

## **Extract from *Situated Writing as Theory and Method: The Untimely Academic Novella***

### **Aim and Organisation of the Book**

Emergent genres of narrative life writing can be localised in the intersection of feminist and postcolonial studies, human and social sciences, and across the arts. This book develops a genre-transgressive textual and visual strategy that is useful for exploring shifting and diverse contexts and conditions, a form of auto/biographical narrative guided by the idea of research as a creative, critical and reflexive storytelling practice. The book includes exemplars from my trilogy of untimely academic novellas: “The Professor’s Chair” (Livholts 2010a), “The Snow Angel and Other Imprints” (Livholts 2010b), and “Writing Water” (Livholts 2013). The common features of untimely academic novella writing are its critical, creative and reflexive approach to constructing academic textuality beyond the author, and to elaborating possible forms of the symbolic, visual and sensory in research. The plot of the novellas unfolds within the university, the writing happens both in the process of writing by the author, and for the main character in the novella in other places. This representational form of analytical reflexivity engages the situated researcher to work from diffracted locations and to engage with the conceptual, emotional, material and political practices of research. (Livholts 2019: xix-xx)

### **The Professor’s Chair**

This novella tells the story of a woman’s desire to obtain a professor’s chair and what it means to use writing and language differently and to challenge genre conventions in academe. The novella unfolds within the university, the writing happens both in the process of writing by the author, and for the main character in the novella in other places. Questions of what it means to write and not write, scenery, place and space, social relations, life and death, are inextricably intertwined with the architectural spaces, rooms, and corridors of a university built of yellow brick.

<FIGURE 1 HERE>

Figure 1. University building. Authors photograph. Sweden, 2005. (Livholts 2019: 61)

### **The Snow Angel and Other Imprints**

This novella is based on the author’s childhood memories and interweaves the lives of three generations of women. The scenery and architecture consist of a landscape of snow, and the novella makes use of a snow angel as a textual and visual practice to make inquiries into geographical space, place and academia. It explores the interrelationship between the social and symbolic formations of class, gender and whiteness and life changes from rural farming life to academic life.

<FIGURE 2.a and 2.b HERE>

Figure 2.a and 2.b Evening Snow Angels. Authors Photographs. Sweden, 2008. (Livholts 2019: 62)

### **Writing Water**

This novella builds on a series of return visits to the previous novellas, reflecting upon and conducting inquiries into how the social conditions of academic life, everyday life and

family life are shaped by and shape the experience of living with three sons. It explores the question of the 'home' of the writer through diverse dilemmas, possibilities and limitations of navigating in relation to the politics of academe set by disciplinary boundaries. It engages the reader in the question of what happens when disciplinary boundaries are dissolved, and interdisciplinary scholarship is created.

<FIGURE 3 HERE>

Figure 3. Water. Authors photograph. Sweden, 2011. (Livholts 2019: 75)