



Book Review

The Digital Academic: Critical Perspectives on Digital Technologies in Higher Education

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Lupton, D., Mewburn, I., & Thomson, P. Editors. (2018). *The digital academics: Critical perspectives on digital technologies in higher education*. UK: Routledge.

The Digital Academic: Critical Perspectives on Digital Technologies in Higher Education is a text bringing together scholars to provide insight for the university in a world where work and communication is highly digitized. The editors gathered scholars' stories that provide accounts of how academics use digital media to teach, interact, and work in higher education. The implications of the digitization of higher education including everyday interactions and employment is included. What is argued is that there is an online culture and created identities impacting how work is conducted. There is movement toward digital technologies and media where the line between being "online and offline" is almost nonexistent (p. 15). What is clear is that there is a great value for those who embrace what the digitization of higher education has to offer.

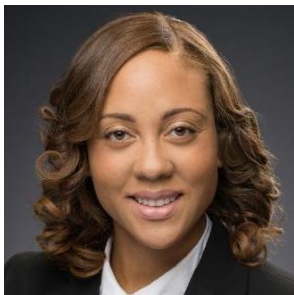
The book is divided into twelve chapters. The first chapter, "The Digital Academic: Identities, Contexts and Politics" overviews the growing use of social media in academia and its use in teaching, research and communication with colleagues. There are numbers of resources which academics can choose to teach and engage students including Twitter, blogs, and massive open online courses (MOOCs). Academics are encouraged to engage with digital technologies, as a place to not only develop an academic profile but to also engage in 'flipped classrooms' and open education.

Chapters two and three cover the role of digital technologies during the completion of a doctorate degree. A point that is made is that digital technologies can support students as public scholars as well as doctoral researchers. There is value in self-created independent projects known as 'PhD2Published' as an effort to create academic community and professional development post-doctoral studies. This public project has opened the possibilities of engaging in academic practices including writing, publishing, and teaching that occur online, but also possible future career

options. Chapter four provides insight into the academic persona and profession of online culture. An argument raised is that this "persona" describes the public version of self which is portrayed on social media (p. 14) and is largely constructed through writing.

In chapter seven, a focus is placed on academics who utilize online tools for scholarly digital activism. Activism on digital platforms is a method of outreach. The chapter addresses the current tension that exists between traditional academic networks and digital scholarship in Asian Australian Studies Research Network (AASRN). AASRN is active in digital spaces and members of the organization are active through online debates in addition to other activities. The organization was created to bring about a strong network for a new niche in research and then transitioned from an email list to social media platforms increasing its growth tremendously. AASRN's online presence is international and active across a number of platforms despite the struggle to have strong community outside of these digital connections. Digital scholarship has broken barriers from traditional activism and is free from traditional academics despite its presence online.

The authors consistently argue that digital media is being used to further academic careers, develop scholarly articles and dissertations from content created on online platforms to communication with other scholars. The book reveals what is becoming more apparent every day in higher education, that "there is no escaping the digital" (p. 15). This book is timely and illuminates the idea of creating an academic self online and how that can work as an advantage to communicate with other scholars in prepare for academic writing, research, and teaching. This book provides academics, graduate students, and interested others with insights into the importance of social media platforms and encourages the embracement of the digital movement for academic socialization, research, and social justice engagement with benefits for all.



Ryin Bailey is a Doctoral candidate at Capella University. Her research interests are postsecondary and adult education, professional development and online faculty, second language learners and motivation.