

## Education in Global Contexts Seminar Series

The Education in Global Contexts SIG is pleased to announce a series of three seminars to be offered online, accompanied by a face-to-face for those based in Melbourne.

The seminars showcase the diversity of research undertaken by our members and highlight the unique insights that researching education across contexts can offer. The seminars will be facilitated and incorporate opportunities for interactive discussion.

Details of each seminar are provided below. Please register by clicking [here](#) or copy this link into your browser: <https://forms.gle/M3aBGACGkE4Fb7c99>

### Seminar One: When Everyone Became a Capitalist: Unpacking Investment Discourse in Education

Speaker: Dr. Will Brehm, Canberra University

5pm AEST, 15 May 2024

Zoom link:



<https://myacu.zoom.us/j/87411757276?pwd=YjYxWGRNYlh0OTd6T1Z5REdYLzI5dz09>

In the 1950s, a group of economists at the University of Chicago embarked on an ambitious intellectual project that would eventually become known as Human Capital Theory. Milton Friedman famously supported the idea because it side-stepped the common tension between labourers and capitalists: if everyone owned their own human capital, then no one was a labourer. Everyone became a capitalist. Milton Friedman is not the central figure in this story, however. Instead, the story focuses on Theodore W. Schultz. Using his unprocessed archives held at the University of Chicago, I outline the origins of human capital theory and the political implications the discourse of education as a form of investment has had on education globally.

Reducing the value of education to human capital has always been contested, however. In the second part of the talk, the case of the School Without Walls in the Australian Capital Territory is detailed. Started in 1973, SWOW embraced a relational understanding of knowing through its Mandala curriculum and an approximately equal political power distribution between students and teachers through its consensus-based general meetings. As a community school that utilized the ideas of de-schooling, it reveals an alternative proposition of the value of education than that captured by human capital theory.

**Dr. Will Brehm** is an Associate Professor in Comparative and International Education in the Faculty of Education at the University of Canberra. Will's research interrogates the intersection of comparative and international education with international relations and the political economy of development. He also hosts the podcast FreshEd, which has been downloaded over 1 million times since 2015.

## **Seminar two: Reimagining the Education in Emergencies community**

Speaker: Dr Ritesh Shah, University of Auckland

5pm AEST, 22nd August 2024

Zoom link: to be provided closer to the date



Based on over a decade of engagement in the education in emergencies community, and specifically work in contexts like Ukraine and Palestine, Ritesh Shah will critically explore some of the absences, silences and erasures that have pervaded the community's work and its complicity in act of empire, exploitation and (neo)imperialism. Against a backdrop of calls for decolonizing education, and comparative and international education more specifically, he will explore what a reimagining of the education in emergencies community might necessitate and require.

**Dr Ritesh Shah** is Senior Lecturer in Critical Studies in Education at the Faculty of Education and Social Work, University of Auckland, Aotearoa/New Zealand. Since completing his doctorate studies in 2013, Ritesh has worked and researched actively in education across a number of conflict-affected and fragile state contexts. As Senior Lecturer at the University of Auckland, Ritesh now leads the University's efforts on research and teaching in education and international development. His current research explores how discourses such as peace-building and resilience, as well as the global 'crises' in education precipitated by the COVID-19 pandemic are both being strategically advanced and contested by a range of global, regional, national and local actors.

**Seminar Three: Topic and Speaker to be confirmed**

October 2024