

Discipline and learn: bodies, pedagogy and writing

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Abstrak

This book explores how discipline is typically construed as a form of subjection in contemporary educational thought and in critical and cultural theory more broadly. It provides a critique of this emphasis on the repressive aspects of discipline highlighting its enabling potential and role in the development of dispositions to learning. The book engages with the work of a range of theorists from Foucault, Bourdieu, Merleau-Ponty, Mauss and Spinoza and considers their usefulness in theorizing embodiment and learning in the teaching of writing in the early years of school. Emphasis, however, is placed on the work of Bourdieu and his notion of habitus melding theory and practice in an ethnography of contemporary classrooms. Conceptually elegant and empirically rich, it undercuts conventional wisdom and potentially rearranges how we think about teaching, learning and writing. It argues that students' bodies not just their minds matter in learning, explaining how, in practice, the desire to learn is a mindful bodily disposition. And it shows how, through an enabling form of discipline, teachers can produce a scholarly habitus in all students, including the educationally disadvantaged and defiant.