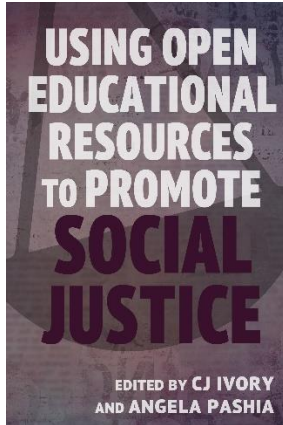




IJIDI: Book Review



Ivory, C. J., & Pashia, A., (Eds.). (2022). *Using Open Educational Resources to promote social justice*. Association of College and Research Libraries.

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Reviewer: Vivian F. Chin, Hawai'i Community College, USA

Book Review Editors: Halie Kerns, Binghamton University, USA
Stephanie Robertson, Brigham Young University–Hawaii, USA

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How open are Open Educational Resources (OER)? How do OER texts address the needs and interests of diverse readers in and beyond the U.S.? Do OER texts reiterate the perspectives of an elitist academic community, or can they promote the voices of historically marginalized groups? Can OER shift pedagogy to promote social justice by providing easier access to texts? One may find such questions challenging to the process of OER adoption, *Using Open Educational Resources to Promote Social Justice*, edited by Ivory and Pashia (2022), addresses these and other salient questions.

The introduction to *Using Open Educational Resources to Promote Social Justice* reveals some issues in producing OER. Ivory and Pashia explain that maintaining their agency as book editors vis-à-vis copyright and licensing required careful consideration, given their grounding in Critical Race Theory, intersectionality, and systems of oppression. Although the print version of this book is costly, this e-book version is readily available online, thus fulfilling the editors' wish for open accessibility via pricing.

It is unusual to encounter an anthology in which all the chapters are useful and address commonly held assumptions about the topic with thoughtfulness and care. The contributors' work here is persuasive and clear. Readers on both sides of the discourse about OER - those who already have qualms about OER and those who are staunch supporters of OER - will find this work engaging and thought-provoking. This collection clarifies the strengths of OER without ignoring its potential challenges.

The editors' and the contributors' consistent use of subheadings within each chapter makes this volume inviting to readers and exemplifies how this book addresses issues of accessibility. Throughout this book, abbreviations are kept to a minimum, and academic jargon is minimal. The authors write in clear prose.

While the titles of the five sections, "Theory and Problematizing," "Open Praxis,"



“Decolonizing Learning in the Global South,” “Scaling Up with Institutional Policies (Approaches),” and “Building and Decolonizing OER Platforms,” would likely require translation for undergraduate students, a knowledge of this vocabulary can help nurture a deeper understanding of diversity and inclusion in education. For those already in the know, these titles promise a thorough examination of OER and its place in social justice work.

Many of the contributors are librarians and are thus knowledgeable about readers’ needs. Multiple chapters discuss the challenges readers may face, from accessing online materials to reading digital texts easily. Issues of ableism might benefit from further attention; for example, the nuts and bolts of converting a pdf to an audio text might be a helpful discussion for this text. Unfortunately, this book does not include an index. An index would be helpful to locate such pedagogical concerns as Universal Design for Learning. However, an adept reader of a pdf can use the search function, control-F, so perhaps an index is an anachronism, particularly in an eBook.

Of particular interest is the chapter “Decolonizing Wikipedia,” two terms that are not typically combined. One may be familiar with strict admonitions against using Wikipedia, and rumors exist about teachers who purposefully post misinformation to entrap students. However, the goal of improving content through decolonizing practices may be less familiar. Wikipedia is very much with us, so finding ways to improve it and using a critical eye while reading it seems paramount. Understanding that Wikipedia has a role in defining information and knowledge is crucial.

The ins and outs of academic publishing and knowledge production receive attention in the chapter “Reflecting on the Institutional Organization of Academic ‘Knowledge’ as a Barrier to OER Construction and Adoption in Higher Education Curricula at a University.” As with the other chapters, this piece delivers and thoroughly considers its title. Although peer-reviewed, the quick dismissal of OER texts as unqualified scholarship demands inspection. The politics of academic publishing certainly demonstrate institutional power in action, and this chapter insightfully discusses the mechanics of this power.

To return to any shortcomings that educators might worry about before using OER, the chapter “OER, Social Justice, and Online Professional Development to Enhance Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion at a University” provides infographics and screenshots from the University of North Carolina Greensboro that illustrate how to assist in introducing and using OER. These materials can help introduce the use of OER and lessen possible embarrassment or misconception about their implementation.

Using Open Educational Resources to Promote Social Justice offers substantial discussions regarding using OER in the service of information equity. It is refreshing to note that contributors are international from countries in Africa, the Caribbean, and North America. This text is helpful for educators thinking about adopting OER for the first time and those who are seasoned in their use. Ivory and Pashia’s text encourages intellectual curiosity in readers to consider how Open Education Resources can live up to its name.

Vivian F. Chin (chin@hawaii.edu) teaches at Hawai‘i Community College, Hilo, Hawaii, USA. She has taught Ethnic Studies, Race & Resistance Studies, Asian American Studies, and English at UC Berkeley, San Francisco State University, and Mills College, California, USA.