

CNR
Centre for Narrative Research
Web Newsletter 20, October 2011

Welcome to the CNR autumn 2011 newsletter. The resource exists to distribute news of members', associates' and interested others' relevant research and writings, and also for short reviews of conferences, papers and books, and announcements of future plans. Please email us if you would like to contribute something about your work, or some other writing, to the next issue.

E-COPY DATE, ISSUE 21: April 1, 2012. Send to: Molly Andrews, m.andrews@uel.ac.uk

Newsletter sections:

- I. CNR Seminar series and conferences
- II. Recent publications by and news from CNR members, advisors and associates
- III Upcoming narrative events
- IV CNR graduate programmes for 2011-2
- V Reports of recent events

I. CNR seminar series and conferences

**A. CENTRE FOR NARRATIVE RESEARCH
RESEARCH SEMINAR PROGRAMME 2011-12**

Tuesdays, 12:00- 1:00 pm, University of East London, Docklands Campus, EB1.63

15 November 2011, Andrea Salter, *Using de Certeau's framework for understanding 'stories': examples from across Olive Schreiner's Letters*

7 February 2012, Wendelien van Oldenborgh, *A Well Respected Man, or Book of Echoes*

12 March 2012, Room EB 2.46 Maria Medved, *White Man's Sickness: Narratives of Heart Healing by Aboriginal Women*

17 April 2012, Marta Rabikowska, *Memory on the screen: the narrative of a post-industrial community in Eastern Europe in the act of filmmaking*

**B. CNR and ESRC NRCM NOVELLA node
GRADUATE RESEARCH SEMINAR SERIES, 2011-2**

Tuesdays, 5.00 – 6.30 pm, Thomas Coram Research Unit, Library, 27-8 Woburn Square, London WC1H 0AA

8 November 2011, Denise Proudfoot, Dublin City University/University of Bath, *Narratives of mothers living with HIV*

6 December 2011, Alessandro Castelli, Gender Institute, LSE, *The representation of 'mothers who kill' in the rhetoric of the Women's Liberation Movement in 1970s Japan.*

7 February 2012, Mastoureh Fathi, University of East London, *Narratives of class performativity: Iranian women doctors and the question of belonging*

6 March 2012, Moira Nikodem, Aberdeen University, *Stories of working lives and belonging: women's narratives of careers in education and retirement*

1 May 2012, Elis Chasan, University of East London, *Women's narratives of love*

***To think is to Experiment*, CNR Postgraduate Research Event, April 25, 2012: CFP by April 10**

The Centre for Narrative Research is organising the eleventh annual Research Day for graduate students on Wednesday, April 25th, 2012 at Docklands Campus, University of East London. Research students from different universities in the UK and Europe will participate into the event with their presentations on their research in progress. The programmes and abstracts from previous years and some of the papers are on the CNR website, accessible via the link: <http://www.uel.ac.uk/cnr/tothinkistoexperiment.htm>. If you are interested in presenting in this exciting and relaxing event, please send an abstract (100-200 words) to Cigdem Esin, c.esin@uel.ac.uk by April 10th, 2012.

II. Recent work by CNR members, advisors and associates

A. Fiona Doloughan, *Contemporary Narrative: Textual production, multimodality and multiliteracies* (Continuum, June 2011)

Contemporary Narrative introduces key issues and trends in contemporary narrative studies. Taking a case study approach, it traces key narrative developments in the context of a range of theoretical approaches, including multimodality, multilingualism and transliteracy. It offers

students of contemporary narrative an overview of the way in which twenty-first century narratives are constructed and the extent to which their construction depends on a range of social, cultural, linguistic and technological factors as well as on individual creativity and expressivity. The book brings together insights from narratology, semiotics, linguistics and translation studies and applies them to the issues raised by contemporary literary and cultural texts, particularly in relation to processes of adaptation, translation and transformation across modes and media. Highlighting the key features of contemporary narrative from a critical and analytic perspective, it also explores the close relationships between reading and writing and the critical and creative dimensions of text to reveal the creativity at work in a range of innovative contemporary narratives.

Table of Contents: 1. New Perspectives on Narrative \ 2. Intermodal Translation: verbal and visual narratives \ 3. Intermedial Translation: narrative and the new media \ 4. Intercultural Translation: language and culture as narrative resource \ 5. Cultural Transformations of Narrative \ 6. Narratives of Travel and Travelling Narratives \ Contemporary narratives: concluding remarks \ Glossary of key terms and concepts \ Further Reading \ References \ Index

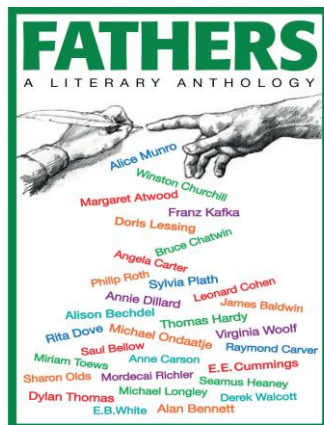
Fiona J. Doloughan is Lecturer in English at The Open University, UK.

Reviews: ‘Covering a range of storytelling practices--including novels, photographs, graphic narratives, cinema, and digital narratives--this illuminating study combines insights from narratology, translation studies, comparative literature, linguistics, and social semiotics to establish an interdisciplinary framework for research on contemporary narrative. The book, which features a helpful glossary, suggestions for further reading, and an extensive bibliography, provides a lucid, well-organized account of key problem areas in the field, including the interplay between the verbal and the visual in multimodal narration, the translation of stories across languages, media, and cultures, and the nature of narrative literacy (or literacies). With its broad scope, analytic rigor, and compelling use of specific case studies, *Contemporary Narrative* constitutes an invaluable contribution to the field.’ Professor David Herman, Department of English, Ohio State University, USA

B. Fathers: A Literary Anthology, ed. Andre Gerard

ISBN: 9780986555404, www.patremoirpress.com. An evocative book of essays and poems from literary legends about their fathers... Newly released by Patremoir Press, *Fathers: A Literary Anthology* is a book “to set the darkness echoing.” This is a transformational book which richly proves the wisdom of Doris Lessing’s insight that “We use our parents like recurring dreams, to be entered into when needed; they are always there for love or for hate.” Proves it for fathers, at least. With father pieces by writers such as Angela Carter, Winston Churchill, Franz Kafka, Alice Munro, Philip Roth and Virginia Woolf, *Fathers* is an impassioned argument for the importance of literature in our lives’ own banks.” On an individual level, *Fathers* is a manual for all children trying to understand and improve their relationship

AUTHOR BIO Born a twin in 1953, son of a German mother and a Belgian father, Andre Gerard grew up far from Wurzburg and from Liege, among the forests and lakes of the coastal pulp and paper town of Powell River, B.C. Lover of endives and sauerkraut, lebkuchen and rice pie, he has a BSc. (74) and a BA. (76) from UBC, and a Master's of English Literature from the University of Washington (77), and over the years has worked as broke hustler, and green chain hand. *Fathers* came to him some six years ago, and although he tried to resist, it would not go away. He is, after all, the father - petus, too, came from seeing how “astronaut kids,” children with fathers half a world away, responded to reading personal essays and poems about fathers. A gift for all his children, biological and emotional, this anthology believes passionately in the power of friendship, loving-kindness and literature to give meaning to our lives with their father. *Fathers* is also a powerful tool for fathers—fathers young or fathers old—to improve themselves. To read Margaret Atwood, James Baldwin, Annie Dillard, Doris Lessing, or Philip Roth as they explore aspects of their fathers is to open maps of possibility. Not surprisingly, *Fathers* also is filled with deep wisdom on the subject of death and grieving. As Andre Gerard writes, “Not only do our fathers engender us, they bring us face to face with our own mortality. For much of our lives they stand between us and death....Every father is a pioneer in the world of death, and the older we become the more inclined we are to see them as such. We pore over the details of our father's death in order to plan our own.” Many of the essays and poems in *Fathers* triumphantly transmute loss and grief into affirmation and celebration.



C. David Harper has co-edited a new book on qualitative research in the mental health field, which includes a chapter by Mike Murray and Sally Sergeant on narrative psychology. Here are the details: Harper, D., & Thompson, A. (Eds.). (2012). *Qualitative research methods in mental health and psychotherapy: an introduction for students and practitioners*. Chichester: Wiley.

D. Paula Reavey, (ed.) (2011) Visual Methods in Psychology: Using and Interpreting Images in Qualitative Research. London: Routledge.

This comprehensive volume provides an unprecedented illustration of the potential for visual methods in psychology. Each chapter explores the set of theoretical, methodological, ethical and analytical issues that shape the ways in which visual qualitative research is conducted in psychology. Using a variety of visual data, including photography, film-making, drawing, internet media, model making and collages, each author endeavours to broaden the scope of understanding experience and subjectivity, using visual qualitative methods.

The contributors to this volume work within a variety of traditions including narrative psychology, personal construct theory, discursive psychology and conversation analysis, phenomenology and psychoanalysis. Each addresses how a particular visual approach has contributed to existing social and psychological theory in their topic area, and clearly outlines how they carried out their specific research project. The contributors draw on qualitative sources of verbal data, such as spoken interview, diaries and naturalistic conversation alongside their use of visual material.

This book provides a unique insight into the potential for combining methods in order to create new multi-modal methodologies. The range of topics covered includes sexuality, identity, group processes, child development, forensic psychology, race, and gender, making the volume a vital contribution to psychology, sociology and gender studies.

Paula Reavey is a Reader in psychology at London South Bank University. Her interests are on topics relating to child sexual abuse, social remembering, mental health, space and embodiment, using memory work, discursive approaches and visual methods. Recent works include two co-edited volumes (with Sam Warner, Routledge, 2003), *New Feminist Stories of Child Sexual Abuse: Sexual Scripts and Dangerous Dialogues* and *Memory Matters: contexts for understanding sexual abuse recollections* (with Janice Haaken, Psychology Press, 2009) and an edited volume, *Visual Psychologies: using and interpreting images in qualitative research* (Routledge, 2011). She is currently working on a book on *Mental Health and Distress* (co-authored with Richard Bentall, John Cromby and Dave Harper, Palgrave – due 2012) and a book on *Memory and Affect* with Steven D. Brown (Routledge – due 2013).

Claudia Wegener has recently published a multi-media article on Creative Africa Network which presents research findings from a pilot project (the DURBAN SINGS audio media & oral history project) through a production (a multi-track mix in this case), while/ by listing all its sources, archives, contributors & networks through active content links (i.e. listening links + contact links) & making this listing a particular feature (a “remix-tree”)of the publication. The title of the article is “Remixing African oral history for a global audience” ; the link: <http://www.creativeafricanetwork.com/page/28437/en.\>

III Upcoming narrative events

A. Other upcoming CNR events

31 October 2011, Centre for Narrative Research Film Screening and Discussion, UEL, Docklands Campus, East Building, 2-4 pm, Room EB 1.41

EVDAL ZEYNIKE by BULENT GUNDUZ
The Life Story of a Traditional Kurdish Storyteller



ABOUT THE FILM

The director explores the Kurdish oral literature by tracing the life story of the renowned *Dengbej* (traditional Kurdish storytellers reciting long epic songs, generally without musical accompaniment) *Evdale Zeynike* whose life inspired all the following generations of the same tradition. Similar to *Bards* in Gallic, Celtic and Irish traditions, the *Dengbej* tradition has been the heartbeat of the Kurdish culture and language which have been marginalised throughout history. *Dengbejs* in Kurdish culture have contributed towards the formation of an oral archive documenting the history of Kurdish people.

The film draws on the interviews with current *Dengbejs* who tell and sing the story of Evdale Zeynike. In his film, Bulent Gunduz also utilises fiction in parts while telling the story. The traditional songs of the *Dengbej* tradition accompany the story of Evdale Zeynike who is known as the *Homer* of Kurdish culture. The film, which particularly puts woman *dengbejs* first, also celebrates the heritage of that culture with colours of Kurdistan's landscape.

The film was granted the big award in Sri Lanka Vesak Buddhiste Film Festival in 2010, praised at New York International Independent Film Festival with a special presentation, and was granted the best international documentary award in International Ireland Film Festival the same year.

SYNOPSIS

The renowned Kurdish bard Evdale Zeynike was raised by his mother (Zeynep) in poverty. When he had a dream at the age of thirty, his life would completely change. He would sing stories in an air never heard before. He extended his reputation to every corner of Serhed where Evdale Zeynike became a legendary *Dengbej*. Evdal would adopt an abandoned child, Temo.

While the child is seven or eight years old, Evdal was struck blind and would experience a period of self-abandonment, of loneliness and isolation. However, Evdale Zeynike continued singing his legendary stories while travelling with his son Temo.

Bulent Gunduz was born in Karayazi (Turkey). He trained as a mechanical engineer. His first encounter with the world of media was to be a reporter for a radio channel in Bursa. He studied film and journalism in Istanbul where he worked as a journalist for the national channel 6 for two years. He has been living in Paris since 2001. In 2007, he published a book on the Turkish media (Generals' Privates with Microphones and Kurds). Currently, he works as an internet journalist and makes films.

1 November 2011, Masterclass with Richard Candida Smith, UEL, Docklands Campus Library Building, Room BS 3.22, 1pm – 3pm

Richard Cándida Smith is Professor of History in Department of History at the University of California, Berkeley, where he teaches intellectual and cultural history of the United States and serves as Director of the Regional Oral History Office. He is the author of *Utopia and Dissent: Art, Poetry, and Politics in California*, *Mallarmé's Children: Symbolism and the Renewal of Experience*, and *The Modern Moves West: California Artists and Democratic Culture in the Twentieth Century*, as well as the editor of *Art and the Performance of Memory: Sounds and Gestures of Recollection*, and, with Ellen DuBois, of *Elizabeth Cady Stanton: Feminist as Thinker*. He is currently working on a book on the development of inter-American cultural markets and debates over "American" identity in the twentieth century. He is a past president of Oral History Association, and has been active in the Working Group on Memory and Narrative, an international, interdisciplinary forum of scholars.

For more details, and to book, please contact Molly Andrews, m.andrews@uel.ac.uk

26 November 2011, Saturday, Sociology, politics, thinking and acting: A Festschrift for Nira Yuval-Davis, with the launch of Nira's latest book, *The Politics of Belonging*. *School of Oriental and African Studies, Khalili Lecture Theatre, 10.00am-6.00pm*

1 December 2011, Battered Women's Social Network Responses, Professor Margareta Hyden, Linköping University, Sweden. A CNR and Family Therapy and Systemic Research Centre (Tavistock Centre) event. *Tavistock Centre, 120 Belsize Lane, 2pm – 4.30pm room tba.*

2 March 2012, Writing Narratives: Reflections and Diffractions, CNR-The Network for Reflexive Academic Writing Methodologies (RAW), Mid-Sweden University. A One Day Symposium, The British Library, London, UK.

PROGRAM

9.30-10.00 Coffee/Tea and Registration

10.00-10.15 Welcome! Maria Tamboukou, CNR and Mona Livholts, RAW.

10.15-11.00: 'Someone Else. History's ethical turn and the narrative of others' Carolyn Steedman

11.00-11.45: 'Politics, narrative and imagination: reflections on a semi-autobiographical experiment'. Olivia Guaraldo

11.45-12.00: Coffee-Tea Break

12.00-12.45: 'When might narrating become impossible? On an altered sense of time.' Denise Riley

12.45 – 1.15: Discussion

13.15-14.30: Lunch Break

14.30-15.15: 'A Diary of Excellence. Some Notes on the Practice and Politics of Style in Feminist Academic Writing' Annelie Bränström Öhman

15.15-15.30 Coffee -Tea Break

15.30-16.30 'Moments': Writing the Auto/Biographical I and Beyond. Liz Stanley in a Conversation with Mona Livholts in the R.A.W. Dialogue Chair'

16.30-17.00 Book Launch Livholts (Ed.) 'Emergent Writing Methodologies in Feminist Studies'

25 April 2012, 'To Think is To Experiment' Postgraduate Research Day, Special Theme: Narratives in/of Translation, *UEL Docklands Campus, 10.00am - 5.00pm Room tbc*

25 May 2012, CNR Inaugural Lectures, 'Narrative Pathways,' Professor Molly Andrews, Professor Corinne Squire, Professor Maria Tamboukou, UEL Docklands, *Venue to be announced.*

8.25-9 June 2012, Narrative Innovations: A Summer School for Narrative researchers, Co-organised by Monash University, Linköping University and the Centre for Narrative Research at the University of East London, *Prato, Italy, at Monash University's Prato Centre.* <http://www.ita.monash.edu/>. NB This workshop is now full.



Olympic Lives: the Olympics and me

What are the stories that we, and our friends and families, are telling about our Olympic plans?

How - if at all – do we think the Olympics will affect our lives? What are we looking forward to about the Olympics? What are we worried or not sure about?

The UEL social sciences Olympics project: We are going to set up a webpage with interviews and other materials generated by students who take the coming Olympics as a mini-research project. We'd also like the materials to form the basis for an exhibition at UEL. The idea is that each participant in the project will record (in audio or video) a short interview with a friend or family member on the topic, 'The Olympics and me,' or will make a similar piece of work based on writing, photography or art. More about the project coming soon...

B. Other upcoming Narrative Events:

UEL Centre for Human Rights in Conflict seminars

Wednesday 26th October, 3.30 - 5 pm, *Migrant workers and camel jockeys: a look at exploitation in the Gulf*, David Keane, Lecturer, Department of Law, Middlesex University

Wednesday 9th November, 3.30 - 5 pm, *Gender-based violence in war and the question of accountability: The case of Bosnia*, Maja Korac, Reader, School of Law and Social Sciences, University of East London and Olga Martin-Ortega, Senior Research Fellow, Centre on Human Rights in Conflict, School of Law and Social Sciences, University of East London. Chair: Johanna Herman, Centre on Human Rights in Conflict, UEL

Wednesday 23rd November, 3.30 - 5 pm, *The Human-Rights Compliance of UK Anti-Terrorism Legislation in the Light of Domestic and International Case Law*, Carmen Draghici, Lecturer, School of Law, City University

All seminars will take place in Room 110, Duncan House, University of East London, Stratford Campus, High Street, London, E15 2J. Refreshments Provided, All welcome. Map of Duncan House: <http://g.co/maps/jfyk7>. For further information, please visit www.uel.ac.uk/chrc, or contact Johanna Herman at j.herman@uel.ac.uk

Phantasmagoria, Autumn 2011

Please join us at Dalnavert this October for



PHANTASMAGORIA
history, memory, and haunting through film, photography and projection

Manitoba Historical Society Dalnavert Museum
61 Carlton St • Winnipeg

OCT 5
NOV 6
2011

OCT 5 Art installation at Dalnavert, featuring work by
to Coral Maloney | Caroline Monnet
NOV 6 Clint Enns | Doreen Girard | Andrew Milne
Danishka Esterhazy | Wendy Sawatzky

special events

OCT 5 Opening Night Panel Talk with
9PM Amber-Dawn Bear Robe | JJ Kegan McFadden
Jonah Corne | Vanessa Warne | Melentie Pandilovski

OCT 26 *In the Attic*
to A spine-chilling magic lantern performance and
OCT 30 telling of ghost tales from near and far
8PM by Charlene Van Buekenhout
Tickets for this show must be booked in advance. Contact info below.

NOV 5 Forgetting Remembering: Film and Memory
2PM A closing lecture on film, memory,
and contemporary art
by Dr. Jens Brockmeier

PHANTASMAGORIA will be open from
October 5 to November 6, 2011.
Contact the Manitoba Historical Society Dalnavert Museum for hours and admissions.
204 943 2835 | www.mhs.mb.ca | bookings@mhs.mb.ca

We would like to acknowledge this project's generous supporters:



22 February 2012, 6pm Jens Brockmeier: The Art of Remembering and Forgetting

A talk by Jens Brockmeier on the narrative fabric of autobiographical memory and what gives narrative, visual, and performative artists privileged access in exploring it.

Chelsea College of Art and Design, 16 John Islip Street, Westminster, London SW1P 4JU. CCW Graduate School at the University of the Arts London

Olive Schreiner Letters Online - Going live in January 2012

In January 2012, transcriptions of more than five-and-a-half thousand letters written by the feminist and socialist writer and social theorist Olive Schreiner (1855-1920) will be made freely available world-wide. *Olive Schreiner Letters Online* will provide a new and distinctive electronic resource for a wide range of narrative researchers working in the social sciences and humanities. From January, complete and fully searchable transcriptions of all Schreiner's extant letters stored

in archives across Europe, the US and South Africa, as well as a set of useful editorial apparatus around these, will be accessible at www.oliveschreiner.org.

At present, more information about the work of the Olive Schreiner Letters Project, which is funded by the Economic and Social Research Council, and how and why we are bringing into being *Olive Schreiner Letters Online*, is available at www.oliveschreinerletters.ed.ac.uk. On this site, many Project publications are available to download and there is much information about Schreiner and her core concerns.

If you would like to hear more about *Olive Schreiner Letters Online* and receive information about activities and events from across the globe concerning using letters and other ‘documents of life’ in narrative and other kinds of research, please subscribe to our mailing list by contacting Liz Stanley and / or Andrea Salter (both based at the University of Edinburgh, UK) at oliveschreiner@yahoo.co.uk. Alternatively, you can self-subscribe to our new ‘Lives & Letters’ mailing list by sending a blank email to sympa@mlist.is.ed.ac.uk with the following in the subject: *sub lives-and-letters*. Many thanks.

We very much welcome comments on *Olive Schreiner Letters Online* and would love to hear from you!

Call for papers: Memory before Modernity. Memory Cultures in Early Modern Europe, Leiden University, The Netherlands, 20-22 June 2012

In the ‘memory boom’ that has emerged in the humanities and social sciences since 1990, five major themes have captured most attention: (a) the relationship between politics and memory, (b) trauma and memories of violence, (c) the ‘mediatization’ of memory (d) the transmission of memory and identity formation (e) the relationship between memory, history and other concepts of the past. Yet most case studies relating to these themes have been concerned with events and evidence post-1800; indeed, many theorists of memory allege that there is something intrinsically ‘modern’ about them. The aim of this conference is to put this assumption to the test.

First, we want to ask to what extent, and in what ways, these five themes also played themselves out in the early modern period. Secondly, we want to analyze more closely how early modern cultural, social, political and religious frameworks affected cultures of memory. Who ‘managed’ early modern memories? What mechanisms were at work? What patterns can we establish? How distinctively ‘early modern’ are these?

We invite late medievalists and early modernists to offer proposals for 20 minute papers on one of the following five themes. Details on the panels can be found below

- Panel 1. Memory wars before the nation state
- Panel 2. Coping with distressing memories
- Panel 3. Memory landscapes as multimedial experiences
- Panel 4. Memory transmission and identity formation
- Panel 5. Sensations of change

The themes will be introduced in five keynote lectures. Confirmed keynote speakers include Philip Benedict, Susan Broomhall and Benjamin Schmidt. The conference will end with a round table in which experts on modern memory will comment on the findings of the conference.

We will be able to cover the expenses of economy travel and accommodation in Leiden for all speakers selected. Papers should be submitted two weeks before the conference and will be made available to all participants beforehand. Proposals can be submitted until 1 November 2011 by email: emm@hum.leidenuniv.nl

This conference is organized by the NWO VICI Research Team Tales of the Revolt, Memory, Oblivion and Identity in the Low Countries, 1566-1700, that is directed by Professor Judith Pollmann. Further information on the team and the project at www.earlymodernmemory.org

IV Narrative Research postgraduate programmes at CNR

- *Masters in Narrative Research* (4 modules and Dissertation, 1 year fulltime, 2 years part-time)
- *Postgraduate Diploma in Narrative Research* (4 modules, 2 semesters fulltime, 4 semesters part-time)
- *Postgraduate Certificate in Narrative Research* (2 modules, 1 semester fulltime, 2 semesters part-time)
- *Postgraduate Associate Certificate in Narrative Research* (1 module, 1 semester part-time)

Available modules for 2011-2 include: *Narrative Research by Distance Learning*: An alternative route. Students can also attend onsite tutorials. Fall 2010.

***Narrative Force*:** A unique module, examining Foucauldian and Deleuzian approaches to narrative. By Distance Learning only. Spring 2011.

For more details, please contact: Corinne Squire and Maria Tamboukou. Email: c.squire@uel.ac.uk , m.tamboukou@uel.ac.uk

V. Reports of recent events

Narrative Dialogues - *Jo Finch, UEL*

An interesting and thought provoking seminar on narrative research, took place recently, in the busy first week of teaching at UEL. Members of staff from the fields of psychology, psycho-social studies, social work, cultural studies, education and refugee studies, presented to a diverse audience, an eclectic range of empirical research findings and pedagogical applications of narrative approaches. All the presentations provoked lively intellectual debate and raised fundamental philosophical questions at the very heart of narrative research. One “narrative” that ran through these discussions concerned the question of emotion and affect, of how the narrative researchers make sense of emotion, often when these narratives of affect are often “unspoken” and in the case of Giorgio Donna’s research in Rwanda “unspeakable”. How do we make sense of those narratives that cannot be spoken or articulated? How do we make sense of the contradictions, the good and bad narratives? What narratives do we chose to privilege

over others and how do narrative researchers enable the voices of the participants to be heard?

To Think is To Experiment: A Day for Postgraduate Narrative Researchers, April 2011, Cigdem Esin, UEL

The Centre for Narrative Research has been organising postgraduate research day, *To think is To Experiment*, for 10 years. This year it was the tenth anniversary of CNR's formation as a research centre at the University of East London. As part of commemorative events, To Think is To Experiment was dedicated to the doctoral research at CNR.

We invited CNR's past and current PhD students to present their narrative work on 18 May 2011. Linda Sandino, Mastoureh Fathi, Solveigh Goett, Gudrun Loehrer, Jacomijne Prins, Denise Proudfoot and Nicola Samson responded our invitation and presented their research. It was a day full of stimulating presentations and intense conversations on the multiplicities in narrative research. The presentations were rich and thought provoking in content and form, revealed the variety of research questions that narrative approaches could be applied as well as the variety of narrative interpretations.

Linda Sandino's talk, 'Both sides of the story': narrative identity and the curatorial imagination' was the second Siyanda Ndlovu Memorial Lecture. Sandino presented her analysis of a life history interview with a curator of fashion at the Victoria & Albert Museum whose work encompasses "radical" forms of curating (radical) fashion within the context of an established, historic museum and collection. While focusing on the concept of 'radical' in this narrative, Sandino explored the function of narrative as a space for reaching meaning.

Mastoureh Fathi's presentation on her doctoral research with educated Iranian women living in Britain revealed the cultural and political complexities involved in translation in research context. Fathi underlined the argument that these complexities make translation not only linguistic but also a cultural performance of narration.

Textile artist Solveigh Goett told us the stories of her pieces which she collected in her cabinet of domestic wonders. In her project 'Mirabilia Domestica', Goett explored the narratives of small things which create a space for meaning making, memory work, enchantment, evocation and flights of the imagination.

Gudrun Loehrer's research on the depiction of nudity on Early 19th-Century American Paper Money presented an interdisciplinary perspective that brought together political, historical and narrative arguments.

Jacomijne Prins' research on intra-group identity construction and negotiation among Dutch-Moroccan young adults led to an interesting discussion on the continuous re-construction of narratives within interaction in research context.

Denise Proudfoot's presentation focused on her research story in which she listened to narratives of mothers living with HIV in Ireland. Her research aims to explore the challenges faced by the

mothers with HIV. Several interesting questions were raised about the influence of these challenges on the constitution of stories.

Nicola Samson presented some of the issues that have arisen for her as a narrative researcher who undertook life story interviews with neighbours in her street for her research on women's experience of belonging.

Among others, there was one narrative argument that permeated through all presentations and following discussions. That was the context that makes all the analysed narratives be heard and analysed in particular moments of history. What constitutes narratives and how narratives are constructed in research contexts were the questions that were repeatedly exchanged between speakers and participants of the event.

Similar to previous years, the tenth To Think is to Experiment served as a constructive space in which postgraduate narrative researchers with different experiences and approaches exchanged ideas and questions.

“The fish don't talk about the water”: an impression of the *Spring Symposium on Narrative Research* at the University for Humanistics (Utrecht, 31 March 2011), *Kevin Haines, University of Groningen*

To an uninitiated outsider, the Netherlands appears to be the land of straight lines evoked in an Escher or a Mondriaan. A walk beside a canalized river presents us with few features that might distract us from the need to carry goods by water as efficiently as possible. Similarly, Dutch academia likes to apply an efficient positivist brush of *wetenschap* (science) to the landscapes it researches: the 'subjects' of this research are preferably investigated alongside control groups, and results are analyzed statistically to ensure validity. Anything else just wouldn't be considered scientific? Fortunately, at the inaugural *Spring Symposium on Narrative Research*, keynote presenters Matti Hyvärinen (University of Tampere) and Brian Schiff (The American University of Paris) demonstrated that narrative research is firmly grounded in the traditions and conventions of qualitative research.

Just as it is possible to leave the beaten track and find oases of natural growth in the unexpected meanders of Dutch rivers, it is also possible to find oases of exceptional practice in qualitative research. One such site of growth is the Dutch Network for Narrative Research (NNN), which provides a welcome platform for the discussion and development of the narrative research discipline in the Netherlands. I use the term 'discipline' to underline the rigorous nature of narrative research methodology. Narrative research draws conceptually from theory and methodology in a variety of fields, notably Psychology, Sociology and Linguistics. Anneke Sools, chair of this intriguing symposium, puts it this way: “A wide scope is needed to give meaning to the detail”.

The most transparent value of narrative research is its ability to 'give a voice' to the individuals or groups being studied. Narrative approaches allow participants to express their experience in terms that they had not previously considered, either because their everyday experience is too

familiar for them to be able to examine it critically, or because the experience is subject to social taboo. We are reminded of Risseuw's metaphor at this point: "The fish don't talk about the water". Narrative research can open the door to personal transformation, and consequently it has the potential for empowerment, as exemplified in the research reported by Karin Willemse (Erasmus University Rotterdam) and Corinne Squire (University of East London). In quite different settings - Willemse in Darfur, Squire in urban London - these researchers have succeeded in co-creating narratives with participants which gave the participants access to 'imagined future identities'. This work is reminiscent of the work of the Luttrell's classic *Pregnant Bodies, Fertile Minds* in which these possible futures may have remained 'unimagined' without the intervention of the narrative research process.


Such research challenges the traditional scientific view of the researcher as an independent observer. These researchers are involved in the inter-active co-creation of narratives with their participants, and they therefore need to be explicit about the identities and values that they bring to this process. Another challenge for narrative researchers lies in demonstrating the wider social value of this kind of qualitative research. If we are to be taken seriously as academic researchers, we will in the long-term need to build a convincing case for the validity of our research, specifying the criteria we apply to the validation process. Also, we will need to show that our work contributes meaningfully to understandings of the experience of certain groups in our society, and ideally that it has an explicit impact. Gerben Westerhof (University of Twente) gave us a powerful insight into the impact value of narrative approaches to mental health practice, showing how narrative can function to transform the self-image of patients. However, his need in the academic environment to combine narrative analysis with statistical data demonstrated the difficulty of taking a purely narrative approach when the academic audience also expects to see quantitative data.

Further challenges were embodied in the presentations of Fleur Basten (Campus Orleon Nijmegen) and Alexander Maas (University for Humanistics). Basten challenged us to be critical in developing the narratives of disadvantaged groups, not taking the potential empowerment at face value but first establishing a clear agenda for such research in its social context. Maas showed the value of narrative research in relation to organizational story-telling, a tool that is increasingly used during organizational change. This latter example once again emphasized the inherent tension in narrative research between the needs of the individual and the needs of the social groupings of which that individual is a member. I found myself wondering whether it is possible to create an organizational story that properly reflects the experiences of the individual employees in that organization; or will the corporate message prove dominant? Maas stressed the need for openness with such an approach, recognizing that it would be an inappropriate method in a financial climate in which change may amount to downsizing, which in practice may result in job losses.

It was a singular achievement to bring together so many branches of thought from the growing tree of narrative research. The next step will be to pursue the various themes in more detail through a series of workshops proposed over the coming two years.

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Web Newsletter 20, October 2011