

Critical Realism as a Bridge between Critical Pedagogy and Queer Theory

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Abstract : This paper explores the traditions of critical and queer pedagogy, its intersections, tensions and paradoxes. Critical pedagogy, with a materialist realist ontology, and queer theory, which is often post-modern, post-structural and anti-essential, may not seem compatible. Similarly, there are tensions between activist orientations, often enacted through essential sexual identities, and a queer approach that questions such identities and subjectivities. It will argue that critical realism gives us a bridge between critical and queer pedagogy in preserving a realist materialist ontology, where economic forces are real, and independent of consciousness and hermeneutic constructions of them. At the same time, it offers an epistemology that does not necessitate a binary view of the roles of the oppressed, liberator, or even oppressor. It accepts that our knowledge is contingent, partial and contestable, but has the potential, and enough validity, to demand action and potentially inform the actions of others.

Keywords : critical pedagogy, queer pedagogy, critical realism, heteronormativity

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