



Literacy and Religion: The textual politics and practice of Seventh-day Adventism (Studies in Written Language and Literacy)

Cushla Kapitzke

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This book explores the interrelation of literacy and religion as practiced by Western Christians in, first, historical contexts and, second, in one contemporary church setting. Using both a case study and a Foucauldian theoretical framework, the book provides a sustained analysis of the reciprocal discursive construction of literacy, religiosity and identity in one Seventh-day Adventist Church community of Northern Australia. Critical linguistic and discourse analytic theory is used to disclose processes of theological (church), familial (home) and educational (school) normalisation of community members into regulated ways of hearing and speaking, reading and writing, being and believing. Detailed analyses of spoken and written texts taken from institutional and local community settings show how textual religion is an exemplary technology of the self, a politics constituted by canonical texts, interpretive norms, textual practices, ritualised events and sociopolitical protocols that, ultimately, are turned in upon the self. The purpose of these analyses is to show how, across denominational difference in belief (tradition) and practice, particular versions of self and society are constructed through economies of truth from text that constrain what can and cannot be articulated and enacted by believers.



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