

Review Essay: *Feminist Pedagogy in Higher Education: Critical Theory and Practice*.

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Book Under Review

Tracy Penny Light, Jane Nicholas, and Renée Bondy, eds. *Feminist Pedagogy in Higher Education: Critical Theory and Practice*. Waterloo, ON: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2015. 331 pp.

In the edited collection *Feminist Pedagogy in Higher Education*, Tracy Penny Light, Jane Nicholas, and Renée Bondy bring together fifteen essays that discuss some of the challenges and triumphs involved in implementing innovative feminist pedagogy in the university classroom. While each chapter is a stand-alone piece, the volume as a whole is a wonderful contribution to the feminist literature, showcasing “the celebrations and successes, as well as the struggles and pitfalls, of feminist pedagogies” (5).

This collection covers a range of topics, from restorative justice in the classroom, to the use of book clubs as a teaching strategy, to a pedagogical practice of sex, and more. Before reading this book, I was intrigued by the editors’ choice to present the chapters individually, as opposed to collecting certain chapters together under sub-sections, as is so often done in edited collections. I was weary that without such sub-sections, the wide array of topics covered in this book would be challenging to engage with as a whole. I was pleasantly surprised to find that this was not the case. In fact, the authors of each chapter manage to engage successfully with each other in their respective pieces. The dialogue created between the chapters encouraged me to revisit chapters, to weave back and forth between contributions, and to consider each piece in light of the contributions and arguments of the other chapters. To further strengthen this dialogue, the way in which the editors have organized these chapters allows one to read the entire collection chronologically – as aspects of each chapter easily flow into aspects of the next. This flow, combined with the focus on feminist pedagogies more generally, allows all of these pieces to shine both individually and collectively.

As the editors note, while the pieces included in this collection are thought provoking, there is a distinct absence of reflections from scholars in the STEM disciplines and the collection is very Western-centric; this is certainly a limitation of this book. Nonetheless, I found this collection to be well worth reading (and

indeed, reading again!). As a student, these pieces inspired me to reflect on my own experiences in the feminist classroom and to appreciate the dedicated feminist professors who have shaped my own (un) learning. As an aspiring feminist educator, I also recommend this book to others who are interested in exploring and expanding the use of feminist pedagogies in their own teaching.

This collection feels like a fruitful conversation between feminist allies who, despite very different experiences, share the common goal of reflecting on and enhancing feminist pedagogy. In reading this book, I am delighted to have been a part of this conversation.