

Editors' Preface

Borut Mikulec, Sonja Kump, and Tadej Košmerl

The idea for the book originated in conversations, reminiscences and suggestions in the adult education community in Slovenia following Dr Sabina Jelenc Krašovec's premature death, after a serious illness, in December 2020. Most of Sabina's colleagues shared the view that the most appropriate way to honour her work was to publish a book. The editors took up the challenge and approached the authors Sabina had worked with. For the purposes of this monograph, we asked them to engage in dialogue with her work – with her ideas and insights published in monographs, book chapters, articles, conference papers, etc. – and to reflect (critically) on it, applying their own research and/or practice. We also invited the colleagues from abroad with whom Sabina had forged working ties and friendships, a large number of whom responded to our invitation.

In her pedagogical and research work, Sabina situated adult education in social contexts. She was convinced that if we are to understand adult education, this could only be done by critically analysing the political, economic and social aspects of its structure. Theoretically, her texts mostly drew on the Frankfurt School's critical theory of society and the critical/radical tradition of adult education, while methodologically she was a representative of the qualitative research paradigm. She approached her research mainly from the perspective of critical theory, but also phenomenology, poststructuralism and feminism. It is therefore not surprising that most of her texts took as their starting point the socially critical role of adult education, emphasising its emancipatory potential and reflecting on the mobilising role of adult education in a broader social context, in particular its potential influence on the desired social change towards greater social justice. She was aware that many authors conceived of adult education primarily as a field of practical action; therefore, she emphasised that adult education could not be developed without appropriate (historical, sociological, philosophical) reflection and theory. And finally, she believed in the transformative power of learning and education at all stages of life and in creating a better world.

This book begins with an introductory chapter by Borut Mikulec and Sonja Kump, *Introduction to the Adult Education Legacy of Sabina Jelenc Krašovec: The Transformative Power of Adult Learning and Education*, and it is divided into three thematic parts, which are discussed in more detail in the introductory chapter.

Part one contains six chapters addressing issues related to older people's learning and education in the community. António Fragoso discusses *Older Adults' Informal Learning in the Community: Snapshots from Research*, Barry Golding and Annette Foley write about *The Mothership: Exploring the Anatomy of One New Zealand Men's Shed*, Annette Foley examines *Therapeutic Virtual Landscapes: An Exploration of Gendered Learning Spaces during the COVID-19 Lockdown*, Małgorzata Maliec Rawiński and Barry Golding write about *Researching Men's Sheds in Australia: Reflections from the Antipodes: A European Female Visitor and an Australian Male Guide*, Marvin Formosa studies *Learning Opportunities for Older Persons in Residential Long-Term Care: A Systematic Review*, and Nives Ličen and Dušana Find-eisen ask *Why Not Together? Intergenerational Education and Learning*.

Part two includes four chapters studying informal learning in the public sphere and active democratic citizenship. Veronika Thalhammer and Bernhard Schmidt-Hertha inquire whether *Informal Learning Is Not Informal Education?*, Nikola Koruga, Tamara Nikolić and Aleksandar Bulajić discuss *The Role of Adult Learning in the Community in Strengthening Democratic Participatory Practices*, Meta Furlan examines *The Role of the Adult Educator in Promoting Learning and Action in the Public Space*, and Vida A. Mohorčič Špolar writes about *Education for Active Citizenship*.

The third and final part contains two chapters discussing the specialised topics that Sabina also studied in some detail – adult educators' professional development and guidance and counselling in adult education. Monika Govekar-Okoliš examines *The Training of the Mentors of Higher Education Teachers in Competences for the Effective Management of Students' Practical Training*, and Tanja Vilič Klenovšek writes about *The Importance of Adult Education Guidance and Counselling for the Adult and for Society*.

The editors would like to thank all the contributors who have shed light on different aspects of Sabina's legacy in the fields of the theory, policy and practice of adult education, thus demonstrating the resonance and relevance of her work in the national and international arenas. We believe that the best way to honour Sabina's legacy is to discuss her ideas, keep them alive, reframe them and use them to improve our educational practice as well as our communities and society at large.