

LINDA RADFORD

The Fantasy Child: Reading In and Out of Danger

In this paper I examine the astonishingly understudied problem of the psychic and social appropriation of adolescent historical narratives by teachers. Following Jacqueline Rose's (1984) work in *The Case of Peter Pan, or The Impossibility of Children's Fiction*, and other inspired theorists of children's literature who in the last two decades have been cautioning adult readers of the seductive call of the fantasy child (Britzman 2006, 1998; Lesnik-Oberstein 2004; Galbraith 2001; Robertson 2001, 1999; Thacker 2000), I consider what drives the pedagogical aspirations of readers' thoughts and fantasies about the teaching of two historical narratives. Exploring how the readings of such texts become a mirror game where reading is a place of *(n)everland* connected to the psychical and physical past, which has everything to do with the loss and desire, rescue and reparation that are related to difficult memories of growing up, I uncover a pedagogy of reading that underscores why reading matters to education.

Linda Radford teaches part-time at the Faculty of Education, University of Ottawa. Her recent doctoral work investigates narrative, subjectivity, reading experience and psychosocial formation. She is interested in questions around narrative experience and learning in the study of education.