing challenges (or spirit murdering) faced by
73 ethnic minority teachers, emphasising their role as holders of cultural capital. Historically
74 marginalised and overlooked, non-white teachers are depicted as possessing significant cultural
75 capital, which can enrich educational environments only when colleagues in school or higher
76 education leverage their unique skills, knowledge, attitudes, and perspectives. For instance, they
77 can better relate to their students, use culturally relevant language, and extend knowledge beyond
78 Western paradigms (such as incorporating non-Western perspectives on the body). Moreover,

79 they serve as bridges to their communities and facilitate meaningful dialogue with parents. The
80 findings of the book concerning marginalisation and the need for viewing student teachers and
81 their cultural capital concur with our experiences as teacher educators in England, we have
82 witnessed firsthand systematic inequities faced by teachers from translocal backgrounds, which
83 further underscores the systemic challenges they confront. Notably, the book draws
84 predominantly on the work of Bourdieu, which provides a solid theoretical foundation for the
85 authors' exploration of diversity and translocality. This theoretical density makes the book a rich
86 resource for academic scholars seeking to engage deeply with these concepts.

87 **The Reviewers' Perspectives: Insights and Reflections**

88 **Shrehan:** As a British-Palestinian academic working in East London, my context bears many
89 similarities to the authors based in Great Western Sydney, particularly in serving a large ethnic
90 minority and disadvantaged local community. For the past five and a half years, I have worked
91 with trainee teachers in East London through the Post Graduate Certificate of Education (PGCE)
92 programme.

93 Two elements of the book particularly struck a chord with me. Firstly, Bonnie's
94 recounting of a conversation with Tony: 'I remember Tony once said to me that one who does
95 diversity research does not necessarily mean one is not racist/sexist etc' (p. 110). This is a
96 sentiment I have often encountered in the field. Many involved in diversity research seem more
97 attracted to its sexiness appeal and potential grant funding rather than the application of its
98 theories and the activism integral to social justice work. For me, social justice is a profound
99 philosophy influencing everything from my dietary choices to my recycling habits and how I
100 spend my weekends, which are largely dedicated to activism. As an educator, if we aim for
101 genuine change and socially just praxis, student teachers must have opportunities to engage with

102 true reformers and embrace their stance (Cochran-Smith, 2004). Thus, witnessing individuals in
103 the social justice space who do not embody a socially just life feels contradictory to the
104 liberatory undertaking.

105 The second striking element of the book was the authors' acknowledgement and
106 promotion of Richard Tinning's work on modest pedagogy and suggestion for working with
107 receptive audiences (Tinning, 2020). Bonnie adds that some critical feminist scholars might
108 project their issues onto unreceptive audiences under the guise of diversity work, this approach,
109 characterised by blame and shame, is unproductive and limits our reach. Bonnie identifies as a
110 'relational critical scholar', advocating for appropriateness in our reach. Personally, as someone
111 known for being a thought-provoking, critical voice in the field, I find the idea of tempering our
112 tone to accommodate as playing into white fragility (DiAngelo, 2018) troubling. We must be
113 brave, courageous, and radical in our approaches, refusing to constantly tiptoe around the
114 sensitivities of fragile colleagues. Toning down our claims could normalise whiteness and
115 perpetuate injustice.

116 Reflecting on the book, I am compelled to reassess my position as a critical scholar-
117 activist. Perhaps I need to embrace the label of 'radical' as it represents a potential breakthrough.
118 Historically, radical movements have been the catalyst for genuine justice, such as the Stonewall
119 riots of 1969, which paved the way for annual Pride events advocating for gender and sexuality
120 rights. Embracing radicalism might grant me the freedom to challenge and provoke in novel
121 ways. If not me, then who? Thus, if the authors intended for us to engage deeply with theory and
122 challenge our intellectual boundaries, they have achieved their goal and some, challenging our
123 positions as scholars and the stances we choose to take and embrace.

124 **Becky (Rebecca):** As a white, gay woman living in the UK and working in PETE for the past
125 three years, I have firsthand experiences of prejudice and inequality related to my sexual
126 orientation. Simultaneously, I acknowledge the privilege and power afforded to me by my
127 whiteness. This book has provided me with a deeper reflection on my privilege and facilitated a
128 better understanding of the challenges faced by PE trainee teachers and educators with trans-
129 local identities.

130 It has prompted me to consider how to incorporate further education on inequalities for
131 individuals with trans-local identities into the PGCE courses I deliver. A guiding principle in
132 both my professional and personal life is ‘representation matters.’ This book is pivotal in
133 shedding light on trans-local identities, offering critical visibility for trainee PE teachers and
134 PETE educators grappling with these identities and their associated challenges.

135 The book has challenged my practices by incorporating diverse perspectives from a range
136 of authors into my curriculum, ensuring the visibility of various races and ethnicities in learning
137 course content. It has heightened my awareness of the intersectional identities of those I engage
138 with, guiding me in building meaningful relationships and taking informed actions as needed.

139 While this book has significantly enhanced my intellectual and theoretical knowledge—
140 particularly on concepts like the ‘monarchy of fear’ (Nussbaum, 2019) and ‘white fragility’
141 (DiAngelo, 2018)—the next step for me is translating this knowledge into practical application
142 for my student teachers. Although scholarly theories often struggle to bridge into practical
143 application within our time-constrained, neoliberal institutions, they serve as a reminder of our
144 collective responsibility to confront the pervasive whiteness and lack of diversity within PETE.

145 This book serves as a timely call to action. It reminds academics, including those who
146 may not identify as activists, of the imperative to engage actively in this work. Addressing these

147 issues should not be overlooked or minimised—it requires dedicated effort from all. Therefore,
148 my current interpretation is a firm call to action in addressing and transforming our practices
149 within PETE for a more equitable educational environment.

150 **Encouraging Scope**

151 The authors of the book emphasise the need to expand on their findings, noting that while
152 there is recognition of the value in creating socially just PETE programs, more support and
153 research are necessary. They acutely acknowledge that the PETE programme discussed in their
154 book often lacked emphasis on socially just concepts/educators. Moreover, student teachers were
155 taught by health promotion academics or traditional content focused on methods like Teaching
156 Games for Understanding and Mosston's Spectrum of Teaching Styles (c.f. p. 55-56). As a
157 consequence, there is a compelling call for further research to explore what a comprehensive
158 social justice program in PETE entails. It is this mission that Shrehan takes on in her
159 forthcoming book and encourages others to join her.

160 **Constructive Commentary**

161 While this book provides deep theoretical insights into translocal diversity within PETE,
162 practical guidance on how educators can reflect on their positionality and implement inclusive
163 practices was notably absent. We can hear and see the human in the book through the minor
164 spelling errors. A notable accident includes the inadvertent misgendering of Robin DiAngelo,
165 underscoring the importance of accurately using authors' pronouns in academic discourse or
166 defaulting to gender-neutral pronouns like 'they' when uncertain. It is a reminder to us all that at
167 the end of the keyboard, there is a human, working, typing, thinking, collaborating, making
168 mistakes and for that reason, we suggest reading the book, the humans behind it have a worthy
169 tale and can challenge your thinking and potentially your practice within the field.

170

Acknowledgements

171 Thanks to Bonnie and Tony for the opportunity to read a great thought-provoking book and to

172 Michael for inviting us to write the book review.

173 References

- 174 Cochran-Smith, M. (2004). *Walking the road: Race, diversity, and social justice in teacher*
175 *education*. Teachers College Press.
- 176 DiAngelo, R. (2018). *White fragility: Why it's so hard for White people to talk about racism*.
177 Beacon Press.
- 178 Love, B. L. (2019). *We want to do more than survive: Abolitionist teaching and the pursuit of*
179 *educational freedom*. Beacon Press.
- 180 Pang, B., & Rossi, T. (2022). *Diversity, difference and social justice in physical education:*
181 *Challenges and strategies in a translocated world*. Routledge.
- 182 Tinning, R. (2020). Troubled thoughts on critical pedagogy for PETE. *Sport, Education and*
183 *Society*, 25(9), 978-989.