

[Understanding Communities in Europe and beyond by \(Re\)Connecting with Histories of Education](#)

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Educational Research (Re)connecting Communities

24-25 August 2020 - Emerging Researchers' Conference

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Adopting history of education perspectives which allow for deeper understanding of 'communities' and (dis/re)connections imagined with regard to this is key. Indeed, historical examples of the relevance of, yet also multifariousness of, 'communities' in education abound. History of education researchers themselves partake in 'epistemic communities', which raises questions regarding choices they make.

Network 17 invites proposals for the European Conference on Educational Research, which will be held at the University of Glasgow (UK). Proposals can be submitted for papers, posters, videos, ignite talks, panel discussions, research workshops, and symposia via EERA website. NW17 is open to any contributions related to the overall conference theme.

The Call

Across Europe and beyond, nationalist, separatist, as well as global environmentalist movements, among others, have been on the rise, bringing into sharp focus a range of effects on various communities perceived as such. To position education research in relation to such tendencies, adopting historical perspectives that allow for deeper understandings of such 'communities' and any '(dis/re)connections' imagined with regard to these is key.

Historical examples of the relevance of 'communities' in education broadly conceived abound. Thus, for instance, one could think of 'communities' as being at the heart of a variety of education agendas and trajectories: from the new/progressive education movements to nationalist movements, to curriculum (reform) movements, to political movements including feminist girls'/women's education, working-class and anti-racist or -colonial movements. Likewise, education has served as a vehicle for creating new communities with education systems having helped shape nation-states as 'imagined

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communities' (Anderson 2016) sharing 'invented traditions' (Hobsbawm 1983) - and sometimes framed as 'communities of communities' to potentially ambivalent effects (Myers 2006). Indeed, through education, particular communities have also come to be imagined/created as suspect (e.g., Muslim communities in the frame of Prevent in the UK). Yet, not only State actors have endeavoured to mould communities through education; also private actors like captains of industry have 'engineered' (Thyssen 2015) or 'imagineered' (Van Gorp 2018) communities employing educational means. Educational endeavours have moreover not only been at the centre of local, regional or national communities but also global or transnational communities and networks.

The term community tends to imply cohesion: a gluing together, uniting or defining of elements otherwise not amenable to group-based educational policy and action; a sharing of values, beliefs, culture etc.; (an) inside(rs) and outside(rs) separated by boundaries. Yet, from the history of education, examples of 'fractured communities', or frictions within as much as between communities, are not lacking - 'Others' and 'Selves' have thus been imagined-created and acted upon along such lines as class, caste, gender, race/ethnicity, dis/ability, language, religion, political conviction, and sexuality. In many instances, cohesion and fracture have characterised within- (and cross-)community relationships in education and society, for example in the case of members of the Deaf community for whom tension has emerged between concerns with inclusion and with safeguarding Deaf culture. At least as many examples can be cited of the workings of cross-border communities in education, including 'epistemic' (Haas 1992) ones. Education itself has moreover often been turned to as a lever for cross-community interaction and dialogue, the drive for change proper to education, of course, also in this context having involved power dynamics.

History of education researchers themselves could be seen as partaking in epistemic communities, which raises questions regarding expertise, influence on policymaking etc. From a historiographical perspective, it is thus worth exploring 'researcher cuts' (Barad 2007; Goodman 2017) made regarding topics, narratives, sources, methods, theories etc. Could this lead to new, daring approaches revalorising, for instance, the role of senses (Classen 1992) in community-building/imagining processes; or that of emotions, images (rhetorical-material) and 'new' media including digital ones?

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<https://eera-ecer.de/networks/17-histories-of-education/ecer-2020-nw-17-special-calls/nw-17-histories-of-education-under...>