**To Think is to experiment**

**Thursday, 10th May, 2007**, **Docklands Campus**, **Room: WB 2.03**

**Research Day Programme**

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|  10.00-10.15 | Welcome and Introduction |
|  10.15-11.00 | **Watching Families on Lifestyle Television - Some Observations on Shame and Governmentality"***Galit Ferguson, University of East London* |
|  11.00-11.45 | **Charlotte Wolff’s (1986) biography of Magnus Hirschfeld – parallel lives, intersecting narratives.**[Work in progress] **Toni Brennan***, University of Surrey*. |
| 11.45-12.00 | Tea-Coffee |
|  12.00-12.45 | The Impact On The "NewNarrative Turn" On The Notion Of Identity In Narrative*Sarah Helsig, King’s College London* |
| 12.45-14.00 | Lunch |
|  14.00- 14.45 | We would rather suffer than … to ask for help”: Women who stay in an abusive intimate relationship*Carol Rivas, Queen Mary's School of Medicine and Dentistry* |
|  14.45-15.30 | **Class and Gender Relations Amongst Iranian Teachers***Mastoureh Fathi, University of East London* |
| 15.30-15.45 | *Tea-Coffee* |
|  15.45-16.30 |  **General Discussion** |
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**ABSTRACTS:**

**Watching Families on Lifestyle Television - some observations on shame and governmentality"**

**Galit Ferguson, University of East London**

Parenting-help shows on 'lifestyle' television are rife. This paper explores how far these programmes work "in the service of power" (Thompson,1990), and how far they are structured / motivated by the theme of shame. In an analysis of so-called 'confessional media', how far can we move beyond a notion of the audience's supposed voyeuristic delight at watching people air their private 'linen’ in a public domain? Witnessing lifestyle television's 'big reveal’ need not be regarded as some form of hermetically sealed psychological (‘helpful’) enterprise but as a culturally contextualised experience which cannot help but be political.

**Charlotte Wolff’s (1986) biography of Magnus Hirschfeld – parallel lives, intersecting narratives.  [Work in progress]**

**Toni Brennan***, University of Surrey*

During the Weimar Republic, having gained her MD degree in 1928, Charlotte Wolff (1897 – 1986) practised medicine in Berlin and was involved in one of the first family planning clinics, thereby learning her first lessons in sexology and psychotherapy, as she would remember in her 1980 autobiography.  Wolff was aware of the work of the sexologist Magnus Hirschfeld, like her a Jewish doctor and an advocate for gay rights *avant la lettre*, who founded and led the Institute for Sexual Science (ISS) in another part of central Berlin, but they never met.   In May 1933 the ISS, one of the first targets of the Nazi regime, was destroyed and burned to the ground while Hirschfeld was abroad on a long lecture tour and he died in exile in Nice in 1935.   Wolff was arrested in May 1933 and immediately released due to serendipitous circumstances; first she fled to Paris, eventually settling inLondon in 1936, where she lived until her death in 1986.  She published books on cheirology and on the psychology of gesture, engaged in research in comparative psychology, regained her licence to practise medicine, wrote a novel and two autobiographies and was an icon for second wave feminists.  In the Seventies, she became a pioneer in the study of sexuality, conducting one of the first empirical investigations of lesbianism, *Love Between Women*(1971) and of bisexuality[*Bisexuality*(1977/1979)].   Her last work, the biography *Magnus Hirschfeld* (1986), subtitled “A pioneer in Sexology”, begun when Wolff was in her eighties, saw her, *inter alia*, correspond with eyewitnesses who attempted “to reconstruct” the ISS from memory.

Beyond the painstakingly researched “objective facts” of Hirschfeld’s life offered in the biography, this paper seeks to examine the book (as well as some unpublished notes, correspondence and research material) *qua*narrative produced by Wolff using these facts as building blocks, as well as to raise questions about the biographer’s investment in their subject.

**The Impact On The "New** **Narrative Turn" On The Notion Of Identity In Narrative**

**Sarah Helsig, King’s College London**

This presentation will shed light on how the “new narrative turn” (Bamberg, 2006, Georgakopoulou, 2006) and the shift away from research of life stories to so-called small stories (Bamberg, 2004, a, b, Georgakopolou, 2006) impinges on the notion of identity used in narrative research. Thereby, the special focus will be on how the investigation of selfhood that is connected to specific narrative data elicited in autobiographic interview settings can be enriched by turning to identities that are (co)constructed in the course of interaction. First, small stories will be briefly characterised with the help of five narrative dimensions proposed by Ochs and Capps (2001). Then, it will be discussed how the analysis of these stories told in situ does justice to a postmodern understanding of identity understood as multiple, fragmented, jointly constructed, contestable and performed selves. Finally, the question will be raised whether the turn to small stories can be seen as a complement to or rather a substitute of biographic life stories (Bamberg, 2006, Freeman, 2006).

**“We would rather suffer than … to ask for help”: Women who stay in an abusive intimate relationship**

**Carol Rivas, Queen Mary's School of Medicine and Dentistry**

This paper will present findings from a qualitative study of the perceptions and experiences of white British,Caribbean and African women with current psychological abuse from intimate partners, in the context of social support and culture.  Women were recruited mainly from primary care practices in Hackney, inner London and were interviewed at recruitment and approximately six months later. Thematic analysis was used to explore the women’s roles within the abusive relationship and their actions, beliefs, expectations and experiences in responding to the abuse, including their use of psychosocial resources and help-seeking.  This paper will consider Triandis' Theory of Interpersonal Behaviour (collectivism-individualism) and social role theory in relation to the women’s reliance on their internal coping mechanisms.

**Class and Gender Relations Amongst Iranian Teachers**

**Mastoureh Fathi**

**Class and Gender Relations Amongst Iranian Teachers**

**Mastoureh Fathi, University of East London**

The purpose of this paper is to demonstrate the different discourses and power relations around women’ s education (specifically of women teachers) in Iran - as a country which is tangled between ‘secularization and Islamization’ and their personal accounts of education/occupation and emancipation in personal lives. Comparing the narratives of two groups of teachers coming from two middle and working classes in urban areas of Iran, this paper looks at how education (higher education) and teaching career facilitate the creation of emancipatory knowledge and an understanding of self in a move from a lower class position (in a fragmentary and complex way) to a position marked as ‘middle class’, while such a leap is associated with the escape of a pathologized and less-valued self to an ‘ideal’ one. Using Bourdieu’s concepts of symbolic capital and habitus to explore the cultural and symbolic understanding of class, the article is focused on the narratives of class mobility, ‘change’ and social exclusion amongst educated women where female education is just a recent phenomenon.