[Machinations: Artificial Intelligence, Ethics of Care, and the Future(s) of EdTech](https://play.library.utoronto.ca/watch/c77ec5ca3a00d655c7b336a44c7e6d6d) |Brenna Clarke Gray, Thompson Rivers University | Keynote for Digital Pedagogy Institute 2023

Theme: Sustainability Issues and the Harms of AI

**Questions & Key Ideas**

How are you feeling about generative AI?

AI definition

Generative AI definition

Moral panic and punitive impacts for students

**Notes and Drawings**

Interests in care-centered practices and the ethics of educational technologies

We’ll try today to imagine into existence a future that we want in relation to technology use in education

Centered distrust around how large companies are using and selling these tools. Don’t have our best interests at heart when developing and providing access to AI tools.

AI is a catchall term, encompasses wide range of machine learning tech. Uses large datasets to make predictions and conclusions.

Generative AI is a class of tools that doesn’t just make predictions/decisions, but attempts to generate. If it doesn’t have complete data, it will fill in the blanks to the best of it’s ability, which is limited.

It's not a replacement for Google for fact-based answers to questions (e.g. can I bring my dog to a national park?)

“It only knows what’s already been thought” which also includes biases and misinformation.

We sometimes personify these tools which can make it seem like they are sentient and intelligent, but they are not. It can’t go rogue, but people can use these tools to disrupt and harm us.

Early reactions were based around fear, ways to ban tools, quickly redrafting policies.

What institutional values are reinforced when we respond to a changing landscape by being more punitive?

Space is needed to give time to build expertise in using AI tools

Ed tech companies sometimes weaponize tech knowledge against educators

John Warner – “Chat GPT Can’t Kill Anything Worth Preserving”

Costs of generative AI

How do we live our values in the age of AI?

How are our values represented in the tools we choose?

Further marginalization of the already marginalized

Ways forward

Panic reactions can turn to policing as a solution in the classroom. This can lead to using other AI tools to detect (which don’t work) and can harm students more than the tools themselves.

The rush to embrace needs to be contrasted with some caution. There needs to be time to assess, build expertise, and respond.

Who is left behind, who is not able to keep pace (for a number of different reasons).

Feelings of being out of touch, and feeling pressure to keep up with new technology and tools.

Structural university issues and pressures have led to assignments that AI can do well in. Not enough time, too large of class sizes = assignments that are easy to mark.

Labour ethics – exploited workers being exposed to traumatic and violent materials. Global south tends to be the most exploited by edtech.

Data scraped from the internet without creator’s consent. Legal issues around use in these tools

Example of an AI modelling agency specialized in “diversity.” What does this actually represent? Is this meaningful?

Climate justice – large carbon footprint for the training of AI. AI searches can use up to 5x more computing power than a standard search engine. Preprint “Making Generative AI Less Thirsty” (doing less demos and using screenshots instead)

Students already marginalized by the education system are the most likely to be harmed by AI. Need to reconsider AI used for grading and monitoring in teaching and learning practices.

Radical transparency instead of a fear response. Fostering a culture of academic integrity (Why is this important and meaningful for students? Why should they care?)

Care centered approach to AI

Hold ourselves to the same standards as our students.

Encourage disclosures of AI use rather than punitive measures.

Problem: Consider potential harms + who gains from this use + ethical considerations = decision (ok that sometimes the response is no)

Summary: Some caution is warranted when considering the use of AI, but resorting to punitive measures when dealing with student use will lead to more harm overall. We need to question the structures of higher education and how it creates the conditions for assignments to be successfully completed using AI. We need to explore how we ensure our values are being represented in the tools we choose to use.