

# Biography and Society

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**BIOGRAPHY AND SOCIETY**  
RESEARCH COMMITTEE 38 OF THE ISA

NEWSLETTER / FEBRUARY 2003

## LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

First of all we would like to wish you all a Happy New Year, filled with health, good luck and success.

I am delighted to send this newsletter and hope you will appreciate all the news and enjoy reading it.

At the XV World Congress of Sociology in July last year I was elected as President of the RC 38. I hope I will be able to fulfill your expectations and continue the previous successful work of our RC.

I am very much looking forward to working with Brian Roberts as Vice-President and Michaela Kottig as Secretary, and all the old and new members of the Board.

We would like to express our warm welcome to the following new members of the Board:

*Roswitha Breckner (Austria)*

*Tazuko Kobayashi (Japan)*

*Feivel Kupferberg (Denmark)*

*Henning Salling Olesen (Denmark)*

*Marilyn Porter (Canada).*

The willingness of the following members to stay in the Board is very much appreciated:

*Ursula Apitzsch (Germany), Jan Coetzee (South Africa), Catherine Delcroix (France), Kathy Davis (The Netherlands), Wolfram Fischer-Rosenthal (Germany), Elena Haavio-Mannila (Finland), Matti Hyvarinen (Finland), Lena Inowlocki (Germany), Kaja Kazmierska (Poland), Elena Mechtcherkina (Russia), Helma Lutz (Germany), Robert Miller (Northern Ireland), Gerhard Riemann (German), Victoria Semenova (Russia), Julia Vajda (Hungary)*

I hope we will be able to continue the wonderful and important work that Kathy Davis and Helma Lutz did over the last years in producing an informative and interesting newsletter.

At this point I would like to once again thank them very much for their effort.

Besides having the newsletter in order to inform you about conferences, publications and other news in our field of biographical research we will continue the tradition of publishing viewpoints in general papers or articles. I am very grateful to have the chance to publish the paper by Kathy Davis "Biography as Critical Methodology" in this newsletter. Kathy presented this paper at the Congress in Brisbane at a session of three Research Committees; our RC 38 together with "Gender and Society" (RC 32) and Social Practice and Transformation (RC 09).

Tazuko Kobayashi from Japan was kind enough to write a report about our RC session in Brisbane from her perspective.

Some further important news:

### **Interim conferences**

Some members indicated their interest in organising an interim conference on the following themes:

Matti Hyvarinen (Tampere, Finland): methodological issues

Kathy Davis/ Helma Lutz (Amsterdam, Netherlands): transnational biographies

Ursula Apitzsch (Frankfurt, Germany): 'Quality of Life' Research

### **The newsletter on e-mail**

In the business meeting in Brisbane we decided that the newsletter, due to cost and a lot of practical problems, will only be sent by e-mail. In the future we would like to establish a homepage in the internet. This will be our last newsletter in hard copy. In the future you will get it by e-mail.

We ask all of you to send us by e-mail:

1. Your email address
2. And your full mail address

This gives us also the possibility to inform you immediately when required.

**Our new e-mail address is: Biography-and-Society@gmx.de**

### **Membership fees**

Please remember to pay your membership fee:

Two years: € 35

Four years: € 70

**bank account: Michaela Köttig; Sparda-Bank-Kassel; Germany; Branch: 520 905 00; account number: 100 378 257**

I want to invite you to reply to this newsletter and to send us material for the next newsletter.

**The deadline for the next newsletter is September 2003.**

I look forward to hearing from you.

Best wishes



Göttingen February 2003

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## VIEWPOINTS

**BIOGRAPHY AS CRITICAL METHODOLOGY<sup>1</sup>****Kathy Davis****Utrecht University**

Biographies have always been a valuable asset for sociology, but, as sociological tradition, biographical research has had its 'ups' and 'downs'. The first attempt to use life stories as research material for sociological questions is the now-famous study by Thomas and Znaniecki (1918/20) *The Polish Peasant in Europe and America*. Members of the so-called Chicago School, who used life stories to enhance their field studies of impoverished, marginalized or deviant social groups, further elaborated their approach. Life stories were regarded as a perfect way to illustrate the processes of social disorganization inherent in city life, while giving subjects who had previously escaped sociological attention a voice (see, for example, Shaw, Anderson, and Park). These studies captured the sociological imagination with their colourful depictions of what the sociologist Alexander Liazos in a 1972 article referred to as the lives of 'nuts, sluts and perverts.' However, these studies were also criticized for their impressionism, their lack of scientific rigor, and their neglect of the lives and crimes of the powerful.

It wasn't until the early eighties that biography emerged as a method in its own right. Daniel Bertaux (1981) in his – by now – classic volume, *Biography & Society* set the agenda for biographical research as a separate research orientation within sociology. Bertaux came of age as a sociologist during a period when Parsonian structural functionalism and empiricist research were the dominant paradigms within the sociological mainstream and Marxism the primary alternative for critical sociologists. Both paradigms were deterministic, focussing on macrostructures and processes. In Bertaux's view, both tended to lose sight of the mundane aspects of human lives. Life stories were a remedy, ideally suited to understanding people's experiences and showing how they negotiate their lives under conditions of poverty, oppression, exclusion, or social change. By allowing the downtrodden to tell their stories, biographical research could give macro-sociological theories a much needed 'human face.'

For Bertaux, biographical research remained in terms of its epistemology a realist enterprise. By collecting stories from individuals, the sociologist could provide a more factual and, therefore, a more comprehensive sociology. Schooled in the positivist research tradition of his time, he was opposed to using single cases, arguing instead

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<sup>1</sup> This paper was presented at the XV World Congress of Sociology (Brisbane, July 7-13, 2002) in a session, which brought together three research committees – RC 38 Biography & Society, RC 32 Gender & Society, and RC 09 Social Practice and Transformation – to discuss recent changes in sociological methodologies and their implications for sociology in the new millennium. The session, which was called *Who is the 'we' in the 'how do we know?'* focused on how we acquire knowledge about the social world and what our responsibilities are to our research subjects and our intellectual and political communities.

that sociologists should collect as many life stories as possible in order to uncover systematic patterns in people's experiences and circumstances. His goal was to provide a 'better sociology' – a sociology which, in line with C. Wright Mills (1959) *The Sociological Imagination*, integrated life stories in a structural analysis of society and processes of historical continuity and change. Bertaux also took an admittedly partisan stance against the power elite and in favor of the underdogs of society.

While Bertaux and his followers were basically adding a Marxist critique of society to the historical excavation of a factual reality, other sociologists took a social constructionist approach to biographical research. Drawing upon symbolic interactionism, ethnomethodology, and interpretative sociology, they saw life stories as a resource for exploring how individuals construct and interpret their social worlds. They did not treat life stories as a source for factual accounts of events or realistic renditions of individuals' experiences, but rather as social constructions. Life stories were in their view *never* simply reflections of reality, but invariably a way of 'packaging' experience to meet the requirements of the situation at hand (Sacks). It was up to the sociologist to uncover the local conditions under which such stories were produced and interpreted

The 'postmodern' turn in sociology took this social constructionist approach a step further by emphasizing the importance of power in the production and reception of life stories. The emphasis shifted from life stories as a resource for understanding how individuals interpret the social world, to the stories that culture tells about itself, stories which display the discursive character of the social world. Inspired by Foucault, many sociologists began to look at how individuals' life stories were embedded in the cultural and institutional narratives available within a specific context or at a particular period in time. Power was treated as an integral feature of these cultural narratives as well as the stories individuals told about their lives. In contrast to the realist approach which tried to retrieve the 'voice from below', the goal of (postmodern) constructionist biographical research was to create a sociology which was *both* critical *and* reflexive – a sociology which was prepared to critically interrogate the stories individuals tell and the stories sociologists tell about them as a way to deepen our understanding of how power works in late modern societies.

## DEBATES

In recent years, there has been a lively debate between the 'realists' and 'constructionists' within the biographical research community. (Our newsletter has been full of passionate defences of each position, along with equally passionate rejoinders and I suspect that the last word has yet to be said.) In the context of this debate, I would like to discuss the question raised in this session: who is the 'we' in 'how do we know?' The 'we' seemed clear in the realist tradition of biographical research – *we* were politically engaged sociologists trying to unearth the 'voice from below'. We were always on the side of the downtrodden, the marginalized, and the oppressed – in short, of the underdog. It was our task to serve 'the people' by 'giving a voice' to those who did not have the power or opportunity to speak for themselves. We allowed our informants to tell their stories without interruption and presented these stories, after the fact, as reasonably truthful and accurate representations of their social

worlds. Our own personal or intellectual agendas were secondary to giving the respondent a voice. As Gerhard Nijhof, a Dutch biographical researcher, put it: our experiences, opinions, or interpretations were scribbled in the footnotes at the bottom of the page - 'the sociologist as foot note' approach.

Clearly, constructionism and the 'postmodern turn' have complicated matters for biographical researchers. From a constructionist point of view, it seems much less clear who the 'we' is, let alone how 'we' know what we know. More generally, the normative or political underpinnings of the biographical enterprise have undergone a subtle, but unmistakable transformation so that the answer to Howard Becker's reformulation of today's question: 'whose *side* are we on' is also anything but straightforward. Without wanting to deny the continued importance of biographical research which is currently being done within the 'realist tradition', I would like to take a brief look at three developments within biographical research of a more constructionist bent: the 'interactive' interview, the importance of interpretation in biographical analysis, and the use of the sociologist's intellectual biography or autobiography as a resource. It is my contention that all three developments have opened possibilities for a theoretical and methodological integration by combining epistemological reflexivity with politically engaged biographical research.

## REFLEXIVITY IN INTERVIEWS

The first development concerns treating the interview as an interactive event, a performance which involves the activities of both the interviewer and the interviewee. This moves away from the notion that interviews involve sociologists asking questions of subjects who then respond – what the qualitative sociologist Jay Gubrium refers to as the 'interview as vessel of answers' approach. Rather the interview has come to be seen as a co-production, jointly constructed by participants who have their own – sometimes conflicting – agendas and strategies for accomplishing them.

This shift in understanding the interview as a reflexive enterprise kindled an appreciation among biographical researchers for what happens during interviews, for the ruptures in the interaction, the misunderstandings and the problems, as well as for the attempts to repair ruptures, the ongoing work of affiliation, and the unexpected twists and turns a conversation can take. Many biographical researchers now begin their analysis with a consideration of 'how the interview went'. For example, researchers describe the doubts, suspicions or mistrust which have to be negotiated in an interview where the academic/interviewer is usually more affluent or privileged than his or her interview partner. Researchers also pay more attention to how their interviewees dissemble, waffle, or even overtly try to deceive them during the interviews. Or they may describe the problems *they* have identifying with the people they interview. This may be because their interviewees are racist or because they display disconcerting nationalistic tendencies or because their religious orthodoxy makes the researcher uncomfortable. By the same token, sociologists may like their respondents *too* much and feel compelled to admit that they have 'gone native' – a process which anthropologists have described at length.

By exploring how differences between the interviewer and the interviewee are negotiated, biographical research becomes more explicitly reflexive about how power

works at the micro-level of interaction and how 'we', as sociologists, are implicated in the production of knowledge.

### **REFLEXIVITY IN INTERPRETATION**

The second development extends reflexivity from the interviews to the process of interpreting and analysing life stories. Whereas biographical researchers initially used life stories as illustrations of some aspect of social life, as a means of providing their sociological analysis with some human interest, the increased concern for reflexivity has allowed the inherent complexity of the process of interpretation to come to the fore. Biographical researchers have become more inclined to re-read and re-analyse their material. The outcome has been an acknowledgement that any life story is complicated and multi-layered and they it invariably provides a multiplicity of – often contradictory – meanings.

This has meant that more attention has been paid to the painstaking analysis of single-cases. The biographical researcher has to consider the narrative constraints, the thematic development, the conversational dynamics, and the relationship between the story and the social context in which it was told. An interesting spin-off of this concern for the process of interpretation is the introduction of methods for analysing interview material in groups. This was developed by the German sociologist Fritz Schütze and Gerhard Riemann and been taken up by many other biographical researchers throughout Europe and the Middle East. This method of analysis draws upon the researcher group – that is, colleagues who all work on biographical material - as a resource. By working collectively on biographical texts, particularly rich and reflexive interpretations of life stories can be generated. So far the results have been impressive, allowing you to almost feel what it is like, for example, to become a psychiatric patient or a member of a neo-nazi group, or to appreciate how experiences like migration, war, or displacement disrupt but also can transform a person's life.

This concern for reflexivity within the interpretation process has not only opened our eyes to the fact that there is never just one story to be told about a person's life. It has also shown, more generally, just how inherently contested the production of social knowledge is. Moreover, understanding the ambivalences and contradictions in all knowledge, which is generated about the social world may, paradoxically, bring us closer to 'reality' – or, at least, as close as we are likely to get.

### **REFLEXIVITY IN (AUTO) BIOGRAPHY**

The third development involves the reflexive relationship between the researcher's autobiography and the biography of his or her subject. The biographical researcher has increasingly begun to situate him or herself as part and parcel of the research enterprise rather than taking up a more distanced position outside the analysis. The researcher's personal, social and intellectual biography is no longer treated as irrelevant to the task of telling the respondent's story (as it was in the 'sociologist as footnote approach' – or in 'realist' research tradition). On the contrary, the researcher's biography has proved a useful tool not only for explicating the analytic proces-



ses involved in understanding what is going on in someone else's life, but more generally in understanding how sociological knowledge is produced.

The notion of sociological autobiography is not new. Merton already advocated it as a resource for understanding how sociological knowledge is produced. By tracing their theoretical development, sociologists could link their theories with the broader social and cultural context of which they are a part. Feminist scholars from many different disciplines have taken this kind of reflexivity a step further by treating themselves as part of their intellectual inquiry and considering their own biography as an essential part of critical research. This concern for the autobiographical character of any inquiry was an antidote to the disembodied and disembedded view from nowhere, which characterized 'masculine' science. As alternative, feminist scholars demonstrated how their personal, normative, and intellectual autobiographies structured the knowledge they produced and needed to be made explicit in the interests of doing responsible feminist research.

Within biographical research, the British feminist sociologist Liz Stanley and, more generally, the Auto/biography group in the UK, have been particularly influential in stimulating this kind of research, producing a wonderful corpus of biographical studies in which sociologists account analytically for their reconstructions of the lives of their research subjects by investigating the grounds of their own interpretations. In this way, they not only demonstrate that knowledge is always situational and contextual – that is, informed by the experiences, passions, intellectual history and preoccupations of the researcher. They also show that the researcher is socially, culturally, and historically located in ways that may be very different from the informant. This kind of reflexivity not only resonates with discussions of inequalities between interviewers and their interviewees; it suggests that accountability may provide a way to analyze how these inequalities and differences work in the production of knowledge.

In short, a concern for reflexivity produces a new kind of critical biographical research – research which not only gives a voice to the other, but also makes clear how the sociologist, however unintentionally, may also be involved in the silencing of those voices. Attending to the interconnections between the biographies of researcher and research subject enables sociological research, which is more accountable and more critical, precisely because it is also able to be self-critical.

## CONCLUSION

In conclusion, let me go back to the initial question concerning what has happened to the 'we' in the 'How do we know' within biographical research. I have shown how the 'we' in biographical research has shifted from the openly partisan 'we' of the realist tradition to a reflexive 'we' of postmodern constructionist perspectives. The aim of giving a 'voice' to the outsider has given way to the aim of uncovering the enormous multiplicity of these 'voices', which are raised in agreement as well as disagreement. The desire to create a more complete and comprehensive knowledge of how things 'really' are has been elaborated by an appreciation of the constructed and contested character of all knowledge.

The question remains, of course, whether biographical research in this reflexive vein has remained as critical and engaged as its predecessors have been. Some are sceptic-

tical. They worry about biographical research becoming just another kind of literary text analysis, which loses sight of the material conditions which structure individual life stories. Or they are wary of the inordinate amount of time put into analysing the single case, whereby we are in danger of losing sight of the social patterns and structures, which are the bread and butter of any sociological inquiry. Or they worry that we sociologists have become too narcissistic and self-absorbed and wonder whether we shouldn't all just quit the profession and go out and write our own autobiographies.

It is my contention, however, that a concern for reflexivity does not stand in the way of biographical research, which gives a voice to the marginalized or shows how social processes of power shape the lives of individuals. While there are certainly epistemological differences between 'realist' and 'constructionist' perspectives, there is no contradiction when it comes to being critical. On the contrary, in terms of the reflexivity in the 'postmodern turn', biographical research has made us become more self-critically critical. Positioning ourselves as benevolent champions of the downtrodden and giving a 'voice' to the oppressed and silenced, however well-intentioned that has been, will no longer do. The assumption that – for the most part, white, western, affluent professional sociologists can enable the view from below has begun to seem naïve. A study of the interaction in the interview shows that our respondents have their own agenda's in interview situations and in some cases may be 'playing' us to their own ends. Studies of power relations show that there is no straightforward communication but a complex negotiation involving relations of solidarity but also of betrayal. The careful uncovering of multiple layers of meanings shows that there is always more than one story to be told and that biographical research involves exploring the repetitions, discontinuities and contradictions in the stories people tell rather than trying to find the best possible version. And, finally, by analyzing the interconnections between our own biographies and the lives of our informants, we sociologists can produce knowledge in which we admit the limitations and begin to explore some of the constraints, which operate, on how we engage in the production of sociological knowledge. Taken together, the three developments in reflexivity – a concern for the interview as interactive event, an appreciation of the process of interpretation, and a concern for the relationship between autobiography and biography, make biographical research just as – if not more – critical than it has always been.

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**XVTH WORLD CONGRESS OF SOCIOLOGY****July 8 -11, 2002, Brisbane, Australia****RC 38 BIOGRAPHY AND SOCIETY CONFERENCE REPORT****Tazuko Kobayashi,****Japan Women's University**

At the XVth World Congress of Sociology in Brisbane, RC 38 Biography and Society had eight Sessions and one Joint Session with RC02. The topics ranged from collective identity to family and violence, practice and problems of biographical methods, and the interpretation of a single life story from multiple perspectives. The papers represented a richness of analytical points of view and a variety of materials of oral life story, diary and autobiography, and showed a diversity of lives in many areas. The discussions were extremely vigorous, and the sessions suggested to us that there is much fruitful diversity in the biographical approach.

However, one thing that disappointed me was that there were very few Asian participants in these sessions. In particular, I was the only Japanese participant even though biographical studies are a very active field in Japan.

One session that I was very interested in focused on a single life story, discussed from five perspectives. All the papers addressed the same transcript, which was based on an interview by Mary Marshall Clark of South African anti-apartheid activist Mamphela Ramphele. The fact that she previously published an autobiography made this examination very interesting.

The presentations in this session explored the following topics: analyzing the life story in search for the possibility of intersections with race/ethnicity, class, and gender; methodological issues concerning the different ways of expressing a single person's experience in written and narrated form; discussing the narrative techniques of interviews for approaching lived experiences; focusing on the gender implication of her life and work from feminist theoretical points; and, with the idea of considering the interview as an intersection of personal and public voices, thinking how telling her past is relevant to the recent South Africa context and the relation between memory and identity.

The preceding conference in Montreal in 1998 also had a similar session, where the subject was the single life story of Turkish female immigrant in Germany, and in which six papers were presented. I remember that there was very lively discussion of the problem of treating a single life story and the validity of understanding facts through a life story. This time, the five papers showed us the recent trend of approaching a life story from multiple theoretical perspectives. I understand this multiplicity was further developed during the four years, and the session was important for suggesting further possibilities for biographical studies.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS, NEWS, CALLS FOR PAPERS****Project Announcement**

<b>Project:</b>	The Chances of the Second Generation in Families of Ethnic Entrepreneurs: Intergenerational and Gender Aspects of Quality of Life Processes
<b>Project management:</b>	Ursula Apitzsch/ Maria Kontos
<b>International Scientific Coordinator:</b>	J.W.Goethe-Universität Frankfurt/M.
<b>Projekt Acronym:</b>	EthnoGeneration Proposal No SERD-2002-00119
<b>Starting date:</b>	1.12.2002; Duration 36 months
<b>EC contribution:</b>	740 000 EURO

**Summary:**

The objective of this study is to investigate the quality of life of ethnic entrepreneurs and their family members in intergenerational and gender perspectives. We focus on the specific conditions that enable or hold back the young generation in accumulating educational and cultural resources and in developing their own life plans. The study will thus explore the interrelation between the quality of life of ethnic entrepreneurs and the future chances of their children. A main subject of investigation concerns the reproduction of the inequality of chances linked to the work conditions, especially to labour division in families engaged in ethnic business. Our concept of quality of life takes biographical dimensions into account. We aim at developing a biographically and intergenerationally sensitive instrument of analysis of quality of life processes.

The study explores the quality of life of families in ethnic business, comparing different European countries and their welfare and educational policies aimed at facilitating child rearing. The analysis will focus primarily on northern European countries (UK, France, Denmark, Germany) with a longer immigration and ethnic economy tradition. For a more comprehensive view we include in the comparison a southern European country (Greece), where ethnic businesses comprising more than one generation is a new but growing phenomenon. The study is designed to evaluate our leading hypothesis on the inheritance of inequality through specific ways of involving the labour of family members in the ethnic business. In our sampling strategy, we follow principles of Grounded Theory, such as selecting different kinds of contrasting cases concerning a variety of types of families and of types of work involvement of family members. The aim is to identify coping strategies with regard to specific work demands and in relation to family socialization patterns.

Ursula Apitzsch

**Conference Announcement  
Call for Papers  
UK**

**3rd Annual Conference -**

**'Narrative, Memory and Identity: Theoretical and Methodological Issues'.**

**Organizer:** Narrative and Memory Research Group,  
University of Huddersfield, UK

**Date:** Saturday, April 5th, 2003

**Venue:** University of Huddersfield, UK

**Keynote Speakers:** Professor Andrew Sparkes (University of Exeter),  
Maggie O'Neill (Staffordshire University).

**Call for Papers:** Deadline for Abstracts (200 words)  
**28th Feb. 2003**

**Further details of conference:** Brian Roberts: B.Roberts@hud.ac.uk

**Conference Announcement  
Call for Papers  
Latvia**

**The Role of Oral History in Shaping Cultural and Personal Identity  
An International, interdisciplinary conference Riga,**

**Organizer:** University of Latvia  
Institute of Philosophy & Sociology

**Date:** 1st - 3rd May

**Venue:** Latvia Academy of Sciences, Riga

**Call for Papers:** Deadline for Abstracts (200 words)  
**7th Feb. 2003**

**Further details of conference:** Mara Zirnite, Manager of Oral History Archive  
Akadēmijas lauk. 1. – 509, FSI, Rīga. LV – 1940  
[mara@lza.lv](mailto:mara@lza.lv), Tel. 7 227920

Since the reestablishment of independence in 1991 Latvia has developed a strong oral history tradition using biographical and life-history approaches.

The academy houses an expanding oral history archive and many collections of life histories have recently been published. You could learn more about our efforts by visiting our site: [www.dzivesstasts.lv](http://www.dzivesstasts.lv).

We are, however, aware that our work is of relatively recent origin and may be hampered by a certain lack of theoretical maturity.

The aims of the conference are:

1. to consider the concept of identity through the analysis of lifestories
2. to discuss the theory and practice of lifestories, as well as the theoretical and practical problems of this research
3. to gain insight into the role of the individual in culture and history
4. to consider how societies shape and present themselves to others

Lifestories are valuable not only to scholars but to communities themselves as they seek to confront and remember their own histories.

The conference committee invites scholars of the humanities and social sciences whose research includes lifestories. We hope that the international conference will represent a broad range of approaches and theories to lifestories a foster conversation in a community of international scholars.

The working languages of the conference will be Latvian and English. Simultaneous translation will be provided.

I am enclosing a provisional programme that may help you to shape your own contribution. I would be grateful if you could send me a paper title, an abstract of about half a page together with a paragraph outlining your biographical details.

### **The Role of Oral History in Shaping Cultural and Personal Identity**

Subjects to be covered at the Conference:

- I. Creating Oral History Sources
- II. Disciplinary Approaches and Issues:  
Anthropology, Folklore, Sociology, Linguistics, Historical etc.
- III. The Usage of Oral History Sources in Theory and Practice
- IV. In Search of Identity (Cultural and Personal)
- V. Using Oral History in Social Life
- VI. Case Studies, Regional Issues
- VII. Future Directions (virtual conferences, video, CD presentations on-line)

**Conference Announcement**  
**Call for Papers**  
**India**

**Empowering Women through Information and Knowledge****From Oral Traditions to Information and Communication Technologies**

**Organizer:** SNDT Women's University (Mumbai) and  
Centre for Women's Development Studies  
(New Delhi)

**Date:** May 30 - June 2, 2003

**Venue:** Pune, Maharashtra, India

**Call for Papers:** Deadline for Abstracts **25<sup>th</sup> February 2003.**

**Further details of conference:** [www.gendwaar.gen.in](http://www.gendwaar.gen.in)

The Conference is hosted by the SNDT Women's University (Mumbai) and Centre for Women's Development Studies (New Delhi). It will be a meeting ground for scholars, researchers, information professionals, activists and policy makers to exchange experiences, knowledge and insights. Further, it will help to facilitate interaction and create networks to encourage collaborative research and development activities.

'Women's information and knowledge' is broadly interpreted for the Conference to include information and knowledge created by women, for women, about women. 'Empowerment' is used to refer to an environment that enables women to take control over material assets, intellectual resources and ideological choices.

The use of ICT as a means of creating, sharing and disseminating information and knowledge among women is extremely relevant in today's context. There is a wide range of experiences to share across the world. Interactions between individuals working in diverse contexts, with multiple media and in different sectors will greatly contribute towards creating South-South and North-South linkages.

Abstracts may be sent by email or post to:  
Conference Secretariat, SHPT School of Library Science  
SNDT Women's University,  
1 Nathibai Thackersey Road, New Marine Lines  
Mumbai 400 020, India  
Tel: 91- 22 2208 5439  
Email: [conference@gendwaar.gen.in](mailto:conference@gendwaar.gen.in)



**Conference Announcement**  
**Call for Papers**  
**Finland**

**The Second Tampere Conference on Narrative**  
**"NARRATIVE, IDEOLOGY, AND MYTH"**

**Organizers:** \*University of Tampere, Research Institute for Social Sciences & Department of Sociology and Social Psychology, Department of Women Studies.  
\*Finnish Network of Narrative Studies.  
\*Politics and the Arts Group (Standing Group of the European Consortium for Political Research)

**Date:** 26<sup>th</sup> –28<sup>th</sup> June 2003

**Venue:** Tampere Hall, Tampere, Finland

**Call for Papers:** Deadline for Abstracts (300 –350 words)  
**1<sup>st</sup> March 2001**

**Further details of conference:** [www.uta.fi/conference/narrative](http://www.uta.fi/conference/narrative)

**Guest speakers:** Mark Freeman (Holy Cross, Worcester)  
Davis S. Gutterman (Willamette, Oregon)  
Liz Stanley (Manchester)

**Program committee:** Kathy Davis (Utrecht), Olivia Guaraldo (Verona), Margaret Heller (Kings College, Halifax), Annabel Herzog (Haifa), Kia Lindroos (Jyväskylä), John S. Nelson (Iowa), Shelley Day Sclater (East London), Maureen Whitebrook (Sheffield), Matti Hyvärinen (Jyväskylä, chair)

Over the last three decades, the concept of narrative has successfully traveled from the humanities to social, psychological and political studies - and to many other disciplines. The "narrative turn" raises questions about the relation between ideology and narrative. Recent critical literature considers narratives from the perspectives of power and persuasion; some emphasize the normative nature of narratives. Others, most notably empirical work in women's studies, health studies and sociology, typically assume an emancipatory potential for narratives; storytelling is seen as a form of emancipation, or "giving a voice" to otherwise silenced groups.

Different approaches work with different theories and definitions of narrative. The field is characterized and energized by diversity. This conference explores this diversity, and particularly focuses on non-normative ways of discussing narrative and narrativity. Papers will address the issue of social, cultural and political circulation of narratives, and the different forms narrativity takes, and the significance it assumes, within social action.

We intend to address the "murky side" of narrative: the issues of myth and persuasive stories. "Myth" as a core narrative can constitute the seductive yet hidden struc-

ture of social or political theories, of news releases, and of personal life stories. But we would also question the opposition between the apparent clarity of the concept of narrative and the 'darkness of the myth'. Is it possible for us to rethink our cultural and political belongings so that they take the form of a constantly re-narrated story, as a founding myth without an origin?

The core of narrative - and its social and political importance - lies in the fact that it remains bound to a partiality of perspective, and thus must reject any form of abstract universalism. At first, this seems to contrast 'theory', 'concept' and 'narrative', but we also insist on exploring the possibilities of narrative theorizing. How is it possible to denounce the false universalism without falling prey to 'community' - determined identities? Can we feature storytelling as a weak form of universalism? We will ask whether narrative can help us to understand subjectivity as a form of social and political agency always in relation with others, as agency that can exist outside the traditional boundaries of Politics. Perhaps we should re-think subjectivity as a 'story', which is as such always told (also) by someone else and is thus intrinsically relational. This would raise the following questions: What is the relationship between narrative and social, political, and cultural identities in times of global, de-territorialized times and spaces. What is the relationship between myth, storytelling and political identity in times of globalization?

We invite all kind of narrative work that addresses these (and other) faces of narrative. Papers that combine theoretical and empirical work on narrative, those that have a genuinely interdisciplinary approach, and papers that try to find narrative forms of theorizing will be particularly welcome.

Papers might address the following themes (although the list is not exhaustive):

- Narrative and social action
- Narrative and myth
- The persuasiveness of narrative
- Narrative, self and identity
- Narrative and memory politics
- Artistic, political and professional uses of narrative
- The significance of narrative for nation-building
- Narrating trauma - narration as witnessing
- Mythical and ideological bodies
- The emancipatory function of narrative
- Dangerous narratives - the (mis)use of myths
- The social, cultural and political circulation of narratives
- Narratives of belonging and dispossession
- Narratives as a new way of theorizing in social and political theory

To apply, please send a 300-350 word abstract (as a message, not as an attached file) to: [Tarja.Aaltonen@uta.fi](mailto:Tarja.Aaltonen@uta.fi) and [Matti.Hyvarinen@vip.fi](mailto:Matti.Hyvarinen@vip.fi).

Conference fee: 120/60 (lower for research students).

Two pre-conference doctoral courses will be organized. Further information will be found from our web site.

Professor Matti Hyvärinen, Dept. of Social Sciences and Philosophy  
P.O. Box 35, 40014, FIN-40014 University of Jyväskylä, Finland  
Tel: +358-14-260 307(work); +358-40-822 4045 (GSM)

**Conference Announcement**  
**Call for Papers**  
**UK**

**International Visual Sociology Association Conference**

**Organizer:** International Visual Sociology Association (IVSA)  
**Date:** July 8-11, 2003  
**Venue:** University of Southampton, UK  
**Call for Papers:** Deadline for Abstracts  
**February 15, 2003**

**Further details of conference:** [www.visualsociology.org](http://www.visualsociology.org)

An international, cross-disciplinary conference, Images of Social Life invites contributions to a matrix of visual strategies in film, video, still photography and multi media used to formulate, conduct and disseminate social research.

Contributions dealing visually with all aspects of social life - intimate scenes of personal life, subjectivity formation, domestic organisation, urban life, work, community, biography, place, migration and global processes - particularly those linking different degrees of magnification, scope and scale - are strongly encouraged. Themes that cross-cut the usual tensions between the micro and the macro, individual lives and bigger social processes, the global and the local, the general and the particular, the theoretical and the empirical, and connect small landscapes with bigger processes are particularly welcome. Creating a matrix across disciplines, research fields, methodologies, and forms of social analysis, we will see what different visual strategies can achieve by moving in different directions and operating at different levels.

On past experience we expected this conference to attract scholars from the US and all over Europe from a broad range of disciplinary bases including Cultural and Media Studies, Geography, History, English, Architecture and Urban Planning, Politics, Psychology, Art and Design, Anthropology, Sociology and Social Policy. It is intended for those who work with images - whether making their own or using those of other people, in film, video, still photography and multi-media - in understanding social life. It is also for those who would like to develop their visual literacy as researchers and teachers and learn basic skills in the photography and video workshops.

Abstracts shall be sent by February 15, 2003 to Caroline Knowles, [cknowles@soton.ac.uk](mailto:cknowles@soton.ac.uk) or by post to:

Caroline Knowles  
Department of Sociology & Social Policy  
University of Southampton  
Highfield, Southampton SO17 1BJ  
United Kingdom  
International Visual Sociology Association (IVSA)

**Conference Announcement**  
**Call for Papers**  
**Spain**

**ESA Research Network 'Biographical Perspectives on European Societies'**  
**6th European Sociological Association Conference of Sociology**

**Organizer:** European Sociological Association  
**Date:** 25th –28th September 2003  
**Venue:** Murcia, Spain  
**Call for Papers:** Deadline for Abstracts  
**31. January 2003**

**Further details of conference:** [www.um.es/ESA/](http://www.um.es/ESA/)

The 2001 Helsinki sessions of the 'Biographical' Research Network were very successful, with ten panels and over thirty-five paper presentations. At Murcia, we plan to continue some of the conversations that started in Helsinki, while adding new themes to our agenda. Accordingly, we are now calling for PROPOSALS FOR PAPERS. As of now, the following sessions have been proposed:

- 'Visuality and Biographical Research'  
Convenors: Julia Vajda and Eva Kovacs, Hungary; ([h13073vaj@helka.iif.hu](mailto:h13073vaj@helka.iif.hu)); Institute of Sociology; Budapest Univ 1446 Budapest
- 'Transitions in Eastern Europe'  
Convenors: Julia Vajda and Eva Kovacs, Hungary; ([h13073vaj@helka.iif.hu](mailto:h13073vaj@helka.iif.hu)); Institute of Sociology; Budapest Univ 1446 Budapest
- 'Biographical research: Impacting on policy and practice?'  
Convenors: Tom Wengraf and Prue Chamberlayne, United Kingdom; ([t.wengraf@mdx.ac.uk](mailto:t.wengraf@mdx.ac.uk)) & ([p.m.chamberlayne@open.ac.uk](mailto:p.m.chamberlayne@open.ac.uk)); Tom Wengraf (Middlesex University); 24A Princes Avenue; Muswell Hill; London N10 3LR; Prue Chamberlayne; School of Health and Social Work; Open University; Milton Keynes MK7 6AA; United Kingdom
- 'Biographies and Genealogies: Borders of locality in the globalizing world'  
Convenor: Oleg B. Bozhkov ([olegbozh@hotmail.com](mailto:olegbozh@hotmail.com))
- 'Recherches Biographiques de Langue Française'  
Convenor: Armelle Testenoire, Université de Rouen, France; ([a.testenoire@wanadoo.fr](mailto:a.testenoire@wanadoo.fr)); Cette session se déroulera en français. Les résumés devront être rédigés dans les deux langues: français et anglais.
- 'The Role of 'Theory' in Biographical Research'  
Convenor: J.P. Roos, Finland; ([jproos@valt.helsinki.fi](mailto:jproos@valt.helsinki.fi)); Dept of Social Policy; Box 18 00014 University of Helsinki

This session will consider (among others) questions of construction, social determination, evolution of life stories etc.

**'Bourdieu and Biography'**

Convenor: J.P. Roos, Finland; ([jproos@valt.helsinki.fi](mailto:jproos@valt.helsinki.fi))

In memory of Pierre Bourdieu.

**- 'The Inter-generational Transmission of Cultural Beliefs and Practices'**

Convenor: Robin Humphrey, United Kingdom; ([Robin.Humphrey@newcastle.ac.uk](mailto:Robin.Humphrey@newcastle.ac.uk))  
Department of Sociology & Social Policy; Newcastle University; Newcastle NE1 7RU

**- 'Migration and Narration'**

Convenor: Tamar Rapoport and Edna Lomsky Feder, Israel;  
([mstamarr@mscc.huji.ac.il](mailto:mstamarr@mscc.huji.ac.il)) & ([msednal@mscc.huji.ac.il](mailto:msednal@mscc.huji.ac.il)); School of Education; Hebrew University; Jerusalem

**- 'Women in Non-traditional Professions - the Social Reaction in Different Cultures'**

Convenor: Anat Mordechai, Israel; ([anatmordechai@hotmail.com](mailto:anatmordechai@hotmail.com));

**- 'Biographical Research in the Spanish context'**

Convenor: To be announced

**- 'Biographical Research and the Feminist Movement'**

Convenors: Laura Torrabadella and Mònica Nadal, Spain;  
([lauratorrabadella@btlink.net](mailto:lauratorrabadella@btlink.net))

We are interested in:

How engaged feminists refer to their past and present experiences in the present context of lower political engagement?

Feminist movements during and after periods of transition?

How a biographical perspective throws light on crucial aspects of the feminist movement? And

The interplay of the biographical perspective and feminist thought.

Our own work looks into the role of memory in recollecting biographical experiences of women who joined the Feminist Movement during the Spanish transition period in the 70s and are still committed today.

**- 'Workshop on the Archiving of Qualitative Data'**

Convenor: John Given, Northumbria, United Kingdom; ([john.given@unn.ac.uk](mailto:john.given@unn.ac.uk))

The advent of the internet and the spread of digital means of recording visual and aural information is producing new possibilities for the collection and dissemination of biographical and narrative information. This workshop will feature 'real-time' demonstrations of online biographical archives and discuss issues - technical, methodological and ethical - around their management.

**- 'Identity Forms in Late Modernity - Borderlines, Bridges and Transitions'**

Convenors: Ana Paula Marques and Emília Araújo, Portugal  
([amarques@ics.uminho.pt](mailto:amarques@ics.uminho.pt)) & ([era@ics.uminho.pt](mailto:era@ics.uminho.pt));

The social world is split permanently by struggles fought between social agents where reality classification systems are at stake. One resort to the classification or categorisation of the surrounding reality aims at turning it predictable by objectifying it. At the same time, the production of those classification systems, which are, thus, organisation systems, also serves as a tool for self and hetero-identification, defining the frontiers of belonging or non-belonging, simultaneously reflecting and (re)producing divisions in society. Everything else that does not fit one of the poles

is relegated to the plan of social non-existence. Thus, the questions we want to open for discussion are: What happens, then, to all those who do not effectively fit any of the polar categories? How does one live on the borderline of two margins? What does it mean, for oneself and for others, to be 'in-between', 'half way to'? How is non-belonging, non-definition, social non-existence, experienced? What strategies are developed by agents under such circumstances and what strategies are developed by social systems to deal with those who do not fit the official classification systems? How to deal with these "non-categories" when they seem to cover a growing number of individuals?

- 'Region and Biography: Conceptualizing the relation between an influence structure and individual actors'

Convenor: Thomas Loer, Germany; ([t.loer@wiso.uni-dortmund.de](mailto:t.loer@wiso.uni-dortmund.de)); University of Dortmund; Department of Economic and Social Sciences; D-44221 Dortmund; Tel: +49 (0)2 31 7 55 29 42 Fax: +49 (0)2 31 7 55 32 93.

This session is concerned with the relation of biography (the case structure of biographies) and region (as an 'influence structure'). Papers discussing the methodical and methodological problem of grasping the phenomenon of 'region' (not only in its economic sense but as a socio-cultural influence structure) are welcome as well as contributions to the theoretical problem of conceptualizing the relation of structure and actor and action/praxis as the place of practical mediation of the two (exemplified by analysing the above-named relation between biography and region).

- 'Life Histories and the Reconstruction of National Identity in Eastern Europe'

Convenor: Vieda Skultans, United Kingdom; ([V.Skultans@bristol.ac.uk](mailto:V.Skultans@bristol.ac.uk)); Department of Sociology; University of Bristol, 2, Woodland Road, Bristol, BS8 1UQ.

Autobiographical writing has become a dominant genre in Eastern Europe following the collapse of Communism. This panel will examine how life histories position themselves in relation to certain historical events and in turn come to determine those events as critical for the shaping of national identity. Papers are invited which address:

- \* The relationship between social memory and life-writing
- \* The role of life-writing in transforming individual suffering into social suffering
- \* The role of critical historical moments in life-writing
- \* The shaping of autobiographical experience by shared cultural plots and symbols
- \* The contribution of specific genres of life-writing to national identity
- \* The convergence and divergence of personal narratives from core cultural narratives
- \* The distinctiveness of East European life writing
- \* The contribution of memory writing to the reconstruction of history

- Extending the Possibilities for Presentation & Dissemination of Narrative Studies'

Convenor: Kip Jones, United Kingdom; ([kjones@dmu.ac.uk](mailto:kjones@dmu.ac.uk)); The emerging synthesis of the arts and social sciences present challenges to the methodological-philosophical foundations of knowledge. At the very heart of this matter is knowledge transfer. The need for innovation in dissemination of detailed descriptive information has, until recently, been neglected in the social sciences. As collage-makers, narrators of narrations, dream weavers-narrative researchers are natural allies of the arts and humanities.

Abstracts are invited that grapple with extending the possibilities of presentation and dissemination of narrative studies. Presentations using tools from the arts and

humanities are especially encouraged for this conference thread. The use of other media, in addition to traditional papers, is welcomed. Possibilities include, but are not limited to, performance, dance, film, video, audio, graphic arts, new media (CD ROM, web-based production), poetry and so forth. Presentations may deal with the theoretical, methodological, ethical and mechanical issues of using such media or, simply be a presentation that uses one of the media as an example of narrative as performance.

- "Biographical Certainty". How do people organize their life-course in present society?

Convenor: Jens Zinn, Germany; ([jens.zinn@unibw-muenchen.de](mailto:jens.zinn@unibw-muenchen.de)); Fakultät SoWi Universität der Bundeswehr München; D-85577 Neubiberg;

Contemporary discussions of the process of modernization reveal a loss of unambiguity (Bauman) as well as a return of uncertainty (Bonss). The discussion of change in modern societies and social individualizing processes concerns after all expectations on the individual's life-course. The starting point of the planned session is the questions: How in changing modern societies can expectations on the life-course be worked out? How can the individual life-course be managed if its central institutions, like the family or the occupation, are breaking away? What are the effects on individual's biographical action when the traditional constellations of primary social relations or work-life erode and can't be used to stabilize biographical expectations any longer? In the session both empirical results as well as conceptual questions (for example, the meanings of 'certainty', 'security' and 'safety' and its normative premises) could be discussed.

- 'Biographies of Ageing from Different Cultures'

Convenor: Sibel Kalaycioglu, Turkey; ([ksibel@metu.edu.tr](mailto:ksibel@metu.edu.tr));

The session will compare different practices and experiences of ageing from countries with different traditions and welfare system structures. Such experiences could be significant, especially in the light of current discussions on 'successful ageing'.

- 'Self-reliance and Successful Life Strategies'

Convenor: Sibel Kalaycioglu, Turkey; ([ksibel@metu.edu.tr](mailto:ksibel@metu.edu.tr));

With drastic changes in the welfare regimes of many Western societies, how do people cope with the responsibilities of 'developing successful life strategies' or with 'self-reliance'? Cases from Turkey or many eastern European countries also may be very relevant for the discussion of 'the personal and individual strategies in a global risk society' (Beck).

- 'Reflection of Cultural Traumas in Life Stories'

Convenor: Aili Aarelaid-Tart, Estonia; ([aarelaid@iiss.ee](mailto:aarelaid@iiss.ee)); Head of the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies Institute of International and Social Studies Tallinn Pedagogical University; Blvd. Estonia 7; Tallinn 10143, Estonia; Tel: 372-6454498, Fax 372-6454927

Cultural trauma is a traumatic event in the life course of persons dealing with compulsory and rapid changes of previous value systems and behavioral patterns. Cultural trauma may take place as a result of the collapse of a political regime, as an unexpected effect of migration, as part of personal bankruptcy or imprisonment, or as the impact of a rapid invasion of new cultural mores into a traditional region etc. From different personal stories we could map the main strategies and behavior of winners as well as losers in these kinds of situations. We are interested in analysing

traumatic collisions in the life course; stories of:

- people from small places under the pressure of rapid urbanization;
- political prisoners under any kind of non-democratic regime in Europe (Stalinism, Francism, ect.);
- poorly acculturated migrants;
- persons who have lost their positions in social or cultural hierarchies.

The problem actually is part of the coming enlargement of the European Union where thousands of people's life courses may be put through unpredictable traumatic changes.

ADDITIONAL SESSIONS: Members of the 'Biography' research network and indeed all researchers in these and cognate areas are invited to submit additional proposals for topics for sessions as well as individual paper abstracts.

Your proposal should be sent as an ABSTRACT in the following format: Paper Title; Author(s); Your e-mail; Your postal address; An Abstract of no more than 200 words; Preferred session (if you have a preference).

**Abstracts** should be sent by 31 January 2003 to BOTH the Chair of the 'Biography' research network: Robert Miller ([r.miller@qub.ac.uk](mailto:r.miller@qub.ac.uk)); School of Sociology & Social Policy; Queen's University; Belfast BT7 1NN; Northern Ireland, U.K.

AND to the Convenor of the session in which you would like to present your paper (listed below).

If you require further information about a session (e.g., if you are not sure whether your paper fits with the topic), contact the Convenor directly.

If you feel your paper does not fit into any of the named sessions, send it directly to Robert Miller. There will be at least one 'General' session at the conference. (Please do not submit the same paper to more than one session or more than one research network.)

General information about the 6th European Conference of Sociology is located at the website: <http://www.um.es/ESA/>

Robert Miller, Chair ESA Research Network 'Biographical Perspectives'; School of Sociology & Social Policy; The Queen's University of Belfast; Belfast BT7 1NN; Northern Ireland United Kingdom; tel: +44 (0)28 90273275; Fax: +44 (0)28 90273943; e-mail: [r.miller@qub.ac.uk](mailto:r.miller@qub.ac.uk)



**Fellowship Announcement  
USA****Alexander S. Onassis Public Benefit Foundation  
Ninth Foreigners' Fellowships Programme**

Alexander S. Onassis Public Benefit Foundation announces the ninth annual Programme of research grants and educational scholarships starting on October 1st, 2003, which is addressed to foreign full Members of National Academies, University Professors of all levels, researchers - PhD holders, artists, translators of Greek literature, elementary and secondary school teachers of the Greek language as a foreign one, post-graduate students and PhD candidates.

The Programme covers the following fields only:

- o Humanistic Sciences: Philology, Literature, Translation, Linguistics, Theology, History, Archaeology, Philosophy, Educational Studies, Psychology
  - o Political Sciences: Sociology, Anthropology, Public Administration, International Relations, Mass Media
  - o Law
  - o Economics
  - o Architecture
  - o Arts: Visual Arts, Music, Dance, Theatre, Photography, Film Studies
- The grants and scholarships offered within the framework of this Programme cover scholarly research, post-educational training in the teaching of the Greek language and culture and/or artistic creation in Greece only and in the fields stated in the above paragraph only.

In principle, only persons of non Greek descent are eligible to participate in the Programme. However, as an exception to this rule, persons of Greek descent (second generation and on) are also eligible, provided they are permanently residing and working abroad or currently studying in foreign Universities.

Further information and application forms are available at the Foundation's web site: <http://www.onassis.gr> or can be requested from:

Alexander S. Onassis Public Benefit Foundation  
7 Aeschinou Street, 105 58 Plaka, Athens  
Greece

fax: 30-210 3713013

e-mail: [foreigners@onassis.gr](mailto:foreigners@onassis.gr)

The application forms and all supporting documents must be post-marked no later than January 31, 2003.

**Fellowship Announcement  
USA****FELLOWSHIP OPPORTUNITIES FIVE COLLEGE WOMEN'S STUDIES RESEARCH CENTER**

A collaborative project of Amherst, Hampshire, Mount Holyoke, and Smith Colleges and the University of Massachusetts, Amherst.

The Center invites applications for its Research Associateships for 2003-2004 from scholars and teachers at all levels of the educational system, as well as from artists, community organizers and political activists, both local and international. Associates are provided with offices in our spacious facility, computer access, library privileges, and the collegiality of a diverse community of feminists. Research Associate applications are accepted for either a semester or the academic year. The Center supports projects in all disciplines so long as they focus centrally on women or gender. Research Associateships are non-stipendiary. However, international applicants may apply for one of the two special one-semester Ford Associateships for Fall 2003 or Spring 2004, which offer a stipend of \$12,000, plus a \$3,000 housing/travel allowance in return for teaching (in English) one undergraduate women's studies course at Smith College. Ford applicants' research should focus on how the economics of globalization regulate gender, race, ethnicity, nationality, class, and sexuality in Latin America, the Caribbean, Africa, the Middle East, the former Soviet bloc, or Asia. We are searching for two Ford Associate positions. For one position preference will be given to those whose work focuses on sexuality in a global context, including sex work, global sex trafficking, health issues, international gay and lesbian activism and advocacy for sexual minorities. For the second position, preference will be given to those whose work focuses on cultural production and resistance, including political performance, the transformation and use of international media, and new technologies. Ford applicants need not be studying their own region of origin. Applicants for both programs should submit a project proposal (up to 4 pages), curriculum vitae, two letters of reference, and application cover sheet. In addition, Ford applicants should submit a two-page description of a women's studies course they are prepared to teach, which includes their pedagogical goals and techniques.

Submit all applications to: Five College Women's Studies Research Center Mount Holyoke College 50 College Street South Hadley, MA 01075-6406

**Deadline is February 10, 2003**

For further information contact the Center at TEL 413.538.2275 FAX 413.538.3121 email [fcwsrsrc@wscenter.hampshire.edu](mailto:fcwsrsrc@wscenter.hampshire.edu); website: <http://wscenter.hampshire.edu/>

Us-other mailing list [Us-other@wscenter.hampshire.edu](mailto:Us-other@wscenter.hampshire.edu)  
<http://wscenter.hampshire.edu/mailman/listinfo/us-other>

**Call for Nominations****Third Norbert Elias Amalfi Prize 2003**

The Norbert Elias Foundation, in co-operation with the Academic Committee of the European Amalfi Prize for Sociology and Social Sciences, announces the Third European Prize dedicated to Norbert Elias. The Prize consists in a sum of 1000 Euros and it will be awarded to a significant first work by a European author published in Europe between 1 January 2001 and 31 December 2002.

The Prize is awarded in commemoration of the sociologist Norbert Elias (1897-1990), whose writings, at once theoretical and empirical, boldly crossed disciplinary boundaries in the social sciences to develop a long-term perspective on the patterns of interdependence which human beings weave together. Norbert Elias was himself the first recipient of the European Amalfi Prize for his book *Die Gesellschaft der Individuen*. Now the Norbert Elias Prize is intended to draw attention to a promising young European scholar who has published a first book in sociology or a related discipline. The first Norbert Elias Prize was awarded in 1999 to David Lepoutre for his book *Coeur de Banlieue* and the second in 2001 to Wilbert van Vree for *Meetings, Manners and Civilisation*.

In order to nominate an author's first book for the award, please send a letter of recommendation by **February 15, 2003 to: Saskia Visser; Secretary, Norbert Elias Foundation; J.J. Viottastraat 13; 1071 JM Amsterdam; The Netherlands**

In the case of books written in the 'smaller' European languages, please also include a brief summary in English.

## News

## New Publications - Books

**FALLEN WALLS: VOICES FROM THE CELLS THAT HELD MANDELA AND HAVEL**

Published by Lidove Noviny Publishers (with the Robben Island Museum) in hardcover and available from the authors (Jan K. Coetzee, Rhodes University, email: [j.k.coetzee@ru.ac.za](mailto:j.k.coetzee@ru.ac.za)). Price R129-95.

Straddling two continents and two hemispheres, this collection of prison writings compares and contrasts the political struggles that gave birth to two vibrant new democracies of the 21st century: South Africa and the Czech Republic. The triumph of decades of suffering endured by the ordinary citizens of these two small yet significant countries is symbolised by two extraordinary leaders, Nelson Mandela and Vaclav Havel.

As they stride the modern world like two colossi, the startling moral rectitude of these two men acts as a beacon at the cusp of a new century which seems, increasingly, to have lost its way. Yet Mandela and Havel urge us all to acknowledge the role played by ordinary men and women in effecting freedom and justice.

Havel laments the fact that the voices of heroes of recent history who fought against oppression "... are slowly fading, as the details of their lives slip from human memory", while Mandela urges us all to remember "... the collective cry of conquest over the efforts of oppression to destroy the human spirit."

And so, the authors have recorded three voices from the apartheid era cells of Robben Island - Joseph Mati, Johnson Mgabela, Monde Mkunwana - and three voices from communist era prisons in Czechoslovakia - Jiri Mesicki, Lola Skodova and Jiri Stransky. Each of these stories is a unique expression of the feelings, thoughts and daily experiences of victims of oppression, giving substance and resonance to the human suffering that continues to plague our times.

There are striking similarities, as well as differences between the two sets of stories that are informed by the incongruities of the Cold War. On a personal level, the tales from Robben Island are characterised by an absence of bitterness and thoughts of revenge, while a sense of bleak isolation and lingering bitterness pervades those from the Czechoslovakian prisons and labour camps. The buoyant tone of triumph of the South Africans is balanced by the darker, more sceptical mood of the Czechs.

In an age that teeters so precariously between hope and despair, the narratives of six prisoners of conscience contained in this book remind us not only of what we are, but also of what we may become. The reader is privy not only to the banality and brutality of evil, but also to the stark simplicity of human goodness.

In a timeless warning against complacency, Vaclav Havel states in his Foreword to **Fallen Walls**: "... the authors remind us anew of the price that is so often paid for freedom and democracy."

## News

## New Publications - Books

**Apitzsch, Ursula/Inowlocki, Lena (2000):** L'analisi biografica: non solo un metodo ma anche un approccio teorico. In: Alberici, Aureliana (ed.) : *Educazione in età adulta*, Rom: Armando Editore, S. 33 – 50

**Breckner, R. (2002)** Biographical Continuities and Discontinuities in East-West Migration before and after 1989. Two case studies of migration from Romania to West Germany, In: R. Humphrey, R. Miller and E. Zdravomyslova (eds) *Biographical Research in Eastern Europe*, Aldershot: Ashgate

**Breckner, R. und S. Rupp (2002)** Discovering biographies in changing social worlds. The biographic interpretive method; In: P. Chamberlayne, M. Rustin and T. Wengraf (eds) *Experiences of social exclusion: biography and social policy in Europe*, London: Policy Press, 287-306

**Breckner, R. (2002)** Migrants': a target category for social policy? Experiences of first generation migration; In: P. Chamberlayne, M. Rustin and T. Wengraf (eds) *Experiences of social exclusion: biography and social policy in Europe*, London: Policy Press, 211-226

**Davis, Kathy (2003)** Dubious Equalities and Embodied Differences. Cultural Studies on Cosmetic Surgery. Rowman & Littlefield, Lanham, Md.

**Davis, Kathy and Lutz, Helma (2002)** Traveling theorists. On biographical border crossing and feminist imagination. In: Kathy Davis, Christien Brinkgreve, Bart van Heerikhuizen, and Bernard Kruithof (eds.), *Levensverhalen*. Amsterdam: Amsterdam Sociologisch Tijdschrift, 2002, pp. 38-58.

**Haavio-Mannila, Elina / Kontula, Osmo / Rotkirch, Anna (2002)** "Sexual Lifestyles in the Twentieth Century". Palgrave (former Macmillan), Houndsmills (UK), New York, ISBN 0-333-79418-4.

The book is based on 166 Finnish autobiographies collected by means of a writing competition. It can be ordered from Macmillan Direct Customer Services, Brunel Road, Houndsmills, Basingstoke, RG21 6XS, UK, e-mail mdl@macmillan.co.uk.

**Humphrey, Robin/Miller, Robert/Zdravomyslova, Elena eds. (2002):** Biographical Research in Eastern Europe, Ashgate - either just out/forthcoming – which arises out of ESA work

**Roberts, Brian (2002)** Biographical Research, Open University Press; ISBN 0-335-20287-X hbk (£50); ISBN 033520287 PBK (£16.99);  
Contents: Introduction: Biographical Research; Uses of Biographical Research; The Life History; Autobiography and Biography; Auto/Biography and Sociology; Oral History; The Narrative Analysis of Lives; Memory and Autobiography; Ethnography and Biographical Research; Conclusion  
For further details: <http://195.89.185.89/bd.cgi/openup/isb?0335202861>

## News

## New Publications - Journals

**Auto/Biography: A British Sociological Association Study Group Journal,**

Editor Andrew C. Sparkes, University of Exeter. Treasurer and Membership Secretary, Michael Erben, University of Southampton. Book Reviews Editor, Gill Clarke, University of Southampton. Auto/Biography is a sociology and a cross-disciplinary journal that publishes refereed research articles which focus upon theoretical, epistemological, and empirical issues related to the general field of biographical and autobiographical inquiry. The journal is published by the Study Group on Auto/Biography.

Editorial Correspondence, including manuscripts (three double spaced copies), should be sent to the Editor: Professor Andrew C. Sparkes, School of Sport and Health Sciences, Exeter University, St. Luke's Campus, Heavitree Road, Exeter, Devon, United Kingdom. EX1 2LU.

Book Reviews and Books for Review: should be sent to the Reviews Editor: Dr. Gill Clarke, MBE. Research and Graduate School of Education, University of Southampton, Hampshire, United Kingdom. SO17 1BJ

Business Correspondence, including information relating to membership, subscription rates, and purchasing back copies of the journal, should be addressed to the Treasurer and Membership Secretary: Michael Erben, Centre for Biography and Education, Research and Graduate School of Education, University of Southampton, Southampton, Hampshire, United Kingdom, SO17 1BJ.

**Auto/Biography Volume X, Nos 1& 2, 2002 Contents:**

Review Essay: Life writing, Margaret Drabble

Just like home. John K. Smith

"Speaking with authority": Biographical and ethical reflection in the work of Raymond Gaita. Alex Segal

Narrative on the net: bill and his hyper- lives, loves and texts. Jonathan Skinner

Arnold of Rugby: Smothered by biography? Terence Copley

Teaching Carolyn Steedman's Landscape for a Good Woman: reflections on pedagogy and life writing in British adult education and university contexts. Margaretta Jolly

Biography and bibliography: An Intellectual profile of Edward Rose. Andrew Carlin  
Educative purpose and transdisciplinary compass in Auto/Biography: Suicide and literature, cinema and collective subjectivities. Michael Erben

Diaries: A timely reflection. Sara Jane Finlay & Natalie Fenton

"Everybody gets one or two chances in life, this is my second!": Risk and the construction of (mature) student biographies. Richard Waller

The single-mindedness of women to adventure in the outdoors. Margaret R. Boniface

Getting beyond 'mustn't grumble' and 'what can I expect at my age': A narrative approach to older women's health stories. Pat Chambers

Loss and change: An Account of my father's death and its affect on me. Helen Bulbeck

Being on the receiving end: One patient's experience of nursing care. Phil Salmon

The (in)visible wound: Body stories and concentric circles of witness. Brett Smith  
Exploring social capital in narrative accounts of life transitions. Judith Sixsmith & Margaret Boneham  
Writing a "true" sports story. Jim Denison

*BOOK REVIEWS*

Liz Edwards: Women in Teacher Training Colleges, 1900 - 1960: A Culture of Femininity. Reviewed by Val Walsh.  
Brian Roberts: Biographical Research. Reviewed by David Morgan.  
Sidonie Smith & Julia Watson: Reading Autobiography: A Guide for Interpreting Life Narratives. Reviewed by Andrew C. Sparkes.  
Tom Wengraf: Qualitative Research Interviewing. Reviewed by Sybil Merson.  
Catherin Robson: Men in Wonderland: The Lost Girlhood of the Victorian Gentleman. Reviewed by Hilary Dickinson.  
Lorna Sage: Bad Blood. Reviewed by Brian Roberts.  
Sheila Rowbotham: Promise of a Dream: Remembering the Sixties. Reviewed by Maria  
Flis Henwood, Helen Kennedy & Nod Miller: Cyborg Lives? Woman's Technographies. Reviewed by Helen Betts.  
Valerie Steele: The Corset: A Cultural History. Reviewed by Stevie Mayhook.  
Christopher Hitchens: Orwell's Victory. Reviewed by Maggie Miller.  
Deborah Cadbury: The Dinosaur Hunters. Reviewed by Patrick Fullick.  
A.D.Harvey: A Muse of Fire: Literature, Art and War. Reviewed by Helen Bulbeck.  
Elliot Mishler: Storylines: Craft Artist's Narratives of Identity. Reviewed by Val Walsh.  
Ivy Alexander: Maid in West Ham. Reviewed by David Dixon.  
Charmain Vcannon (Ed.) Our Grandmothers, Our Mothers, Ourselves. Reviewed by Helen Betts.  
Barbara Howard Traister: The Notorious Astrological Physician of London: Works and Days of Simon Forman. Reviewed by Barbara Spender.

*INDEX TO AUTO/BIOGRAPHY 1992-2001*

**"The History of the Family. An International Quarterly." (2002, 7) Special Issue edited by Gabriele Rosenthal: **Family History - Life Story. Contents:****

Family history: Life stories. Gabriele Rosenthal  
East German Family Histories and Life Stories - Continuity and Changes. Simone Kreher  
East German Dissident Biographies in the Context of Family History: Interdependence of Methodological Approach and Empirical Results. Ingrid Miethe  
Veiling and Denying the Past: The Dialogue in Families of Holocaust Survivors and Families of Nazi Perpetrators. Gabriele Rosenthal  
Interchanged identities - the role of a Jewish school in Budapest (Hungary) in a mixed marriage. Éva Kovacs - Júlia Vajda  
Two cultural worlds in one family: one case in the historical context of Russian society. Victoria Semenova  
Narratives on World War II in Poland: When a Life Story is Family History. Kaja Kazmierska

**INTERACTION. INTERVIEW. INTERPRETATION**

In Russia there appeared the first issue of the new international interdisciplinary journal 'Interaction. Interview. Interpretation' (INTER).

The journal is on intersection of interpretative theory, critical methodology, culture, biography and social change. It gives the priority to the new approaches in social research and more precisely to the investigation of social practice and everyday life of different social actors. The journal is devoted both to methodological and practical issues, publishes research articles, critical analyses, commented biographies as well as visual materials coming from different socio-cultural contexts. It presents the articles of international-wide qualitative oriented research community.

The publication is a bilingual one and contains the articles both in Russian and English in full length. It will appear twice a year.

The Co-editors-in-chief are Lena Inowlocki (Germany), Elena Meshcherkina (Russia), Victoria Semenova (Russia).

All your requests and further information about the journal and proposal of manuscripts you could send to Elena Mescherkina or Victoria Semenova, Institute of Sociology, build. 5, Krzhizhanovskogo 24\35, 117259 Moscow, Russia (or Lena Inowlocki) e-mail: rusica@isras.ru

Journal's structure and the contents of the first issue.

Letter from the Editors

Theoretical Discourses and Discussions

Michael Rustin: Reflections on the Biographical Turn in Social Science

The Individual and Society

Jan Coetzee: Life on the Periphery: the Need for Fixed Points Amidst Rapid Transition

Field Research

Elena Iarskaia-Smirnova: Social Change and Self-empowerment: Stories of disable people in Russia

Alla Chirikova. Woman-Director in Business and Private Life

Research Reflection

Valeri Golofast. Conceptualizing Everyday Life

Classics Heritage

Im memoriam Pierre Bourdieu. Pierre Bourdieu. L'Illusion biographique

Life Story of the Issue

Elena Meshcherkina: How to Become a Baroness

Visual Sociology

Elena Meshcherkina: A Subjective Camera

Book Reviews and Conferences

Igor Masalkov

Anne-Ancelin Schuetzenberger: Aie, mies aieux! Liens transgénérationnels, secrets de famille, syndrome d'anniversaire, transmission des traumatismes et pratique du genosociogramme

Liana Ipatova & Sergey Kuchterin. Annual Training Course in the Center of Sociological Education (Institute of Sociology, Moscow)

Internet news

Igor Masalkov. Resources for Qualitative Research in the Internet.

Contributors



**Please remember:**

**This will be our last newsletter in hard copy. In the future you will get it by e-mail.**

**We ask all of you to send us by e-mail:**

- **Your e-mail address**
- **And your full mail address**

**Our new e-mail address is:**

[Biography-and-Society@gmx.de](mailto:Biography-and-Society@gmx.de)

**The deadline for the next newsletter is September 2003.**

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