

ABSTRACT

This dissertation explores the lives of second and third generation Sikh youth in the Greater Vancouver area in relation to the ways they think about their identities. As racialized youth growing up in a major Canadian urban center, being situated within an array of various ethnic, racial, religious, and gender differences plays an important role in how participants recognize what it means to be Sikh, and the potential to become differently. Particularly relevant in this study is an investigation into the ways competing discourses of multiculturalism both facilitates the way participants “do” their identities, and also shapes the ways Sikh youth come to (*mis*)recognize the multicultural “others”. Through small group and individual interviews, youth theorizing on the repetition, regulation and re-signification of identity categories is explored. Relying significantly on Judith Butler’s theory of performativity, and Michel Foucault’s discussions of discourse, knowledge, and power, multiculturalism is taken up as an important societal discourse which requires racialized youth to perform their identities in everyday multicultural context such as schools. In other words, multiculturalism is theorized beyond policy and curriculum debates to investigate how youth “do multiculturalism” in different contexts through various embodied practices which constitute and regulate claims to a Sikh identity.

Based on an analysis of interview transcripts with 25 self-identified Sikh youth (ages 13-25), I argue that an important consequence of living in a “multicultural” society as understood by participants is the recognition of self and others through three frames of recognition. These “multicultural frames of recognition” include the ways Sikh youth come to recognize a discursive whiteness, discourses about racialized others, and discourses about other Sikh communities. I argue that subjection through the discourses which structure these three “multicultural frames of recognition” contribute to participants’ understanding of the diverse racial, ethnic, religious, and gender identities in modern day Vancouver, while foreshadowing the constitution and constraints of the identification process for Sikh youth within the multicultural imaginary.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

Academic Studies: B. A. Thompson Rivers University, 1998
B. Ed. University of British Columbia, 1999
M. A. Gonzaga University, 2005

GRADUATE STUDIES

Field of Study: Sociology of Education, Youth Studies

Courses

EDST 601 Introduction to Social Theory
EDST 601 Research Methods
EDST 602 Seminar in Supervision
EDST 577 Educational Policy
EDST 565 Multiculturalism and Education
EDST 565a Critical Race Theory and Education
CUST 565b Critical Media Literacy
EDUC 503 Qualitative Critical Ethnography

Instructors

Dr. L. Roman
Dr. A. Mazawi
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Dr. L. Loutzenheiser
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SELECTED PUBLICATIONS

Loutzenheiser, L., & Heer, K. (2017) Unsettling habitual ways of teacher through ‘post-theories’ of teacher agency. In J. Clandinin & J. Husu (Eds.), *Sage International Handbook of Research in Teacher Education* (pp. 317-332). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications Inc.

Heer, K. (2015). I thought you were one of us: Triumphs and crisis when teaching your own. *The Review of Education, Pedagogy, and Cultural Studies*, 37(3), 359-372.

Birk, M., Gill, H., & Heer, K. (2015). De-Islamizing Sikhaphobia: Deconstructing structural racism in the Wisconsin *gurdwara* shooting 10/12. *Education, Citizenship and Social Justice*, 10(2) 97-106.

Heer, K (2014). Philosophy by emotional ambush: Dr. George Yancy and the phenomenology of race. *The American Philosophical Association Newsletter: Philosophy and the Black Experience*, 13(2), 11-15.

Heer, K. (2012). Indian to Indian: Building alliances between South Asian and Aboriginal peoples through critical pedagogy and a politics of empathy. In H.K. Wright, M. Singh and R. Race (Eds.), *Precarious international multicultural education: Hegemony, dissent and rising alternatives* (pp.169-186). Netherlands, Sense.

SELECTED PRESENTATIONS

Heer, K. (2018). "Layers of Diversity: Working with an Intersectional Lens." Guest speaker, Teacher Education Office Speaker Series, University of British Columbia, January, 2018.

Heer, K (2014). Sikh youth and global education assemblages. Unpublished paper presented at the American Educational Studies Association Annual Conference, Toronto, Ontario, October 2014.

Heer, K (2013). De-Islamisizing Sikhaphobia. Unpublished paper presented at the Canadian Society for the Study of Education Annual Conference, Victoria, British Columbia, June 2013.

Heer, K. (2013). Sikh youth, multiple identities and education. Unpublished paper presented at the American Educational Research Association Annual Conference, San Francisco, California, April 2013.

Heer, K. (2013). Race, philosophy, and educational research. Invited speaker Philosophy of Education Speaker Series. Vancouver, British Columbia, February 2013.



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THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies

PROGRAMME

The Final Oral Examination
For the Degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY
(Educational Studies)

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Wednesday, February 28, 2018, 12:30 pm
Room 203, Graduate Student Centre
Latecomers will not be admitted

"Becoming Sikh: Sikh Youth Identities and the Multicultural Imaginary"

EXAMINING COMMITTEE

Chair:

Dr. Wendy Roth (Sociology)

Supervisory Committee:

Dr. Lisa Loutzenheiser, Research Supervisor (Curriculum Studies)

Dr. Donal O'Donoghue (Curriculum Studies)

Dr. Hartej Gill (Educational Studies)

University Examiners:

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Dr. Jennifer Vadeboncoeur (Human Development, Learning, and Culture)

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School of Child and Youth Care

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