BOOK REVIEW

Higher education for good: Teaching and learning futures

EDITED BY: LAURA CZERNIEWICZ AND CATHERINE CRONIN

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Higher education for good is a book of hope that makes an essential contribution to the future of the university. Edited by Laura Czerniewicz and Catherine Cronin, it is an open-source book published in 2023. It explores how higher education can act as a transformative force for good within and outside the academic field. This is particularly relevant in a context marked by turbulence and severe crises in recent years. In this regard, Guzmán-Valenzuela (in the preface of the book) asks, "How can universities contribute to the good despite these rather gloomy and dark times, narratives, and practices?" (p. 33). The book addresses this question with hope by presenting theoretical and practical perspectives on rethinking and reshaping higher education.

The book contains a rich collection of works from 71 authors, both new and established, from 17 countries and various disciplines. It consists of 27 chapters, divided into five sections, each exploring a unique aspect of how education can be a force for social good. Due to the extensive number of chapters, it is impossible to discuss them all here, and I have selected a few examples to support the themes present in the different sections of the book. The first section, "Finding Fortitude and Hope", sets a positive tone, highlighting resilience and the potential for change in higher education. The opening chapter by Catherine Cronin and Laura Czerniewicz, "Higher Education for Good", lays the foundation for the entire book by questioning the status quo and advocating for a more inclusive, equitable and hopeful academic system. This section focuses on foundational issues, addresses current dilemmas such as neoliberal policies and systemic challenges, and the authors collectively argue for reimagining a higher education that centres on social justice, public good, and the holistic well-being of university staff and students.

Section Two, "Making Sense of the Unknown and Emergent"*,* focuses on the uncertainties and challenges facing higher education. It provides a range of theoretical lenses to make sense of the present and its dilemmas. For example, Su-Ming Khoo's, "On Public Goods, Cursing, and Finding Hope in the (Neoliberal) Twilight Zone*"* (Chapter 3) critiques the neoliberal model that dominates higher education. This model is characterised by market-driven policies, managerialism, and the manipulation of knowledge. The chapter advocates for reclaiming the public good, namely the reaffirmation of the principles that education should be accessible to all, promote equity, and serve a wider public interest. Additionally, Leslie Khan, Mona Ghali, and Paul Prinsloo address another important theme in the book by exploring the concept of higher education institutions as infrastructures of care, which includes the mental health needs of students and staff. They envision a future where care and empathy are central to academic institutions in "Imagining Higher Education as Infrastructures of Care" (Chapter 4).

In Section Three, "Considering Alternative Futures"*,* the authors highlight the importance of imaginative and speculative thinking in envisioning better futures for higher education. In this regard, Elizabeth Childs and others use a speculative scenario to highlight potential opportunities and gaps in "Speculative Futures for Higher Education: Weaving Perspectives for Good" (Chapter 13). They bring together different perspectives and provide a holistic view of a possible future for higher education that embraces inclusivity and innovation. This speculative approach

allows readers to imagine possibilities beyond the constraints of current systems, inspiring creativity. Student perspectives from various backgrounds have been used to share information on creating a more inclusive and participatory academic environment in "Vibrant, Open and Accessible: Student Visions of Higher Education Futures" (Chapter 14) by Sharon Flynnn et al. They advocate for including technology to enhance learning experiences, emphasis on mental health and well-being, and the need for participatory governance. This chapter highlights the need to listen to student voices and consider their views in policies and practice.

Section Four, "Making Change through Teaching, Assessment, and Learning Design", contains various ideas in which educators share their perspectives. In line with the book's overarching theme, it contains examples of innovation and inclusive practices in teaching, learning, and assessment to better align with the principles of equity, justice, and inclusivity. For example, in "A Design Justice Approach to Universal Design for Learning" (Chapter 16), Aleya Ramparsad Banwari and others highlight the importance of inclusivity and justice in educational design. They introduce the concept of design justice, providing practical examples that address systemic inequalities and improve accessibility for all students. "Humanising Learning Design with Digital Pragmatism" (Chapter 17) by Kate Molloy and Clare Thomson emphasises the importance of creating a learning environment that prioritises human connection, inclusivity, and empathy. The chapter emphasises the need for thoughtful technology integration into educational practices and highlights different digital tools and methods to support these objectives.

The final part, Section Five, provides a broad overview of the implementation of long-term change through systemic and structural changes at various higher education levels. It is entitled "(Re)making HE Systems and Structures" and focuses on the changes that are necessary for a more open, equitable and sustainable approach to the higher education landscape (Kalz, 2023). This recurring theme in the book of pursuing equity and social justice highlights current inequities faced by marginalised groups and advocates for policies and practices that promote inclusivity and fairness. In this regard, Patricia Arinto and colleagues argue for sustainable and open education practices in "Cultivating Sustainable Blended and Open Learning Education Ecosystems" (Chapter 24). They discuss the principles of open education and how they can be integrated into blended learning to enhance accessibility and sustainability. Similarly, Pradeep Kumar Misra and Sanjaya Mishra discuss the importance of open knowledge in the transformation of academic institutions in "Making Higher Education Institutions as Open Knowledge Institutions" (Chapter 25). Such open knowledge systems involve open access, open data, and open educational resources to democratise knowledge and make it accessible to a wider audience. The authors provide strategies to implement such practices.

This review would not be complete without adding notes about the book's artwork, as it significantly enhances its thematic essence. The cover image by George Sfougaras is a small boat with a tree in it, rooted in rough seas, and inspired by the exodus of refugees and the images of people sailing across the Mediterranean from Turkey to the Greek islands. The news was and is saturated with shocking pictures of little boats and uprooted people, desperately seeking a better life, leaving all they had, and all that had sustained them behind (Sfougaras, 2023, 35-36). Using his own life story, Sfougaras shares the story of hope, where every uprooted person seeks a better life through their hopes and dreams. This cover image reflects the overall theme of resilience and possibility and summarises the narratives of hope that run through the book. In addition to the cover image, each section of the book begins with a carefully selected image by various artists, enhancing the focus and thematic depth of the different sections and adding a visual layer to the book's exploration of transformative educational futures.

Various perspectives in different conventional and non-conventional formats, such as stories, photos, poetry, visual storytelling, and a description of a quilt weaving, are presented in the book. These perspectives provide insight into resilience tactics and collective action at different higher education levels. The authors, from diverse backgrounds, contribute to a comprehensive understanding of the future of higher education. What makes *Education for good* particularly engaging is the diversity of its content, which contributes to addressing the complex and multifaceted global challenges in higher education. The book succeeds in incorporating voices from different geographical, cultural, and disciplinary backgrounds, offering a rich variety of ideas and experiences. This diversity allows for a multifaceted discussion in which critical voices can challenge the status quo, highlight different challenges, and envision transformative possibilities. It offers hopeful and innovative solutions across different contexts to create a more socially just world, as confirmed by Koole et al. (2023) and by Connell in the afterword of this book.

The book presents some minor shortcomings. First, due to the wide variety of topics covered, readers may find certain content and chapters lacking in depth. The chapters do not always provide detailed information but share a certain level of expertise and academic background. Second, although the book advocates systemic change to transform education for the good, implementing these changes across diverse institutional contexts remains a challenge.

The book is a timely and thought-provoking contribution to the debate on the future of higher education. It challenges readers to reconsider the traditional paradigm. The editors and contributors collectively call for a reimagined higher education system that serves the common good. For me, this collection stands out as a provocative and inspiring resource for universities, students, and academics, and I found it an informative read. It challenged me as a reader to rethink traditional paradigms and reflect on new possibilities for creating a more just academic landscape for all. The book is futuristic in nature as it not only offers a critique but also provides hope and purpose for the future trajectory of higher education. It courageously addresses the need to change values within universities and proposes concrete initiatives to address local and global challenges.

Education for good offers a comprehensive and thought-provoking collection for those interested in exploring such an alternative future for higher education and seeking innovative and hopeful perspectives. It stimulates the imagination and encourages action towards a more equitable, open and sustainable future for higher education.

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Reviewer Notes

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