

A Doctoral Student's First-Year Experience Paves a Path to Activism

"It's never too late to be what you might have been."
 – George Eliot

Spring 2020

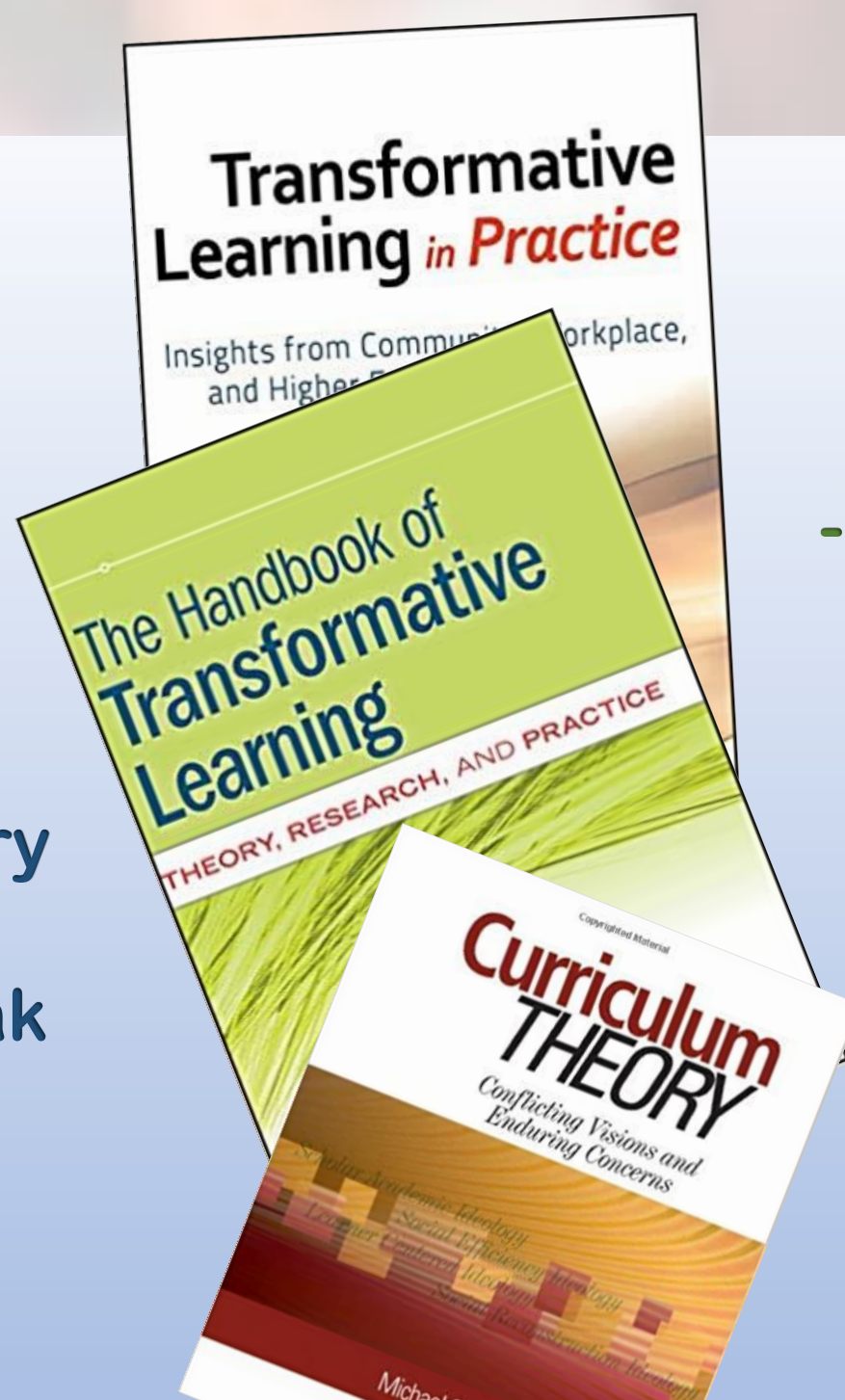
EDSU 903
and
EDSU 904

**Informed
Insight**

RESEARCHER-IN-TRAINING

The COVID-19 pandemic changed life as we knew it—including my thoughts about a research focus (see CONCEPT MAP at right).
 After a term-long deeper-dive into philosophies, perspectives, and theories, eventually settled on Critical Theory and Transformative Learning Theory to build Theoretical Framework for prospective research project. If stay on this path, it would speak to issues of poverty (SDG #1), health and wellness (SDG #3), employment (SDG #8), inequality (SDG #10), and justice (SDG #16).

"The capacity of a system to engage in the complexities of continuous improvement consistent with deep values of human purpose [the concepts of social justice, collaboration, equality, and creativity in fostering the common good]"
 —Definition of sustainability by Michael Fullan, as cited by Gould (2013)



TOP TAKEAWAYS

- Bloom's Taxonomy
 - Social Reconstruction Ideology
 - Backward Design Model
- ## FAVORITE FUNDAMENTALS
- Concept Mapping
 - Problem Statement
 - Positionality and Identity

MOST SAGACIOUS SAYING

"Pick a different theory and you're likely to get different results."
 —Dr. Elizabeth Lange

Fall 2019

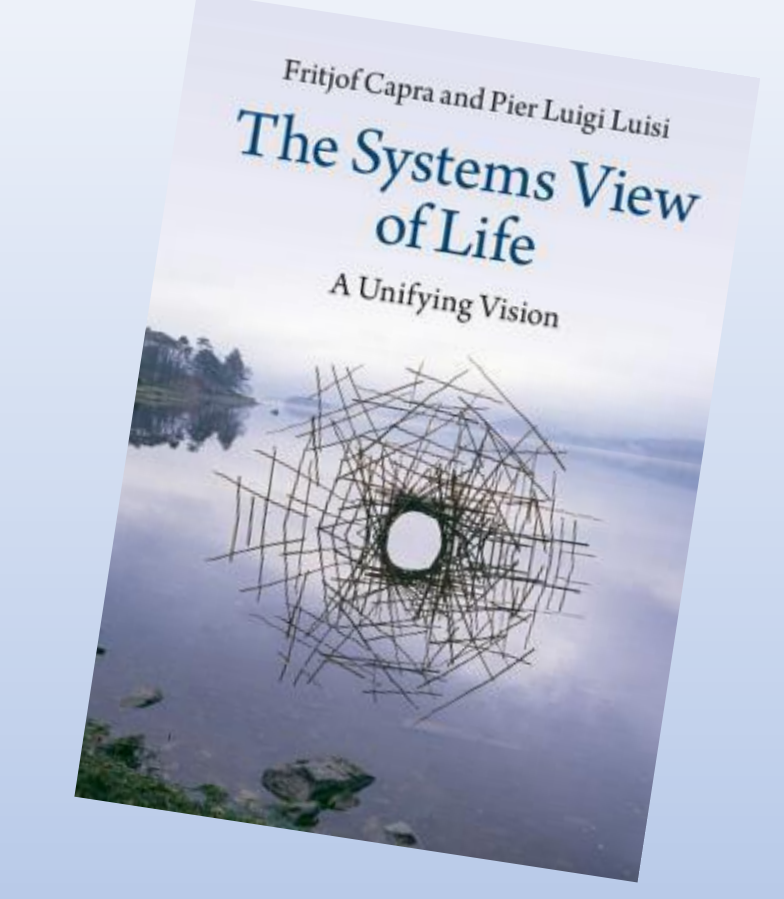
EDSU 908
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Investigation

RESEARCHER-IN-TRAINING

Ideas about a research focus continued to morph. Began to apply systems thinking in consideration of how to bridge available talent pool of older job seekers to adult continuing education and workforce programs that would train them for, and connect them to, available green economy employment opportunities.
 As the term progressed, discovered that ageism appeared to permeate leads and job postings connected to organizations promoting environmental activism. A coincidence?... Investigated this as a potential dissertation topic.

"In reality, people do not resist change; they resist having change imposed on them."
 —Dr. Fritjof Capra



TOP TAKEAWAYS

- Emergence
 - Theory of Autopoiesis
 - Epistemology / Ontology
 - Theoretical Frameworks
- ## FAVORITE FUNDAMENTALS
- Systems Thinking & Mapping
 - Typology Table
 - Professional Learning Communities (PLCs)

MOST SAGACIOUS SAYING

"long live The Brain Trust!"

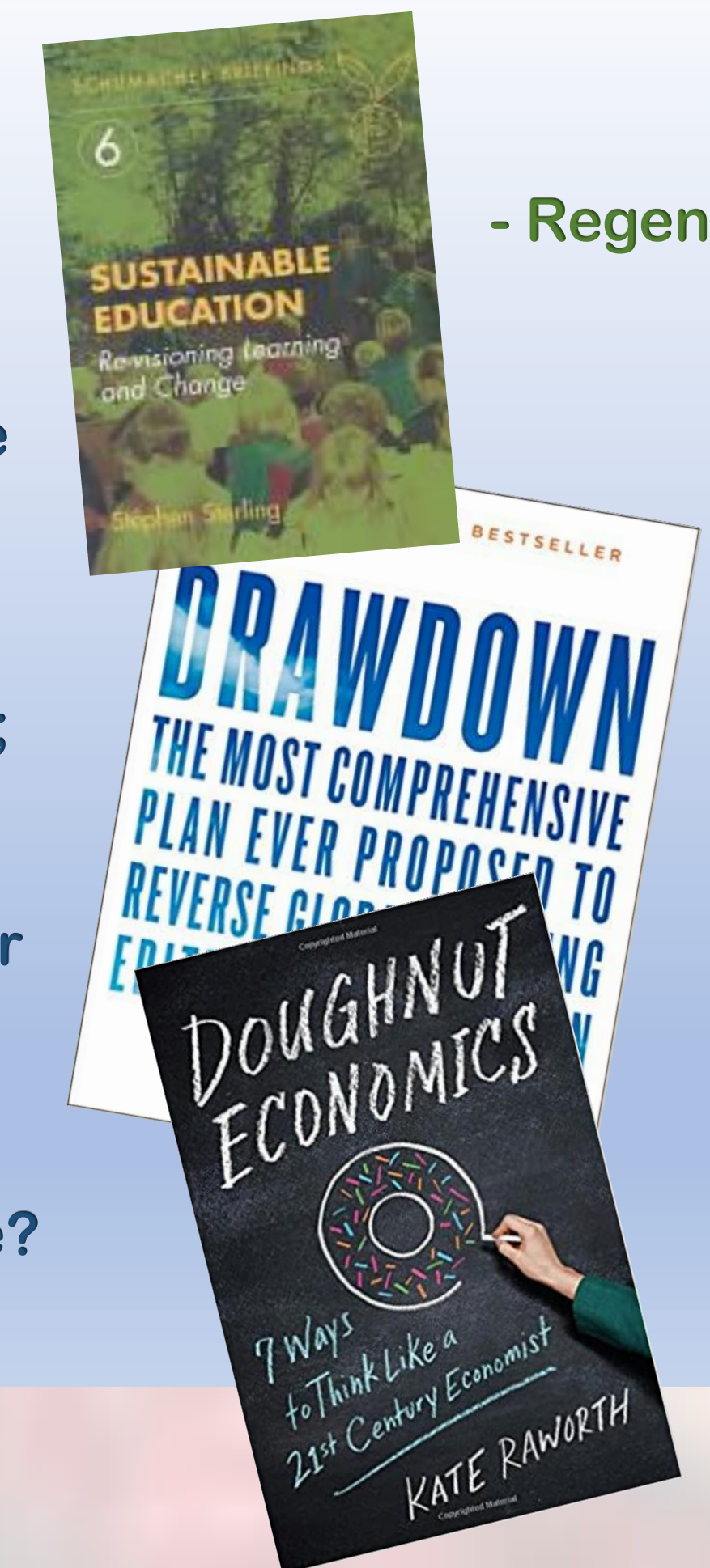
Summer 2019

EDSU 900
and
EDSU 911

Inquiry

RESEARCHER-IN-TRAINING

Initial thoughts about what to research and where to serve as a change agent...To transform continuing education in the career development field to better facilitate the employment sustainability of vulnerable populations, such as: (1) older workers and job seekers; (2) workers and job seekers from the disability community; (3) workers and job seekers negatively impacted by advancements in technology; or (4) workers and job seekers negatively impacted by consequences of climate change.
 As the term progressed, considered asking either one, or both, of these questions:
 1. How does climate change impact our jobs? (System of Problems)
 2. How can our jobs help combat climate change? (System of Solutions)



TOP TAKEAWAYS

- Regenerative and Distributive Economy
 - Qualitative Growth
- ## FAVORITE FUNDAMENTALS
- APA Style
 - United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)
 - Design Thinking

MOST SAGACIOUS SAYING

"Trust the process."
 —Dr. Lynda Fernholz

CONCEPT MAP: Current Research Focus

Modern American society does not seem to value its older members

"youth is valued over old age and...old people are often mistreated and negatively stereotyped" (Berger, 2017).

that value "incubates" this attitude

Ageism seems to be the last socially acceptable prejudice

"On the social side, ageism has become the most pervasive discrimination in society today, exceeding discrimination based on race or gender" (Cortijo et al., 2019).

that attitude "activates" this behavior

In spite of being illegal, ageism continues to exist in the workplace

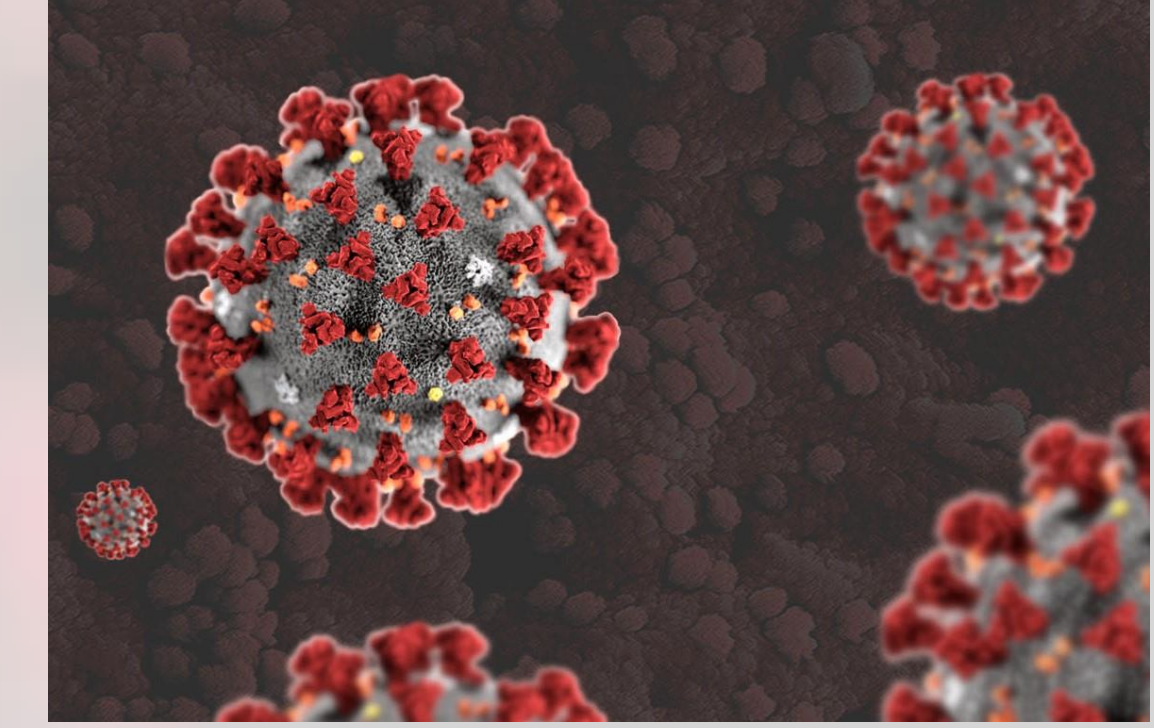
"The problem is getting more scrutiny after revelations that hundreds of employers shut out middle-aged and older Americans in their recruiting on Facebook, LinkedIn and other platforms" (Cohen, 2019).

design research to aid in the "eradication" of that behavior

Texas Lt. Gov. @DanPatrick thinks I should die for the Dow

#BoomerRemover

confounding variable is introduced



Will COVID-19 add yet another opportunity for age discrimination in the workplace?

Sick employees cost employers in multiple ways

According to the CDC (2020), older adults diagnosed with COVID-19 are at higher risk of severe illness

"When full costs were measured rather than medical costs alone, researchers found that health conditions...took on new significance in driving costs upward" (Torres, 2007).

"People who are crazy enough to think they can change the world are the ones who do." – Rob Siltanen

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