

Learning technology: a feminist space?

What do the resources of feminism offer to learning technology as a body of theory and a space of educational, social and technical practice?

This exploratory session will introduce some themes and resources from feminist thinking in relation to four distinct areas of interest to ALT members and conference goers. Participants will be invited to contribute opinions, examples and practical ideas to a live 'map' of 'learning technology as a feminist space' that will be produced during the session and developed in the weeks after the conference. The four areas of interest proposed are:

1. Learning technology work as gendered work. How are different roles valued and rewarded at the learning/technology interface? How are these roles gendered, and what impact does this have on practitioners' identities, security, rewards and careers? Are there aspects of the struggle for equal pay and conditions that are particularly relevant to learning technology work?
2. Learning technology and educational opportunity. What difference has the widespread use of digital systems in education made to the experiences, participation rates and outcomes of women learners? How does digital disadvantage intersect with gender inequalities, and in what ways (if at all) are the digital systems used in education gender biased?
3. Feminist pedagogies. What can we learn from feminist pedagogies, as we build critically and politically engaged educational practices for an age of digital learning?
4. Feminist epistemologies. How are practices of knowledge production and reproduction changing, and what can we learn from feminist criticism of established ways of thinking - for example the criticism of binary logics (digital/analogue, public/private) and their policing and gendering? In the age of the 'learning machine' and the 'curriculum as code', what new metaphors can we use to help us thrive as embodied, gendered human beings in a world saturated with code?

Other areas of interest may be defined and mapped within the session.

The session will use a mix of live/embodied and online participation (via femedtech.net) to support contributors, and reflection on issues arising from the methods used will be incorporated into the session. The organiser will work within the code of practice developed by [#femedtech](https://twitter.com/femedtech) to ensure the session is as safe, open and inclusive as possible.

Participation in the session and the mapping process is not restricted by gender. Everyone with an interest in learning technology theory and practice, from a broad standpoint of inclusion and social justice, is invited to contribute. We will explore how feminist thinking can inform practical interventions, and debate whether feminism is a necessary perspective at a time when learning technology is the site of struggles over inclusion/exclusion, power and participation, and over different models of knowledge and educational value. No prior knowledge of feminist thinking is required. Different perspectives on feminism and equality are positively welcomed.

Resources and references

Main resource for the workshop:

Beetham, J. (2019) [Learning technology: a feminist space?](#)

Branwen, J. (2018) Why do schools have a massive pay gap? [Online] BBC News. Available at: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/education-43460998> [Accessed 20.03.19]

Coate, Kelly & Kandiko Howson, Camille. (2014). Indicators of esteem: gender and prestige in academic work. *British Journal of Sociology of Education*. 37. 1-19.

Consalvo, M. (2013) Cyberfeminism. [Online] Encyclopaedia of New Media. Available at: https://study.sagepub.com/sites/default/files/Ch17_Cyberfeminism.pdf [Accessed 20.03.19]

Hicks, M. (2017) *Programmed Inequality: How Britain Discarded Women Technologists and Lost Its Edge in Computing*. MIT Press.

Shepherd, N. (2013) Where have all the cyber feminists gone? [Online] Engenderings. Available at: <https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/gender/2013/06/10/where-have-all-the-cyberfeminists-gone/> [Accessed 20.03.19]

Watters, A. (2016) Men (still) explain technology to me. [Online] HackEducation. Available at: <http://hackededucation.com/2015/03/11/men-still-explain> [Accessed 20.03.19]

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