

Book Review

Migration and Education in a Multicultural World: Culture, Loss, and Identity

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In *Migration and Education in a Multicultural World: Culture, Loss, and Identity*, Ursula A. Kelly invites us to think deeply about the ways individuals renegotiate identity in an era of displacement. Kelly writes about migration and cultural loss, which, while they might occur in any context, are integral aspects of rural life—from displaced aboriginal peoples to migrant workers to declining populations from outmigration. The parallels between the 21st-century conundra of rural identity in general and those of identity in diaspora are also strong. Kelly explores how the forces of globalization and environmental degradation, and the demands of fast capitalism to bypass any extended mourning for what has been lost, affect the migratory psyche. Scholars of the rural cannot help but read Kelly's book on two levels—to imagine how we might productively educate not only migrant communities and individuals, but also rural ones, to enable the "change and renewal through mourning" (p. 24) necessary to sustain cultures, communities, and individuals in a time of extreme loss.

In her introduction, Kelly describes the volume as a "collection of essays," and it reads as such. This style is not typical academic writing that builds arguments in a linear, thesis-driven fashion. Rather, it is essayistic in Montaigne's original sense of the word: it meanders instead of racing ahead to a foreshadowed conclusion; it explores rather than asserts. Readers must adjust their expectations for the book accordingly; you will not find recommendations for classroom practice or extended critiques of existing pedagogies here. Instead, prepare to digest the separate chapters slowly, and not necessarily in order, as you think along with Kelly about the psychological demands of cultural loss. The form and purpose of the book also mean that it is a difficult text to review in a traditional fashion. Here I attempt to give a sense of Kelly's method and the

effects of her style rather than a summary and critique of the arguments that might, in a different sort of piece, arise from her analysis.

In each chapter Kelly delves into one aspect of cultural loss and identity. The first and second chapters focus on the psychological processes of grief and reconciliation, while the third reflects on the possibilities and limits of literacy in negotiating identity within these contexts. The fourth, fifth, and concluding chapters turn toward education, examining, respectively, educating in contexts of environmental loss, attachments to teaching and attachments to place, and the potential for critical pedagogy to address the network of issues raised in the book. Throughout, however, Kelly remains largely focused on her analysis of culture, loss, and identity; the connections to education tend to happen briefly and at an abstract level. The book's strength lies in the multiple disciplinary perspectives that Kelly brings to bear on her subject. The first chapter, "Losing Place," introduces us to some of the theoretical models that she uses throughout the text, including those from anthropology (Ruth Behar's analysis of "dying cultures" and the ways academics represent them), sociology (John Berger's writings on human migration), psychology (Melanie Klein's work on the processes of grief; Freud), cultural studies (Richard Johnson's explorations of collective grief and mourning), and literary theory (Judith Butler's examination of loss and its relationship to identity). In addition, she brings in works by poets and novelists, looks specifically at the history of Newfoundland and Labrador as a case example, and includes reflective passages on her own personal history of migration, loss, and teaching. Once the reader embraces the shifts in genre that Kelly's approach necessitates and the exploratory nature of her text, the result is a book that is truly multidisciplinary. Rarely have I read a work that so thoroughly integrates perspectives from multiple disciplines and multiple modes of writing. However, the reader must be prepared to do the work necessary to connect to classroom practice the threads that Kelly interweaves.

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The fourth chapter is perhaps the most relevant for readers who wish to advocate for sustainable rural futures. Kelly explores a trio of terms—nostalgia, solastalgia, and melancholy—and applies their nuanced meanings to an understanding of the psychological possibilities available to someone negotiating a relationship with a place that is rapidly changing. Others (including myself) have written of the problems inherent in nostalgic attachments to rural places: while nostalgia often constructs a romanticized and unrealistic vision and invokes an urge toward conservatism and resistance to change, it is also a powerful rhetorical gambit for investing others in the future and welfare of the rural. Kelly goes much further, distinguishing nostalgia (longing not only for a past version of a place but for a past version of oneself as one imagines one was in that place) from Glenn Albrecht's (2005) term "solastalgia," which he coined to describe native residents' feelings for a place that has been catastrophically changed through severe environmental transformation. While nostalgia offers some solace to those who feel it, solastalgia tends to lead to anger and blame, rupturing one's relationship with those whom one holds responsible for the environmental destruction. In addition, solastalgia captures the interrelationship between environmental degradation and the disruption of families and communities. As Kelly writes: "The resulting symptoms of this human distress of dislocation and habitat destruction—depression; alcohol and drug abuse; high rates of suicide, diabetes, and heart disease; and the breakdown of family and community culture—coupled with ecological distress... are embraced in [the] notion of solastalgia" (p. 104).

Those of us concerned with the future of rural and wild spaces, and of rural communities, recognize the need to recruit those who do not live in or use these spaces to see themselves as stakeholders in that future. As Kelly shows, this endeavor is fraught not only with the delicacy of shaping people's relationships to place in a time of rapid environmental change, but with the potential to dissolve or strengthen groups' relationships with one another. Ultimately, Kelly writes, "solastalgia does not offer a means by which to reconcile the loss out of which it arises, and change is thwarted" (p. 107). Nostalgia, on the other hand,

can be both "purposeful and counterproductive" (p. 103). While it can inhibit the reconstruction of identity in changed circumstances by offering emotional solace about what has been lost, it can also be seen as "an embryonic critique of the present ... misunderstood as longing for an idealized past" (p. 101). Compared to the state of "traumatic rupture" that solastalgia produces (p. 106), the possibility of nostalgia to motivate change at least exists.

Melancholia, in Kelly's scheme, offers a third model for one's relationship to a severely altered place. Using Freud's investigation of the melancholic state of mind, Kelly argues that it ultimately leads to "the urge to do right by that which has been lost, or gone: to repair" (p. 109). For Kelly, melancholia, despite Freudian descriptions of it as a seemingly stuck mode that inhibits growth, best "offers a basis from which to address the possibilities of and for transformative learning and culture change while also expanding the basis from which the nostalgic and solastalgic subject may be understood and transformed" (p. 110). Kelly's formulation recognizes that in working toward environmental and cultural sustainability, people and their attachments to others and to places must undergo fundamental changes.

In her concluding chapter, Kelly suggests one role for education in this process of change. She has written elsewhere of the primacy of critical literacy models in working toward genuine cultural renewal and change (Kelly, 1993). Here she promotes the possibilities of "a critical civic emotional literacy" (p. 167), combining Judith Butler's (2008) notion of "sensate democracy" with Megan Boler's (1997) idea of "critical emotional literacy" to explore the emotional and ethical effects of neoliberalism, imperialism, industrialization, and postcolonialism on attachments to both place and personal identity. Kelly makes the theoretical groundwork for her position clear; what is missing is a sense of what this pedagogy would look like in action. Kelly leaves the reader to do this work. Once Kelly has plumbed the psychological depths of cultural loss and identity negotiation, it is up to us to determine how we might best work at the local level to use reading and writing to enable the transformations our communities need.

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