

**Active and inclusive citizenship for women:
Democratic considerations for fostering lifelong education**

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Abstract

In this paper a critical feminist theoretical framework is used to explore the challenges of creating democratic learning spaces that will foster active and inclusive citizenship for women. Three democratic considerations are addressed to assess how adult educators can create more inclusive opportunities for lifelong education for women. The first consideration is the need for a careful examination of structural inequalities that create disadvantages for women in pursuing lifelong education. The second consideration is the need to create a broader and more gender inclusive understanding of the scope of lifelong learning possibilities, so that women's learning experiences are not devalued. The third consideration explores how to take up gender as a complex variable within the broader discourse of inclusion. This paper is informed by preliminary results from a current SSHRC (Social Science and Humanities Research Council) study on lifelong learning trajectories for women in Canada and a CCL (Canadian Council on Learning) study on active citizenship for women in Nova Scotia.