

(Re)Learning to teach in contexts of crises

Editors: Nyna Amin and Rubby Dhunpath



Alternation African Scholarship Book Series, Volume #08

(Re)Learning to Teach in Contexts of Crises

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A Note from the Editors

This book arose from an invitation to contribute a volume on the impacts of COVID-19 on higher education institutions by the Editor-in-Chief of *Alternation*. We received close to sixty manuscripts. Twenty-seven were sent out for double blind peer review and a final selection of fifteen was made. The chapters cover a range of issues pertinent to higher education and the authors include recent PhD graduates, postdoctoral fellows, and experienced social scientists and philosophers.

The number of submissions gives a clear indication of the influence of the current conditions on higher education knowledge production. It is our belief that this body of scholarship adds value to our understanding about teaching during a crisis and beyond that, to unexpected conditions that will arise without forewarning in years to come. Its contribution is pertinent for our emotional and cognitive well-being because it is evidence of resilience, and deep and insightful learning that those in higher education have gained – and more importantly, that it does not matter where, and when the (re)learning, learning and unlearning took place. It matters that all kinds of learnings are taking place and are worth sharing.

We do not offer a commentary on each chapter. Instead, we leave it to readers to interpret the texts based on their own contexts, and philosophical, conceptual and theoretical preferences. However, we must declare, that the first chapter by Amin, Dhunpath and Devroop, outlines conceptually and theoretically the notion of ‘(re)learning to teach’ as a problematic imperative emerging from the pandemic-generated crisis. It is not a conception that we imposed on the authors. We provided a wide berth for interpretation of the notion. Furthermore, there was no expectation for a particular paradigm or ideology despite our preferences for critical, poststructural and deconstructive worldviews. With more than seven billion individuals inhabiting the planet, it would be foolish to imagine that particular worldviews should dominate the interpretation and analysis of our inquiries.

The inclusion of the Spivak chapter in a format that differs from the rest in the compendium reflects our commitment to dissension. We chose not to amend the chapter for the sake of uniformity as its impact and power is expressed in the style the author is renowned for. We think you will agree with our decision.

In keeping with the editors’ minimalistic approach, we chose not to thematize the chapters or to place them within sections. Each chapter, readers will note, raises multiple issues and concerns, and the restrictions placed by themes and sections undermine complexity and connectivity. As a result, the sequencing of chapters is based on the logic (and convenience) of the

alphabetical order convention (of the first author in each case). The chapters are interesting takes and include philosophical posturing and case studies in a variety of contexts and countries.

We would like to acknowledge the assistance of Dr Laura Campbell for overseeing the peer review process, Dr Connie Israel and Ms Barbara Kabange for language editing of the texts, Mr Abdulbaqi Badru (PhD candidate) for the cover design and Prof Chats Devroop for formatting all chapters and assisting with troubling matters of the ‘technology kind’.

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