

# bell hooks and Luce Irigaray's Feminist Pedagogies in Education- Related Films

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**Abstract** In this paper, we inquire about bell hooks and Luce Irigaray's ideal feminist classroom and propose a disruption of traditional pedagogy through the use of films as teaching pegs. Using a hooks-Irigaray feminist pedagogical framework, we look at the representations of classroom dynamics in ten education-related films from the 1960s to the 2000s as identified by Matthew Lynch in *The Advocate*. We examine classroom portrayals of the following factors: (1) teacher's mindset, (2) perceived curriculum, and (3) interactions between students and teachers. We find that of the ten films, only four present the feminist pedagogical ideal of hooks-Irigaray. These films are *To Sir with Love*, *Teachers*, *Dead Poets Society*, and *Freedom Writers*. These films portray a transgressive-constructivist teaching approach which disrupts marginalizing processes of traditional pedagogy, and addresses multicultural diversity, power asymmetry, and dialogue built upon integrity and trust. These films may serve as examples for teachers, and bring forth new reflections and visualizations of what may constitute actual feminist pedagogical best practices.

**Keywords:** *feminist pedagogy, hooks, Irigaray, films, classroom*

## Introduction

Feminist pedagogy is grounded in feminist theory. It integrates feminist values in classroom practices and arrangements. bell hooks and Luce Irigaray are just two thinkers who have been staunch endorsers of feminist pedagogy. They have described their ideal feminist classrooms through theory and praxis, through personal experiences and observations. Their works have also been studied alongside each other for comparison and contrast (albeit on other topics such as spirituality and race) (Bloodsworth-Lugo, 2007; Myung-Joo, 2014). We find that they have similar ideas on feminist pedagogy despite coming from varied backgrounds.

While much has been said about the ideal, this leads us to the question of what it means to be “a feminist teacher” or to “engage in feminist pedagogical practices” (Mehta, 2019, p. 22). When we paint a picture of a feminist classroom, what do we see? Although, other teachers have tried to narrate their own experiences in the quest for documenting the process of achieving such feminist spaces (McCusker, 2017; Mehta, 2019), we find that “there are no singular stories and clear answer,” and there is no one definitive picture (Mehta, 2019, p. 30). Therefore, the challenge is to continuously reflect and find new ways to critique teacher power exemplified in traditional pedagogy, or classroom power that focuses on “teachers who discriminate against students based on their gender, race, class, sexual orientation, ability, age, or ethnicity (Briskin & Coulter, 1992, p. 257).”

Interestingly, in the era of YouTube and media streaming, we observe a lot of Hollywood education-related films made available to the general public. These films portray non-traditional classroom set-ups, and various pedagogical practices. Whether fictional or based on true stories, we get

ideas about classroom spaces and settings in these films. In a concrete example, DiNatale (2017) analyzed and discussed how the film *Freedom writers* (LaGravenese, 2007) presents feminist pedagogy in its storyline and scripts. Some of the themes identified revolve around teacher-student relationship reformation, empowerment, community building, privilege of the individual voice, and respect for diversity (DiNatale, 2017).

What we intend to do in this paper is to try to understand feminist pedagogical practices through more vivid portrayals and representations in education-related films. By fusing concepts, we explore a kind of hooks-Irigaray ideal classroom environment that may be possibly exhibited in ten selected Hollywood films in the span of 5 decades (1960s-2000s). We do this by understanding hooks' engaged pedagogy and Irigaray's pedagogy of difference. We look at hooks and Irigaray's main influences, and the similarities of their works. In a combined feminist pedagogical framework, we examine three factors portrayed in these films: (1) teachers' mindset, (2) perceived curriculum, and (3) collaborations and interactions between students and teachers.

Films "provoke reflection about teaching roles and schooling" (Beyerbach, 2005, p. 269). Nowadays, pop culture is where the pedagogy (of pedagogy) is (Sfeir, 2014). Although some may reinforce certain dominant school narratives (Matias, 2013), they may also be used as pegs of feminist pedagogical practices -if they do indeed portray such practices. *Public pedagogies* should accordingly become part and parcel of a "larger public discourse regarding how to develop and engage alternative pedagogical practices" (DiNatale, 2017, p. 87). Oppositional pedagogy "can be extended to analyses of teachers in film" and new pedagogies which "can help preservice teachers to interrogate representations and develop critical views" (Beyerbach, 2005, p. 269).

Achieving the goals of feminist pedagogy has many difficulties (McCusker, 2017). Challenging traditional classroom discussions through the encouragement of critical thinking and anti-oppressive perspectives is not an easy task. As proven by McCusker (McCusker, 2017, p. 9), she had to “make adjustments” due to the “uncertainties and unknowing of the feminist to classroom”. It is thus our goal to realize and reaffirm the ideal hooks-Irigaray feminist pedagogies in films, so that they may serve as examples of what teachers may actually work towards in real life.

### **Theoretical Lens**

Of the central concepts in feminist pedagogy, empowerment has been the most frequently discussed. The basis of empowerment in the classroom can be traced back to Paulo Freire, whose ideals were fostered by his experiences in Brazil during the 1920s. Freire, in his book *Education: The Practice of Freedom* (2000), conceived that an education at the service of people’s freedom requires the construction of new methods and programs designed for people’s empowerment. The only manner in which education can contribute to constructing a truly democratic society is if it serves as a privileged tool in providing people with the capability they need to act and relate to each other.

### ***bell hooks’ engaged pedagogy***

Feminist and cultural critic bell hooks (1994, 2003, 2010) wrote a trilogy of books on education, which were geared towards the promotion of critical thinking, freedom, and hope. Culling her insights from Freire, hooks proposes an engaged pedagogy wherein the teacher encourages the student to self-actualize and build the community at the same time. This proposed pedagogy begins with the teaching of critical thinking.

Critical thinking begins in childhood. By trying to find the answers to questions, students discover what is most important to them (hooks, 2010, pp. 8-9). This leads to a “self-directed, self-disciplined, self-monitored and self-corrective” way of thinking (hooks 2010, p. 9). Unfortunately, this thirst for knowledge ends when a child begins formal education. Since children are expected to conform and obey, independent thinking tends to be discouraged in traditional schools. This is more evident when students begin their college education. More than just consuming information and repeating them at the right times (to get high grades), there have been few professors who encourage the “practice of freedom” (hooks, 2010, pp. 7–8). The teaching strategy that promotes the practice of freedom is what hooks refers to as an engaged pedagogy. This type of pedagogy seeks to remind students of the importance of self-actualization and thinking (the type which they lost from when they were children).

The characteristics of an engaged pedagogy also include interactivity and discernment (Biana, 2013). Discernment is the teacher’s understanding not only of superficial and visible truths but underlying truths as well (hooks, 2010, pp. 9–10). This kind of discernment presupposes the teacher’s wisdom of student diversity, and the realization that students do not fit in one mold. Of course, this is dependent on the student and teacher’s interaction with each other. The teacher strives toward building a community within the classroom, a community wherein both teacher and student have integrity. When students do not fear the classroom setting, they are honest and they voice out possible conflicts. Teachers recognize the unique voices of students even if students feel that they are unworthy to contribute anything to the community. The process of dialogue also ensures the full participation of students in the classroom (hooks, 2010, pp. 19–22).

An engaged pedagogy may be applicable even through “dislocation.” Alternative methods of teaching within or outside the walls of the traditional classroom may be challenged. A specific example of this method is conducting classes in an auditorium or outdoors rather than in a classroom. Changing up classroom arrangements restores faith and joy in teaching (hooks, 2003, pp. 23–34). In fact, the entire world is a classroom! In the current COVID-19 pandemic context, we see alternative learning settings and diverse creative practices. Dislocation is perfect for “free-flowing thought that lets us move beyond the restricted confines of a familiar social order” (hooks, 2003, p. 21). This unfamiliar social order is seen as an advantage rather than a disadvantage. Stepping out of the ordinary set-up encourages a more critical mindset. Since the classroom is dislocated either due to time or space, there may be a bigger possibility that students are fully committed to the shared learning experience and that they really come to “class” to learn.

hooks’ feminist pedagogy is based on her radical feminism which is the acknowledgment of the interlocking forms of oppression, and her cultural criticism which is a method towards achieving a critical consciousness (Biana, 2020). This is in tune with multiculturalism and the affirmation of diverse human experiences. One of the goals of her critical pedagogy is to incorporate her cultural critique methods in order to encourage the next generations to interrogate systems of domination. This idea is “similar to Paulo Freire’s emphasis on the processes of codification and decodification that establish the pedagogical conditions for dialogue, critical consciousness, which in turn develops into a revolutionary feminist pedagogy in opposition to white-supremacist, capitalist patriarchy” (Jaramillo & McLaren, 2009, p. 22). hooks (1994, p. 28) also talks of Martin Luther King Jr.’s idea of peace. Incidentally, if we hope to have peace on earth, “our loyalties must transcend our race, our tribe, our class, and

our nation.” Long before the word ‘multiculturalism’ became fashionable, he (King) encouraged us to “develop a world perspective” and this is something that should be established in the classroom.

To summarize, hooks’ feminist classroom is where both teacher and students struggle to overcome “estrangement and alienation,” and her feminist pedagogy is the engagement of students in a learning process that makes the world “more than less real” (hooks, 1989, p. 51).

### ***Luce Irigaray’s pedagogy of difference***

Luce Irigaray (2000) was likewise influenced by Freire in her work *Democracy Begins Between Two*. She maintains that in order to promote a just society, we must push for a democracy that considers the people’s emancipation. This is also a call for active responsible participation in society, and not merely a democracy centered on formal politics. Like Freire, Irigaray believes that education is central to democracy. The development of educational and political actions centered on citizens’ democracy can actually become a concrete reality. Only when there is a recognition of the other’s absolute difference in discourse and practice can education succeed in contributing to the construction of a truly democratic society. Furthermore, Irigaray also gives particular attention to sexual education as the basis for citizenship training and education for civil life.

Irigaray poses the question of sexual difference in rethinking educational philosophy. Sexual difference is the most universal and irreducible difference running throughout all cultures, and these difference(s) include all human beings in all cultures, and it transcends the subjectivity of one’s existence in the world. Sexual difference, in this case, allows each individual to create his or her own nature as a single being (who is also different from other beings belonging to the same sex). Although each individual of a certain sex seems to

be sharing a certain physiological aspect, the identity of each still remains to be constructed. Irigaray explains though that this is not similar to Simone de Beauvoir's idea that "one is not born, but becomes a woman (by culture)," but rather, "I am born a woman, but I must still become this woman that I am by nature" (Irigaray, 1996, p. 107).

Irigaray's call for an ethics of sexual difference goes beyond differentiating the sexes through their anatomy (Domingo, 2011, p. 48). It does not suggest affirming the notion of essentialism, the inherent difference between the sexes, or that "gender" feminism makes a claim about all women (Domingo, 2011, pp. 43-44, 48). Furthermore, it neither naturalizes nor privileges the gender binary wherein the dual sexed universal is constituted. Irigaray's argument is "not about individual sexual preference or the choice of sexual lifestyles," but "an ontological argument about the condition of possibility of all forms of being" (Cheah and Grosz, 1998, p. 12).

By stressing that both men and women belong to nature so conceived, Irigaray maintains that both sexes have natures which need to grow and express themselves culturally (Stone, 2006, p. 2). This engagement with difference is essential to the construction of a democratic culture that allows the fecundity of a relationship, wherein one is not reducible to the other. It forms the basis of Irigaray's teaching method which encompasses consciousness transformation, dialogue, mutual respect, and reciprocity among individuals. The refounding of society and culture on sexual difference is a new step in the construction of a civilization that cultivates both sexes' subjectivity. It is to learn "to renounce all possession, all appropriation, in order to respect, in the relation, two subjects, without ever reducing one to the other" (Irigaray, 2004, p. 26). By allowing both sexes to positively represent their natures and these differences, one "can bring together the most natural with the most cultural" (Irigaray, 2004, p. 26).



To ensure a ‘difference’ framework that is founded on mutual respect, Irigaray finds it necessary to affirm the value of the female generic rather than allow the assimilation of women to men (Irigaray, 1994, p. 57). We must not extend the rights of men to women in ways that do not fit; we have to reorganize “civil society according to current needs” (Irigaray, 1994, p. 71). Training in citizenship, thus, “involves changes in, or at least addition to, educational programmes (Irigaray, 2008a, p. 16).” The privileged educational system “develops efficiency through competitiveness and segregation... vertical and hierarchical (tendencies favoured by masculine subjectivity)” (Irigaray, 2008a, p. 145).

Recognizing the important role of education in realizing this goal, Irigaray proposed an educational program that strongly argues for a “co-existence in difference” and a new paradigm on the promotion of relational identity, on the tolerance and the fecundity of difference(s) with the following objectives (Irigaray, 1997, as cited in Oramas, 2002, p. 69): (1) To raise consciousness, from childhood, of the relevance of the differences between genders, through innovative scholarly programmes and methods; (2) to teach the respect of oneself and of the other, beginning with the recognition of the sexually same of different other, key to the possibility of living within all forms of diversity; either related to gender, or to culture, tradition, race, nation, etc.; (3) to develop relational attitudes among subjects at the different stages of their scholarly life, but also between teachers, and between parents; and (4) to balance, in the programmes, values related to masculine subjectivity and those related to feminine subjectivity.

On the basis of the insight that education is still based on patriarchal models of the pedagogical relationship, the process should develop “horizontal relations in difference” (Irigaray, 2008a, p. 217). Through a “horizontal” relationship between the teacher and the student, the “possible coexistence

between two worlds, two cultures, two truths, two places or spaces, two times” may be created (Irigaray, 2008b, p. 236). There is a need for both teacher and student to listen to “the way in which the other envisions and constructs their truth” (Irigaray, 2008a, p. 232). In effect, Irigaray’s aim for horizontal relationship in difference is a blueprint not only for relations between teacher and student but among individuals in a multicultural world (Priest, 2014, p. 89).

### **hooks and Irigaray’s ideal classroom**

Bloodsworth-Lugo (2007) reexamines the feminist potential of the concept of sexual difference as a framework for understanding pedagogy and difference. For this purpose, she explores the important aspects of Irigaray’s theory in interrogating the spaces between the oppositional categories of masculinity and femininity as a core element in reframing pedagogy. The failure to locate a genuine relation of difference renders other forms of difference invisible. Therefore, Bloodsworth-Lugo articulates new ways in which the discussion of racial identities could allow the questioning of sexual difference. Building on the elements of racialized identities, she draws upon hooks’ cultural criticism in emphasizing the significance of interrogating racial difference in an ongoing critique of the myth of sameness that undergirds traditional systems of education.

In a similar way, we look into hooks’ and Irigaray’s theoretical frameworks by configuring their feminist pedagogies in a combined ideal. hooks believes that a teacher should acknowledge the diversity of his or her students, especially their unique sexes, races, classes (and other factors present in the diversity wheel). Teachers should have a critical and discerning mindset. This means that teachers are open to the concept of dislocation as well. It follows that the courses they teach should represent other voices as well (i.e. Black female voice, etc.), and promote social justice, critical

consciousness, and community-building. Classrooms should provide “safe” interactions where a student has “no fear.” This calls for an unfamiliar social order wherein one is not confined to a physical classroom, and there is mutual integrity of teachers and students. Irigaray, on the other hand, promotes a constructivist mindset wherein students’ consciousnesses are transformed through dialogue, mutual respect, and reciprocity among individuals. Feminine values should be incorporated in education to emphasize the importance of living in relation with others, and a new language—one not based on a logic that is fundamentally masculine. With regard to student interactions, Irigaray encourages horizontal relations in the classroom where both teacher and student listen to one another. The classroom is where two subjectivities enrich a culture of creative co-existence.

The hooks-Irigaray ideal classroom then would be as follows:

**Table 1.**

*hooks-Irigaray feminist pedagogical framework.*

<b>Ideal Classroom</b>	<b>hooks</b>	<b>Irigaray</b>	<b>hooks-Irigaray</b>
Teacher’s Mindset	Critical and discerning mindset, multicultural and openness to dislocation	Constructivist mindset, reciprocity among individuals	Transgressive, multiculturalist, constructivist
Curriculum	Representation of diverse minorities, promotion of social justice, critical consciousness, and community-building	Incorporation of feminine values in education and promotion of consciousness transformation	Counter-hegemonic
Teacher-Student Interaction	“Safe” interactions, mutual trust, and unfamiliar social order	Horizontal relations and a culture of creative co-existence	Dialogue, Asymmetry, and Integrity and Trust

hooks' engaged pedagogy and Irigaray's pedagogy of difference are similar in many ways. Specifically, however, they are alike in terms of the emphasis given to the feminist agenda of deconstructing hegemonic systems of education. With its emphasis on a transgressive-constructivist teaching approach that address multicultural diversity, and power asymmetry in the organization of teacher-student interaction facilitated through a dialogue built on integrity and trust, the hooks-Irigaray ideal classroom underscores the importance of a counter-hegemonic pedagogy. At its core, the combined framework embraces a commitment to educating a diverse population for multicultural coexistence toward the development of a truly democratic society.

## Methodology

Matthew Lynch (2018), in *The Advocate*, came up with a list of impactful Hollywood education-related movies that were produced in a span of 5 decades (1960s-2000s). These films featured portrayals of unconventional teachers and unorthodox pedagogical practices.

Our study used Lynch's list of films as the main selection for our analysis. A previous study, Beyerbach's (2005) critical analysis, studied 59 films with regard to the gender, race and class of teacher representations, but with no mention of specific pedagogical practices whatsoever. Lynch's film list is a part of Beyerbach's list as well. The ten films are as follows: *To Sir, with love* (TSWL) (Clavell, 1967), *Up the Down Staircase* (UTDS) (Mulligan, 1967), *Teachers* (Hiller, 1984), *Dead poets society* (DPS) (Weir, 1989), *Lean on me* (LOM) (Avidsen, 1989), *Dangerous minds* (Smith, 1995), *Freedom writers* (LaGravenese, 2007), *Won't back down* (WBD) (Barnz, 2012), *Remember the titans* (RTT) (Yakin, 2000), and *Stand and deliver* (SAD) (Menéndez, 1988). The

primary question of whether these films portrayed the above theoretical lens or the hooks-Irigaray's ideal classroom was determined by looking at the representations of: (1) teacher's mindset (2) perceived curriculum, and (3) collaborations and interactions between students and teachers. We inferred these through a thematic analysis of character development, and film and plot synopsis.

### **Analysis and Discussion**

Lynch selected the list of films according to their perceived impact. We, on the other hand, observe various ways of teaching and learning in these films. Teachers had transgressive, transmissive (traditional or teacher-centered methods), or liberal and multicultural mindsets (recognizes cultural diversity and encourages an appreciation of multiple identities but does not address the underlying inequalities within these differences). Some of them followed the traditional curriculum, some implemented counter-hegemonies to these prescribed curricula.

#### ***To sir, with love***

Mark Thackeray is a Black substitute teacher at a London East End high school. He tries to engage a group of indifferent and rebellious students in a working-class London school, while enduring racial insults from a colleague and his students. He later starts to take firm action to set his class in order, abandoning the formal curriculum of the school and giving up on school textbooks, in favor of lessons on life skills and issues (James and Mohan, 2017, p. 69). He employs a transgressive approach to pedagogy where both the teacher and students construct knowledge by sharing stories in the classroom. As he discards the prescribed syllabus or curriculum, and engages the students into a meaningful dialogue, he is able to offer a counter hegemony to the traditional school framework that facilitates conformity to prevailing power relations.

Thackeray's transgressive stance on treating the students as adults eventually helped in the improvement of classroom discipline, and asymmetry of teacher-student relationships.

### *Up the down staircase*

Sylvia Barrett begins her first teaching job at Calvin Coolidge High, a large public high school in New York City. Despite her initial struggles to relate to students, she came to recognize her students' hidden talents, aspirations and needs within a semester's experiences of handling homeroom and teaching English class. She engages her students with intriguing questions to develop their interest in literature, gives them a voice through a suggestion box, and tries to meet the needs of her students. She gradually feels her way into getting disruptive students into a lively discussion about classic literature with her soft-hearted compassion for her students.

### *Teachers*

Alex Jurel was once a passionate high school social studies teacher who believes in the educational system but has been worn down by student violence and demands of the administration. Regardless, he was popular to the students with his ability to identify and connect with them. After the school psychologist has a mental breakdown, he was tasked with the job, and regained his zeal by working with Eddie, a "difficult teenager" who can neither read nor write. He stepped outside the prescribed curriculum as he provided some positive reinforcement to help Eddie regain his interest in learning. He also managed to get the entire class actively involved in vital school issues through a learning activity and photo exhibition.

### *Lean on me*

Joe Clark is hired as a principal at Eastside High School, New Jersey, where he once worked. He became most known for

his abrasive interventions to improve student performance and reduce cases of school violence. He would aggressively confront the teachers whenever students performed poorly, fight with his students' parents when they were not in agreement with his disciplinary methods, and bypass the official protocol of issuing out warnings and expulsions. His dedication to rebuild the school led him to establish a more empathetic approach. Apart from initiating a tutorial program, student/peer mentoring and remedial courses to pass New Jersey's minimum basic skills test, he also begins to counsel "at-risk" students to motivate them to succeed and stay in school.

### ***Dead poets society***

John Keating, a new English teacher in a boarding preparatory school, challenges the hegemonic discourse of the school with his unorthodox teaching method. Instead of conforming to the traditions of disciplined learning styles, he inspires his students to find self-fulfillment in their pursuit of knowledge. His learner-centered approach to teaching includes educating students to follow their unique passions, and motivating them to take a more active part in their educational and life aspirations. He stirs up his students with the phrases, "Carpe diem," and "Make your lives extraordinary," as he stressed the idea that living fully must not be structured around society's rules.

### ***Dangerous minds***

LouAnne Johnson initially entered the classroom clueless. She shifts her privileged, "white bread" mindset, and employs a more transformative approach to addressing the needs of her less fortunate students. While "disguising" the curriculum to be more *palatable* to students, she successfully teaches actual courses prescribed by the school system. The primary challenge of Johnson was staying authoritative in

the classroom while maintaining mutual respect between herself and her students. She does this by getting involved in her students' personal lives and acknowledging their real problems.

### *Freedom writers*

According to first time teacher Erin Gruwell, "everyone has their own story, we're gonna write it in these journals." Like hooks, Gruwell acknowledged the diversity of minorities, and raised a critical consciousness on racist oppression. In one scene, Gruwell invites a Jewish woman who survives and encourages her students to fight structural injustices primarily brought about by racist motivations. DiNatale (2017, p. 85) has already granted Gruwell's use of feminist pedagogical practices in the classroom in "order to transgress institutional practices that seek to silence her Students' Right to their Own Language." These practices are much more evident in Gruwell's unique classroom environment, constructivist approach to learning, mutual trust, restructuring of power dynamics, empowerment, and community-building (DiNatale, 2017, pp. 92–95).

### *Won't back down*

WBD is a film about parents who were unsatisfied with the school system thereby taking matters into their own hands. If we would look at the original teachers as portrayed in the film, they were apathetic, passive and uncreative. They also punished students for being unable to read and write (in the case wherein a student was locked in a closet for poor performance). This is obviously reminiscent of traditional pedagogical practices which brought about an uprising of parents in the school system.



### ***Remember the Titans***

Herman Boone was a coach of the football team who believed in the potentialities of the student athletes. Although the setting was not strictly in the classroom, the coach promoted teamwork, and mutual respect among students. In one of his lines, Boone asserts that, “I don’t care if you like each other or not, but you will respect each other.” This was stated in the backdrop of racial conflicts between white students and students of color.

### ***Stand and deliver***

Jaime Escalante was a Mathematics teacher who acknowledged the academic limitations of his students due to their social statuses. Coming from poor communities mostly, he knew he had to effect changes in school culture to encourage learning. Escalante goes beyond the traditional easier math courses and challenges his students to learn AP Calculus. Escalante motivates students to fulfill their actualities, and go beyond society’s perceived limitations. He mentions that “there are some people in this world who assume that you know less than you do because of your name and your complexion but math is a great equalizer.”

Looking closely at the classroom portrayals in these films, we find that *To Sir with Love*, *Teachers*, *Dead Poets Society*, and *Freedom Writers* reflect the hooks-Irigaray model of transgressive-constructivist pedagogy. The teacher portrayals in these films incorporate multicultural and reciprocal dimensions in their pedagogical practices to arrive at a more inclusive and affirmative learning community. Additionally, the films suggest an oppositional stance to traditional educational practices wherein the curricular processes acknowledge multicultural diversity. Mutual respect in interactions between teacher and students are also evident. Collectively, these represent new curricular

perspectives in line with the hooks-Irigaray counter-hegemonic pedagogy.

**Table 2.**

*Classroom portrayals in the films.*

<b>Film/ Classroom Portrayals</b>	<b>Teachers' mindset</b>	<b>Perceived Curriculum</b>	<b>Teacher-Student Interactions</b>
To Sir, with love	Transgressive	Counter hegemony to the traditional school framework	Dialogue and asymmetry
Up the down staircase	Transformative	Traditional school framework	Authoritative but with mutual respect
Teachers	Transgressive	Counter hegemony to the traditional school framework	Punishment reinforcement
Dead poets society	Transgressive	Counter hegemony to the traditional school framework	Dialogue, asymmetry, and mutual trust
Lean on me	Transmissive and passive	Traditional school framework	Punishment reinforcement
Dangerous minds	Transformative	Traditional school framework	Authoritative but with mutual respect
Freedom writers	Transgressive	Counter hegemony to the traditional school framework	Dialogue, asymmetry, and mutual trust
Won't back down	Transmissive and passive	Traditional school framework	Punishment reinforcement
Remember the Titans	Liberal and Multicultural	Not applicable	Authoritative but with mutual respect
Stand and deliver	Liberal and Multicultural	Goes beyond expected school framework	Authoritative but with mutual respect

The other films *Up the Down Staircase*, *Lean on Me*, *Dangerous Minds*, *Won't Back Down*, *Remember the Titans*, and *Stand and Deliver* did not conform to the hooks-Irigaray pedagogical framework in appropriating aspects of traditional pedagogy. *Won't Back Down* and *Lean on Me* both portrayed a traditional pedagogical approach in maintaining the transmissive and passive teachers' mindset, traditional school framework, and punishment reinforcement student-teacher relations. While the pedagogies in *Up Down the Staircase* and *Dangerous Minds* reflected a transformative teacher's mindset, both films continued to reflect a traditional school framework and authoritative approach to student-teacher relations. Lastly, while *Remember the Titans* and *Stand and Deliver* have both espoused the liberal and multicultural teachers' mindset, and the relationship between students and teachers is one of mutual respect, teachers have maintained an authoritative attitude.

### **Conclusion and Recommendations**

Our aim has been to understand feminist pedagogical practices, using a combined hooks-Irigaray feminist pedagogical framework, through more vivid portrayals and representations in education-related films. Through a thematic analysis of character development, film and plot synopsis, we looked at the three factors: (1) teacher's mindset, (2) perceived curriculum, and (3) collaborations and interactions between students and teachers in examining classroom portrayals in ten Hollywood education-related movies from the 1960s to the 2000s identified by Lynch. We find that of the ten films, only four portray the feminist pedagogical ideal of hooks-Irigaray.

The hooks-Irigaray pedagogical framework is generative in terms of rethinking the pedagogical space of encounter between teachers and students within and through

engagements with these films. These films draw attention to how one's pedagogical framework and practices influence the potential for the classroom to be a space for feminist intervention. Particularly, *To Sir with Love*, *Teachers*, *Dead Poets Society*, and *Freedom Writers* open up the discourse on what constitutes a feminist classroom. Accordingly, this suggests opportunities to use film as a site of developing pedagogical practices that promote feminist values. These films may serve as examples for teachers, which may bring forth new reflections and visualizations of what may constitute actual feminist pedagogical best practices.

While certain conventions in the four films continue to be employed in ways that actively work in actual classrooms, they have changed across time. It becomes interesting to also look into the extent by which portrayals of education-related films of the current decade embody the evolving principles of feminist pedagogy. The replicability of these pedagogical models should however be explored in certain social contexts and local settings (where intersectional hierarchies and policies may be different) as well.

In the advent of Netflix, YouTube, and other movie streaming sites, there are newer films that may also be readily analyzed vis-a-vis current needs and practices. Such work may evolve to a 21st century transdisciplinary discourse of progressive and innovative education theories toward lifelong transformative learning (which is the call of the times). Furthermore, a comparison of feminist pedagogical best practices in the past and the present may also be done. These may be used as basis for future understandings of feminist pedagogy and a means to determine the contribution of feminist pedagogical and andragogical approaches across disciplines. We recommend further qualitative and quantitative studies as well (which may employ other films or feminist models). The inclusion of non-Western films would be consistent with challenging hegemonic practices and

decolonizing the curriculum, and such studies may provide expanded data for succeeding discussions.



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