



Critical Lessons in Interculturality

Failing Better

By Fred Dervin

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Challenges idealised views of intercultural success, showing how failure can be a critical tool for understanding and teaching complex human interactions.

Critical Lessons in Interculturality: Failing Better argues that our obsession with intercultural success is limiting. This book proposes a paradigm shift, urging us to see failure not as an endpoint, but as a rich, essential site for critical learning and a more realistic understanding of human interaction.

Readership

This book would appeal primarily to scholars, educators and advanced students in the fields of intercultural communication, education and critical studies. Its readership includes academics and practitioners seeking a critical and reflexive alternative to success-oriented models of interculturality. It is also highly relevant for researchers in applied linguistics, educational sciences, anthropology and sociology who are interested in deconstructing power and ideology in intercultural encounters.

Key selling points

- Moves beyond unrealistic ideals to focus on the critical lessons found in inevitable intercultural failures.
- Proposes a radical rethinking of how we practice intercultural engagement.
- Reframes moments of misunderstanding and nonunderstanding as potentially productive.
- Provides conceptual tools and real-world vignettes for students and practitioners seeking a more realistic approach.

About the Author(s) / Editor(s)

Fred Dervin is Professor of Multicultural Education at the University of Helsinki, Finland. He has published extensively on the hidden complexities of intercultural encounters, drawing on critical and post-critical perspectives. He is also a failed pianist and a devoted Moomin reader.

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