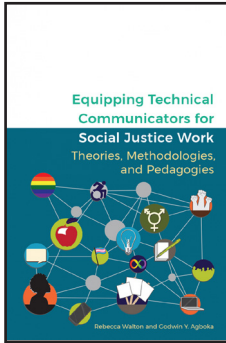


Book Review Editor

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Equipping Technical Communicators for Social Justice Work: Theories, Methodologies and Pedagogies

edited by Rebecca Walton and Godwin Y. Agboka
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E*quipping Technical Communicators for Social Justice Work: Theories, Methodologies and Pedagogies*, edited by Rebecca Walton and Godwin Y. Agboka, addresses technical communication theories, research methodologies, and pedagogical practices for teaching technical communication courses. The book comprises four sections, with three chapters in each section. In the introduction, the editors observe that there is still an important gap of knowledge in technical and professional communication (TPC) that directly interrogates theories, research methodologies, and pedagogical practices for enacting social justice.

Section one, “Centering Marginality in Professional Practice,” interrogates social (in)justice and how to enact justice in our daily professional practice. In “Narratives from the Margins: Centering Women of Color in Technical Communication,” Laura Gonzales, Josephine Walwema, Natasha N. Jones, Han Yu, and Miriam F. Williams discuss critically structural inequality and microaggressions they experience in everyday life, the workplace, meetings, and the process

of academic publication from the Color of Women perspective. The microaggressions and marginalization they experienced are presented in narrative form. They discuss tactics and strategies which deal with microaggression for working toward social justice in and beyond TPC.

In “Inupiat Ilitqusiatic: An Indigenist Ethics Approach for Working with Marginalized Knowledge in Technical Communication,” Cana Uluak Itchuaqiyac presents her voice from the indigenist ethics perspective of the Inupiat Ilitqusiatic, a traditional ethnic culture of Northwest Alaska. She explains the “Indigenous Research Paradigm” and asks scholars to abide by the principle of “indigenous methodology ethics.” Itchuaqiyac focuses on three ethical values from the Inupiat Ilitqusiatic community: responsibility to the tribe, knowledge of the family tree, and knowledge of the language.

Emily Legg and Adam Strantz, in “I’m Surprised that this hasn’t Happened Before: An Indigenous Examination of UXD [User Experience Design] Failure During Hawai’i Missile False Alarm,” discuss the need to embrace an indigenous framework for UXD that centers the local community and their needs in the design process in order to mitigate issues like the 2018 event in Hawai’i when Civil Defense authorities sent a text message with a false warning of an impending nuclear attack. The authors indicate a lack of indigenous peoples’ input in designing UXD throughout the history of colonization and urge the use of more socially just approaches to design messages, primarily by envisioning users.

The second section, “Conducting Collaborative Research,” highlights socially just research and methodologies for conducting, designing, and engaging in collaborative research. In “Purpose and Participation: Heuristics for Planning, Implementing, and Reflecting on Social Justice Work,” Emma J. Rose and Alison Cardinal discuss the relevance of two components of heuristics in enhancing social justice in TPC: 1) purposes, which examine pragmatism, advocacy, and activism in enacting social justice work in TPC, and 2) participation, in which researchers involve people, particularly those from marginalized communities, in the research and design process.

In “Visual Participating Action Research Methods: Presenting Nuanced, Cocreated Accounts of Public Problems,” Erin Brock Carlson examines how a visual participatory action research approach might be used in technical communication for enacting social justice. The participatory visual methods help researchers foster social justice in the TPC field. These methods invite participants to cocreate knowledge with researchers, offering an alternative to already established patterns. The author discusses two methods as tools for community-

based inquiry: Participant-Generated Imaging (PGI) and Participatory Mapping (PI). In the PGI method, participants take photos of their daily activities, and in the interviews with them, they interpret the photos by identifying general patterns of the images. While in the PI method, participants center their goals directly on representing relationships between participants and their place. The PI method is especially used for challenging problems linked to a particular place and community.

“Legal Resource Mapping as a Methodology for Social Justice Research and Engagement,” by Mark A. Hannah, Kristen R. Moore, Nicole Lowman, and Kehinde Alonge, discusses Legal Resource Mapping (LRM) as a methodology for engaging citizens and collecting research about policy-driven problems in TPC. To illustrate the idea of LRM, the authors present a case of the Citizen Police Oversight Agency in Albuquerque, New Mexico, and an overview of workshop findings, giving examples of locating the law, framing the issue, identifying actants, and surfacing values.

In the third section, “Teaching Critical Analysis,” the authors instigate scholars to utilize critical analysis within pedagogical settings and implement various activities to teach TPC courses. In “Social Activism in 280 Characters or Less: How to Incorporate Critical Analysis of Online Activism into TPC Curriculum,” Kimberly Harper discusses her pedagogical and curricular choices for facilitating a course entitled “Technical Communication in the Age of #BlackLivesMatter.” The author discusses project-based learning and problem-based learning methods that she implemented in two class projects that were closely aligned with using social media and online activism.

Sarah Beth Hopton, in “The Tarot of Tech: Foretelling the Social Justice Impacts of our Designs,” argues for predicting the social justice impacts of design with game-playing, specifically with Seattle Studio/The Artefact Group’s brainstorming tool, the “Tarot Cards of Tech” (TOT). Hopton argues that wicked problems can be solved through the intersection of technical communication, agriculture, and social justice by introducing TOT in a technical communication course.

“An Intersectional Feminist Rhetorical Pedagogy in the Technical Communication Classroom” by Oriana A. Gilson articulates the potential of an intersectional feminist rhetorical pedagogy to reframe the TPC course for students. Focusing mainly on usability as a central concept in the TPC classroom, she offers an intersectional feminist rhetorical approach as a pedagogical tool for shifting students’ view of the field from one focused solely on efficiency and consistency to one that is both interested in and working toward socially just practices.

The final section, “Teaching Critical Advocacy,” illustrates how

pedagogical tools can be used for acting toward social justice advocacy in TPC. In "Election Technologies as a Tool for Cultivating Civic Literacies in Technical Communication: A Case of the Redistricting Game," Fernando Sanchez, Isidore Dorpenyo, and Jennifer Sano-Franchini demonstrate why communication professionals need to explore how technologies are so often used as political weapons that discriminate and marginalize people. The authors make a strong and very timely case for continuing to interrogate election technologies as we collectively work to advance social justice in technical communication.

Liz Lane, in "Plotting an interstitial design process: Design Thinking and Social Processes as Framework for Addressing Social Justice Issues in TPC Classrooms," presents a version of the methodology that encompasses marginalized populations and reconsiders the notion of a framework for inclusivity: a socially just design interstitial that extends the genre.

In the final chapter, "*Kategorias* and *Apologias* as Heuristics for Social Justice Advocacy," Keith Grant-Davie presents two classical rhetorical tools to enact social justice in TPC. The author argues that the tools can help discussants build arguments for change and forestall arguments against change. He offers some tools to help students develop *kategorias* relevant to *apologias*.

This collection is devoted to social justice methods and approaches, seeking to establish patterns of work that center on several marginalized groups. The most salient feature of the book is that various samples, real cases, resources, incidents, tools, tactics, strategies, classroom pedagogical practices, research methodologies, and approaches for enacting social justice are presented. In this collection, TPC program directors and instructors will find topics that they often discuss and manage in widely variegated contexts relating to social justice. Examples include the latest critical literacy theories and how they apply to election technologies and redistricting, microaggressions, indigenous frameworks and theories for research, design thinking, actants, decolonial theory, participatory action research, community engagement, heuristics, classical theories of argument, and many others. However, as a multilingual student in twenty-first-century America, I cannot help but notice that the collection inexplicably does not contain discussions of urgent current issues related to multilingualism and social justice in TPC.

The volume equips readers with both theory and practice for enacting social justice. Along with offering tools for enacting social justice, towards the end of each chapter, most of the contributors present implications, usefulness, prospects, practical takeaways, limitations,

etc., all of which help readers to understand what is next and prospectively lend meaning and effectiveness to their future work in the field. As I, myself, am originally from a marginalized community, while reading the chapters, I can sense and feel how (in)justice happens in the academy and beyond it. It is a must-read book for all who work in TPC, as it discusses how to combat injustice and equip oneself to address social justice issues effectively, whether in the workplace, the community, or academia.

Author Information

Jagadish Paudel is a Ph.D. candidate in Rhetoric and Composition Studies at the University of Texas at El Paso. His areas of interest include social justice in composition studies, decolonizing composition studies, policies in rhetoric and writing programs, multilingualism, translanguaging, critical pedagogy, and non-Western rhetoric. At present, in addition to serving as associate editor of *Open Words*, he is an associate editor for the *Practices and Possibilities* book series for the WAC Clearinghouse. He is also associated with the Writing Program Administrators-Graduate Organization (WPA-GO) Leadership Council. Currently, he serves as its Vice-Chair and usually leads speaker series events in the organization.