



Book review: Feminist Critical Digital Pedagogy: An Open Book

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Koseoglu, S. & Veletsianos, G. (2022). *Feminist Critical Digital Pedagogy: An Open Book*. EdTech Books.

https://edtechbooks.org/feminist_digital_ped

An accessible book, this open online volume would appeal to readers whether new to feminist pedagogy or not. It centres on personal experience and offers a variety of windows into what feminist critical digital pedagogy can look like in practice. Indeed, some of these chapters would be suitable additions to reading lists for teaching in higher education programmes. It is commendable that the editors have challenged the notion of a book as a finished artefact, instead offering it as an open and ongoing 'evolving' document, with further contributions encouraged. This offers the exciting prospect of the book documenting a conversation with itself as it is augmented. This review was of the book as published in August 2022.

'The University can't love you: Gendered Labour, Burnout and the Covid-19 Pivot to Digital' by Brenna Clarke Gray, the first chapter, is an honest account of her experience mapped against selected literature and framed within the dysfunctional relationships staff members have with the university and its structures. Introducing the useful idea of 'moral stress' from health care literature, Grey aligns this to the cognitive dissonance many experience when their values are in contradiction to the practices they enact. This chapter serves to shine a light on these issues rather than provide answers, but it proves an excellent opening for what follows.

The next chapter 'Reflection, Agency and Advocacy as Feminist Pedagogy: Rethinking online environmental education' by Patty Born, gives a personal account of redesigning a course based on the principles of ecofeminist pedagogies and intersectionality. There are a lot of practical approaches described, albeit briefly, which go some way help the reader see applications for their own practice. It is a positive account but it would have been interesting to read more about the challenges faced, such as institutional procedures or cultures, which may have pushed back on decentering the instructor. A longitudinal follow-up on evaluation and further development of this course could be an interesting additional chapter for the book.

'Virtually De-Centered and Radically Hopeful: Faculty Learning Communities' by Judit Török and Maura Conley is an detailed roadmap which would be of immense interest to faculty developers on implementing a month-long 'deep dive' on feminist pedagogy. It is heartening to see this chapter move the book beyond the implementation of feminist pedagogy within individual classrooms. Welcome too is the authors' initiation of an important debate on the applicability of feminist pedagogies at scale, particularly at institutional level.

Tanya Elias's chapter 'Agency and Reciprocity in Digital Education: Lessons from Indigenous Sewing Practice', is a beautiful exploration of the development of her thinking about critical digital pedagogy as informed by learning to sew indigenous 'kamiks' footwear. Through the lens of holistic, rather than functional, technology, Elias offers a vista of education which embraces the small-scale, repairable, and reciprocal. Urging us to eschew normalisation of 'big tech' and its agenda in education, Elias promotes open practices which centres people, their experiences, communities, and environment. While not going into any depth to what this looks like in practice, this chapter offers highly readable introduction to thinking differently and critically about digital pedagogy. Furthermore, as the environmental impact of digital practices in education become more widely debated, this chapter is a valuable contribution to this work.

In Jennifer Schneider's chapter, 'Feminist-Oriented, Mixed Methods Action Research: Reflections on Methodology, Online Pedagogy, and Digital Tools', she discusses feminist reflexivity in research while also demonstrating it in action. It promotes assessment feedback as a site of decentralising power; indeed, further work on evaluating the impact of these practices would be most welcome. Following the previous chapter's criticality of technologies, the digital aspect here is somewhat underexplored.

If there are areas currently underdeveloped within the book, these would be a deeper engagement with the literature or theories in feminism/critical/digital/pedagogy. As this book is a living artefact, it would be good to see it develop debates which speak from the practices discussed here, back to the theories and scholarship that informed those practices, rather than just cite them. Hopefully, this can be developed in future additions.

The editors recognise the obvious lack of diversity or perspectives within the current body of authors. The beauty of the open book format enables that to be rectified and they include an open call for contributions within their introduction. While they espouse a more supportive and developmental version of peer-review for contributors, I hope that their renunciation of 'gatekeeping' does not mean they will not prioritise and hold space for contributors with diverse perspectives. This volume is a welcome addition to

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scholarship in feminist critical digital pedagogy and the editors should be applauded for creating a novel open model for scholarly publication in this field.

Biographies

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