

# RADICAL TEACHER

A SOCIALIST, FEMINIST, AND ANTI-RACIST JOURNAL ON THE THEORY AND PRACTICE OF TEACHING

## Publishing Revolution: Publishing Praxis in the Classroom

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PHOTO BY DESIGN ECOLOGIST

In her field-shaping, feminist, queer, and antiracist digital humanities piece, “#transform(ing)DH Writing and Research,” Moya Bailey discusses the possibilities for “digital alchemy” that online collaborative writing projects can foster. She writes: “Alchemy is the ‘science’ of turning regular metals into gold. When I discuss digital alchemy I am thinking of the ways that women of color, Black women in particular, transform everyday digital media into valuable social justice media magic that recodes failed dominant scripts” (n.p.). Propelled by Bailey’s model for digital alchemy as arising from both organized and spontaneous “circular collaboration” as well as by other projects in the queer and feminist digital humanities that seek to challenge individualistic conceptualizations of writing and knowledge-making, commercial models of publishing, and narrow understandings of access, this pedagogy piece reflects on a course I had the joy of designing and teaching in Fall 2018 in The Department of Gender, Sexuality, and Women’s Studies at Simon Fraser University (SFU), located on unceded Coast Salish Territory; the traditional territories of the Musqueam, Squamish, Tsleil-Waututh, and Kwikwetlem First Nations.

“Intersectional Feminist Journal Praxis” was a project-based course that asked students to collectively develop—from start to finish—an inaugural issue of an undergraduate journal. The goal of the course was to mobilize students to partake actively, at all levels, in intersectional, antiracist, and decolonial publishing through learning how to work, write, and create collaboratively while navigating the affordances and limitations of Open Journal Systems Software (OJS) (Public Knowledge Project). There were eight students in the course stemming from diverse backgrounds in terms of gender, sexuality, ability, racialization, and nationality (for example, students identified as Filipinx, black, Latinx, white, brown, of color), most of whom were settlers, and all of whom were in their early twenties. Because this was a 300-level Gender, Sexuality, and Women’s Studies course with prerequisite requirements, students were already well versed in many discussions around gender, sexuality, antiracism, and decolonization, and as such were politically akin in their feminist commitments and outlooks. For example, the value of an intersectional syllabus was never questioned as students were inclined to think of feminisms in the plural and of gender in conversation with race, sexuality, ability, and nationhood. Also, SFU is a university invested, at least theoretically, in decolonization, and it houses the Bill Reid Centre for Northwest Coast Studies (named after the renowned Haida artist), an Indigenous Student Centre, and a First Nations Studies Program. At the same time, the university stands on unceded territory, uses colonial English as its language of operation, and as most educational institutions on Turtle Island (in North America), benefits from the bounties of settler colonialism. While I was not able to access diversity statistics for the university (I am not sure if data on identities other than binary gender has been consistently collected at SFU), from my experience the student body is racially diverse though dominantly of white European and to a smaller extent East Asian descent, reflecting the composition of the city of Vancouver, British Columbia.

Throughout the semester of Fall 2018, students read and discussed readings on intersectionality in publishing studies, as well as conversed with guest speakers about approaches to digital publishing and about practical methods for collaboration. Students worked in teams around specific tasks like a call for papers, peer review, copyediting, and introduction-writing while employing critical publishing practices such as remaining reflexive about, for example, accessibility and power inequalities in processes of knowledge production. The inaugural issue of the journal which the students decided to name *Intersectional Apocalypse* was published on the theme of “Digital Dialogues: Navigating Online Spaces” and is now available online (<https://journals.lib.sfu.ca/index.php/ifj>). In this piece I begin with the context and framing of the course, exploring in particular the ways in which publishing is necessarily a political praxis, and one that can be effectively utilized in anti-oppressive projects of world-making. Following on this, I discuss the histories and praxes of feminist publishing in particular. In these first two sections, I draw mostly on research that the students themselves read in the course—that is intersectional feminist theories and intersectional approaches to journal-making and publishing studies. In the third section I draw on students’ words, as reflected in their assignments, to explore the innovative praxis they developed within the framework of the course. As I will explore, I treat students as authorities on building a feminist journal and on their experiences in the class, citing them as I would cite any other author. In the concluding section, I offer some thoughts for other instructors undertaking journal praxis pedagogy and consider my own role and affects in the project. The piece explores forms of “digital alchemy” that can flourish if students are empowered to work together towards an intersectional feminist online publishing project as well as the need for collaborative approaches that are attuned to crankiness, frustration, tiredness, and anger (Bailey n.p.).<sup>1</sup>

## Publishing as an Anti-Oppressive Praxis

As Simone Murray and others have noted, until recently there has been a dearth of scholarly attention to the processes, or as Jennifer Gilley remarks, the “mundane realities” of feminist publishing (Tanselle qtd. in Gilley 142). Even while students routinely read the knowledge produced, curated, and hosted by feminist and social justice-oriented journals, they rarely have opportunities to think about the ways in which that knowledge is made, or the sometimes darker undercurrents of exploitation and emotional labor that fuel knowledge production. Sometimes termed a “labor of love,” journal publishing is often feminized work, for no pay and little recognition (McLaughlin). While publication in top-tiered feminist journals remains key to getting hired, becoming tenured, and being seen, read, and recognized in feminist communities, the editorial work that makes this career advancement possible remains largely uncredited. And yet, feminist journals, broadly conceived, have mushroomed over the last decades, creating an intricate galaxy of feminist knowledge-production. Journals such as *Ada: A Journal of Gender, New Media and Technology*; *Feral Feminisms*; *Decolonization: Indigeneity, Education and Society*; and before that *Wagadu: A Journal of Transnational*

*Women's and Gender Studies* and many others, are experimenting with the affordances of online spaces and multimodality while pushing the theoretical frames of various fields. Constituting a space accessible to anyone with internet access, open access feminist journals create spaces for community, for sharing and making knowledge without a price tag attached, and for challenging academic journal paywalls. Yet, despite the disruptive potential of online publishing, publishing in all its forms can be both a transformative, justice-oriented cultural practice as much as one that reifies power imbalances, oppresses the already oppressed, and re-states rather than remakes knowledge boundaries.

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For example, while many lauded the rise of online publishing as making possible a new way to access and democratize knowledge, Vincent Larivière, Stefanie Haustein, and Philippe Mongeon in "The Oligopoly of Academic Publishers in the Digital Era," demonstrated that online publishing not only replicates but aggravates power imbalances of traditional publishing models with the ownership of the majority of journals in the hands of 5 commercial publishers (Reed-Elsevier, Wiley-Blackwell, Springer, Taylor and Francis being the top 4, with the social sciences being most affected by this trend). While the costs of production have decreased for these publishers with digitization, the costs at which they sell journal bundles to libraries has increased, dramatically increasing their profit margins to be similarly inflated to those of big pharma and the automobile industry. In response to these outrageous findings, the authors of the study ask: "What do we need publishers for?" indicating that "it is up to the [academic] community to change the system" (Larivière, Haustein, and Mongeon n.p.).

Also, while "open access" has been widely celebrated as increasing access to knowledge and thwarting the commercialization of knowledge, the very idea of "gold standard" open access unloads the responsibility of making work accessible onto authors themselves, asking that they pay thousands of dollars to make their work free to the public. Further, even in its radical so-called "Diamond" forms, open access, as Kimberly Christen discusses, relies on colonial understandings of knowledge sharing that thief and misuse Indigenous and Traditional Knowledge. For example, Christen points out that Indigenous knowledges under settler colonialism have always been regarded as "open" and free for *settler* use, even when they were created with only particular Indigenous nations, genders, or people with specific community roles in mind. In other words, the

abuse of settler-Indigenous relations (by settlers) has created expectations that Indigenous knowledges, materials, and ceremonies *should* be free for settler enjoyment and learning. Further still, because some Indigenous knowledges and Traditional Knowledge is held in common by all people of a certain nation rather than by a sole author as is common in Western settler contexts, it has been easy to "take" Indigenous work without seeking consent, permission, or payment. In such cases, knowledge that belongs to a specific Indigenous nation, ends up being legally "owned" by someone else (Younging).

"Openness at any and all costs," according to Christen, while a response to corporate greed, can mask the manners by which knowledge is gathered in colonial contexts, rendering knowledge itself "innocent" and the property of all even while many Indigenous peoples have limited access to their own histories (2874). What is the difference, then, from Indigenous standpoints, in making work developed by one's community accessible to a broader public of settlers from centuries of knowledge theft by explorers and museums? In response to these concerns, scholars and communities have developed alternative access frameworks such as Traditional Knowledge Commons (TK) licensing agreements (as a response to Creative Commons licensing) and Mukurtu CMS. In contrast to other open access platforms and licensing systems, Mukurtu and TK are built with and by Indigenous communities and with Indigenous ethics in mind. Thus, stories, cultural materials, and knowledge can be shared how, if, and to the degree that communities want to share them, restricting, for example, settler access to materials where desirable (Mukurtu CMS; Local Contexts). These technologies are knowledge interventions that challenge Western conceptualizations of "intellectual property regimes" and serve a "wider range of ethical and cultural concerns" (Christen 2888, 2889). Grounded in nation-specific protocol, Indigenous ethics strive for nation-specificity, including around how knowledge is understood and shared, and demand agreements that are mutually beneficial (Younging, 15–16, 95–96).

Questions of peer review are similarly complex and often underexplored. While there needs to be exploration of how peer review operates in relation to settler colonialism, it seems clear that if stemming from Indigenous ethics and knowledges, the paradigm of peer review, as much as all aspects of publishing, would be fundamentally rethought. Scholars such as Korey Jackson consider the genealogies of peer review as a form of knowledge assessment, arguing that while peer review seems like a common-sense practice, it is actually a historically contingent one, a "fluid genre of scholarship" (n.p.). Arguably, peer review today is a labor-intensive and incomplete form of assessment that offloads labor onto academics as a means to save journals time and money (Larivière, Haustein, and Mongeon). Despite efforts at decreasing reviewer bias, double anonymous/"double blind" (rather than eponymous) forms of review can function as a license for meanness, negligence, orthodoxy, and entitlement among reviewers (Pontille and Torny). Instead of accepting this system, as Jackson argues, peer review should continue to evolve, and we should, in his words, "continue to watch the watchers" rather than let one mode of assessment dominate the field (n.p.).

Also, in *Editing as Cultural Practice in Canada*, Dean Irvine and Smaro Kamboureli frame editing itself as a cultural practice, in the sense that it “denotes ... collective traditions and customs ... operating as a mode of communal labour and agency ... bring[ing] forth collective products of lived experiences” (2). In this sense, editors play a key role as creators of culture, as well as its practitioners. Editors, including and especially feminist journal editors, as Kate Eichhorn and Heather Milne frame it, undertake both the material production of bringing work into print (or virtually, into online spaces), and the affective or emotional (immaterial) work of creating networks, communities, worlds, and, sometimes, revolutions. This publishing work can dismantle canons and build up exquisitely curated conversations that center minoritarian voices and communities or it may function as business as usual. Importantly, the very processes and methods of publishing are in many ways the opposite of what is prized and rewarded in academia: collaborative, interactive, grounded in the mundane, and invisible.

## Feminist Publishing Histories and Praxes

Historically, publishing, print, and online media have been key to movement struggles and revolutions. For example, publishing played a key role in the resurgence of feminism in the 60s and 70s. The development of countless presses across North America, including such presses as The Kitchen Table Press by Barbara Smith and Audre Lorde (and others) and Daughters, Inc. modeled on Virginia and Leonard Woolf’s Hogarth Press, alongside the creation of over 200 women’s bookstores that promoted and distributed this work, made possible the amplification of voices otherwise excluded from white male canons (Harker and Konchar Farr). Feminist periodicals likewise exploded over North America, and as Anne Mather’s 1974 report on feminist publishing indicates, between March 1968 and August 1973, there were over 560 new feminist periodicals in the US. Similarly, in Canada, over 900 feminist periodical titles (many of them short-lived and in small circulation) emerged between the 60s and early 90s (Mather; Jordan and Meagher). These periodicals not only published some of the most famous feminist pieces of the era but also formed the precursors to contemporary feminist academic publications. In the 60s and 70s, as much as today, writing and publishing was a form of antisexist and antiracist activism in itself, founded on both the material, mundane realities of getting shit done as much as on the affective circuits of feminist fabledom and friendship. Feminist communications circuits included writers, readers, editors, printers, publishers, distributors, and retailers (Travis 276; Darnton). This women in print movement was about creating feminist methods for publishing, producing feminist content, building networks, and providing sites for political feminist engagement (Jordan and Meagher). Both the political and the mundane were deemed equally valid, vital, and central. For example, women were encouraged to learn the craft of printing as much as the business of it, fueled by a socialist-inspired class consciousness invested in blurring the hierarchies between manual and mental labor, skill-set acquisition and political development (Travis 280). In other words, *praxis* was at the heart of the women in print

movement of the era, and as Trysh Travis writes, “feminist theory—accurate ideas about what women are and where they are situated within the structures of power and culture—develop[ed] in concert with and as a result of women’s development of practical skills” (280). Through a “dialectical relationship between skills and politics” (280) a feminist publishing praxis was formed.

Drawing on theorists of praxis such as Amanda Lock Swarr and Richa Nagar, praxis-based approaches to research and pedagogy are reflexive, alerted to how practice alters theory, refusing top down generation of knowledge. Feminist praxis holds onto the radical notion that we are all theorists in our own right and that knowledge comes in varied forms that should not be subject to a hierarchy. Feminist journals have always been fundamentally about praxis, holding method and process to be as vital as outcome, and being innovative in their inclusion of poetry, art, and hybrid genres as central to the work of building knowledge as the sharing of academic articles. Feminist journals are always in the process of praxis, which in Swarr and Nagar’s words involves “constant negotiations and retheorizations ... through alliances, languages, and critiques that disrupt dominant logics and imaginaries ... creating radicalized practices for institutional transformation and sociopolitical justice” (Swarr and Nagar 18). For many feminist theorists and practitioners, praxis needs to be intersectional in order to “broaden and radically redefine” genealogies of feminism by creating online dialogue, communities, and insisting on the validity of feminist of color perspectives (Loza n.p.). In this sense, building journals is often both collaborative and coalitional work that does not insist on similarity of experience but creates opportunities for multiple forms of engagement.

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Praxis is also grounded in a dynamic approach to collaboration, one that involves recognizing the multi-personed work that flows into the publication of an individual author’s work and the reality that knowledge production is collaborative. This involves making visible all labor that is involved in a project. Bailey, with whom I opened this piece, discusses collaboration as a process that needs to benefit all parties involved and be for the benefit of all communities touched by the process. While academia continues to reward single author texts, digital projects including journal projects can foster, in her words, “a different methodological practice” toward inventing, remaking, challenging, and critiquing the powers that be (Bailey n.p.). The same principle holds true for Indigenous ethics, which are founded on reciprocity and relationship-building (Younging). Notably, collaboration should not signify lack of discord, tension, or disagreement. In fact, as students in the class had an

opportunity to explore, journal praxis is entwined in the affective modalities of both concord and discord among journal collaborators and readers. In other words, collaboration does not always feel good and studying these more negative affects and events—frustrations, tiredness, friendship tensions, uneven workloads—is an important entry point to thinking about power in collaborative settings.

## Publishing Praxis as a Composition Pedagogy

Drawing on publishing praxis, the “Intersectional Feminist Journal Praxis” course was fundamentally invested in thinking about the ways that journals can function as an arm of postsecondary institutions and as such are often entwined in elitism as well as racist and settler colonial legacies. Bell hooks has argued that while the 60s and 70s saw feminists aggressively challenging the status quo, feminism became depoliticized in the 1980s through both “lifestyle feminisms” and the migration of feminist engagement to the institutionalized worlds of women’s studies classrooms (9). In hooks’ account, the university depoliticizes and enervates rather than ignites feminist struggle. Educational institutions across North America are well documented in their functioning as sites for the reproduction of sexist values, the stratification of class along racial lines, as well as the fostering of white settler colonial entitlement. All the same, as La paperson argues in *A Third University Is Possible*, universities have also held within them spaces of resurgence and transformation. As part of the work of thinking about postsecondary institutions as sites of power and inequality, it is vital to think about the role that journals play. For example, while online feminist journals provide sites where diverse forms and theoretical traditions of knowledge can be celebrated and shared, it is instrumental to question how journals contribute to anti-oppressive pedagogies in terms of *how* they produce knowledge as much as in terms of what knowledge they produce (Verhaeghe, Przybylo, and Patel).

Thinking about journals presented opportunities for students to explore a “blend of feminist theory and publishing practicability” (Gilley 142) —reflecting on how intersectional feminist theories are put into practice and how praxis can inform grounded theorizing aimed at social justice and anti-oppressive world-making. Or, drawing on Cassius Adair and Lisa Nakamura’s reflection on the anthology *This Bridge Called My Back*, which the students read for the class, building feminist knowledge collaboratively through books or anthologies constitutes a “networked pedagogy” that is as much about relationships and forming kin networks as it is about the final product. Through the class, students were encouraged to build such a “networked pedagogy,” undertaking the elaborate, lengthy, and detail-oriented process of creating an online journal with the understanding that, in the words of Barbara Smith and the popular slogan from the women in print movement, “freedom of the press belongs to those who own the press” (qtd. in Adair and Nakamura 261; also see Smith).

To explore how learning about collaborative intersectional feminist journal-making looks like from the

students’ eyes, I rely on a thematic analysis of two course assignments—a reflective logbook and a reading analysis—submitted by the eight students. In drawing on the students’ voices (and naming those students who wanted to be named), I employ an attention to the mundane practicalities of journal making as well as write *with* the students, rather than about them, centralizing them as interlocutors in this piece.

For students, this course was a unique opportunity within their degrees to practice theory and hone praxis. Offered in Fall 2018, the course was 13 weeks in length and took place twice a week for 2 hours at a time in classrooms on the Burnaby Campus of SFU. Each class usually involved a discussion of readings, collective decision-making, and a feminist media lab during which students worked together on the journal. Weekly themes included: intersectional genealogies, praxis, peer review, journals and institutionalization, knowledge sharing, publishing and social change, access and disability, collaboration, zines, digital labor, invisibility, and archiving—roughly corresponding to the journal tasks underfoot (for a full syllabus, see Przybylo). Students learned to think critically about publishing and knowledge production, with a focus on topics such as open access, feminist periodicals, and Indigenous and decolonial approaches to copyright and knowledge sharing. For example, through course readings and discussions, student Maki Cairns learned that: “Access to knowledge should not exist as a hierarchical structure, it should be an equal playing field ... Also, a lot of journals rely on academic jargon which is inaccessible for a lot of society. Language itself becomes a huge barrier to access to information.” Stemming from an understanding of how knowledge—even feminist and anti-oppressive knowledge—can be co-opted, packaged, and resold, students were encouraged to adopt a radical approach to publishing that focused on challenging essentialized stories around knowledge-creation. This can be seen in this statement by anonymous student 2: “By making sure our work is not only free and easily accessible through the internet, but also ethical and anti-oppressive, we are ensuring that our work is not only ‘white’ feminist, but intersectionally feminist.”

Yet early in the course students reviewed how intersectionality itself can often be co-opted, sold, or appropriated by the marketplace, considering the 2011 piece published by Flavia Dzodan, “My Feminism will be Intersectional or it will be Bullshit,” and the ways in which Dzodan’s words became imprinted on feminist memorabilia, often misquoting her words, misspelling Dzodan’s name, and sometimes not citing Dzodan as the originator of the phraseology in the first place (Romano; Dzodan). Therefore, in the words of student Sarah McCarthy, the journal project was “about not just saying things are feminist, but actually engaging with intersectional feminist action.” They go on: “In creating our journal, we are actively engaging in bridging theory and practice, embedding our theory into the work we are doing, and working to expand our theory as we work.”

One way in which the class focused on action was through the work of collaborative decision-making. When faced with decisions such as what to name the journal or what issue to frame the Call For Papers around, we undertook a decision matrix model introduced to the class

by artist, curator, and guest speaker Xavier Aguirre Palacios. The matrix is a time-intensive but compelling method for decision-making that encourages all voices to be heard in dialogue rather than in competition with one another. It asks that each student present a solution to a task at hand (as, for example, with a suggested theme for the first issue) and then that every option is compared against every other option by every student. The tool encourages each student, regardless of how quiet in class, to offer a solution and to weigh in on every decision. As student Navi Rai wrote in her reflection, "I very much appreciate how each individual person in our class is so unique, and each individual creates work differently; yet we somehow can come to a commonplace and collaborative zone." Remarkably, even though each student came to the class with different experiences of marginalization as well as of privilege (as with being mostly settlers), students found a collective voice and celebrated each others' words and work in the class. Kaiya Jacob writes that "we are made up of many different people of different marginalised identities. When discussing topics as a group, we make a point of allowing space for each person to speak, and for their perspectives to be heard and understood. ... Through our open and collaborative approach to the course, each person's perspective holds so much weight because we recognise each other's ability to broaden our personal and group frames." Drawing on Kimberlé Crenshaw's concept of "frames" as making the tracking of injustice and the instituting of social transformation possible, students were encouraged to see the value of honing their own frames while working with each other to both trouble and expand them.

When reflecting on whether our first issue should be on grounding Indigenous issues, including those of Musqueam, Squamish, Tsleil-Waututh, and Kwikwetlem in the Vancouver-area, the class had difficult discussions around most of us being settlers and whether or not soliciting submissions from Indigenous communities would actually benefit those communities. Naiya Tsang writes: "The process of choosing our topic was lengthy, rather labour-intensive, emotionally-draining, and perhaps not a practical fit for all situations due to the length of time it takes to use it properly, yet it was and is an important aspect in the production of this journal." In the end students chose instead to focus on "Digital Dialogues: Navigating Online Spaces" for the first issue, recognizing that they were not equipped with the time, resources, and connections to facilitate the deep relating work that an issue on Indigenous Vancouver perspectives would demand.<sup>2</sup> One student, Maki Cairns, contemplated the boundaries of the project: "Maybe [Audre] Lorde would disagree with our journal because we are using the 'master's tools' in a way, we are still using a system that was originally created for a privileged few to access (Lorde). The journal is trying to push these confines by doing things like providing transcripts, audio recordings, and being open access, but we are still limited in what we can do." Indeed, as shown by students' reflections, the vast potential of

practicing intersectional and antiracist feminisms and pushing the limits of theory in and through action, comes with its obstacles.

Yet the course was successful in stimulating an empowered sense of competency and motivation in regard to taking feminist action. For example, anonymous student 1, who wrote how little they talk with friends about academic topics usually, reported: "this class was integral [to me] because it gave me the push to reach out to my peers and share the CFP [Call for Papers]." By the end of the course they described how practicing the theory that is learned in class gives them a hope that their actions can make the world better in some way: "I am filled with immense joy to know that, in some small way—as an atom or a cell or a pixel on the screen—we were able to leave our mark on the world through our work."

Thinking about questions of scope, aims and goals, access, peer review, licensing, copyediting, and design, students in the class were unwilling to accept any business as usual model for approaching the praxis of publishing. To challenge the colonial primacy of English, students asked that we compile a list of the languages we were competent in. Our list included English, French, Polish, Hindi, Punjabi, and Spanish, and the students specified on the CFP that they would be accepting submissions in these languages. While all the submissions but one were in English (we received one in Spanish), the class saw its vision for the journal best reflected in holding the possibility for multilingual articulations open.

In a similarly innovative way and in relation to the limitations of peer review as discussed earlier, the students decided to remake peer review as a site of workshopping and collaboration. As they collectively wrote: "*Intersectional Apocalypse* aims to uplift and nurture knowledge in all forms, including through our peer review process. To do this, we believe it is imperative to push the boundaries of what peer review is and how it is conducted" (<https://journals.lib.sfu.ca/index.php/ifj/reviewpolicy>). Their solution to developing a networked and nurturing model of a workshop-based peer review involved asking contributors to also act as reviewers. While this sounds simple, it was modeled on imagining what both authors and



**FIGURE 1:** A SCREEN CAPTURE FROM THE OPENING PAGE OF THE JOURNAL, WHICH THE STUDENTS COLLECTIVELY DEVELOPED ON OJS, TITLED *INTERSECTIONAL APOCALYPSE*. AVAILABLE ONLINE AT: [HTTPS://JOURNALS.LIB.SFU.CA/INDEX.PHP/IFJ](https://journals.lib.sfu.ca/index.php/ifj).

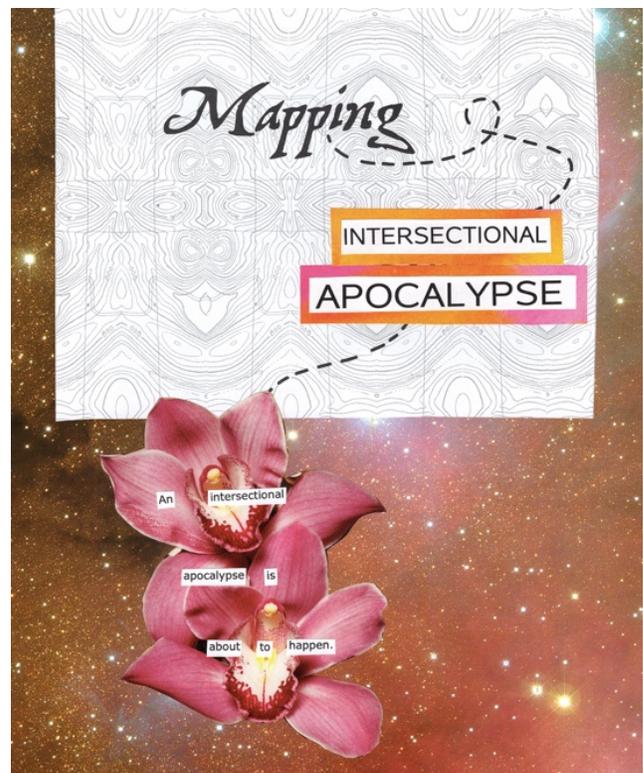
reviewers can gain from the process of sharing and improving each others' work toward building a whole greater than its parts. An uncommon practice for most academic peer reviewed journals, this circular model could greatly benefit journal issues, encouraging collaboration, development, and learning, rather than competition. Further, students wanted guidelines for reviewers to keep in mind the humanity of both the reviewer and author, calling for respectful engagement and self-care. Other interventions the class undertook were creating audio files of all the pieces toward greater accessibility and including TK commons licensing as an option for contributors. Through focusing on the methods, processes, and "mundane realities" of how knowledge is created, students undertook a fundamentally political project (Tanselle qtd. in Gilley).<sup>3</sup>

However, the risk of getting involved and absorbed in intersectional and antiracist feminist praxis in class might also prove to be too labor-intensive for full-time undergraduate students. Working as feminist creators is routinely emotionally involved, labor-intensive, feminized work, with little monetary reward or recognition attached to it. As with many things in life, if things go smoothly, no one notices, and if they do not, reputations and bridges can be burned. More broadly, undertaking this project, I continued to be concerned by the possibility that I might engrain in students' habits of free and unpaid work that they already likely face in many other work environments such as student work, activism, and with unpaid internships. In one reflection, an anonymous student comments on the experience of intentionally not identifying as Indigenous in the course so that she would not have to be called upon to do the emotionally taxing work of speaking for multiple Indigenous communities and nations in addition to her own, a position which she was not comfortable with. She discussed how even while she enjoyed the work in the class, she noticed that students assumed that she was like many of them, a settler, leading her to painful moments of invisibility and increased pressure to come out to the class. Exploring some of these more difficult elements of collaborative work within settler colonial contexts—that is the tensions of "using the master's tools"—the final sections of the course focused on reflecting on labor, emotional work, as well as the challenges of being publicly present online as feminist content-makers (Lorde). Students learned firsthand how the realities of limited funding and time can compromise the vision of a project. As Kaiya Jacob wrote, "We've aimed to challenge some of the critiques [of digital labour] by raising money to pay our contributors, but despite our efforts, the reality of unpaid labour remains a part of our journal." While the class sought out fundraising to compensate contributors to the journal and was successful in providing about \$50 to each contributor and to the artist featured in the introduction, there was not sufficient money to remunerate their own work as journal publishers and creators.

In her reflection on a class discussion on uncompensated labor, student Naiya Tsang wrote: "Many of us would love to continue with this journal, but also recognize that there is very little financial benefit; at the moment, we are paying (tuition) to produce this journal – trading in financial currency for a tenuous cultural currency."

Not only was the work of this social justice project uncompensated but, on top of it, it was fueled by difficult feelings associated with experiences of injustice, racism, sexism, settler colonialism, and marginalization. According to student Kayla Uren: "Our journal highlights marginalized experiences, and sensitive voices and emotional topics. I feel that there is a lot of anger that initiates the journal's existence." It is then no surprise that in their final reflection, anonymous student 1 wrote: "Having completed my portion of the journal production, I feel ... it was draining, ... and the most exhausting part was the need to always be 'logged in.'" For example, one of the most intensive periods for students involved hacking OJS technology through learning the basics of coding with PHP language. Because it was my first time offering this course, I myself was unprepared for the challenges that using and hacking OJS would present, as well as the extent to which students would actually need to learn how to code in order to maneuver the journal in the direction that aligned with their aims and vision. The final result was imperfect, providing a living trace of the labor of making a journal from scratch.

Following these accounts of some of the more troubling aspects of collaborative feminist publishing which challenge celebratory ideals of feminist sisterhood and camaraderie, I want to advocate for honing a cranky and killjoy-grounded



**FIGURE 2:** A COLLAGE CREATED BY STUDENTS (NAVI RAI, NAIYA TSANG, KAYLA UREN) FOR THE INTRODUCTION TO THE INAUGURAL ISSUE. IT READS: "MAPPING // INTERSECTIONAL APOCALYPSE // AN INTERSECTIONAL APOCALYPSE IS ABOUT TO HAPPEN."

approach to the free labor involved in collaborative writing and making projects. Digital humanities work, especially when feminist, antiracist, queer, and decolonial, is incredibly fulfilling and energizing. It transforms us into doers, makers, and activists. Yet, celebrating the work the class has undertaken, I assert the importance of introducing to

students their right to be dissatisfied, frustrated, angry, tired, and cranky, understanding these modes of unhappiness as integral to the affect arsenal of feminist publishing. Sara Ahmed argued that happiness is used to as a tool of social regulation, and even more so in regard to people who are oppressed. In this sense, happiness and being happy are “not so much a right as a responsibility” (Ahmed 9; Frye 2–3). In relation to the work of digital humanities and feminist anti-oppressive publishing projects, happiness is often packaged as “hope labor”—or the idea that through undertaking difficult, monotonous, thankless, and unpaid tasks a payment scheme such as a job will be lying in wait for us around the bend (Kuehn and Corrigan). This feeds into the capitalist myth that “success happens to good people and failure is just a consequence of a bad attitude” (Halberstam; see also Ehrenreich). Encouraging students to be skeptical of models that defer payment and recognition, the students undertook fundraising to pay journal contributors and together we kept space open for a cranky, angry, and killjoy approach to conditions of labor exploitation within the university. “Cranky collaboration” thus emerged as a possible addition to the “circular collaboration” and “digital alchemy” models with which I started the piece (Bailey). For while there is power in working together, collaboration itself also too frequently becomes co-optable by the marketplace. It is my hope that cranky collaboration indulges in the joy of feminist publishing and digital humanities models while also reminding us that difficult feelings are part of coming together as feminists invested in social change and world-making.

## Concluding Thoughts: Can Everyone Teach this Course?

“Intersectional Feminist Journal Praxis” was a nourishing and rewarding experience also for me, the instructor. Due to its collaborative framework, I had the opportunity to invite guest speakers, host field trips (such as to the Vancouver Public Library’s zine collection), work with the Public Knowledge Project, and receive feedback from colleagues at The Institute for the Study of Teaching and Learning in the Disciplines at SFU. Most importantly, the course invited mentorship between the students and I in a way that most courses do not, because of the nature of the project, the small class size, and the inimitable jelling of the group. After the class, I worked with students on other projects, met them for coffees, and some of the class and I went on a hiking daytrip. Yet the reality of innovative teaching, teaching that strives for new combinations of methods and technologies alongside reflexive feminist learning, is that it is itself labor-intensive and emotionally demanding. If I recall correctly, I spent some three months fine-tuning the details of the syllabus so that the intersectional theory, hands-on praxis, and in-class activities would align. In other words, despite the mentorship, collaborative, pedagogical, and friendship opportunities this course afforded me, academic contexts in which teaching innovation is encouraged yet under-rewarded, make the design and delivery of such courses often unthinkable. Tiredness is a difficult affect that I regularly face in my

pedagogical practice. I am asking too much not only of my students but also of myself. Ironically, this is just as true of editorial work—it provides an endless stream of work tasks, camouflages this work under the moniker of “Editor” and a published final product, and is too often not properly financially remunerated and professionally rewarded within academia. Editing, like teaching, also demands a happy, accommodating public face that serves to mask tiredness, frustration, anger, and crankiness—not to mention pain, loss, irregularity, and mental health struggles. In both celebrating and remaining critical of the important work of anti-oppressive innovation in composition pedagogies as this special issue strives to do, I suggest that we begin with ourselves. We each need to ask ourselves, persistently, whether our pedagogical commitments to teaching students how to live lives critical of oppression are reflected in how we teach ourselves to work for institutions that are all too hungry for our excitement, commitment, and time.

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## Endnotes

1. After designing this course, I applied for a Teaching and Learning Development Grant through Simon Fraser University, which provided me with funding to hire a PhD Research Assistant, Shahar Shapira, who worked with me to collect “data” on how the course was taking shape and how students were learning from this project-based experiment in pedagogy. Data was collected by drawing on assignments the students were already completing on the journal and was used with their permission.
2. For the Call for Papers the students came up with, visit: “Digital Dialogues: Navigating Online Spaces: Call for Papers” at <https://tinyurl.com/ycc67ff8>.
3. For a full Table of Contents for the inaugural issue, see *Intersectional Apocalypse* (<https://journals.lib.sfu.ca/index.php/ifj>).

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