INNOVATIVE PEDAGOGIES AND ETHICS IN THE AGE OF AI

Edited by Katia Moles and Laura Robinson

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VOLUME 30

INNOVATIVE PEDAGOGIES AND ETHICS IN THE AGE OF AI

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STUDIES IN MEDIA AND
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INNOVATIVE PEDAGOGIES AND ETHICS IN THE AGE OF AI

Edited By

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INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

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ABOUT THE VOLUME EDITORS

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Cara Chiaraluce is a teaching professor with expertise in the fields of carework, gender and family, and health. Chiaraluce has published articles in the Journal of Family Issues and American Behavioral Scientist, and her book Becoming an Expert Caregiver: How Structural Flaws Shape Autism Carework and Community (Rutgers University Press, 2024) examines the process through which lay women become expert caregivers to provide the best care for their children. The expert caregiver is shaped by cumulative frustrations in U.S. care systems, particularly in education and healthcare, and constraining flaws in entrenched cultural ideals of gender, family, and ability.

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Konstantinos Sipitanos holds an MA in Linguistics (2016) and a PhD (2020) in Language Teaching and Participatory Research Methodologies from the University of Crete. He works as a researcher at the University of Crete, as an adjunct lecturer at the University of Athens, and as a fellow tutor in the Hellenic Open University. His publications include articles in journals such as *Social Semiotics, EAR Journal, Punctum International Journal of Semiotics, IJEL Studies,* and *EURO-JCS*, as well as chapters in edited volumes. He has also authored books published by Routledge, Palgrave Macmillan, and Gutenberg. He has participated in EU-funded Erasmus+ projects (CICADA, BackpackID, COALITION, SHIELD against Disinfo) and national research initiatives. His research focuses on literacies, social semiotics, critical discourse analysis, participatory action research, and student voice.

Stephany Vallejo earned a Teacher Credential in the master's program at Dominican University after graduating from Sonoma State with a degree in Sociology. At Dominican, as a Teacher of Color (TOC) herself, Vallejo researched and authored her master's thesis on racialized dynamics. Vallejo is a Social Studies teacher at Griffin Academy in Vallejo in California and strives to educate minds through creative methods to help future generations achieve their goals and prosper in their lifetime.

Julie B. Wiest is Professor of Sociology at West Chester University of Pennsylvania. Her research focuses on the sociocultural contexts of mass media, digital/new media technologies, and violence. She co-edits the Interpretive Lenses in Sociology book series and is Senior Crime and Media Editor for the Studies in Media and Communications book series, for which she edited two volumes on crime and media. Wiest has authored or co-authored three scholarly monographs, as well as chapters and articles in a variety of edited volumes and academic

journals, including *American Behavioral Scientist, Criminal Justice Studies, First Monday, Howard Journal of Communications,* and the *International Journal of Communication.*

Jaime D. Wright, PhD, is a Lecturer in the Religious Studies Department at Santa Clara University, where he has taught since 2017. His teaching and research focus on religion and medicine, symbolic interactionist approaches to understanding lived religion, and spatial-based learning. He has presented his research on the use of GIS in the classroom, hospital chaplaincy, and breast cancer and religion at academic conferences and published on subjects such as body modification, and social support during breast cancer. He has served as co-chair of the Living Religion Collaborative in the Religious Studies Department at Santa Clara University since 2019. Wright is a co-PI on a Faith and Health Grant through Interfaith America and is a co-founder of SCU's Health, Humanities, and Interfaith Collaborative (HHIC) that emerged from the grant in 2024.

Emily S. Wu deeply explores in her research, teaching and community work, the diasporic, transnational, and cross-cultural experiences and understandings of health and healing, community-building, and social justice. Currently teaching in the Social Justice department, she is a religionist and ethnographer with expertise in Asian Religions. She serves as a steering committee member (2009-2026) of the Religions, Medicines, and Healing unit of American Academy of Religion. As the Assistant Director of Dominican University of California's Service-Learning program, she works closely with non-profit community partners in Marin County to facilitate student engagement in the local community. She is also the Board President of Asian American Alliance of Marin, a racial justice advocacy non-profit organization in Marin County, CA.

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SECTION 1

INTRODUCTIONS

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CHAPTER 1

RE-ENGINEERING ETHICAL PEDAGOGIES: ADVANCING TEACHER–SCHOLARS IN THE AI ERA

Katia Moles, Laura Robinson, and Christina Dai

Santa Clara University, USA

ABSTRACT

This volume examines one of the most important teacher–scholar projects of our time: innovating pedagogies and ethics in the age of artificial intelligence (AI). The volume brings together scholarship in three sections: Introductions, Digital Agency and Giving Students Voice, and Embodied Pedagogies. In this volume, we curate scholarship that engages with pedagogical governance for educators, digital storytelling, inclusive pedagogy, discussion boards, online student engagement, autoethnography, documentary-making, ecological consciousness, study practices, community-centered learning, and Geographic Information System (GIS) mapping. Taken together, this body of research demonstrates that meaningful learning is not only cognitive but also emotional, relational, and contextual, which requires pedagogies that attend to empathy, belonging, and lived experience. Across diverse contexts, educators are provided with pedagogical tools to support students in developing critical thinking and reflection skills while also fostering social responsibility and a commitment to the common good. All these elements are essential to this timely, interdisciplinary teacher–scholar project to support ethical AI in education.

Keywords: Tech ethics; pedagogy; artificial intelligence; digital; innovative education; learning; teaching

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INTRODUCTION

Under the intellectual leadership of Katia Moles, this volume probes one of the most important teacher–scholar projects of our time: innovating pedagogies and ethics in the age of AI. It builds on our previous scholarship on pedagogies for a digital world (Moles, 2016, 2024; Moles et al., 2024; Robinson et al., 2026), as well as our work on the inequalities that shape educational trajectories in an age of ubiquitous digital connection. The volume opens with Section 1, *Introductions*, beginning with this piece, "Re-engineering Ethical Pedagogies: Advancing Teacher-Scholars in the AI Era" by Katia Moles, Laura Robinson, and Christina Dai. This chapter lays out the framework for the volume with a synthesis of the authors' key contributions.

Continuing the first section, the next chapter is "A Critical Review of Applications, Agency, and the Imperative of Pedagogical Governance for Educators at the Center of Artificial Intelligence in Higher Education" by Ressa Uli Patrissia (2026). As Patrissia writes: "Artificial intelligence (AI) has evolved from a marginal interest to a fundamental structural element of modern higher education." The author points to a fundamental need to focus on the ideal combination: the technological innovation must function well, be valuable for teaching and learning, and ethically employed.

Meeting this need, Patrissia engages with a large corpus of scholarship, including empirical studies, policy papers, and theoretical works. From this synthesis, the author "contends that the educational value of AI is not intrinsic to its technical design nor assured by adoption rates, but is formed through the interpretive, curricular, and ethical efforts of human educators." Among the chapter's contributions are the analysis of "four main areas where AI is used, questions the structural marginalization of educators in research and governance," and the proposal for "an educator-centred framework for responsible AI integration." This framework emphasizes "repositioning educators from peripheral end-users to central theoretical and practical actors" as a "structural imperative for preserving the educational purposes of the university." In sum, after establishing how AI has been rapidly integrated into universities and evolved toward generative uses, thereby necessitating ethical educational approaches, the volume turns to empirical examples in the next section.

In Section 2, *Digital Agency and Giving Students Voice*, two contributions emphasize forms of digital agency. The first is "Digital Storytelling and Inclusive Pedagogy" by Cara Chiaraluce (2026). The chapter offers a valuable example of digital storytelling as a "powerful tool for advancing inclusive pedagogy in higher education." By engaging with Universal Design for Learning (UDL), culturally relevant pedagogy, and participatory culture theory, the author shows how educators can leverage social media platforms that "can function as sites of equity-oriented learning when intentionally designed" to "support participatory learning, identity expression, and community formation, particularly for students who may feel excluded in traditional academic spaces." One such use is digital storytelling: the "integration of narrative with multimedia elements such as video, audio, and images, enables students to connect course concepts

to lived experience, thereby deepening comprehension, fostering agency, and amplifying marginalized voices." The author provides rich empirical examples of coursework that demonstrate how multimodal storytelling assignments offer "flexible modes of expression aligned with UDL principles," particularly short-form videos that can "enhance engagement, motivation, and sociological imagination." Chiaraluce brings these contributions into dialogue with AI by exploring both the "potential to lower technical and creative barriers, support multilingual learners, and expand access to multimedia production" while recognizing "key risks, including digital inequality, platform surveillance, and emotional vulnerability," thus offering a nuanced understanding of ethical uses of AI for educators.

In tandem with Chiaraluce's practical strategies for ethical and inclusive implementation, the next chapter in this section is "Deconstructing Discussion Boards to Optimize Online Student Engagement" by Julie B. Wiest (2026). This author provides a compelling exploration of online discussion boards as a central "component of digital learning (DL) courses, particularly for those structured fully online (and asynchronously)." According to Wiest, discussion boards are a critical, low-cost tool, as the:

> … typical model begins with an instructor-provided discussion prompt that relates to current course material, with each student expected to start a new discussion thread with their individual response to the prompt before then replying to a minimum number of other threads.

As the chapter reveals, this format allows the instructor to "monitor discussions in progress, with varying amounts of participation, and then assess student participation/performance according to a standardized rubric." As teacher–scholars' use of discussion boards is normalized, they can also take advantage of both audio and video formats. To do so, Wiest offers an innovative "discussion board model that holds promise for effectively increasing student engagement in (and enjoyment of) online discussions while ultimately breaking down barriers to more enriching online class discussions." Wiest addresses ethical concerns that generative AI tools pose, specifically their ability to produce original content that is "difficult to distinguish from human-generated ideas" and "unlike with plagiarized work, its use can be impossible to prove when it is identified or suspected." The author proposes concrete strategies that educators could employ to address these particular issues, especially given that "generative AI is already inextricably intertwined in education." Given the timeliness of such contributions across the volume, these approaches will be of great interest to teacher–scholars across a variety of fields and institutional formats.

This section, closes with "Cultivating Critical Engagement: An Erasmus+ Project Utilizing Autoethnography and Documentary-Making to Empower and Educate Young People" by Konstantinos Sipitanos (2026). The author's contribution allows readers to see how "engaging and strengthening young people's voices is a challenging yet crucial undertaking, particularly in a world grappling with numerous social and environmental issues and marked by a proliferation of technology and digital tools." According to Sipitanos, the "imperative for young people's involvement through digital platforms is evident." Nonetheless, "there is

a need to discern specific teaching practices that not only uplift their perspectives but also foster critical thinking." The chapter meets both of these objectives by introducing an "Erasmus+ project founded on autoethnographic methodologies," empowering students to create their own documentaries. As the author lays out, these pedagogies empower students to learn and use technological tools alongside critical thinking skills, supporting more effective reflection. By inviting students to draw on their lived experiences to examine the socio-historical contexts of ancient Greece and Rome in tandem with those of the contemporary European Union (EU) that shape their daily lives, this approach enables them to make critical connections and comparisons that "contribute to the complex task of educating culturally aware global citizens." Sipitanos also addresses the potential benefits and pitfalls of generative AI, highlighting its use in "simulation-based learning" and "historical empathy" pedagogies to "support perspective-taking and the exploration of complex socio-historical contexts … While these tools have the potential to enhance critical thinking and reflection, they may also reproduce biases embedded in their training data." Thus, the author advocates that use of such tools "requires careful consideration and guidance," underscoring the need for critical and ethical training for students and educators alike.

Next, Section 3, *Embodied Pedagogies*, brings together four teacher–scholars who explore different facets of embodied pedagogies. The first chapter in this section is "Connecting with Life: Teaching Ecological Consciousness" by Justin Sabia-Tanis (2026). The author notes that addressing climate change is difficult due to the polarizing nature of the topic and the heightened emotions, such as anxiety and despair, that students frequently carry into classroom discussions. Such conditions can be barriers to learning. And teaching ecological facts is not adequate for either deep learning nor inspiring "students to act on the knowledge they acquire." Responding to the idea that "the root of the ecological crisis is … caused by a sense of discontinuity with the earth," Sabia-Tanis proposes pedagogical strategies that encourage engendering "a connection with the earth and community" to address various barriers to teaching the subject while also enabling students "to approach the topic with greater resourcefulness and determination." Based on ecological justice and ethics coursework from graduate students, the chapter proposes pedagogical approaches and activities that cultivate "a positive emotional space in the classroom, pose key questions of values and meaning, and embody a connection to the earth by both students and the instructor." Such teaching methods can increase learning as well as lead to social action. Sabia-Tanis also discusses simulation-based pedagogies and offers critical thinking questions for classroom discussion, highlighting the importance of addressing "AI-related ethical concerns and questions in the classroom as they relate to embodied experiences and real-world implications."

The second contribution is by Leonardo Henrique Brandão-Monteiro (2026) and titled "The Impact of COVID-19 on Study Practices: Insights from Higher Education Aspirants' Enskillment in Brazil and the U.S." This work chronicles the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and asks, "What do the changes brought about by pandemic-related restrictions reveal about the social mediations of our participants' out-of-school study practices?" The chapter deploys the "concepts of

enskillment (Ingold, 2001, 2011) and relationship with knowledge (Charlot, 2000)," applying them to data from three California universities and one Brazilian public university. As the findings illuminate, "the main issue faced by the U.S. interviewees was de-enskillment, a broadening of the Ingoldian concept. Meanwhile, among the Brazilian participants, it was possible to shed light on inequalities between public high school students and private high school attendees." By comparing this and other differences, including socio-economic status, entrance exams, educational trajectories, etc., Brandao-Monteiro's chapter provides "understanding of social mediations of out-of-school study practices among Brazilian and U.S. students." The author closes with a discussion of how "AI technologies may work to reduce or exacerbate existing educational inequalities."

In the third chapter in this section, entitled "Community-Centered Racial Equity Learning in the Digital Age: Reflections on Pedagogical Priorities," Emily S. Wu, Stephany Vallejo, and Anna Ranario (2026) trace the pedagogical evolution of a website hosting Cultural Humility training modules originally created for a Service-Learning program. This platform arose during the COVID-19 pandemic, which required asynchronous instruction, but has since developed "into a key tool for transforming academic knowledge hierarchies in community-engaged education." The authors examine how the site centers the "wisdom, worldviews, and lived experiences of … historically marginalized communities" to reframe "how students and faculty understand social issues, systemic inequities, and community strengths." Utilizing media, reflective questions and prompts, and contextualized knowledge and histories, learners deepen their understanding of community socio-historical contexts. The site now also trains "faculty and community partners, fostering reciprocal learning beyond the classroom … this digital pedagogical exploration revealed how technology helped bring to light the students' desire for human relationships, belonging, and social responsibility." The authors discuss the ethics of technology in that it cannot "replace relational and/or place-based engagement; rather, it can deepen access, continuity, and collective meaning-making when thoughtfully aligned with community knowledge and values." They further articulate that, in the context of increasing AI use, their "work underscores that the most essential dimensions of learning remain profoundly human: authentic engagement, critical reflection, and collective meaning-making grounded in community connection and cultural humility." Teacher–scholars and community partners alike would benefit from this and other volume contributions for their models of how digital pedagogical platforms and tools can engender reciprocal learning, deepen community engagement, and/or challenge traditional hierarchies of academic knowledge production.

The last chapter in the *Embodied Pedagogies* section brings the volume to a close with "Solidarity, Context, and Privilege: How GIS Maps and Ethnographic Methodologies Can Supplement Short-term Volunteering Programs" by Jaime D. Wright (2026). Also addressing how to enhance community-based learning (CBL) courses, Wright's contribution analyzes the use of both "digital GIS mapping and ethnographic methods" as pedagogical tools to help undergraduate students "move beyond individualistic explanations" to examine structural and historical factors that shape social inequalities. The author describes how students "use a GIS map with multiple data layers to analyze" various localized factors "in which

their CBL-partner organizations operate." Pairing this tool with ethnographic methods training, "these tools help students triangulate spatial data with lived experience." The chapter provides example exercises and shows "how place-based learning helps students apply their sociological imaginations to understand the communities served by their organizations." Wright includes student quotes that highlight their learning. The conclusion includes the author's reflections "on the promise and challenges of this approach, including the emerging complications posed by AI" and provides suggestions to educators for meeting these challenges. Wright ends on a hopeful note, that "most students still demonstrate a desire to learn and gain new experiences. In our challenging economic and political times, they remain eager and hopeful to realize that their efforts contribute to the greater good." Similar to Wu, Vallejo, and Ranario's aforementioned chapter, teacher–scholars and community partners will find this contribution valuable. It offers insights into harnessing digital tools and ethnographic methods while addressing the challenges they pose, in order to enhance student learning and commitment to the common good.

In closing, this volume demonstrates that pedagogical re-engineering in an AI era is most efficacious when grounded in ethical reflection and critical awareness of socio-technical systems. Across the contributions, teacher–scholars examine how digital technologies, such as multimedia storytelling, digital platforms, GIS mapping, and generative AI, have the potential to expand or hinder teaching and learning. A central theme throughout the volume is the importance of uplifting student voices and agency, and authors provide various examples of how to re-engineer pedagogies to do so. Teacher–scholars demonstrate various ways that students can integrate their lived experiences and voices into more active learning approaches. Contributors also emphasize how innovative pedagogies and digital tools can assist with raising cultural awareness as well as the analysis of structural inequalities. They also discuss challenges of especially generative AI, such as hard-to-detect content generation, algorithmic bias, and environmental degradation, as well as the importance of embodiment and community engagement. Therefore, instead of approaching technology as inherently constraining or necessarily transformative, the authors illustrate how pedagogical design and ethical and reflective practices, including educators and learners' critical awareness of technology's capabilities and limitations, all impact the educational value of how students learn.

Finally, looking ahead to future work, while we highlight the promise of many technologies, we also signal a new stage of digital inequality in which AI creates skill and literacy chasms across educational contexts (Robinson et al., 2020, 2023; Schulz & Robinson, 2022). These inequalities affect not only students' proficiency in using these tools but also the extent to which they benefit from them. If AI is incorporated into our educational norms, we must ensure that it enhances students' critical thinking and original production of content. As this indicates, future scholarship would do well to pay careful attention to pedagogical strategies that promote equitable and reflective use of these technologies. Ensuring the ethical and fair use of AI requires that it be treated not only as a tool but also as an object of critical inquiry, such that AI should be viewed and treated as a resource to which all students and teachers are afforded equitable access.