

Feminist Pedagogy

Volume 2
Issue 4 *Volume 2, Issue 4: Back to School*

Article 10

August 2022

Rand, Sarah. The small book of hip checks: On queer gender, race, and writing.

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Recommended Citation

Jordan, TL (2022) "Rand, Sarah. The small book of hip checks: On queer gender, race, and writing.," *Feminist Pedagogy*. Vol. 2: Iss. 4, Article 10.

Available at: <https://digitalcommons.calpoly.edu/feministpedagogy/vol2/iss4/10>

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Rand, E. (2021). *The small book of hip checks: On queer gender, race, and writing*. Duke University Press. 140 pp. \$23.95 paperback. ISBN 978-1-4780-1148-4
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The small book of hip checks: On queer gender, race, and writing by Erica Rand (2020) is an accessible look into the revising process of writing through hip checks and personal stories that emphasize questioning assumptions and positionality. The book reads as if it is a letter to the reader, filled with vulnerability, pensiveness, and an open joy of exploration into gender and sexuality. Allowing readers to view her writing process in real time, literally detailing her revision and editing process for the book, Rand provides a new perspective on revisiting and revising scholarly work as telling stories through writing. In this review, I discuss Rand's use of hip checks in writing, personal stories as a reflexive writing tool, and the role of the "hip check" in the feminist classroom. Rand's book is well suited for educators looking to help their students through the writing and revising process in their academic work.

The book itself is a series of short essays with thin threads relating back to the idea of the "hip check." Rand uses this term in all its connotations: inspecting of the physical body part, a mode of flirtation and gaining attention, and the move which forcibly redirects an opponent (p. 13). Rand utilizes these stories to highlight hips, as body parts, in the context of gender, sexuality, and race, using writing to provide "hip checks" to redirect the reader into new realms of thinking. For instance, Rand juxtaposes a story on gendering human remains to a story about a drop-down menu to mark gender on a website, forcing the reader to think differently on the politics of assigned gender by creating an abrupt shift in theme (p. 115). In another essay, the author's inability to master hula hooping takes us on a journey of how Rand's own body "hip checked" her gender, and how she recognizes herself as femme (p. 63). She shares these stories with readers as lessons on the analysis of gender and sexuality, but also as reminders of how positionality and misconceptions inform gender productions. In doing so, Rand gives us honest, vulnerable reflections about lessons learned about gender and writing.

In addition to Rand's personal examples, the author advocates for the "hip checks" the readers experience themselves. She writes, "My aim here is both to disrupt your paths of thinking/feeling/movement and to advocate for openness to what being hip-checked might deliver, despite or because of sometimes being painful, because of or despite sometimes being pleasurable" (p. 14). Where this book departs from other books on writing is that Rand is reflexive about how she is implicated in traditional notions of race and gender, which show up in her own writing process, and the subsequent analysis. For much of the book, Rand reckons with her positionality and reliance on old writing habits which uphold hegemonic norms and exclude people outside of Rand's own experience. For instance, in the essay "Gifts and Givens," she reckons with her initial draft of the book in writing, "I saw that I had repeatedly described joy in movement that feels natural before pointing to the racism and ableism that may contribute to the assessment of naturalness in others or ourselves" (p. 68). Enacting reflexivity about the writing process, Rand models for readers how they, too, may write about gender, sexuality, and race by using personal stories as a starting point for analysis. By suggesting the use of personal story, she makes the process accessible for new writers, since all of us have stories where gender, sexuality, and/or race are main themes.

The small book of hip checks would be a fresh addition to many gender and women's studies classrooms, particularly those that emphasize writing projects. Rather than a prescriptive, rule-focused guide to writing, Rand offers the student direct examples on storytelling within gender, sexuality, and race. By narrating her thought process in creating and revising these

stories, she models how students may similarly utilize personal narrative to apply, extend, or disrupt course concepts and theories. Educators could assign Rand's work in undergraduate or graduate courses to model how they use storytelling as a means for theorizing. It can also serve as a model for reflexive writing.

Rand's book also invites educators to "hip check" their previous knowledge in order to decenter their own positionality when teaching students to theorize through writing. The "hip check" concept teaches the writer to never be comfortable in their own habits, but continually revisit their approach and welcome new ways of knowing. This framework is particularly poignant for those writing from a Western, white, cisgender perspective, which may prioritize dominant ideologies of gender, sexuality, and race. The "hip check" provides space for writers to learn beyond their own perspective, and wrestle with dominant assumptions towards a more inclusive analysis of their work.

The small book of hip checks invites readers to rethink the writing process, as well as how they approach theorizing in the feminist classroom. Through personal narrative, Rand provides tools for writers at all levels to consider how they uphold norms in gender, sexuality, and race through the writing process. This book is a critical view on the writing process that will give new insight to writers and theorists of all levels, providing hip checks—both comfortable and jarring—to embrace new knowledge as we deeper explore our relationship to our writing and how we engage with the world.