

ACR 150/ Literacy in American Society/ Section 5000/ Prof. Barnes/ Spring 2022

Our Notebook- this Google doc is like a communal notebook. We will use it throughout the semester for defining key words (glossary) and for brainstorming ideas. We are all authors here. I ask that we respect each other and contribute.



Our class glossary

Here are some important terms we will be discussing in this class. It's your job as a class to define them in your own words and to find relevant examples. If you come across a vocabulary word you'd like to add to this list, just do it. You can then either define it yourself or wait for others to do so.

Vocabulary: word or phrase	Our definition	Examples
Literacy	From class on 2/1: The skill/ process of reading and writing, form of expression by writing and reading?, the ability to understand words	
Ethnography of literacy (Szwed)	Study of literacy through observing everyday life of people	Field observations or interviews
Sociocultural perspective of literacy (Baker)	Literacy changes as the culture of the time changes	Today we use computers to write emails, on social media
Annotate	Take side notes about reading or videos	Summarize what you read, key terms and definitions, your response
Digital literacies	new form of literacy formed by technology	social media, social networking, online searching
New Literacy	A form of literacy through digital technology	Text messaging, blogging, social networking, podcasting, and video making
Eugenics (Musa)	The selection of desired	Genetic screenings, birth

	heritable characteristics in order to improve future generations	control, forced abortions or forced pregnancies
1917 Immigration Act (Ryan)	a ban to stop people from entering the United States	literacy test, Chinese exclusion act of the 1882
Literacy Tests (Sophia)	A test of literacy given to immigrants to discriminate and lessen immigration (mostly from specific places, for example Italy and Japan) to America	Started as reading/writing a passage from the U.S. Constitution in any language
The model minority (Santos)	The idea of intelligent and well behaved Asian American/An ideal minority group that everyone should look up to	Asians are very smart and really good at math and science
American ambivalence about immigrants (Robert)	There has always been a bias against immigrants among Americans since the beginning of American society, and there will be until the system is rid of the corrupt people in charge.	Alexander Hamilton in 1802 stated: "The influx of foreigners must, therefore, tend to produce a heterogeneous compound; to change and corrupt the national spirit; to complicate and confound public opinion; to introduce foreign propensities."
Hegemonic discourse	High power saying why they deserve to be in power	In the 1960s, white official giving the literacy test to African Americans saying they should not be allowed to vote.
Counternarrative discourse	Lower power people speaking out against the higher power	People not agreeing with what the president has to say.

Dichotomy	something to do with two opposing things that are similar	Good and evil
Technology		

Classwork 4/12

Disrupting Dichotomies for Social Change: A Review of, Critique of, and Complement to Current Educational Literacy Scholarship on Gender by Molly Blackburn

A few years ago, I attended a round-table discussion on girls, literacies, and identities. The presenter drew from the work of Judith Butler to analyze data that represented girls engaging in electronic literacies to interact with peers. Consistently, the presenter interpreted their social dynamics in heterosexist ways, arguing that the girls were making particular moves for the purpose of instigating or developing romantic relationships with boys. The possibility that any of the girls (or boys) may have experienced same-sex desire was not considered. More specifically, there was a situation in which a girl electronically represented herself as a boy and entered a boys' chat room. The presenter interpreted this move as being a way for this girl to gain access to what the boys thought about the girls; she was cast as a sort of spy in a girl-boy game. This interpretation troubled me: not because I understood it to be an improbable interpretation, but because in coming to this analysis, the presenter drew from the work of Butler - who is not only a feminist but also a queer theorist - and because it seemed to dismiss other possibilities completely. For example, I wondered whether the girl's representation of herself as a boy and entrance into the boys' chat room could also be interpreted as electronic cross-dressing and what difference such an interpretation would make for the implications of the research. However, it seemed to me that in this discussion, such an interpretation was impossible. It felt as if I, as a lesbian - and the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and questioning (LGBTQ) youth with whom I work - were impossibilities.

Question 1: *Why was the author upset when the presenter interpreted a girl's posing as a boy to enter a boy's chat room?*

The author was upset because the author thought that the girl pretending to be a boy had a bad intent when in reality she didn't.

Because the presenter interpreted the girl's actions as predatory/ill intended, when that may not have been the intent.

The author is upset because the presenter did not think of the girl's identified as a boy and just thought of her as a spy

Queer youth are routinely ignored in this literature and in classrooms. In this conceptual essay, I draw on my firsthand experiences with queer youth to illustrate the significance of understanding gender and sexual identities in complicated ways in order to meet the needs of queer students as well as all students who are confined by dichotomous, heterosexist, and homophobic understandings of gender. I begin by reviewing the ways in which literacy scholars conceptualize both gender and literacy; I then identify purposes for critically examining gender and literacy. I describe my experiences initiating and facilitating a literacy group for queer youth, focusing on one reading of one short story and, more specifically, two particular youths. I examine the ways in which these youths police and cross gender lines as they engage with literature. Finally, I assert that making "gender trouble" (Butler, 1990/1999) in literacy teaching and research can work against the violence caused by dichotomous notions of gender.

Question 2: *What is the content and purpose of this article?*

The content and purpose of this article is to illustrate the significance of understanding gender and sexual identities in order to meet the needs of queer students.

The purpose of this article is show the struggles of the LGBTQ youth in school

In this essay, I conceptualize gender as fluid and multiple.

Question 3: *How does the author define gender here, in your own words?*

The author defines gender as an identity that varies and that has the potential to change.

The author defined gender as an identity and a way to represent themselves.

Literacy educators can work to "counter the violence" the dichotomies provoke in two ways, each of which relies on the other: We must foster multiple and variable performances of gender and sexuality while creating, indeed insisting on, a context where such performances do not come with violent consequences. **Making gender trouble** in educational contexts demands both of these efforts simultaneously. But **any text read, discussed, or written in ways that interrogate dichotomous notions of gender in any context committed to being safe for queer readers and writers will help make gender trouble**. Both literacy educators and scholars can work to "counter the violence" by being more sensitive to gender and sexual diversity in our teaching and research. We must not assume that all of our boys desire to perform masculinity or that all of our girls desire to perform femininity. We must neither ignore the possibility that some of the youth with whom we work are homosexual nor pretend that none of them are homophobic. This demands self-consciousness regarding our own prejudices against LGBTQ people.

Question 4: *What does the author suggest we do to increase equality for LGBTQ students in the classroom?* To allow an environment to experiment with gender and sexuality. And to approach the topic of gender and sexuality without a heterocentric point of view.

Question 5: *What did you learn from this reading? What can you do to combat gender discrimination?*