



Researching Learning Lives:

On discipline, inter-disciplinarity and imaginative imperatives in auto/biographical and narrative research

Location:

Canterbury Christ Church University,
Canterbury Campus, England.

**Thursday 28 February -
Sunday 3 March 2013**

There may be a paradox at the heart of researching learning lives, in all their complexity: the need, on the one hand, to absorb ourselves in particular disciplines, and to be disciplined in our work. This includes drawing on rich traditions, whether sociological, psychological, narrative or literary etc. However, on the other hand, we may be aware of the limitations of strict disciplinary boundaries, and how lives often defy some of our attempts at categorising or understanding them. And if we need discipline in our methods, we need to be aware of the danger of how this can 'discipline' the other, and impose regimes of truth on subjects, subjectivities and intersubjective processes.

There are also echoes in our conference theme of C. Wright Mills and the normative, imaginative, interdisciplinary imperative, which he saw to lie at the heart of biographical enquiry: of the need to connect history, structuring and agentic processes, in biographical work, in thinking about the constraints to, and possibilities for, human flourishing. Others, perhaps inspired by feminism, stress connectedness and relationship as being essential to the imaginative processes of chronicling and interpreting learning lives.

They may also draw on critical feminist theoretical perspectives in challenging whose and what knowledge counts; and/or on Foucault in terms of how subjects, including researchers, have been disciplined to think and practice in constrained and constraining ways.

In our conference, we want to create spaces for dialogue:

between those emphasising, for example, the social and those focusing more on the psychological/psychoanalytic in their research, as well as between colleagues who may, for instance, draw on literature, including fiction, for their inspiration, rather than 'social science'.

There will be a series of **keynotes from internationally renowned colleagues, dialogues/round tables**, alongside **individual papers and symposia**, focusing on our theme of discipline, its importance and discontents in researching learning lives.



Network and research theme group

The ESREA Life History and Biography Network

The network has been active and influential over many years. It consists of diverse researchers, new and experienced, drawing on differing disciplinary backgrounds. It includes researchers and doctoral students from every part of Europe, north, south, east and west, and beyond.

The Network first met in Geneva in 1994 and has provided the basis for diverse and influential publications, as well as for major collaborative research projects (including the recent, major RANLHE Europe-wide study of non-traditional students in universities); and for many other forms of collaboration, such as an Erasmus doctoral programme for research students on methodology.

Auto/biography and Narrative Research Theme Group at Canterbury Christ Church

Canterbury Christ Church University is also home to an extensive body of research in the broad field of auto/ biographical narrative studies and life history. There is a thematic group that brings together academics from different disciplines, with particular strengths in education, health and social care studies.

The thematic group has provided a base for major funded research, and there is extensive work on narrative and careers counselling, on researching professional lives as well as those of students, as well as on life writing, life stories and community development. The group contains a substantial cluster of doctoral students, who draw on this family of methods to chronicle and theorise change and transitional as well as transformational processes in many contexts.



Keynote speakers

A series of keynotes will be delivered by internationally renowned colleagues:

Professor Lynn Froggett | University of Central Lancashire, UK

Professor Linden West | Canterbury Christ Church University, UK

Professor Peter Clough | University of Sheffield, UK

Professor Jeanne Marie Rugira | University of Quebec, Canada

Professor Jean Kabuta | Belgium



Booking Information

To attend the conference, please note the following prices which are inclusive of morning and afternoon refreshments, lunch, Thursday evening buffet and Saturday evening's conference dinner:

- ESREA member £210 (EURO 255 inc VAT)
- Non member £250 (EURO 305 inc VAT)
- PhD students £170 (EURO 206 inc VAT)

£1 = 1.2110 EURO

Please note: If you are an overseas delegate you will need to reclaim VAT back in your own country: VAT Reg: 347 0691 47

ESREA will offer 2 bursaries (250 Euros each) for doctoral students. The money is to be used for travel and or accommodation. The bursaries are awarded to those whose access to the conference might otherwise be difficult.

Candidates must apply in the first instance to Gill Harrison:
gill.harrison@canterbury.ac.uk with the following details Name, Email, Current Address, Institution. The bursary is only awarded to those whose papers have been accepted by the Scientific Committee.

Canterbury visitor information

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