

Processes of othering in sexual education

Critical perspectives on Norwegian textbooks and teaching practices

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Drawing on queer theory and post-colonial perspectives, Åse Røthing discusses how teaching about sexuality in contemporary Norway tends to construct certain groups and sexual practices as “the other” while other groups and practices are being privileged and normalized. Her presentation builds on classroom observations in secondary schools and on analysis of textbooks in Social science, Biology and Religion. She will in particular focus on (1) how concepts of “Norwegianness” are being constructed in relation to sexual norms and practices of the ethnic or imaginary “other”, (2) how the concept of “homotolerance” as educational ambition offers privileged positions to (assumed) heterosexually oriented students and to heterosexuality as such, and on (3) the processes of othering in sexual education in biology related to male heterosexuality and concepts of reproduction as normative starting points.

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