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The Necessity of Pursuing Feminist Pedagogy in Economics

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this paper is to characterize feminist pedagogy within the context of economics instruction in the US and to contribute to the development of this paradigm by charting out a research agenda for feminist pedagogy in economics. Our argument proceeds in two parts. First, we answer the question, what is feminist pedagogy in economics (FPiE)? This section sets out a working definition and contextualizes FPiE within the broader pedagogy literature, within the pedagogy literature specific to economics, and within the practice of economics teaching today. Next, we explore new directions for research and practice in FPiE by discussing post-positivist epistemologies, resisting the depoliticization of economics education, and effective responses to diversity in the neoliberal university.

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Introduction

Feminist pedagogy in economics can inform the practical program and theoretical foundation for economic education in post-secondary institutions.[1] In the US, colleges and universities are responding to demands from students and other constituencies in light of the #MeToo movement, the #BlackLivesMatter movement, and the resurgence of authoritarian nationalism around the world, including the election of Donald Trump in the US. The discipline of economics in particular is still struggling to respond to the 2008 financial crisis (Mearman, Berger, and Guizzo 2021), the economic reverberations of the Covid-19 pandemic, the public's consequent demands for a transformed economic system, as well as institutional sexism and racism, the best-known documentation of which is Wu (2018). Feminist pedagogy, along with other philosophical frameworks for teaching and learning such as critical pedagogy, can help individual instructors and students activate their agency and can motivate groups of people to

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[1]A note about terminology: we use the singular "feminist pedagogy" (and "feminist pedagogy in economics") strategically to refer to a set of evolving, locally specific, and contested practices perhaps better captured by the plural, "feminist pedagogies." Feminism can be understood to be an umbrella term for a set of social, political, and intellectual movements (feminisms) arising from the lives of groups of women and other groups marginalized by gender hierarchies, including nonbinary and trans people of all genders. We also refer to "women and people from underrepresented racial and ethnic" groups. This, too, is an evolving and contested term that is often evoked in terms of national contexts (prominently the US and the UK), but which has local meanings within countries and which can be expanded to include neocolonial relationships and the status of students, instructors, and economists in the Global South and its diaspora.

create change. In this paper, we focus on undergraduate teaching and learning of economics. The goal of this paper is to characterize feminist pedagogy within the context of economics instruction in the US and to illustrate the value of this paradigm by discussing select issues in light of feminist pedagogy: epistemology, de-politicization of economics education, and responses to diversity in the neoliberal university. Our central argument is that feminist pedagogy is well suited for developing economics instruction that challenges oppression along the lines of race, gender, and class.

Feminist pedagogy is an evolving and contested paradigm, not a prescripted program or method. As such, it can be characterized in a number of ways. In terms of values, feminist pedagogy sees education (teaching and learning) as enmeshed in political power struggles. The goal of a feminist instructor is to work towards the liberation of all peoples, with an explicit orientation against patriarchy.[2] Feminist pedagogy emerges from the long tradition of feminist thinking and struggle and politically allied bodies of knowledge in education, including critical pedagogy and decolonial pedagogy. Feminist pedagogy is a product of frequent confrontations with critiques that deepen its commitment to a sustainable ecology and liberation of all peoples. In terms of concrete principles, which are necessarily incomplete and debated, we can identify the following: an explicit commitment to resisting the patriarchy and all forms of social domination, including by race and class; a commitment to alternative forms of knowledge other than those that are hierarchical and hegemonic, including experiential knowledge and subjugated knowledges; and an emphasis on process over outcomes, including a commitment to help strengthen voice and agency among individuals and groups facing oppression.

Feminist pedagogy in economics (hereafter FPiE) is more than just attracting more women and people from underrepresented racial and ethnic groups to the economics discipline; the goal of FPiE is to "transform the economics classroom into a site for social action" (Lewis 1999, p. 35). FPiE critiques not only the content presented in economics classrooms and textbooks but also the teaching methods — the majority of which was, and continues to be, the lecture format — along with the working conditions of instructors and the learning conditions of students in the neoliberal university. Feminist pedagogy in economics is informed by feminist economics, which itself is a research program aimed at developing ways of understanding economic phenomena that are responsive to feminist thinking and political struggle, broadly defined (Schneider and Shackelford 2001). Thus, feminist pedagogy, along with critical pedagogy and related philosophies of teaching articulated by heterodox economists, offers a critique of mainstream economic education in its "overly rigid proscription of economics" (Mearman, Berger, and Guizzo 2021, p. 4). Up to now, institutional practices within the economics discipline have not incentivized a great degree of formalization of feminist pedagogy practice or public writing on the topic. We are aware of only two papers that articulate an original formulation for FPiE, Shackelford (1992) and Aerni et al. (1999), and the thinness of this literature, as well as the promise of FPiE itself for pursuing social justice through economics education, motivates our work.

[2]Feminist writing has shown that patriarchy, the system of domination based on gender, intersects with other forms of domination, such as those based on class, race, colonialism, and ecological degradation. We agree with so many feminists before us that single-axis analysis of power is not tenable in social science research or in political struggle.

We find value in learning from and helping to develop FPiE for primarily two reasons. The first is philosophical: the goal of liberation of all oppressed peoples is one that we share, we think that this is relevant to how and what we teach, and we have found that feminism is a rich tradition of thinking and political action from which to draw on. The second is political and pragmatic: we recognize the need for a paradigm that resists co-optation and appropriation of radical aims within the neoliberal university. As Seamster and Ray (2018, p. 326) say, "the most effective tactic against demands for equality is often incorporation, not opposition." It may come to pass that FPiE is someday reduced to a list of practices or is implemented in such meager increments that the status quo is merely reinforced by the appearance of change. "Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion," for example, has become a catch-phrase that has not proven to be resistant to co-optation for very long (Ezell 2021). Engaging with feminist thought can help to enable an effective push-back against the appropriation and co-optation of radical demands by dominant institutions, and can help to provide conceptual tools to answer questions about the process of social change; for instance, the question of why it is that members of dominant organizations call for more women and more people of color to join the economics profession, but at the same time those organizations and their leaders continue to marginalize feminist economics, Black political economy, and other critical perspectives. The authors searched for a paradigm that would help us to develop our teaching as individuals and as a pair of politically allied members of the profession, and a paradigm that would allow us to extend the work and joy of political struggle in the economics discipline with a coalition of allies working from diverse frameworks. Feminist pedagogy fulfills these criteria.

The purpose of this paper is to be useful for instructors of undergraduate economics who are interested in social justice and to further develop FPiE within a community of practice that includes feminist economists. Because we envision a diverse audience, our argument proceeds in two parts. First we answer the question "what is FPiE?," while accounting for the fact that this paradigm is contested and evolving. This section contextualizes FPiE within the pedagogy literature, within the pedagogy literature specific to economics, and also within the practice of economics teaching today. Second, we chart out a forward-looking agenda for FPiE. This section, inspired by the question "where does FPiE go next?," explores new topics in theory and practice not emphasized by Shackelford (1992) and Aerni et al. (1999): post-positivist epistemologies in economics, resisting de-politicization of economics, and the particular qualities of the university that make radical politics difficult in the neoliberal era.

An Introduction to Feminist Pedagogy for Economists

What is Feminist Pedagogy?

Feminist pedagogy is a multidimensional and contested framework for education. It arises from feminist thinking and feminist political struggle, encompassing the academic literature, the non-academic literature, and the practices and thinking that arise whenever instructors and students engage in learning that is informed by feminist principles. Macdonald and Sánchez-Casal (2002a, p. 5) summarize the principles of feminist pedagogy as follows, "decentering the authority of the professor, developing and

foregrounding subjugated knowledges, legitimizing personal identity and experience as the foundation of authentic and liberatory knowledges (especially marginalized identities and experiences), discussion-based classes, [and] emphasis on student voice." Some of these principles have been more contested than others in the literature. For example, the radical potential of decentering the authority of the professor is contingent on many factors, including the marginalized identities of the instructor, the particular circumstances in which learning is taking place, and the subject matter of the learning (Johnson-Bailey and Lee 2005). In all cases though — and this is the spirit in which the principles of feminist pedagogy are most productively viewed — the feminist teacher is self-reflective on the topic of authority, both in terms of classroom dynamics and knowledge production.

Feminist pedagogy is an evolving paradigm that is not reducible to a list of instructional strategies; the framework resists being "reified into simplistic fetishized methods that are converted into mere instrumentalized formulas for intervention, discouraging dissent and leaving untouched the ideologies that sustain inequalities in schools today" (Darder, Baltodano, and Torres 2008a, p. 18). While gender as social hierarchy is an essential component to feminist analysis, it is not possible to understand how this system is produced, how it operates, and its effects without analyzing its relationship to other systems of oppression, including race, class, colonialism, homophobia, and ableism. Further, binary gender is not a natural phenomenon, so the job of the feminist instructor is to interrogate gender hierarchy and gender essentialism and to help students to do likewise.

Feminism is a political and ethical position (Barker and Kuiper 2003a, p. 1). As a political position, feminists are interested in changing the real-world conditions of those negatively impacted by systems of oppression. Johnson-Bailey and Lee (2005, p. 120) write that the sources of knowledge on feminist pedagogy are both the record of feminist thinking and struggle, and also "our experiential backgrounds of having been different and displaced in our academic environments — both as students and as faculty." The political orientation of feminist thinking is both critical, i.e., negative in its critique of the status quo, and also motivated by hope for the potential of radical alternatives. As an ethical position, the types of arguments made and the ways in which ideas are debated within feminist thought may be unfamiliar to academic economists. We can and must debate what actions and expressions are consistent with different types of feminist thought, but quantitative empirical evidence within an instrumentalist framework is not the privileged method of adjudicating claims. With all this said, feminist pedagogy does not require us to be "perfect" in terms of the actions we take, but it does require self-reflection and self-criticism and engagement in communities of struggle (in this case, education practitioners and students). Most feminist educators view feminist pedagogy as a goal to strive for rather than something to achieve, especially because the goals of feminist pedagogy may be in conflict with our institutional constraints if we work within for-profit education models or within models of private universities designed to maintain socioeconomic hierarchy.

Feminist pedagogy is best understood "within a long tradition of progressive educational movements" (Darder, Baltodano, and Torres 2008a, p. 19) and it shares significant features with paradigms such as critical pedagogy (discussed below), culturally relevant pedagogy (Ladson-Billings 2021), critical race pedagogy (Lynn 1999), culturally

sustaining pedagogy (Paris and Alim 2017), and decolonial pedagogy (Andreotti and Stein 2015). Feminist pedagogy is in conversation with these paradigms; they are distinct, but not mutually exclusive in large part. When we refer to feminism, we refer to a tradition of thinking and practice that has been shaped in conversation with other struggles of oppressed peoples and thus, by theoretical necessity, there is little meaningful distinction between a "feminist" struggle, a "lesbian" struggle, a Black struggle, or an anticolonial struggle, not least of which because there are distinct groups of women and girls who share all of these identities. Paulo Freire, responding to his own prominence and the popularity of his celebrated book, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (Freire and Macedo 2000), is said to have "hoped to serve as a 'magnet' or a 'pretense' … for activist educators to gather and advance democratic opposition" (Shor 2020, p. xi).[3] Similarly, we view feminist pedagogy as merely a pretense, one among many strategies for political struggle among instructors and students. We have found that the framework of coalition, which operates through the logic of finding common ground, is particularly helpful for navigating the relationship between different schools of pedagogical thought. The feminist instructor finds allies in many camps, finds value in many different bodies of knowledge, and considers no framework to be beyond critique, including feminist pedagogy.

Some particular comment on critical pedagogy is warranted as it is perhaps the most well-known anti-oppression paradigm in education. Critical pedagogy is a field of study focused on the relationship between power and knowledge in education (McLaren and Kincheloe 2007). The literature in this field supports a political or partisan approach to education: truth and knowledge claims are not universal and decontextualized but rather relational, dependent on the specific social, economic, and political relationships in a society. So, the goal of the critical educator is to help students understand how systems of domination affect the construction of knowledge and the process of knowledge-seeking, and to support the process of transforming society in such a way that social justice increases while domination, misery, and suffering decreases. It is beyond the scope of this paper to present a full taxonomy of critical pedagogy,[4] but because some readers may be more familiar with critical pedagogy, particularly the writing of Paulo Freire, we can comment on the relationship between critical pedagogy and feminist pedagogy. Critical pedagogy and feminist pedagogy, as two areas of scholarship, have been in conversation since their beginnings; one historical account of the development of feminist pedagogy in Women's Studies recounts that, in the 1970s and early 1980s, "the separatist move of much feminism of that period" excluded "male-authored constructions of pedagogy, with Paulo Freire's work the only significant exception" (Luke and Gore 1992, p. 8). One likely explanation for this close dialogue is the central and related roles of consciousness raising for feminists and *conscientização* for Freire. Feminists criticized writings and frameworks in critical pedagogy for not adequately accounting for gender difference and, as post-structuralism and the postmodern turn reshaped thinking in feminist theory, post-structuralist feminists theorized how critical pedagogy, drawing as it does on ideas associated with the Frankfurt School, is subject to the

[3]Freire said, "In order to follow me it is essential not to follow me!" (Freire and Faundez 1989, p. 30), which is to say, critical pedagogy is a philosophy that cannot be reduced to a simple formula or a series of activities that instructors can implement. Feminist pedagogy shares these same qualities.

[4]For excellent overviews, see Darder, Baltodano, and Torres (2008b) and Giroux (2008).

postmodern critique. Insofar as writing in feminist pedagogy or critical pedagogy informs the practices of teachers, it is not necessary to declare allegiance to one or another thinker. There is considerable disagreement within each camp (again, although somewhat cumbersome, the plural forms *feminisms* and *pedagogies* are more accurate). Drawing on multiple traditions to inform one's pedagogy and one's political stances in the academy is consistent with broad thinking in both feminist and critical pedagogy.

Feminist Pedagogy in Pluralist Economics: Literature review

Within the economics discipline, we can trace early writings on feminist pedagogy to Ferber's (1984) review of a curriculum analysis project (Gappa and Pearce 1980) that included calls for integrating feminist economics into teaching and adopting more inclusive teaching practices.[5] Using a feminist lens and writing about the undergraduate principles of economics course, Ferber presents a radical critique of the basic question at the heart of economics. For Ferber, defining economics as the study of the allocation of scarce resources turns attention away from potentially interesting topics, like the causes and consequences of the misallocation of work opportunities stemming from labor market discrimination or the causes and consequences of specialization between (female) homemaker and (male) breadwinner. Instead, like other heterodox approaches, Ferber (1984) suggests that a more appropriate foundation for economic analysis should be that of social provisioning rather than the allocation of scarce resources (Power 2004).

Prior to the creation of the International Association for Feminist Economics in 1992, which ushered a new era into the discipline, feminist economists wrote about teaching and content in economics courses, but not feminist pedagogy, *per se*. For example, Bergmann (1987) provides suggestions on important topics related to the "ongoing revolution in sex roles" for principles classes and other field courses in economics that both female and male students would find engaging (Bergmann 1987, p. 393). She suggests "new issues" like why (white) women were joining the labor market and leaving the role of housewife, the declining birth rate as cause and consequence of the increase in women's labor force participation, occupational segregation and the wage gap; and "lively controversies" such as marriage, the division of labor, and a critique of Becker's (1981) views on these topics.

Similarly, Bergmann references two books that became standard textbooks for courses focusing on women in the economy: her own, *The Economic Emergence of Women* (2005) and *The Economics of Women, Men and Work* (Blau and Ferber Winkler 2017). Conrad (1992) evaluates the scope and content of the courses on the economic status of women. While she found the courses to be "rigorous", she criticizes the courses as being "too much like the traditional undergraduate courses in their neglect of minority women" and as lacking scrutiny of the mainstream model presented in the majority of economics classrooms (Conrad 1992, p. 565). These early feminist authors focused on the "what" rather than the "how" or the "why" in terms of pedagogy, addressing the immediate concern that content in economics courses contained no information about women

[5]It is always difficult to trace the intellectual development of concepts like feminist pedagogy. Our criterion in reviewing the literature began with a narrow focus: we looked for works written by economists or published in economics journals that discuss how feminism or a normative focus on gender difference and gender inequality might influence pedagogy in economics.

and women's issues. In retrospect, this was an "add women and stir" model of approaching gender in the teaching of economics, which analyzes gender differences while engaging with feminist thought only minimally and preserving as much of the dominant approach as possible. Some writers, like Ferber (1984), incorporated a critique of the mainstream neoclassical approach, but in nearly all cases the critique was limited to course content that virtually excluded women.

There are two foundational articles in the literature that lay out a framework for a feminist pedagogy in economics and that go beyond the "what" to address the "how" and the "why" of feminist pedagogy. To our knowledge, these are the only two such original frameworks published by economists or in economics journals. In the first, Jean Shackelford (1992) summarizes and applies the literature outside of economics to argue that:

> Recurring themes and principles that are consistent throughout feminist analysis, and on which feminist pedagogy can be grounded include: an explicit goal of ending patriarchy and oppression and empowering or giving voice and influence to those disempowered by patriarchal structures; validation of forms of knowing other than "objective," "hierarchical," or "authority-laden" models; and a focus on practice, with an emphasis on process over product or content.

Indeed, after three decades, these principles endure as a compelling and sophisticated distillation of feminist pedagogy written for instructors of economics. Shackelford (1992) describes course content and materials, classroom environment, assignments, and the evaluation of students consistent with the recurring themes she identifies. Shackelford echoes thinkers outside of the economics discipline, many of whom are referenced in the previous section (Macdonald and Sánchez-Casal 2002b). She is both philosophical and concrete in advocating for an economics curriculum transformed by feminist pedagogy.

Aerni et al. (1999) present a complementary framework applying McIntosh's (1983) interactive phases for curricular re-visioning to economics. The authors describe phases through which course content and pedagogy can proceed, from teaching with no analysis of gender as a dimension of power to teaching that is transformed by allowing every aspect of pedagogy to be informed by feminist thought. For content, the phases are Teaching the Received Neoclassical Cannon, Finding and Adding Members of Here-to-fore Underrepresented Groups, Challenging Core Concepts and Proposing Alternatives, and Redefining and Reconstructing Economics to Include Us All. FPiE is conceived of in multiple dimensions. In addition to these four levels for integrating gender in content, the authors present a typology with three types of learning environments in order of greater integration of feminist principles: Sage-on-the-Stage, Guide-on-the-Side and the Learning Communities model where instructors and students learn together, share authority, and evaluate each other. In the Learning Communities approach, the classroom extends beyond the walls and into the broader community. The authors assert that pursuing feminist pedagogy in economics requires both content and the learning environment to be changed (Aerni et al. 1999, p. 38). In this re-envisioned classroom, students are no longer taught just to "think like an economist" but to use economics to learn about the real world.

Feminist pedagogy in economics has come under critique recently. Spotton Visano (2019) argues that critical pedagogy in economics is a more counterhegemonic practice as compared to "feminist economics pedagogy." Spotton Visano righty, in our view,

explains the weaknesses of various approaches in "feminist economics pedagogy," but these seem to be associated with phases 2 and 3 in Aerni et al.'s (1999) taxonomy. A synthesis of, or focusing on the common ground between feminist pedagogy and critical pedagogy, is desirable and necessary. FPiE is not distinctive in the sense that it is an ossified practice, far from it. Instead FPiE is distinctive in that economics instructors engage with a literature and practice of feminist thinking, struggle, and achievement.

The Status Quo in Economics Pedagogy

Twentieth century thinkers like Léon Walras and Milton Friedman likened economics pedagogy to physics education and envisioned the discipline as a "hard" science with laws that are as rational, precise, and as incontrovertible as the laws of astronomy. As the discipline moved away from a view of the economy as embedded in social processes toward a more constricted view of social behavior as seen through the lens of methodological individualism, and as the economy came to be modeled through the use of so-called rigorous, objective mathematical models, so too did its pedagogy shift. Friedman's (1953) argument that economic science should be disinterested and value-neutral helped to shape the current dichotomy between positive and normative questions presented in principles courses around the world.

This view of economics as a positive science remains the standard in mainstream economics teaching. Unlike other social sciences, the mainstream economics curriculum is "monistic" meaning that it inhabits a "standard, single-paradigm, single-delivery approach" that Denis (2009, p. 16) calls "Monecon." This approach to teaching emphasizes technical training and rigor with a narrow methodological and theoretical framework (Kvangraven and Surbhi 2021) as opposed to critical, expansive thinking. Often this is presented to students as a project in learning to "think like an economist" which itself emphasizes conformity in the way of thought. (In part 2 of this paper, we discuss positivism and epistemological pluralism in more detail.) As Mearman, Berger, and Guizzo (2021) argue, "the goal of 'thinking like an economist' tends to leave untouched the bases of mainstream thinking, suggesting that mainstream pedagogy will necessarily frustrate the achievement of liberal goals [in education]." This instrumentalist approach to education is almost exclusively limited to training students in concrete, identifiable skills such as problem solving and specific techniques such as optimization (Mearman, Guizzo, and Berger 2018). The approach presents economics as a universal and objective science, extricated from the social and other non-economic spheres, with nearly no attention paid to power and unequal relationships stemming from disparities in power.

Mainstream research in economics pedagogy focuses on the process (the "how") of teaching, largely because it accepts the content uncritically (Mearman, Berger, and Guizzo 2021, p. 3; Clarke and Mearman 2004). Mainstream pedagogy is nearly uniform across undergraduate economics programs worldwide (Reimann 2004) where instructors rely almost entirely on lectures (Asarta, Chambers, and Harter 2021) based on a monotonous array of textbooks that present the same mainstream perspective of the discipline (Feiner and Roberts 1990). Furthermore, undergraduate textbooks tend to promote a sense that economics is an agreed upon body of knowledge (Ormerod 2003). Generally, then, the majority of economics education research is concerned

with the process and efficacy of teaching techniques such as facilitating improved student engagement with mathematical models and other technical materials. "This is justified with a reference to 'best-practice' in highly ranked economics departments, 'rigorous' textbooks, institutional 'accreditation' criteria, and perceptions about the need to prepare students for graduate programs and for the job market for economists" (Mearman, Berger, and Guizzo 2021, p. 4). FPiE responds to the mainstream monistic pedagogy in every facet from content, to delivery, to classroom environment, and evaluation with a focus on community and a transformative pedagogy that builds knowledge from its participants and does not passively accept a monistic paradigm or model.

Due to the nature of economic heterodoxy, which is an umbrella term for many disparate perspectives, there is no unified heterodox economics pedagogy. In interviews of mainstream and heterodox academic economists, Mearman, Berger, and Guizzo (2021) find that the heterodox instructors in their sample mirror mainstream economists in that they are no more likely to have an explicit knowledge of educational philosophy. These heterodox instructors do share a concern for open-mindedness and free thinking in the economics classroom. Heterodox instructors tend to focus more on content that challenges the mainstream cannon with alternative frameworks for understanding the economy. In contrast to mainstream teaching, Marxist, Post-Keynesian, and Institutional economics are more likely to articulate economics research as fundamentally a study of the production and distribution of economic surplus, including the role of power relations in determining economic relationships, the study of economic systems beyond market relations, and the employment of theories focusing on these issues, rather than the allocation of scarce resources. The heterodox instructors interviewed showed a commitment to pluralism and engaging in a critical approach.

The starting point for a pluralist pedagogy in economics is that there is more than one approach, theory, or proposed solution to any question. The essential characteristic of pluralist pedagogy is that multiple ways of knowing are considered, which goes beyond considering multiple models within the dominant neoclassical or causal inference frameworks. Multiple approaches are considered and compared against each other both in terms of their theoretical characteristics and the empirical evidence related to the theory. Many heterodox economists embrace pluralist pedagogy to the extent that they present the mainstream perspective as well as one or more schools of heterodox thought. There is common ground between feminist pedagogy in economics and pluralist pedagogy: both critique the positivism of mainstream economic teaching and prioritize that economics is not "value free."

Instructors in Europe (specifically the UK) and in the US are working to turn pedagogy in economics away from monism and positivism. In the UK, new writings on decolonization pedagogy critique Eurocentrism in the discipline. Kvangraven and Surbhi (2021) survey nearly 500 economists and conclude that mainstream economic pedagogy's emphasis on training and rigor, with its narrow methodological and theoretical framework, stands in the way of decolonizing economics. They argue for the need to understand how the mainstream model perpetuates Eurocentrism and they argue for greater attention to colonialism, empire, and racism and how these forces shape the contemporary global economy and economics research. There is much common ground between feminist pedagogy in economics and the project of decolonizing economics, not least of which because most of the leaders of the decolonizing economics project are feminists.

In the US, efforts are being made to diversify the profession, the classroom, and the curriculum. Amanda Bayer created Diversifying Economic Quality or Div.E.Q. (https://diversifyingecon.org), a wiki, a collaboratively maintained website, full of resources for economists and students to increase diversity and inclusion in the discipline. Div.E.Q. offers resources that help instructors to add information about women and members of underrepresented groups into their courses as well as other information about teaching techniques to target relevance, belonging and a growth mindset. In contrast with FPiE, Div.E.Q. is not based in an ethic of political resistance. Its intention is more of the "add X and stir" variety in that it aims to equalize the quality of economics education, but it does not question the purpose or primary content of economics education. The project does not explicitly aim to dismantle the hegemony of the mainstream or to provide instructors with a philosophical basis from which to organize their pedagogy. It does, however, encourage instructors to "discuss alternative economic approaches" and it provides information about feminist theory, queer theory, and post-colonial theory. Div.E.Q. is representative of a number of contemporary initiatives that seek to add topics and, to a lesser extent, alternative methodologies to the standard economics cannon; both the strength and weakness of this approach is that it does not explicitly target more radical change.

In the next sections, we illustrate the relevance of FPiE for instructors of economics and the usefulness of FPiE for creating progressive change by discussing three topics through the lens of feminist pedagogy: post-positivist epistemologies, resisting de-politicization of economics education, and dealing with "Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion" discourse in the neoliberal university. The goal of the next section is to contribute to the development of FPiE as a framework responsive to current conditions, and to this end we end each discussion with what we consider to be important open questions associated with each topic.

New Directions for Research and Practice in Feminist Pedagogy in Economics

FPiE Requires Post-Positivist Epistemologies

The epistemological challenge of feminist pedagogy to neoclassical economics is of practical importance to all feminist instructors of economics because, as MacKinnon (1983, p. 645) writes, "the feminist theory of knowledge is inextricable from the feminist critique of power because the male point of view forces itself upon the world as its way of apprehending it." Economics gets and maintains a seat at the table in part by using the rhetoric of positivism. Barker (2003, p. 151) writes that "economics has been wildly successful in establishing itself as a hard science in the eyes of the academy, the government and the general public." At the undergraduate level, a (false) dichotomy between positive and normative economics is introduced early on (Friedman 1953). So-called "positive" questions are those about how the world really is. As opposed to normative questions, which involve values or judgements about what ought to be, positive questions in economics can be answered neutrally, based on empirical evidence (most often quantitative) or theoretical argumentation using formal mathematical models, or so the argument goes. Instructors explain that economics research involves theoretical work to create models,

which are simplifications of the real world, and that empirical studies help us to develop better models by comparing predictions or model assumptions to the real world.

Heterodox economists, including feminist economists, and philosophers of science have critiqued the normative-positive research split on philosophical grounds (this theory of knowledge is logically flawed and unworkable) and political grounds (this theory of knowledge is used to justify research norms that, whenever they are put into practice, have political effects along the lines of social group hierarchies). Insofar as FPiE is concerned, we argue that issues of epistemology are essential for teaching in economics: feminist pedagogy in economics must incorporate post-positivist epistemologies. In this section, we articulate the main arguments of the epistemological challenge raised by feminist pedagogy, we illustrate the practical consequences for teaching economics based on our own experiences in the classroom, and we identify questions for further research for FPiE around epistemology.

The ideal of the social scientist as someone who contributes productively to humanity by answering questions in a neutral, disinterested way, separate from but informing politics or decision-making, can be traced to the Enlightenment. Feminist philosophers and feminist economists have critiqued this view by showing that the theories (models) that economists use, the empirical data used, the questions that are asked, and the criterion used to adjudicate claims are all value-laden. Positivism is an epistemological stance holding the position that knowledge about the world can be constructed outside of human culture and social relations. For positivist research, the object of study may be culture or any other topic; what is crucial is that "the specific social relations and context in which the solitary knower is situated are completely irrelevant to knowing" (Barker 2003, p. 155). Positivism holds that objectivity comes from taking a neutral or universal subject position. Positivism holds that there are many questions about the world that can be answered objectively such that it is not "true" from the perspective of a particular culture or subject but simply True, based on the rules of formal logic (theoretical modeling) or empirically verifiable in ways that are not culturally specific. This is in contrast to an epistemology that acknowledges the cultural context of knowledge projects and in which one's subjectivity informs knowledge generation (Harding 1992).

A post-positivist epistemological stance in economics does not necessitate abandoning objectivity, nor is it about just doing economic science "better," i.e., with less bias. Instead, a post-positivist epistemology recognizes that "the methods and norms in the disciplines are too weak to permit researchers to systematically identify and eliminate from the results of research those social values, interests, and agendas that are shared by the entire scientific community, or virtually all of it" (Harding 1992, p. 440). Here, Harding is referring to such values as patriarchy, racial hierarchy, and market-oriented neoliberalism. Harding (1995) argues that, because being value-neutral is both impossible and does not lead to objective science, we should embrace "strong objectivity." That is, we don't seek to take culture and values out of science, but we analyze the role of culture and values in the knowledge seeking projects that we undertake, and we seek out those theories, frameworks, and facts that help us understand the world using a variety of "standpoints." The process of conducting post-positivist research involves consideration of multiple ways of knowing, since the research methods and practices associated with a dominant perspective may not be able to detect or render visible biases. For example, feminist economists have written extensively about the lives of women,

including the conditions of unpaid work in the household, in communities, and in the context of other paid labor. Critiques of positivism explain that this difference in research questions and methods is related to the matrix of domination, specifically "gender" as the outcome of a process of social hierarchy. It is all but impossible to mount this critique using only concepts recognized by neoclassical economists.

As a practical matter, any instructor interested in pluralism, broadly defined, must engage with epistemology. Epistemology offers a framework for thinking about how we know what we know, and how we make sense of different ways of knowing. Within mainstream economics, epistemology is rarely discussed or even acknowledged. PhD programs have de-emphasized history of economic thought, and heterodox approaches within economics are ghettoized to a handful of graduate programs. For heterodox economists, epistemology is central because anyone outside the mainstream, dominant approach must, by necessity, (a) acknowledge multiple ways of knowing and (b) reckon with adjudicating claims. Post-positivist epistemologies are more commonly represented in the literatures of other social sciences (Susen 2015), and feminist instructors and those working towards social justice in their teaching should work to abandon positivist epistemologies, which are no longer tenable (Barker and Kuiper 2003b), while developing strategies to teach in a manner that is responsive to anti-hegemonic epistemologies or to epistemological pluralism.

We can address one possible objection from those not working from heterodox traditions that explicitly consider epistemology in their research: What is the place of epistemology in teaching undergraduate economics? After all, we are not all philosopher economists. How can we be expected to include a discussion of epistemology in Principles of Economics, for example? To this, we can respond simply that epistemology is already included in the curriculum and already discussed in introductory and econometrics courses, often on the first day. We are referring to the normative-positive split or the idea that we are discovering universal causal truths through our methodologies. What is essential for FPiE is that we acknowledge and account for different ways of knowing *within economics* besides the mainstream neoclassical and causal inference methodologies. Alternative epistemologies include feminist standpoint theory, Marxist theory (taking the perspective of the proletariat), or any of the epistemologies used by our colleagues in other disciplines. After all, economists do not have a monopoly on developing knowledge about the material allocation of resources, production, consumption, or understanding human behavior.

To ground this discussion, we turn to our experiences with teaching. At Bucknell, the economics department explicitly incorporates pluralism into the learning objectives for all courses and for the Economics Major (Kristjanson-Gural 2017; Magee 2009). In Principles of Economics, we present different schools of thought (for example, Neoclassical, Marxist, Institutionalist) and we briefly sketch out the different ways of knowing associated with each school. Principles courses emphasize that mainstream economics sees itself as pursuing value-neutral, objective scientific research. The justification for this view is provided and discussed. Crucially, the critique from other schools of thought is also provided and discussed. One alternative perspective that can be discussed is to see positivism as merely a rhetorical move, because value-neutral research is not possible nor desired. In an upper level course, Economics of Inequality, students are encouraged to pursue auto-ethnography as their final project. For example, students may choose to

write about the 2008 financial crisis and recession by tracing out the labor histories of their family members. Ethnography is particularly useful because it allows scholars to explicitly question any "incongruence between [theoretical] categories and lived practices rather than rely on pre-established classificatory systems" (Acosta 2018, p. 9). Ethnography or research based on one's life experiences is a strategy that comes up frequently in the feminist pedagogy literature. Valle (2002, p. 160), for example, encourages students to "make themselves and their families the object of study." Post-positivist epistemology involves discussion of different ways of knowing, accounting for subjectivity in research, and embracing a variety of ways of knowing, including those based on experiential knowing.

Scholarship in FPiE should take up questions in critiques of positivism and epistemological pluralism in economics education. In particular, we would suggest a focus grounded in the realities of particular educational contexts, such as: What activities are to be undertaken by instructors, students, and other community members to most effectively challenge positivist epistemologies in economics instruction? What are the best pedagogical strategies for introducing post-positivist epistemologies in the economics classroom? And, what are useful and appropriate measures of success for either of these endeavors?

FPiE Requires Resisting the Depoliticization of Economics Education

Related to the issue of epistemology is the issue of power and politics in the economics classroom. It is an irony that, in a discipline that studies the distribution of resources, so many economists should characterize themselves as pursuing research and teaching that is apolitical, disinterested, and fundamentally technical rather than political. Of course, much of the political power and influence that some in the economics discipline do have is due to this facade of scientificity. Outside of the U.S. and other countries in the Global North, especially in those countries that have been subject to the ideas of economists from the Global North, the particular political leanings of so-called technocrats in development institutions, including "femocrats" working on issues related to women and girls, have been apparent from the start. Madra and Adaman (2014) critique this "depoliticization through economization" across three schools of thought (the post-Walrasian approach, the Chicago approach, and the Austrian school) by tracing a history of economic thought; the authors show that the methods and practices that are seen as neutral and unbiased today are those that historically achieved dominance because they justified particular material relationships that benefited those in power. FPiE requires moving beyond "there are winners and losers" for most economic policy actions to an explicit consideration of the ethical values and political implications expressed in policy preference and in research. So, with the benefit of even more evidence from the neoliberal era, we may add a critique of technocratic framing of issues in economics teaching to the earlier works on FPiE (Shackelford 1992; Aerni et al. 1999), further aligning FPiE to the philosophy of critical pedagogy (Freire and Macedo 2000; Giroux 2011; Spotton Visano 2019).

Depoliticization happens when economics research is presented as value-neutral, rather than incorporating an acknowledgement and engagement with the inherent values as part of a reflexive research methodology. Depoliticization happens when

economic theories are presented as if neoclassical economics were the only (right) way of understanding the world, rather than one possible view that happens to largely justify the current maldistribution of resources and power. Depoliticization happens when theoretical results such as utility maximization for individuals and welfare maximization for systems are celebrated to justify our current economic institutions while real world outcomes are deemphasized. Depoliticization happens when crucial concepts for a social science, like power, are systematically removed from the field of study. Depoliticization happens when select research questions and ideas carried out within the tradition of economics are removed from the curriculum, ignored, or rendered invisible to students when these are precisely the topics that would most serve students in developing critical consciousness (Feiner and Roberts 1990). Depoliticization happens when hegemonic norms, such as what constitutes a family (cisgender, heterosexual, heteronormative) are reified in the process of teaching and when this move is described in the classroom not as a decision with political consequences but as an unavoidable, inconsequential technical detail.

The FPiE call to embrace politics in the teaching of economics can be elaborated in several ways. First, consistent with thinking developed in critical pedagogy, we recognize that our duty to our students is not just to present a summary of dominant claims about the economy but to help them critically analyze economic systems, including contradictions in capitalism (such as the ideal of meritocracy and the reality of unjust inequality). Second, while FPiE recognizes the political nature of the discipline and calls for resisting depoliticization efforts, it does not advocate for politicizing economics instruction through indoctrination, which is antithetical to critical consciousness. Third, education itself, especially public higher education, regardless of the discipline, is inherently political, as can be seen recently by efforts to ban Critical Race Theory or LGBT+ issues from being discussed in public schools. At the risk of stating the obvious, there is no outside observer determining whether material is sufficiently "neutral" or not. Instead, we have political actors on all sides drawing judgements and contributing to the workings of the economics discipline. The "loudest" or most powerful voices are likely to be those linked to institutional power.

Many of the central ideas from neoclassical economics emphasize the benefits to market participants of decentralized competition. There are some analogies drawn between market logics and democratic principles, such as the fabled "marketplace of ideas." And yet, the call to politicize economics education is often greeted with fear: fear that acknowledging the political nature of research will somehow debase the discipline. In order to dismiss critical pedagogy, feminist pedagogy, and other politicized paradigms for education, "conservative and liberal educators … dismiss [] the constitutive role of politics and dissent to democratic life" (Darder, Baltodano, and Torres 2008a, p. 18). Politicizing the classroom does not have to mean that there is hostility and heated exchanges, though this may happen. The feminist instructor prepares for how to deal with disagreement and conflicting interests as a normal part of democracy. The feminist instructor models thinking and acting in a way that honors the dignity of all people and the environment and they model a serious, authentic search for truth, not the shallow comfort of unexamined disciplinary methodology. The feminist instructor cultivates competency in these areas, learning from others' experiences, such as Sánchez-Casal (2002, p. 74) who reports that "in the radical classroom racial divisions

become more dichotomous and polarized." The question of how to teach is not separate from the question of what change you want to see in the world. It is proper to consider our political goals for liberation in the course of doing our work. As instructors, our working conditions vary greatly, but almost all of us have some agency in the university to embrace and practice different teaching philosophies, including those that are politicized with the intention of creating radical change.

While the feminist literature outside of economics and critical perspectives on pedagogy within economics have explored the role of politics in pedagogy, FPiE would be strengthened by further engagement with this issue. Right now, we have one overwhelmingly dominant paradigm. Within this framework, patriarchy and racial hierarchy "become[] simply a source of deviations from an otherwise automatic and desirable equilibrium, rather than a historically intrinsic part of the economic system" (Feiner and Roberts 1990). Future scholarship in the (de)politicization of economics and FPiE should consider questions such as: What activities are to be undertaken by instructors, students, and other community members to most effectively resist depoliticization of economics and economics instruction? What are the best pedagogical strategies for teaching about and through politics in the economics classroom? What are appropriate measures of success for either of these endeavors?

FPiE Requires a Critique of the Neoliberal University

There was an increase in activity focused on antidiscrimination and inclusion, particularly around gender and race, among US-based economics institutions after Alice Wu's (2018) paper about Economics Job Market Rumors (EJMR). It is beyond the scope of this paper to characterize or discuss the multiple initiatives and efforts that were undertaken. Instead, we focus more narrowly on teaching-related interventions. To be clear, there is still a wide range of work done in this area; we present a broad schema rather than attempting an exhaustive appraisal. Broadly speaking, the discipline is confronting its "race" and "gender" problems. Often these are not stated explicitly, but we can take these problems to be that white women and people of color are underrepresented in economics and the few women and people of color that are in the discipline disproportionately report negative experiences, often in situations that are explicitly tied to their identities (Bayer 2018).

We can identify two dominant, implicit frameworks used by the mainstream economics education institutions in the US. The first we term "Improve Education Quality for Equity." The logic of this approach is that low quality teaching disproportionately harms students from marginalized backgrounds and, conversely, high quality teaching disproportionately benefits these students. Thus, the solution to the "gender problem" and the "race problem" in economics is to improve education quality for all and particularly to focus on remedial work to address the effects of past educational inequality. The second approach we label "Raise Awareness." The logic of this approach is that the bias against women and people of color is largely not purposeful, so the solution is to raise awareness about microaggressions and to take small steps to create a greater sense of belonging. These small steps include changing the examples used to illustrate concepts in economics courses; one may use different names for fictional characters or different pictures that are more inclusive, with no change to the big ideas of the lesson. The (usually unstated) goal is to communicate that anyone can be *homo economicus*. Our

view is that these frameworks incorrectly identify the problem in economics education: patriarchy and racism are complex institutions and they represent on-going intergroup competition, on-going political struggle, rather than being mostly a legacy of anachronistic biases that we have supposedly overcome. In practice, most of the solutions proposed by the two implicit frameworks above are necessary but are not sufficient for achieving social justice in teaching. FPiE represents a more accurate view of the problems (patriarchy, racism, colonialism, environmental degradation) and, relatedly, FPiE represents a more politically potent expression of social justice principles for economics education.

Proponents of diversity-based frameworks for changing pedagogy in economics try to fit active learning and other alternatives to traditional lecture delivery into the framework of prevailing standards of "good teaching" and "thinking like an economist." This conservativism makes it possible for many people to grasp the importance of active learning in economics without feeling disloyal to the methods and norms of their research traditions. However, this conservatism is also this approach's weakness: active learning or just plain good teaching refuses to fully address the limitations of the dominant conception of teaching and research in economics. That is, the way research and teaching in economics is shaped by and helps to provide support for neoliberalism, exploitation, environmental degradation approaching collapse, and (neo)colonialism.[6] From the perspective of diversity-based frameworks, feminist pedagogies and critical pedagogies are intrusions of politics and possibly illegitimate and certainly contestable values into teaching. From the perspective of feminist pedagogies, as informed by standpoint theories, the dominant conception of teaching and research in economics is both value-laden and refuses to address those values even in its defense. The point is not that full and equal inclusion of currently underrepresented groups in economics is not a necessary goal, but that feminist pedagogies and critical pedagogies facilitate learning in the sense that they provide more robust grounds for adjudicating knowledge claims and they allow us to better understand the world around us in ways not limited to the dominant viewpoint.

Most of the current efforts undertaken by the economics profession share this conservativism. The EDUCATE Workshop is the latest high-profile initiative by the American Economic Association to confront underrepresentation of women and men from Black, Latinx, Native American, and other racial and ethnic groups. The authors of this paper were part of 40 economics instructors who participated in the 2021 workshop. The main goal of the program was to develop "The ability to apply the scientific process so as to choose between competing evidence-based teaching practices that might have disparate effects on those of different races, genders, and ethnicities."[7] Throughout the workshop, the main thesis of the program was clear: diversity and inclusion goals could be accomplished by 'just plain good teaching' and minor changes to the examples used in class so that these reflect a diversity of experiences.[8] The former point is expressed in Bayer and

[6]This paragraph draws from Harding (1992, p. 441).

[7]Other goals include helping participants to develop: (1) "The ability to analyze and evaluate how classroom climate, pedagogy, and assessment impact student behaviors and outcomes, recognizing that these impacts are heterogeneous;" (2) "The ability to teach students to learn economics using some of the quantitative approaches employed by economists;" (3) "The ability to think critically about course goals and learning outcomes and their relationship to pedagogic choices and assessment, with special attention to enhancing diversity and inclusion;" and (4) "The ability to communicate motivations for, and outcomes of, teaching enhancement to diverse audiences."

[8]Based partially on feedback from attendees, the workshop has been modified with more explicit attention to race and gender in subsequent iterations.

Rouse (2016), "[b]etter teaching helps all students but is particularly effective in attracting and retaining students who do not have the benefit of prior training or encouragement in economics." Based on the article, it is clear that "better teaching" does not necessarily involve feminist pedagogy in the sense of transforming the discipline and transforming the classroom to be a co-learning space (Aerni et al. 1999), or embracing principles informed by feminist activism and academic work (Shackelford 1992), or explicitly embracing a post-positivist epistemology in teaching or politicizing the classroom, as described above.

Going forward, some of the most pressing questions regarding the pursuit of feminist pedagogy within and against the neoliberal university include: How can current DEI efforts be appropriated by supporters of FPiE to reassert the radical potential of education in economics? What measures of success or evaluation criterion should feminists and those working towards critical pedagogy in economics support if we are seeking strategies that have the best chances of resisting co-optation and appropriation of radical demands?

Conclusion

Our goal in this paper is to articulate a useful and galvanizing exposition on feminist pedagogy for economics. Although we reject the false dualism of theory and practice, we recognize that all parts of this discussion may not be of practical use to all readers. This is not written as a list of tools that anyone can implement without thoughtful engagement with feminist thinking — that is impossible. This paper will be a success if it contributes to changing economics teaching in the world, if it helps to foster new collaborations, if it serves as a helpful entry point into the conversation around feminist pedagogy, or if it helps others doing this work to develop their ideas and practice. When this work is critiqued, it will help the authors to think through their ideas. We invite collaboration, reinvention, and co-conspiracy. The authors explicitly pursued feminist principles in their collaboration — minimizing hierarchy as much as possible, explicitly discussing gender dynamics, embracing mutuality in support that extended beyond "career" goals, working within larger communities of politically engaged peers — and this benefitted them and the paper itself. Feminist principles made the work more enjoyable and made our efforts more effective.

There are many resources for learning more. There is an explosion of feminist pedagogy and critical pedagogy work not written by economists. We acknowledge that there are many challenges to engaging with this literature as economists, not least of which is the meager, possibly negative, (individual) incentives to do so. To the extent that this article can be used to deepen an engagement with this literature, it would also be a success.

FPiE requires building knowledge and expertise around oppositional, politicized, critical pedagogical frameworks and engaging in reflection around your own teaching practice in relation to these frameworks. FPiE is an opportunity to work to transform teaching and other politicized professional activities. This work can be done within networks, in community, or simply with like-minded others in groups as small as two people. Will "feminist pedagogy" be appropriated and reduced to a list of strategies that can operate without contradictions in the neoliberal university? Will there be attempts to de-politicize feminist pedagogy? Yes, of course. As authors, we are prepared for this, and this article is part of our work to build oppositional power to confront this possible future.

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