

# RAISING CONSCIOUSNESS THROUGH FEMINIST PEDAGOGY IN ANIMATION

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## Abstract

Exploring collective practice and collaboration with external experts to develop a method of integrating feminist pedagogy into creative HE environments using animation as a feminist tool. This case study focuses on a student-made film, *Why Mums Don't Jump* (2 min, 2023), which premiered in Los Angeles at La Femme International Film Festival 2023. The project resulted from a collaboration between a group of mixed-gender, second-year animation students at Falmouth University who were invested in the subject of female reproductive health and their live-brief client, Helen Ledwick, podcaster, author and creator of *Why Mums Don't Jump*.

Embracing the opportunity to reflect on the methodology and success of learning outcomes based on interviews with participants and audiences. The initial feedback and testimonials indicate that the film was received as a pioneering animated story, granting visibility to a hidden condition known as 'pelvic organ prolapse', often experienced by women postpartum. Audiences' recognition of the film's attitude-changing potential testifies to Wells' view of animation as 'a radical tool in the re-invention... of social, cultural ... materials' (Wells 2012). This case study demonstrates that when animation addresses the need for social change, student work can contribute to the visibility of hidden discrimination and social debates around female reproductive rights. The students' engagement with the process exemplifies their temporary entanglement with what Sara Ahmed once called a 'sweaty concept' (2017) to bring out hidden gender inequalities and generate new social understandings.

Although this is not a definite recipe for educating socially aware animators, analysing this project stage-by-stage, there is an attempt to outline one potential teaching strategy for promoting gender awareness among HE students in creative disciplines.

## Link to recording

<https://youtu.be/AjKv-ZPIQJ0?si=tOkWj8ncN2urSU9>