

Education Review

Reseñas Educativas



Resenhas Educativas

April 22, 2026

ISSN 1094-5296

Howard, J. T., Romero-Hall, E., Daniel, C., Bond, N., & Newman, L. (Eds.) (2025). *Feminist pedagogy for teaching online*. Athabasca University Press.¹

280 pp.

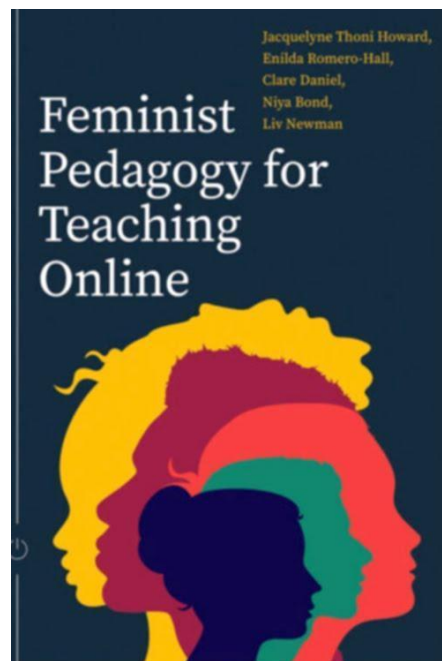
ISBN: 9781771994309

**Reviewed by Mariam Alothman
The George Washington University
United States**

Feminist Pedagogy for Teaching Online, edited by Jacquelyne Thoni Howard, Enilda Romero-Hall, Clare Daniel, Niya Bond, and Liv Newman, is a timely and ambitious book that tackles the increasing demand for equity-centered methods in digital education. As online instruction becomes more common, the book questions the idea that virtual spaces are naturally isolating or merely transactional. Instead, it promotes the view that these environments can be reshaped into places of care, collaboration, and social justice by applying feminist pedagogical principles.

This volume critically explores reimagining online learning as a space for equity and care within the broader discussion of feminist pedagogy and digital education post-pandemic. The editors connect theory and practice by offering practical strategies that help educators humanize virtual classrooms and challenge hierarchical norms. It serves as both a useful guide and a scholarly contribution, making it vital for those dedicated to inclusive and transformative online education.

The editors structure the book into four thematic sections, each highlighting a crucial aspect of feminist engagement in digital environments. Part One introduces the foundational strategies that promote connection, reflexivity, and embodiment—vital components for addressing the disembodiment frequently linked to online learning.



¹Open access book available at <https://www.aupress.ca/books/120334-feminist-pedagogy-for-teaching-online/>

Alothman, M. (2026, April 22). Review of *Feminist pedagogy for teaching online*, by J. T. Howard, E. Romero-Hall, C. Daniel, N. Bond & L. Newman (Eds.). *Education Review*, 33. <https://doi.org/10.14507/er.v33.4499>

Part One: Promoting Connections, Reflexivity, and Embodiment

The editors explore how feminist pedagogical principles like community, collaboration, reflexivity, and embodiment can be successfully implemented in online learning. The editors emphasize that, through deliberate design and facilitation, digital spaces—often seen as isolating—can be turned into engaging and inclusive communities. Four chapters in this section offer both theoretical insights and practical strategies to promote student agency and connection within online environments.

Drawing on nearly two decades of feminist teaching, Guglielmo (pp. 63–84) introduces a framework for group meaning-making in online courses in her first chapter. She highlights discussion boards as crucial for promoting co-teaching and decentralizing authority. Her five-component framework covers decentering expertise, encouraging collaborative learning, making feminist pedagogy evident, offering diverse engagement methods, and keeping technology simple and accessible. Guglielmo utilizes a highly relational approach, valuing student voices and contributions through examples like discussion summaries and student-led prompts.

In their chapter on a workshop titled “Filming Sex Work in India,” Hemlatha, Saxena, and Date (pp. 103–120) introduce the concept of co-watching as a feminist pedagogical approach. Co-watching involves viewing films together and engaging in real-time chat discussions, promoting community building and dialogic learning. The authors highlight the importance of rooted allyship and community-driven knowledge creation, drawing from decolonial feminist frameworks. They also support emotional expression, such as ranting, as a valid academic practice. Their work underscores the importance of careful thought, flexibility, and responsiveness in online feminist education settings.

The Relational Course Design Collaboration (RCDC) model, proposed by Cottrell and Obermann (pp. 85–102), combines principles of design justice and feminist pedagogy. It challenges conventional power structures in course creation by promoting teamwork among students, faculty, and instructional designers. The authors support a values-based approach to online course design emphasizing connections and shared knowledge rather than strict rules. They showcase the model's flexibility and effectiveness through examples such as a Summer Design Justice Institute and an independent study centered on student-led course development.

Rollag Yoon, Lo Bello Miller, and Gilpin (pp. 151–170) seek to reshape asynchronous discussion boards into small, student-led, relational groups. Inspired by feminist perspectives on identity, power, and reflexivity, they utilize virtual learning communities (VLCs). These relational formats have led students to report deeper understanding, greater engagement, and validation of their experiences. The authors argue that such approaches can enhance persistence and foster a sense of connection in online courses, highlighting the importance of flexibility, student agency, and embodied learning.

Part One effectively counters the idea that online learning is naturally isolating by framing connection as a deliberate pedagogical strategy rather than

an unintended consequence. This approach builds on earlier feminist online pedagogy research by Chick and Hassel (2009), especially in emphasizing that authority, knowledge creation, and participation can be fundamentally transformed in digital environments.

Many strategies in this section—especially co-watching and relational discussion formats—depend heavily on reliable technology, real-time access, and small class sizes. This dependence can marginalize students with bandwidth issues, accessibility challenges, or institutional constraints, particularly in the Global South, adjunct-led programs, or K–12 environments. While the authors recognize inclusivity, the section would benefit from a more detailed analysis of the structural barriers that prevent educators from expanding these relational practices effectively.

Part One emphasizes that connection is both vital and intentional in feminist online teaching. Guglielmo's emphasis on discussion boards as collaborative spaces redefines a typical tool as a venue for democratic engagement. Hemlatha et al.'s co-watching model innovatively employs audiovisual media to foster dialogic learning, though its dependence on synchronous participation might restrict access for students facing bandwidth constraints. Compared to previous studies on feminist pedagogy in face-to-face settings, this section successfully adapts core principles of reflexivity and embodiment to digital environments.

By highlighting the significance of connection and reflexivity, Part One paves the way for Part Two's exploration of equity and collaborative learning in online settings.

Part Two: Building Equity, Cooperation, and Co-Education

Part Two of an exploration of the transformative role of feminist pedagogy in promoting equity, collaboration, and shared learning in online education. The chapters emphasize participatory approaches, innovative use of technology, trauma-informed techniques, and collective meaning-making. Each section shows how feminist educators can create online courses that respect students' lived experiences, boost their agency, and cultivate inclusive learning communities.

Kriner (pp. 193–210) begins by advocating for interactive formative assessments to create participatory spaces in asynchronous online classrooms. Using bell hooks' idea of engaged pedagogy, Kriner argues that tools like social annotation, interactive videos, and wikis serve two main purposes: revealing gaps in student learning and fostering community. These methods allow students to jointly develop knowledge and participate in relational learning, which helps reduce transactional distance and boosts engagement. The chapter effectively supports the idea of aligning assessment practices with feminist pedagogical principles.

Ren (pp. 211–228) introduces the TPACK framework as a way to integrate digital tech into feminist online teaching. She highlights that effective online education merges content, pedagogy, and technology, all rooted in feminist ideals. Ren discusses how social media, collaborative tools, and digital storytelling

can boost student agency and activism. Her chapter provides practical advice for educators and instructional designers aiming to align course design with feminist principles, especially in interdisciplinary contexts.

Glassburn (pp. 121–134) explores how consciousness-raising and trauma-informed strategies are incorporated into a first-year online course, “Gal Pals: Women and Friendship.” She discusses how activities like small-group work, structured sharing circles, and collaborative projects create a safe, trusting space where students feel comfortable talking about sensitive issues such as gendered violence, racism, and mental health. By demonstrating care, transparency, and peer support, Glassburn illustrates that trauma-informed teaching can boost student engagement and enhance understanding. Her method stresses the importance of aligning course content with teaching practices, especially when dealing with emotionally sensitive topics.

Daniel (pp. 135–150) wraps up the section with a chapter on social annotation as a form of feminist praxis. She shares findings from a study on how students interact with shared texts via collaborative annotation. The results indicate that social annotation promotes fair participation, collective understanding, and increased engagement with course content. Daniel’s research reinforces the idea that, when used purposefully, digital tools can support feminist pedagogical aims and turn online learning into a collaborative educational space.

Together, these chapters show how feminist pedagogy can be applied through deliberate planning, technology, and relational approaches. The authors provide practical strategies to foster equity and collaboration in online classrooms, highlighting student agency, group learning, and caring teaching methods. This section serves as a useful resource for educators dedicated to creating inclusive and transformative digital learning spaces.

Part Two highlights that ensuring equity in online learning relies on specific design choices rather than just rhetorical assurances. Kriner’s integration of formative assessment with feminist pedagogy is especially compelling, as it confronts the typically punitive assessment methods used in digital classrooms. This emphasis is consistent with Freire’s (2000) view of assessment as a dialogic process instead of a disciplinary measure.

Several chapters, especially those emphasizing trauma-informed and highly participatory methods, require considerable emotional, relational, and time commitments from instructors. Without institutional support, reduced teaching loads, or recognition of care work, these approaches may remain idealistic rather than feasible. While this section effectively advocates for technology as a tool to enhance equity rather than just efficiency, it doesn’t fully explore the neoliberal pressures that frequently constrain educators’ ability to implement these practices consistently (Morris & Stommel, 2017).

By emphasizing equity and participatory practices, Part Two prepares for Part Three’s focus on care as a fundamental pedagogical reform within digital classrooms.

Part Three: Creating Cultures of Care in the Online Classroom

Part Three highlights care as a crucial and transformative aspect of online education. The chapters collectively suggest that fostering humanized digital environments involves breaking down punitive norms and incorporating empathy, flexibility, and relational accountability. Instead of viewing care as an optional supplement, the authors see it as fundamental to feminist pedagogy and transformative learning.

Gurjar and Gurjar (pp. 153–172) explore how feminist pedagogy can humanize online education through participatory visual methods. They present *photovoice* and the SHOWeD coding method as strategies that enable students to guide their own inquiry and reflect collectively on lived experience. These approaches support both visual and dialogic expression, promoting agency, relational learning, and community building. Grounded in feminist perspectives, the chapter demonstrates how care can be operationalized through student-centered, participatory practices in online environments.

Rognlie, Frazier, and Siler (pp. 173–186) examine what it truly means to “humanize” online education by critiquing conventional course policies such as rigid attendance requirements, mandatory participation rules, and inflexible deadlines. The authors argue that these structures often reproduce inequities and undermine trust. As an alternative, they propose *co-created course policies* developed collaboratively with students to foster flexibility, relational accountability, and shared responsibility. This approach challenges hierarchical authority and aligns closely with feminist commitments to equity, transparency, and collective decision-making.

Jaramillo Cherez and Romero-Hall (pp. 187–202) conclude the section by examining care, identity, and empowerment in emergency remote teaching (ERT). Drawing on empirical research conducted during the COVID-19 pandemic, they highlight instructional strategies that supported student well-being, including sustained communication, personalized feedback, and intentional community-building activities. Their findings underscore that care is deeply intertwined with identity development and empowerment, particularly for marginalized students navigating digital inequities.

Together, the chapters in Part Three present a vision of online education rooted in relational ethics and social justice. They provide practical approaches—like participatory visual projects, policy co-creation, and trauma-informed practices—that educators can customize for different environments. By emphasizing care as a key teaching principle, this section questions neoliberal ideas of efficiency and control, urging instructors to foster online spaces where vulnerability, trust, and collaboration thrive.

Part Three emphasizes a strong, unified approach that regards care as a core structural and political obligation, not just an emotional trait. The chapters collectively challenge neoliberal notions of efficiency, standardization, and control, instead highlighting flexibility, empathy, and collective responsibility.

This section pushes feminist digital pedagogy beyond previous humanizing frameworks by clearly connecting care to resistance.

Many approaches, especially policy co-creation and visual methods, assume a level of institutional freedom that many educators do not have. In strict policy environments, faculty often find it hard to negotiate grading, attendance, or participation rules. As Tuck and Yang (2012) caution, justice-focused teaching strategies can be co-opted by institutions, reducing their potential for transformation. A direct analysis of institutional influence would make this argument even stronger. Building on the focus on care, Part Three smoothly transitions into Part Four, which explores the power structures, surveillance, and knowledge creation in online education.

Part Four: Interrogating Knowledge Production, Social Inequality, and Power

Part Four centers the structural aspects of digital education, exploring how knowledge creation connects with surveillance, privacy issues, and systemic inequalities. This section urges educators to identify and oppose the reinforcement of oppressive power dynamics in online environments and offers methods for fostering critical thinking and ethical participation.

Barton (pp. 245–262) demonstrates how feminist pedagogy can turn online geography classes into platforms for social justice education. Her framework highlights sustainability, amplifies community voices, and promotes critical examination of prevailing knowledge systems. By embedding feminist principles into the core curriculum, Barton illustrates how online learning can foster global awareness and encourage students to challenge entrenched hierarchies.

Payne, Mockler, Lohnes Watulak, and Collier (pp. 229–244) present *cryptoparties* as engaging workshops focused on teaching digital privacy and security through a feminist lens. Their chapter highlights activities like threat modeling and collaborative tool choice, illustrating how these practices deepen students' understanding of the intersectional nature of privacy risks. By integrating technical skills with broader conversations about power and identity, they position cryptoparties as a form of activist education that equips learners to understand and challenge surveillance systems.

Howard (pp. 263–280) concludes this section by critically analyzing surveillance and data collection in online classrooms. She highlights ethical issues related to proctoring technologies and learning analytics, noting that these tools can reinforce existing hierarchies and worsen inequalities. Howard calls for greater transparency, informed consent, and institutional accountability, encouraging educators to select privacy-respecting solutions that align with feminist values of autonomy and justice.

These chapters highlight that technology is inherently political, embedded within social and political frameworks that influence educational experiences. By exploring issues like surveillance, privacy, and epistemic justice, this section guides educators in creating online courses that oppose oppressive norms and encourage democratic involvement. The authors promote an approach that

blends technical literacy with critical theory, ensuring digital education becomes a tool for empowerment instead of control.

Part Four is the most politically intense and analytically urgent part of the volume, exploring how surveillance, data collection, and epistemic authority influence online education. Howard's critique of proctoring tools remains highly relevant, viewing surveillance not just as a security measure but as a factor that amplifies inequality and breeds mistrust. This aligns with wider critical digital pedagogy critiques that see datafication as a form of governance rather than simple support (Morris & Stommel, 2018).

Proposed strategies like cryptoparties and privacy-focused initiatives demand specialized expertise, institutional backing, and technical skills that many educators may not possess. Without examining how power relations function within administrative and corporate levels of educational technology adoption, these interventions risk unfairly shifting responsibility onto individual teachers instead of addressing the systemic structures that inherently encourage surveillance.

After exploring themes of power and inequality, the book ends by highlighting future possibilities for feminist teaching methods in digital environments and emphasizing the importance of sustained dedication to justice and care.

Feminist Pedagogy for Teaching Online is a comprehensive and innovative contribution to digital education scholarship. It provides one of the most detailed efforts to apply feminist pedagogical ideas to online teaching. The four sections of the book clearly demonstrate that online learning spaces are not naturally alienating or neutral. Instead, they are influenced by design choices, power structures, and institutional values. By emphasizing care, collaboration, and critical interaction with technology, the book challenges mainstream ideas about efficiency, surveillance, and control in digital learning.

Ideally, the volume presents detailed, practitioner-driven models that emphasize student agency and relational learning. Its core strength lies in translating feminist pedagogy into practical applications with concrete examples—such as social annotation, relational course design, trauma-informed facilitation, and privacy-focused practices. These insights extend previous feminist and critical digital pedagogy research by emphasizing that justice-focused teaching should address not only content but also infrastructure, assessment, and technological governance.

The authors often assume conditions like institutional flexibility, manageable class sizes, access to technology, and instructor autonomy, which are not evenly available across different educational settings. Without ongoing focus on systemic challenges, some practices may stay out of reach for educators in rigid, neoliberal institutions. Acknowledging these constraints does not reduce the book's importance; instead, it underscores the gap between feminist pedagogical aspirations and the structural realities of online education.

Ultimately, this book is most valuable for educators, instructional designers, and researchers dedicated to critically exploring how power, care, and equity function in digital learning environments. While it doesn't offer a one-size-fits-all solution, *Feminist Pedagogy for Teaching Online* serves as both a practical toolkit and a thought-provoking challenge—encouraging readers to oppose technocratic educational models and envision online classrooms as spaces for collective care, ethical involvement, and continuous growth.

References

- Chick, N. L., & Hassel, H. (2009). Don't hate me because I'm virtual: Feminist pedagogy in the online classroom. *Feminist Teacher*, 19(3), 195–215.
<https://doi.org/10.1353/ftr.0.0049>
- Freire, P. (2000). *Pedagogy of the oppressed* (30th anniversary ed.). Continuum.
- Morris, S. M., & Stommel, J. (2018). *An urgency of teachers: The work of critical digital pedagogy*. Hybrid Pedagogy.
- Tuck, E., & Yang, K. W. (2012). Decolonization is not a metaphor. *Decolonization: Indigeneity, Education & Society*, 1(1), 1–40.

About the Reviewer

Miriam Alothman is a dedicated education professional with more than 12 years of experience in teaching, instructional development, and educational leadership. She earned her master's degree at the School of Education at Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU) and is currently pursuing a PhD at The Graduate School of Education & Human Development at The George Washington University. Her career began in Kuwait, where she served as a primary school teacher at Mariam Boudai Primary School from 2010 to 2022. Mariam is fluent in Arabic and English. She holds a bachelor's degree in English and has earned multiple certifications, including Educational and Technology Training (TOT) from the American Board (BETA) and a communication training certificate focused on personality types. She is also an active member of TESOL Kuwait.



About the Editors

Jacquelyne Thoni Howard is an administrative assistant professor of technology and women's history. She earned a Ph.D. in U.S. history from Fordham University, an M.A. in history from the University of San Diego, and a B.A. in history with a minor in secondary education from Loyola University New Orleans. Jacquelyne leveraged her liberal arts degrees to gain extensive experience in digital scholarship and instructional technology.

Enilda Romero-Hall is an associate professor in the Learning, Design, and Technology program in the Theory and Practice in Teacher Education Department at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, USA. Her research focuses on faculty and learners' digital literacy, networked learning, and critical digital pedagogy

Clare Daniel is a senior professor of practice and director of research at Tulane University's Newcomb Institute. She received her PhD in American studies from the University of New Mexico. Her book, *Mediating Morality: The Politics of Teen Pregnancy in the Post-Welfare Era* (University of Massachusetts Press, 2017), charts a shift in the political and popular discourse about adolescent pregnancy in the wake of the 1996 U.S. welfare reform policy.

Niya Bond is an online educator, faculty development facilitator, and PhD candidate at the University of Maine studying online teaching and learning. Her publications focus on empowering online learners and educators, creating and sustaining virtual communities of practice (both formal and informal), and facilitating equitable, belonging, and inclusive educational experiences

Liv Newman is administrative assistant professor and associate director of the Center for Engaged Learning and Teaching at Tulane University. She has worked in higher education for nearly 25 years spanning both teaching and administrative roles. Her scholarly interests focus on the intersection of race and class, inequities in education, and enhancing the online educational experience for faculty and students.

Education Review

Reseñas Educativas



Resenhas Educativas



Education Review / Reseñas Educativas / Resenhas Educativas is supported by the Scholarly Communications Group at the Mary Lou Fulton College for Teaching and Learning

Innovation, Arizona State University. Copyright is retained by the first or sole author, who grants right of first publication to the *Education Review*. Readers are free to copy, display, distribute, and adapt this article, as long as the work is attributed to the author(s) and *Education Review*, the changes are identified, and the same license applies to the derivative work. More details of this

Creative Commons license are available at <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/>.



Disclaimer: The views or opinions presented in book reviews are solely those of the author(s) and do not necessarily represent those of *Education Review*.