

Locating **Queer** Writing in/as **Failure**

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Locating **Queer** Writing in/as **Failure**

Locating
Reading
Memory



Legitimizing
Valuing
Membership

Queer Pedagogy and Queer Writing

Locating **queer** writing

(**De-**)Legitimizing (**queer**) writing

Production of the (**ab-**)normal (Foucault)

Reiterated limit defining (**un-**)intelligible lives (Butler)

Queer Pedagogy and Queer Writing

- Britzman (1995): “Queer Theory offers education techniques to make sense of and remark upon what it dismisses or cannot bear to know. ...**ignorance** is analyzed as an effect of **knowledge**, indeed, as its **limit**, and not as an originary or innocent state” (154).
- McRuer (2004): asserts “the desirability of a **loss** of composure, since it is only in such a state that heteronormativity might be questioned or resisted and that new (**queer/disabled**) identities and communities might be imagined” (50).

Queer Pedagogy and Queer Writing

- McRuer (2004): “De-composition and disorder always haunt the composition classroom intent on the production of order and efficiency” (55).
- Alexander and Rhodes (2011): “...we are struck by the lack of writing samples *from ‘de-composed’ students* in his chapter. Where, in other words, are the material effects of de-composition?” (189-190).

Queer Pedagogy and Queer Writing

- Kopelson (2013): “...any **transgressions** that take place, or that we enact, in our classrooms are literally institutionally **sanctioned** and **contained**” (206).
- Rhodes (2015): “Can such a thing as **queer** pedagogy even exist? For pedagogy is about **disciplining** the subject.”

Bartholomae Reads **Queer** Writing

Reading **queer** writing

Valuing (and evaluating) (**queer**) writing

Possibilities of **failure** (Carr 2013)

Scavenger methodologies (Waite 2015)

Bartholomae Reads **Queer** Writing

What writing “**fails**”?

And what does that writing “**do**” for Bartholomae?

Bartholomae Reads **Queer** Writing

- “Inventing the University” (1985): unnamed essay (“Time”)
- “The Tidy House” (1993): “Fuck You” essay (Quentin Pierce)

Bartholomae Reads **Queer** Writing

- “Time”: “Many times the times drives a person’s life depends on how he uses it. I would like to think about if time is twenty-five hours a day rather than twenty-four hours. Some people think it’s the boaring or some people might say it’s the pleasure to take one more hour for their life. But I think time is **passing** and **coming**, still we are standing on **same position**.”
- The **queer** art of failure (Halberstam 2011)
- Mētis (Dolmage 2014)

Bartholomae Reads **Queer** Writing

- “The writer of this paper seems to be able to sustain a discussion only by continually **repeating** his first step, producing a litany of strong, general, authoritative assertions that trail quickly into **confusion**” (160).
- “This is the case of student with the ability to imagine the general outline and rhythm of academic prose but **without the ability to carry it out**, to complete the sentences” (162).

Bartholomae Reads Queer Writing

- “Fuck You”: “The stories in the books or meaningless stories and I **will not** elaborate on them This paper is meaningless, just like the books, But, I know the paper **will not make it.**”
- No future: **queer** pessimism (Edelman 2004)
- Survival and **queer** ways of living (Puar 2012)

Bartholomae Reads Queer Writing

- “I knew from the first week that I was going to fail them; in fact, I knew that I was going to preside over a curriculum that spent 14 weeks slowly and inevitably demonstrating their failures” (5).
- “I was not prepared for this paper. In a sense, I did not know how to read it. I could only ignore it. I didn’t know what to write on it, how to bring it into the class I was teaching, although, in a sense, it was the only memorable paper I received from that class and I have kept it in my file drawer for 18 years” (6).

Bartholomae Reads **Queer** Writing

Two extremes of **failure**

Exclusion & Anonymity

Refusal & Infamy

“Time”

“Fuck You”

Re-reading queer writing

Queer memory and queer membership

Limits of knowledge (Britzman 1995)

The right to have rights (Siebers 2008)

Re-reading **queer** writing

- Bartholomae (1993): “I think **basic** writing programs have become expressions of our desire to produce **basic** writers, to maintain the course, the argument, and the slot in the university community; to maintain the distinction (**basic**/normal) we have learned to think through and by. The **basic** writing program, then, can be seen simultaneously as an attempt to bridge AND preserve cultural **difference**, to enable students to enter the ‘normal’ curriculum but to insure, at the same time, that there are **basic** writers” (8).

Re-reading queer writing

- What does it mean to say that basic writing “failed”?
- What does it mean to say that queer pedagogy “failed”?
- What does it mean to say that queer writing “fails”?

Re-reading queer writing

What do we do with our failures?

Re-reading queer writing

- Harris (2012): "...student texts remind us that we can never fully know their authors. They are obstinate in their **otherness**.... Their **value** lies in how, at least sometimes, they can **disrupt** the smooth flow of our discourse about writing and its teaching" (689).
- "Time" essay: **un**named, **ex**cised, forgotten
- "Fuck You" essay: archived, **re**-circulated, haunting