

Morrison, Connie

### Who Do They Think They Are?

Teenage Girls and Their Avatars in Spaces of Social Online Communication

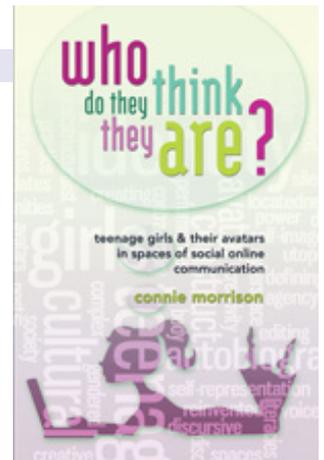
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### Book synopsis

*Who Do They Think They Are? Teenage Girls and Their Avatars in Spaces of Social Online Communication* documents a descriptive case study of teenage girls who created autobiographical avatars for their social online spaces. It explores the complex and often conflicted negotiations behind girlhood identity and representation in a cyber-social world. Comparisons are drawn between autobiographical avatars and the profile pictures that teenage girls use on their social networking sites as they consider the manner in which identity is negotiated, constructed, co-authored, and represented. The contradictions and expectations of online social and popular culture make representations of identity simultaneously limitless and limiting for the girls who create them. Given the nature of the identity-defining and social act of creating an autobiographical avatar, a critical media literacy frame provides a pedagogical opportunity for bringing avatar construction into the secondary English language arts classroom.

This book provides guidance for educators and researchers interested in the social construction of identity in an increasingly visual world, and will be valuable in courses ranging from literacy studies, media education, cultural studies, youth studies, educational research, teacher education, and popular culture to feminist, gender studies, and women's studies courses.

### About the author(s)/editor(s)

The Author: Connie Morrison is a doctoral candidate at Memorial University's Faculty of Education where she teaches courses in teaching and reading popular culture, curriculum teaching and learning, adolescent literature, and intermediate and high school English methods. Her background in media education, English as cultural studies, and social justice pedagogy informs her research in avatar design and the online identity and representation of teenaged girls. She contributed a chapter, «Critical Autobiography for Transformative Learning: Gaining a Perspective on Perspective», to *Narrating Transformative Learning in Education* (2008), and an article, «The Everyday Practice of Avatar Creation», to *The Canadian Journal for New Scholars in Education*.

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