education review // reseñas educativas
editors: david j. blacker / gustavo e. fischman / melissa cast-brede / gene v glass

a multi-lingual journal of book reviews

December 12, 2013 ISSN 1094-5296

Education Review/Reseñas Educativas is a project of the
College of Education and Human Services of the University of Delaware
the National Education Policy Center, and the
Mary Lou Fulton Teachers College, Arizona State University
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Guzzetti, Barbara & Bean, Thomas. (2013) *Adolescent Literacies and the Gendered Self: (Re)constructing Identities Through Multimodal Literacy Practices*. NY: Routledge.

Pp. xvi + 159 ISBN 978-0-415-63618-6

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The question of whether the expansion of literacy practices driven by globalization and Information and Communication Technologies has opened possibilities for less restrictive gender roles for adolescents is a critical one that the field of adolescent literacy has needed to address. In *Adolescent Literacies and the Gendered Self: (Re)constructing Identities through Multimodal Literacy Practice*, Barbara Guzzetti, Thomas Bean, and their contributors answer this question and advance the field's understanding of the complexities of adolescents' gendered literacies in the 21st century. In fact, because of the diverse and intricate perspectives included, this book

Citation: Lesley, Mellinee. (2013 December 12) Review of *Adolescent Literacies and the Gendered Self: (Re)constructing Identities through Multimodal Literacy Practice* by Barbara Guzzetti & Thomas Bean. *Education Review, 16.* Retrieved [Date] from http://www.edrev.info/reviews/rev1266.pdf.

represents a turning point in the existing corpus of research on adolescent literacy where gendered literacy identities are problematized and emerge in many respects as a shared space. In this book Guzzetti and Bean et al. explore what it means for millennial youth to practice literacy from various gendered positions through mew media and an increasingly global stage.

Adolescent Literacies and the Gendered Self is an edited volume that features the work of nineteen literacy scholars. The book pays homage to Helen Harper's significant body of work examining intersections of gender, identity, and desire in adolescent girls' literacy practices (Harper, 2000) and weaves together these themes from Harper's work in a pastiche of studies. *Adolescent Literacies and the Gendered Self* includes research gathered from three continents—Europe, North America, and Australia—and a variety of regions within the United States. This geographical scope presents a view of millennial youth as simultaneously inhabiting global and local spaces through digital technologies and virtual communities. The complex perspectives of youth speaks to an audience of educators, policy makers, and researchers in a broad array of fields including but not limited to women's studies, popular media, business, and literacy education.

Each chapter concludes with implications for literacy education. This makes the book a valuable resource for classroom teachers, administrators, teacher educators, and policymakers. Because Guzzetti and Bean have forged the perfect balance between theory and practice, the volume would be ideal for use in both a graduate seminar and a professional development book club for classroom teachers.

Woven into each chapter is a philosophy of critical literacy, which Cheryl McLean describes in Chapter Seven as a "consciousness and call to action" in which "the power of inherited and oppressive beliefs, values and ideologies associated with language, texts, and social contexts" are challenged (p. 65). This critical literacy presence is exemplified in several of the book's chapters through a poststructural feminist lens (Weedon, 1997) in which discursive practice is critiqued for replicating patriarchal norms. In other chapters, the thread of critical

literacy is one of equitable representation and counterhegemonic tropes in text.

The book is divided into the following three sections:

(1) Gender influences and identities in literacy and literature,
(2) Gender influences and identities in new literacies practices, and
(3) Gender and literacy: issues and policies.

As such, the chapters of each section cluster around themes of: (1) the selection and critical reading of texts with adolescents, (2) the influence and diaspora of text fostered by New Literacies, and (3) the disruption of stereotypic beliefs about adolescents' gendered literacy practices. In the forward Theresa Rogers describes the link between these themes as the ways youth become "engaged cultural critics in private and public spaces both local and global, and virtual and material" (p. xii). This notion of millennial youth as "cultural critics" connects these multifaceted phenomena that comprise the literacy practices.

In the Preface, Guzzetti and Bean also elaborate on these themes by drawing on Helen Harper's work. Harper is quoted as describing literacy as "a lived experience that can affirm or disrupt understandings of self and the world" (p. xiii) and noting the "multiliterate, multilingual, and multimodal" (p. xvi) spaces youth occupy locally and globally (as cited in Guzzetti & Bean, 2013). Both of these ideas frame the chapters in the three sections that follow.

In the first section, Guzzetti and Bean include four chapters that examine what it means to engage boys in literacy practice and problematize media constructions of the role of gender in adolescent's literacy identities. Topics in this section of the book include ways to use new media and adolescent literature to problematize hegemonic and stereotypic depictions of male and female gender roles and examine popular culture, media, and adolescent literature as sites for interrogation of gender disparity. For example, in Chapter One William Brozo documents instances of teachers drawing on boys' out-of-school literacies to foster "engaged, purposeful, and critical reading" (p. 4). The last chapter in this section by

Elizabeth Marshall and Ozlem Sensoy concludes with a quote from Helen Harper in which she challenged English teachers to explore "the dense terrain of popular culture, media and youth" and "tolerate, invite, and interpret the complexity, ambiguity, and contradictions that exist in text . . . and identity formations" (p. 37). This quote captures the central role of adolescents' cultural knowledge in literacy instruction presented in this section of the book and challenges teachers to engage in "critical discussions" and explore multiple possibilities for text selection in order to cultivate a liberatory pedagogy (Bean & Harper, 2006).

In the following section, Guzzetti and Bean foreground the role of New Literacies in shaping adolescents' gendered identities. The seven chapters in this section address the potential for oppression and empowerment through new media. The authors of these chapters explore this idea through 'zining, social networking, cyber entrepreneurship, online book clubs, global citizenship, and gaming. A common thread among the chapters in this section is that adolescents are expanding notions of gender-specific behaviors and roles through new media. For instance, Guzzetti notes more male adolescents are 'zining; Hayes notes more female adolescents are gaming. The chapters in this section also examine the ways gendered identities are performed online and interact with off-line literacy practices.

The larger question posed here is one of the extent to which adolescents experience empowered literacy identities through new media. For example, in chapter six Barbara Guzzetti discusses the way online 'zines provided adolescent females with "an act of power or civil disobedience that balks at the social demand that girls should not speak their minds" (p. 56). Conversely, in chapter nine Benita Dillard notes the girls in her study did not feel socially safe in the online book club they participated in. Thus, Dillard opined online book clubs do not serve as a panacea for all African-American adolescent females "coming to voice" (p. 89). The section concludes with Elisabeth Hayes's observation that gaming serves as a "hub" for "new and traditional forms of literacy" for both male and female adolescents (p. 107). Thus, this section of the book illustrates the complex and sometimes

contradictory sphere of gender roles in online literacy practices.

In the third and final section, Guzzetti and Bean piece together four chapters that disrupt long-standing stereotypes about gender and literacy. In the first chapter of this section Judith Dunkerly and Helen Harper examine notions of female citizenship from a local and globally-framed view of literacy education and an analysis of the policies of two agencies concerned with international education initiatives. In the second chapter Michael Kehler examines the misleading Canadian educational policies that were created to solve a "boy crisis" (p. 121). In the third chapter David Kirkland challenges hyper-masculine depictions of male African-American adolescents with an examination of the trope of tears in popular media and an adolescent's poetry as a "social literacy tool" (p 136). In the fourth chapter Jennifer Ingrey concludes this section of the book with an analysis of the embodied and disembodied literacy practices of genderqueer youth writing in a global North (i.e., the U.S., Canada, the U.K., and Australia) online forum for transgender and transsexual teens. Taken together, the chapters in this section invite the reader to imagine increasingly global and shared literacy communities for adolescents.

All three sections of the book explore "a space that invites possibility" (p. 132) for adolescent literacies. Amid critiques of hegemonic and stereotypic policies, texts, and social constraints, this book emerges as a testament to the possibility of gender equity, desire, agency and full participation in local and global communities for adolescents. The reader is invited to bear witness to what this means from multiple perspectives. The challenge presented to literacy teachers is one of reconciling adolescents' out-of-school and in-school literacy identities to redress tired myths about gender within educational systems driven by neoliberal social economies. The final sentence of the volume captures this idea, "To think within a social imaginary in a globalized time is to rethink the nature of literacy education altogether in the name of gender justice" (p. 147). If literacy is about leveraging social equity in the world, then notions of what it means to teach literacy in an era of participatory media, globalism, and multiple gendered identities must be considered. This collection gives teachers the tools they need to re-imagine

literacy pedagogy beyond measurement-driven definitions of literacy practice.

In fact, the works collected here give the reader much to consider and will no doubt inspire a collection of new studies. This effort will thus serve to keep alive the legacy of Helen Harper's work on gendered literacy identities. Certainly, there is more to examine on this topic. For instance, more research on different adolescent subjectivities than those included in the present volume is warranted (e.g., Latino, immigrant, biliterate youth). One hopes Guzzetti and Bean will investigate such areas by way of follow-up in order to continue to trace the evolution and nuances of adolescent literacy practices in the 21st century.

Finally, the inclusion of Helen Harper's work as a contributing author is bittersweet. Reading this book one cannot help but feel the loss of Harper as a scholar in the field of adolescent literacy. However, the continuation of her vision of gender equity for adolescents represented in the chapters that surround her work is a great tribute to her. Guzzetti and Bean are to be congratulated for not just publishing a substantial contribution to the field of adolescent literacy but for also bringing honor to Helen Harper's life and work as a scholar.

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The National Education Policy Center http://nepc.colorado.edu, and the
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