



Rethinking Knowledge within Higher Education: Adorno and Social Justice

Jan McArthur

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Rethinking Knowledge within Higher Education argues for a higher education that is neither a romantic idyll of learning for its own sake nor an instrumental institution designed to train a willing workforce for the prevailing economic system. Instead, using analysis informed by critical theorist Theodor Adorno, this book argues that higher education should have social and economic roles at its heart, and that these should encompass the needs of all society. The key to achieving this purpose without privilege lies in the ways in which knowledge is understood and engaged with in higher education. Higher education has a special role in society as a place in which complex, contested and dynamic knowledge is engaged with, challenged and created. The realization of this purpose challenges traditional dichotomies between economic and social purposes, liberal and vocational education, and theory and practice. Jan McArthur shows that by interpreting and adapting some of Adorno's most complex ideas, the nature of knowledge and the pursuit of social justice within higher education is feasible and aspirational.

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