

THE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG
FACULTY OF EDUCATION

Seminar Series on *Language Learning, Gender, and Identity*:

LICENTIOUS LINGUISTICS?
WHITE WESTERN MEN AS ENGLISH
LANGUAGE TEACHERS IN JAPAN

DR. ROSLYN APPLEBY
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2 September 2011 (Friday)

12:45 - 2:00pm

Room LG02, Hui Oi Chow Science Building
Faculty of Education, The University of Hong Kong

(Chair: Dr. Angel Lin)

Abstract

This paper is concerned with gender and ethnicity as aspects of language teacher identity in Asian contexts. Set within a broad historical and theoretical framework of Orientalism and Occidentalism, the paper draws on interview data with white male English language teachers who have lived and worked in Japan, and considers their professional and personal experiences with Japanese women. The interviews take as their starting point a notorious comic strip series appearing in an English language magazine in Japan which featured the licentious figure of 'Charisma Man': a stereotypical white Western man, an 'average guy' in his native land who becomes something of a superhero when transported to Japan. English language teaching provides a livelihood for Charisma Man, as it does for many white men in Japan, and becomes the site for his relationships not only with Japanese women, but also with his 'arch-enemy, Western woman'. The paper explores the men's identification with the Charisma Man stereotype, and discusses their attempts to construct acceptable discourses of masculine heterosexuality in an intercultural language teaching environment. It demonstrates something of the opportunities and challenges experienced by Western men as English language teachers in Japan, and situates these within a broader historical and geopolitical context.

About the Speaker



Dr Roslyn Appleby is a senior lecturer in academic and professional language and literacy at the University of Technology, Sydney. Her research interests include: language, gender and identity; international development; and the cultural politics of English as an international language. Her book *'ELT, Gender and International Development: Myths of Progress in a Neocolonial World'* was published by Multilingual Matters in 2010.

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