

Emma Kurenlahti's keynote

Title

The construction of evil in educational communities amidst the sustainability crisis

Abstract

Various aspects of the human-induced sustainability crisis that manifest as climate change and the extinction of species (for example) have called for researchers to reconfigure how evil should be understood, also in education and in relation to non-humans. However, when it comes to the study of evil and education, there has been no empirical research investigating how understandings of evil are currently constructed in educational communities. This dissertation responds to this lack of research by investigating the discursive construction of evil in the educational communities of the animal rights movement and Finnish education. The results show that, in these communities, understandings of evil were constructed in a singularized, structural, and complex manner. Based on these findings, this dissertation argues that, to begin overcoming good/evil dualism and to promote a less human-centered morality, a shift to dialogical ontology in educational communities is needed to begin resolving the sustainability crisis through education.