



LGBT Network: Research Seminar

Thursday 1st April, 12.30pm - 2pm, Room JB-SR 116
Jessop Building

Dissenting Fictions: Investigating the Literacy Practices of Gay Men

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Abstract

In this paper, I draw upon the reconstructed life histories of five, middle-adulthood gay men to map a relatively uncharted terrain - the socio-sexual contexts in which literacy is embedded in adolescence. Dorothy Gale, in the 1939 screen adaptation of Frank Baum's children's classic, *The Wizard of Oz* remarked 'There is no place like home', but the family home and school is often no place to be caught being queer. It has been suggested that the fictional or imaginary are often considered parasitic on the real world (Rosenblatt, 1978), however, I argue that it was in and through our ludic textual practices, in our queerly nuanced re/readings of the 'real', that the logic of (hetero)normative practices in our everyday lives were able to be displaced and disrupted. Drawing on the retelling of our stories as a form of fugitive knowledge in practice, the paper explores the ways in which literacy and homosexuality identity get practised within socio-cultural and socio-sexual contexts. I suggest that the Queering of texts be part of a critical and emancipatory agenda in educational domains.

Biography

Mark is a Senior Lecturer in Literacy at Victoria University and has lived and worked in Japan, Thailand, UK, Vietnam and Melbourne, Australia. His research endeavours to combine contemporary understandings of literacy with poststructuralist ideas of gender and sexuality and he is interested in Queering prevailing normativities and certainties in educational research around methodological process, inquiry and representation. Mark has published his research in the *British Educational Research Journal*, *Auto/biography*, *Pedagogy*, *Culture and Society*, *Sex Education* and *Primary English Education*.

This seminar is hosted by the University of Sheffield's LGBT Staff Network.

(<http://www.shef.ac.uk/hr/equality/involved/lgbtnetwork/index.html>)

We welcome participation in the seminar by both staff and postgraduate research students from across the University interested in research on LGBT issues. If you are planning to attend this event, or interested in joining the staff network, please email:

lgbtnetwork@sheffield.ac.uk