

# MERCER UNIVERSITY

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## *Program*

10<sup>th</sup> Narrative Matters / Narrative Matters 2022

Mercer University – Atlanta, Georgia, USA

May 17 – 19, 2022





Dear Conference Delegates,

On behalf of Mercer University and the City of Atlanta, we extend a warm welcome to the 10<sup>th</sup> Narrative Matters Conference/ Narrative Matters 2022. We are honored to follow in the footsteps of previous conferences in Canada, the Netherlands, and France, and to be hosting Narrative Matters on the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the inaugural event, held in Toronto in 2002.

It would have been difficult to imagine how the world would look today when the wonderful organizers of Narrative Matters 2018 handed the baton to us at the University of Twente in July of 2018: from a global pandemic, to the Black Lives Matter movement and a renewed push for racial and economic equality and justice, to the ongoing humanitarian and political crisis in Ukraine. Clearly, the importance of dialogue, and finding shared meaning through stories, is as important as ever – interpersonally, and internationally.

As many of you know, Atlanta holds a deep history in the Civil Rights movement, and we have attempted to honor this history with our conference theme of personal and social transformation. More specifically, we hope to embrace the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King as well as a second Nobel Peace Prize winner with deep roots in the city - President Jimmy Carter - with our visit to the Center for Civil and Human Rights. We also hope to celebrate all of you who have chosen to dedicate yourselves to seeking, listening, and then sharing stories of individuals who have been marginalized or oppressed. This includes the extraordinary compassion, dedication, and skill Pulitzer Prize-winning Isabel Wilkerson displayed in the decade she spent interviewing 1200 individuals who took part in the so-called Great Migration out of the Jim Crow southern United States in the early-to-mid 20<sup>th</sup> century for her book *The Warmth of Other Suns*.

Finally, thank you for your patience as our event finally moved forward, and especially for your own contributions to our interdisciplinary program; even as we faced an initial COVID-19-related postponement, and then anxiously waited for multiple variant surges to subside, we received countless supportive messages, and then, finally - and somewhat miraculously - enthusiasm when we made the decision to stage a fully in-person event.

We hope you have a great conference, and a meaningful and fulfilling visit to our community.

*Don Redmond and Richard LaFleur, Conference Co-Chairs*



## Schedule-at-a-Glance

*Please Note: With the exception of receptions Monday and Tuesday evening, all events take place at on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> floor of the Mercer University Atlanta Administration and Conference Center (AACC), 3001 Mercer University Drive, Atlanta, Ga, 30341*

### Monday, May 16, 2022

**6p – Welcome Reception – Conference Hotel – Marriott Atlanta NE, 2000 Century Blvd NE, Atlanta, GA 30345**

### Tuesday, May 17, 2022

**Registration – 8a-4p**

**9a – 10a - Opening Keynote: Arthur Frank**

**10:15a – 11:15a Featured Speakers: a) William Randall b) Mark Freeman and Molly Andrews**

***11:30a – 12:30p - Concurrent Sessions #1***

***Lunch in Atrium***

**1:30p – 2:30p - Afternoon Keynote: Brian Schiff**

***2:45p – 3:45p - Concurrent Sessions #2***

**4p – 5p – Featured Speaker, Derrick Alridge**

**7p – Opening Reception - Center for Civil and Human Rights -100 Ivan Allen Jr Blvd NW, Atlanta, GA 30313**



**Wednesday, May 18, 2022**

**Registration – 8a-4p**

**9a – 10a – Morning Keynote: Gerben Westerhof**

***10:15a – 11:15a – Concurrent Sessions #3***

***11:30a – 12:30p – Concurrent Sessions #4***

***Boxed Lunch in Atrium /***

***12:30p – 1:15p : Lunch Seminar***

***Mark Freeman: Writing and Publishing Narrative Research and Scholarship***

**1:30p – 2:30p - Afternoon Keynote: Hanna Meretoja**

***2:45p – 3:45p Concurrent Sessions #5***

**4p – 7p – Featured Speakers: a) Karen Skerrett b) Ruthellen Josselson**

**Thursday, May 19, 2022**

**Registration – 8a-1p**

**9a – 10a – Morning Keynote: Dan McAdams**

***10:15a – 11:15a – Concurrent Sessions #6***

***11:30a – 12:30p – Concurrent Sessions #7***

***Lunch in Atrium***

**1:30p – 2:30p – Conference Keynote: Isabel Wilkerson**

**3:00p – Closing Panel Narrative Matters / Narrative Matters 2023 – Finland**



## Distinguished Conference Keynote

Isabel Wilkerson



Isabel Wilkerson, winner of the Pulitzer Prize and the National Humanities Medal, has become a leading figure in narrative nonfiction, an interpreter of the human condition, and an impassioned voice for demonstrating how history can help us understand ourselves, our country, and our current era of upheaval.

Through her writing, Wilkerson brings the invisible and the marginalized into the light and into our hearts. Through her lectures, she explores with authority the need to reconcile America's karmic inheritance and the origins of both our divisions and our shared commonality.

Her debut work, *The Warmth of Other Suns*, won the National Book Critics Circle Award, the Heartland Prize for Nonfiction, the Anisfield-Wolf Award for Nonfiction, the Lynton History Prize from Harvard and Columbia universities, and the Stephen Ambrose Oral History Prize, and was shortlisted for both the Pen-Galbraith Literary Award and the Dayton Literary Peace Prize.

She is a native of Washington, D.C., and a daughter of the Great Migration, the mass movement that she would go on to write about. She won the Pulitzer Prize for Feature Writing in 1994, as Chicago Bureau Chief of *The New York Times*, making her the first African-American woman to win a Pulitzer Prize in journalism. She then devoted fifteen years and interviewed more than 1,200 people to tell the story of the six million people, among them her parents, who defected from the Jim Crow South.

As for her new book, *Caste: The Origins of Our Discontents*, the venerable U.K. bookseller, Waterstone's calls it an "expansive, lyrical, and stirring account of the unspoken system of divisions that govern our world."



## Keynote and Featured Speakers in order of Appearance

Arthur Frank



Arthur Frank is professor emeritus in the Department of Sociology at the University of Calgary. His first book was a memoir of his own illnesses, *At the Will of the Body* (1991, new edition 2002). He then wrote a study of how people narrate their own illnesses, *The Wounded Storyteller* (1995, second edition 2013), complemented by a book on the ethics of clinical relationships, *The Renewal of Generosity* (2004). His most recent book is *Letting Stories Breathe*, about how stories affect our lives. He has lectured in Sweden, Norway, England, Spain, Portugal, among other countries and was a Resident Fellow in Canadian Studies at UCLA. His interests include narrative bioethics, clinical education, and healthcare practice, especially end-of-life care. But, in whatever venue—all it's ever really about is saying something that helps somebody make better sense of a life that's become troubled.



William Randall



Dr William L (Bill) Randall is Professor of Gerontology at St. Thomas University in Fredericton, New Brunswick, Canada. A graduate of Harvard University, Princeton Theological Seminary, and the University of Toronto, as well as a member of Emmanuel College, Cambridge, he has helped to pioneer a unique approach to the study of aging known as Narrative Gerontology.

Author or co-author of over 60 publications, including 8 books, on this approach, he has given keynote speeches, academic presentations, and interactive workshops for professionals, practitioners, and the general public in Canada, the US, the UK, the Netherlands, France, Spain, Germany, Denmark, Sweden, Iceland, and Norway.



Molly Andrews



Molly Andrews is Professor of Political Psychology, and Co-director of the Centre for Narrative Research ([www.uel.ac.uk/cnr/index.htm](http://www.uel.ac.uk/cnr/index.htm)) at the University of East London and was the Jane and Aatos Erkkö Professor at the Helsinki Collegium for Advanced Studies 2019-2020. Her research interests include political narratives, the psychological basis of political commitment, political identity, patriotism and aging. Her books include *Lifetimes of Commitment: Aging, Politics, Psychology* and *Shaping History: Narratives of Political Change* (both Cambridge University Press), and *Narrative Imagination and Everyday Life* (Oxford University Press) and seven co-edited volumes. Her publications have appeared in five languages.



Mark Freeman



Mark Freeman is Distinguished Professor of Ethics and Society at the College of the Holy Cross. His research activities and interests include philosophically-oriented work in what has come to be known as “narrative psychology” —which in the present context refers to that portion of psychology which looks toward narratives (e.g., autobiographies, memoirs, life histories) to explore such topics as autobiographical memory, personal identity, and the cultural fashioning of personal experience. Of special relevance in this context is his book *Hindsight: The Promise and Peril of Looking Backward* (Oxford, 2010), which explores the idea that there is much that we can know about ourselves only in retrospect: looking backward over the personal past, we can frequently see what we either could not or would not see earlier on as well as discern the contours of our unfolding life stories.



Brian Schiff



Brian Schiff is the Esmond Nissim Professor of Psychology, Director of the George and Irina Schaeffer Center for the Study of Genocide, Human Rights, and Conflict Prevention and Chair of the Department of Psychology, Health, and Gender. Schiff completed his Ph.D. at The University of Chicago, The Committee on Human Development, in 1997 and joined The American University of Paris in 2007.

Schiff is author of *A New Narrative for Psychology* (Oxford University Press, 2017) and co-edited *Life and Narrative: The Risks and Responsibilities of Storying Experience* (Oxford University Press, 2017). He is also editor of a special issue of *New Directions for Child and Adolescent Development, Rereading Personal Narrative and Life Course* (Jossey-Bass, 2014), and *Situating Qualitative Methods in Psychological Science* (Routledge, 2018). He is the 2016 recipient of the Theodore Sarbin Award from the American Psychological Association's Division 24 (Society for Theoretical and Philosophical Psychology).

Schiff's current research examines the motivations of perpetrators of mass crimes, the concept of collective memory, and the social impact of atrocity education.



Derrick Alridge



Derrick P. Alridge is a former middle and high school social studies and history teacher. He currently serves as the Philip J. Gibson Professor of Education and as an affiliate faculty member in the Carter G. Woodson Institute for African-American and African Studies at the University of Virginia. An educational and intellectual historian, Alridge's scholarship examines education in the U.S. with foci in African American education and the civil rights movement. His books include *The Educational Thought of W.E.B. Du Bois: An Intellectual History*; *The Black Intellectual Tradition: African American Thought in the Twentieth Century* (with Neil Bynum and James B. Stewart); and *Message in the Music: Hip-Hop, History, and Pedagogy* (with V.P. Franklin and James B. Stewart). Alridge has also published in numerous journals, which include the *History of Education Quarterly*, *The Journal of African American History*, *Teachers College Record*, *Educational Researcher*, and *The Journal of Negro Education*. He currently serves as an associate editor for *The Journal of African American History*.



Gerben Westerhof



Gerben J. Westerhof is professor in Narrative Psychology and Technology and director of the Story Lab at the University of Twente, the Netherlands. He is also past president of the advisory board of the International Centre for Life story Innovation and Practice (ICLIP, hosted by the University of Connecticut). He is interested in how narratives contribute to sustainable mental health across the lifespan, focusing on psychopathology as well as well-being and meaning in life. He developed and evaluated about ten narrative interventions, always working together with professionals and clients in the field, ranging from autobiographical reflection for social work students to online life story books for persons with dementia and life review therapy for several groups in mental health care.



Hanna Meretoja



Hanna Meretoja is Professor of Comparative Literature, Vice Dean of the Faculty of Humanities, and the director of the research centre *SELMA: Centre for the Study of Storytelling, Experientiality and Memory*. She received her MA from the University of Turku, where she majored in comparative literature and minored in philosophy, art history, cultural history and communications, and completed her PhD in comparative literature at the University of Turku. Meretoja has served as a visiting scholar at the University of Tübingen, Sorbonne Nouvelle, and Uppsala University, and as a visiting professor at the American University of Paris. Between 2014 and 2015, she served as the first director of the research centre *Narrare: Centre for Interdisciplinary Narrative Studies* (University of Tampere). In August 2016, Meretoja was appointed Professor of Comparative Literature at the University of Turku, and since August 2018 she has served as the Head of the Department of Comparative Literature.



Karen Skerrett



Karen Skerrett is a Licensed Clinical Psychologist and Advanced Practice Registered Nurse and has taught at the Chicago Center for Family Health, The University of Illinois, Adler University, and most recently at the Family Institute/Center for Applied Psychological Studies at Northwestern University

Her research and writing focus on resilient processes in couples across the lifespan and strength-based approaches to couple treatment. She is the author of *Growing Married* (2022), Co-author of *Positive Couple Therapy*, and Co-editor of *Couple Resilience* and presents nationally and internationally on adult development, life cycle transitions, innovative approaches to couple treatment and the unique processes of relational resilience and growth in couples across the lifespan.

She has also contributed numerous book chapters and articles to professional journals and reviews for *Family Process*, *Families, Systems and Health*, and the *Journal of Family Nursing*, among others. Her work has also appeared in the *Chicago Tribune*, *Parents Magazine*, *Psychology Today* and the *San Diego Union*.

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Ruthellen Josselson



Dr. Ruthellen Josselson is Professor of clinical psychology at The Fielding Graduate University and a psychotherapist in practice. She was formerly a Professor at The Hebrew University of Jerusalem and Harvard University and a Visiting Fellow at Cambridge University. Her research focuses on women's identity and on human relationships. She received the Henry A. Murray Award, the Theodore R. Sarbin Award and the Distinguished Contributions to Qualitative Research Award from the American Psychological Association as well as a Fulbright Fellowship. She has been active in group relations work for many years, consults to organizations, and lectures and conducts workshops both nationally and internationally. She is co-director of the Irvin D. Yalom Institute of Psychotherapy. On her approach to therapy: "I work from a psychodynamic and an existential psychotherapy perspective. I think of psychotherapy as a project that two people undertake together to try to better understand the problems of living in order to make changes that serve growth and personal fulfillment. I work primarily with conflicts concerning relationships, work and identity, and these often underlie symptoms of anxiety and depression."



Dan McAdams



Dan P. McAdams is the Henry Wade Rogers Professor of Psychology and Professor of Human Development and Social Policy at Northwestern University. Professor McAdams received his BS degree from Valparaiso University in 1976 and his PhD in psychology and social relations from Harvard University in 1979. Honored as a Charles Deering McCormick Professor of Teaching Excellence at Northwestern, Professor McAdams teaches courses in Personality Psychology, Adult Development and Aging, Theories of Human Development, the Psychology of Life Stories, and other topics.



## Detailed Conference Schedule and Abstracts

### Tuesday, May 17, 2022

9:00a – 10a : Morning Keynote

Arthur Frank: **Why Wounded Storytellers Need to be Vulnerable Readers**

Narratives matter because they are the hinge between experience and dialogue, interior and exterior, personal and social. I consider the relation between narration, experience, and dialogue by rehearsing why it made sense, as I wrote *The Wounded Storyteller* (1995/2013) to imagine types of narrative that are available to people narrating illness experience. I then consider why the figure of the wounded storyteller requires a complementary figure that I call the *vulnerable reader*. I conclude with four lessons that the study of stories and storytelling has taught me.

10:15a – 11:15a : Featured Morning Speakers

Bill Randall: **Age as Adventure: Restorying Later Life**

In the minds of many, aging is perceived and experienced in implicitly tragic terms, as a “narrative of decline” (Gullette 2004), as a downward trajectory toward decrepitude and death. Such a way of “storying later life” (Kenyon, Bohlmeijer, & Randall, 2011) can set us up for (among other things) “narrative foreclosure”, which in turn can feed the mild to moderate depression that older adults can sometimes suffer in the face of the various challenges of later life. Insofar as our *experience* of aging is inseparable from our *story* of aging, I will argue in this presentation (which grows out of a larger project that I’m working on) for an alternative narrative of later life. Drawing on concepts from narrative gerontology, on notions of “the hero/heroine’s journey” (Campbell), and on the view, prevalent in many cultures, of older adults as *Elders*, I will outline how later life can be viewed not as a tragedy but as an *adventure* in at least four inter-related directions: Outward, Inward, Backward, and Forward.

Molly Andrews and Mark Freeman: **Narrative and Politics: Challenge and Opportunities**

Narratives are not only the means by which individuals breathe public life into personal experience, they are a primary tool by which individuals recognize and affirm themselves as members of a group, thereby often acting as a catalyst for the raising of political consciousness. Narratives can thus play a vital role in de-individualizing that which is personal; rendering experience into a narrative form can help individuals to become more actively engaged in shaping the conditions of their lives. At the same time, societies are often saturated with different and competing political narratives about who they are, what their history is, and what kind of a future they seek to build. These latter issues have



become especially salient in the contemporary political world, rife as it is with information, misinformation, and disinformation. Using a range of different materials, this workshop will explore the dynamic interplay of narrative and politics in contemporary life and also encourage narrative researchers and scholars to “get in the game” in the service of redressing the challenges at hand and discerning opportunities for fostering progressive sociopolitical change.

**11:30 - 12:30**      **Concurrent Sessions #1**

Linda Buchanan

Stuck in the Story: Buchanan Four Phase Model of Narrative Therapy

Our clients’ narratives, are often full of fallacy that can create confusion about their needs and can negatively impact progress in therapy. This presentation will provide a step-by-step procedure for helping people increase awareness of the narratives which they have developed and how to rewrite them. Attendees will be given handouts that clients can fill out to serve as a templates for creating a new story which incorporates aspects of their authentic self.

Hani Khoury

Giving Up is Not An Option: Memoirs of a Palestine American

In his memoirs, Professor Hani Q. Khoury narrates the highlights of the complexities of his life and the events which have nurtured it. He was sentenced to an electric wheelchair at the age of 18 due to a progressive physical disorder. His story, like many others, is filled with challenges, setbacks, dreams, and, most importantly, hope. The juxtaposition of two very different cultural settings, Israeli-occupied Palestine, and the United States of America, will provide the reader with a deeper understanding of the meaning and implications of liberty and self-determination, both individually and collectively.

Thomas Pierce

A Comparison of the Reminiscence Bump Effect in Autobiographies and Biographies

The reminiscence bump effect is the tendency for older adults to recall more life events from their teens, twenties, and early thirties than from other decades of life. The purpose of this study was to investigate the presence of a reminiscence bump in accounts of life events that are carefully organized and narrated over prolonged periods of time; specifically, those presented in autobiographies and biographies. Life events were collected from 16 autobiographies and 10 biographies. In autobiographies, the reminiscence bump period represented an average of 24% of the authors’ lives at the time of publication; however, events from the reminiscence bump period comprised 45% of the number of pages. In



biographies, the reminiscence bump period represented an average of 19.13% of a person's life at the time of publication, while life events from the reminiscence bump period took up an average of 30.64% of these works. Events from the reminiscence bump period comprised a significantly larger percentage of autobiographies than biographies,  $X^2(1, N = 2886) = 55.21, p < .001$ , suggesting that the reminiscence bump effect is more prevalent when people tell the stories of their own lives than when a biographer tells the story of another person's life.

Tara Sievers-Hunt

Called to the Conversation: From Interview to Ethnodrama (new title)

A digital ethnodrama in three movements, *Called to the Conversation* is the final research product resulting from interviews with nine recent graduates of a small liberal arts PBI in Detroit as conducted by their former professor. This study explored the participants' journeys into professional musicianhood through the pursuit of an undergraduate voice performance degree. The transformation of interviews into a research-based play involved a bricolage of narrative inquiry, performance ethnography, and arts-informed practice—analyzed through a multistep process (e.g., verbatim rhythmic transcription, narrative/resonant threads, stop moments, nuclear episodes) and crafted through the lens of emergent structuring elements (i.e., hero's journey, currere, digital storytelling, theatrical practice). Through this inquiry, new understandings of lifelong learning as a self-authoring process emerged—especially regarding considerations of making space for an individual's journey into professional musicianhood within official and operational higher education curricula.

Panel: The Limits of Narrative

In this panel three presentations address limits of narrative by analyzing stories about technological developments, climate change and therapeutic innovations. Limits of narrative are identified in resistance to dominant stories, boundaries to human agency and the unbearableness of some traumatic memories. The presentations come out of the annual Twente-Amsterdam-Groningen Winter School on Narrative, that will have limits of narrative as its main theme for the 2023 edition.

*Gerben Westerhof: Propranolol, unbearable memories, and dilemmas of narrative development*

Narrative research and narrative interventions share a strong focus that a continuing process of telling and retelling personal stories is needed for narrative identity development. However, there might be limits to this process,



for example when traumatic memories become so unbearable that rather than telling and retelling, some form of closure might be needed. This paper addresses the use of propranolol, a drug that has been said to contribute to altering or even erasing traumatic memories. From a proponent perspective it is argued that the drug supports narrative identity development as it enables closure of traumatic memories and thereby restores authentic identities that were shattered by the experience. From a critical perspective this drug is seen as artificial as it might interrupt authentic identity development and undermine important functions of narrative. The paper aims to apply a binocular view to a story told about the use of propranolol in trauma therapy.

*Heidi Toivonen: What environmental narratives can and cannot do for our sense of agency: Exploring the limits of narrative*

Environmental narratives, especially climate fiction or “cli-fi”-fiction exploring the climate crisis- have lately been the subject of vivid academic research and high expectations. Narratives have been assumed to have the potential to inform and inspire people to think and act in new ways with regards to climate change. I explore environmental narratives from the perspective of *agency* (beliefs about the being-ability of humans and nonhumans), drawing from my recent studies on how people discuss written and filmic environmental narratives as well as from a close reading of two climate fiction novels. Even if narratives can shake traditional ways of thinking about (non)human agency, they have their limits. More experimental, non-human centric narratives encounter readers’ conventional thinking and resistance to attributing certain kinds of agency to the nonhuman environment. In addition, despite their potential, traditional environmental narratives meet their limits in representing less individualistic forms of human agency. Yet, I argue that the power of narrative lies in its limits. Narratives can call attention to the boundaries of what humans are able and willing to know and do about their environment; exploring the limits of our human agency opens a door to new kinds of more balanced human-nonhuman relationships.

*Sjoerd-Jeroen Moenandar: Hacking the (Meta) Narrative: Genre and Ethics in the Introduction of the Metaverse*

We are entering an era of ‘teclash’: increasing unease with the hold of large technology companies over our lives, driven by fatalistic feelings of loss of agency. Neither attempts by these companies to address such concerns, such as



appointing ethical committees and ombudsmen, nor grassroots initiatives aimed at user empowerment, seem effective in addressing this. This context remains unacknowledged in Mark Zuckerberg's introduction of the Metaverse on 28 October 2021. We will show, however, that it is still implicitly addressed through its narrative. A far-reaching transformation of the way in which we use the internet is presented as desirable and unescapable, employing an epic narrative mode which values constancy of the individual and their mastery over their surroundings. However, this future is shaped by Zuckerberg and his company: promising agency for all, it is remarkable how little agency is given to the user. We juxtapose this smooth future vision with a counternarrative using the same narrative building stones, but told in a narrative mode distributing agency more equally. Thus, we engage in strategic analysis, exploring how to resist narratives such as the Metaverse's. Should such resistance remain narrative, or does it require a move beyond the limits of narrative?

John Mark Parker & Mindie Blackshear

#### Journey to Self: The Story of Discovery for Three Trans People

Transgender (or trans) is a broad term used to describe individuals whose gender identity is different from the gender they were thought to be and assigned at birth. Recent studies released in 2016 estimate that approximately 1.4 million Americans are transgender. Trans persons experience extremely high rates of stigma, discrimination, exploitation, harassment – even physical abuse and death, depression, anxiety, substance abuse, and suicide. Navigating the world as a trans person is often painful, challenging, and frightening; however, there are many who share personal stories of hope, transformation, and celebration. Understanding what it means to be transgender can be difficult, especially if one has no exposure to or relationship with a transgender person. Session participants will be introduced to three trans persons living in Georgia through digital narratives created from individual interviews. Those interviewed include a teenager, young professional, and an older adult. While each person's story is unique, common themes will be identified. In addition to sharing three stories of hope, a goal of the session is to provide insight into the lives and experiences of trans people so the world becomes a more understanding place.

Tara Overzat

#### Far from home: A narrative discussion on Asian international college students

This paper will discuss emergent qualitative themes in the Asian international college student population in regard to acculturative stress and its



subcomponents, which include homesickness, fear, perceived discrimination, perceived hate, stress due to change/cultural shock, and guilt (Sandhu & Asrabadi, 1994). These themes are derived from online narrative journal postings written by Asian international college students across the US. Current and future implications for working with this population will be discussed, with an emphasis on how Asian international college students can externalize and deconstruct the issues they are facing and reauthor their stories.

Karen Skerrett

W2W: The Witness to Witness Project: A force to harness hope

The Witness to Witness (W2W) Project: A force to harness hope Our paper will describe the W2W Project, an outreach program supported by the American Family Therapy Academy, designed to serve individuals experiencing high levels of stress on their jobs as they work primarily with asylum seeker, detainees, migrants, immigrants and those made homeless by ecological disasters. The W2W assists those providers who are suffering from empathic stress and/or moral injury The storytelling/storylistening conversations that occur between partners are based on Weingarten’s Witnessing model (2000, 2003); the 38 volunteers work with the model in a “uniquely applied standardized approach.” We present the four witness positions and describe methods to help people move into the aware and empowered position (Weingarten, 2003). The project can be viewed as a form of narrative care (Randall,2019). Themes that have emerged include: vicarious traumatization; helplessness and anger related to destabilized working conditions and resulting demoralization; and a dominant discourse denying worker vulnerability. In the first year of operation, over 95% of participants rated the conversations as “very helpful”. We will elaborate on the four components of the program. These are: 1. conversations between volunteers and their partners, 2. Psychoeducation using modalities such as webinars and newsletters to introduce relevant concepts such as empathic stress, micro aggressions and moral injury, 3. Consultation to organizations such as the Migrant Clinicians Network and the Vera Justice Institute to help managers create more trauma sensitive work environments and 4. a facilitated peer support group for attorneys working in highly challenging environments. The W2W program is demonstrating great potential as a powerful model of healing as well as illustrating the ability of narrative theory and practice to effect meaningful personal and social change.



Magdala Lissa Jeudy      Normative Narratives in Émile Zola's L'assommoir

There is a tradition of criticism that charged Émile Zola with creating shell-like characters—bodies without substance or agency. This scholarship, however, has tended towards a normative and prescriptive reading of this naturalist author, examining the characters through the limited lens of the normal and pathological. I propose to read Zola's much-publicized novel L'Assommoir as a critique of the 18th and 19th-century medico-ontological practices and philosophies that gave rise to the concept of the normal that determine the standard to which the human body and mind should conform. The novel's protagonist Gervaise Macquart has been a marked target of scholars who write diagnoses of defect focusing uniquely on her limp. A close look at Gervaise's story, however, through the interpretive and acute lens of Disability Studies offers the possibility of thinking critically about medicine. Disability Studies provide the medical and the social models as ways of understanding non-normative bodies. Through close reading analysis informed by the history of medicine and Disability Studies, I present alternative narratives of normativity in Zola's novel. This critical work lends to reimagining the character of Gervaise, both body and mind, as a subject in her own right. Retelling Gervaise's story thus is to question how we define the normal and the pathological.

**1:30p – 2:30p : Afternoon Keynote**

**Brian Schiff: Storying Justice**

**In this talk, my primary aim is to think about the concept of justice through the lens of a socially and culturally informed narrative theory. As I will argue, notions of the just, good, and morally correct are not essential qualities but inherently discursive and positional. Justice always comes from a point of view and is based upon interpretations developed in the dynamic interchange of persons, together-with-others, in worlds already figured with meaning. Along the way, I elaborate a theory of narrative that accounts for persons and the social contexts of meaning making. The twist of the story is that, as I will show, acts of extreme violence are based upon a moral logic of justice. The logic is fundamentally at odds with notions of justice that we are accustomed to and is, in no uncertain terms, objectionable. But, there is a moral logic nonetheless that must be accounted for if we are to understand extreme violence. Using the manifestos of mass shooters, so-called lone wolf terrorists, I demonstrate the narrative construction of justice as a motivation for atrocity.**



**2:45p-3:45p**

**Concurrent Session #2**

Marlon Williams

Truth in Storytelling: Ownership, Authorship, and Authenticity

This presentation explores how individuals can proactively write their own self-stories instead of playing roles in narratives others have written. Using concepts of narrative therapy and interdisciplinary approaches to narrative, the author will share his journey of reclaiming his story and the benefits and wisdom for all in listening to the author within.

Albert Banerjee

Exploring the narrative opportunities of climate change and the crisis of care

This paper explores the narrative opportunities of the crisis of care precipitated by an aging population and climate change. We suggest that both these challenges call into question the narratives of mastery that have oriented western cultural and economic aspirations, while opening up possibilities for new ways of being in the world. If nothing else, climate change teaches us that we are not separate from nature, deigned with the power to control it. Rather, it requires we tell different stories, stories that help us understand ourselves as part of natural world. Similarly, the crisis of care frames the aging population as a burden. Rather than accepting this interpretation, we have an opportunity to tell stories that enable us to face our mortality, to understand ourselves as part of the natural cycle of life, and as people who are vulnerable and interdependent. Thus, both the aging population and climate change offer an opportunity to narrate different stories about our relationship to nature and to one another: stories in which vulnerability, mortality and care figure prominently. We conclude this paper by discussing what this work might involve as well as some of the challenges of attempting to move beyond deep-rooted narratives.

Lisa Joy Tuttle

The Transformative Potentials of Navigating Stigma for an Adult Diagnosed with Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder—A Pilot Narrative Study

A broad scope of research addresses the significant impact of stigmatization on the lived experience of individuals diagnosed with a mental health condition or disability, including adults diagnosed with the neurodevelopmental syndrome attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD). Though lower quality of life and educational underachievement associated with ADHD are well-documented (Faraone, 2021), as are reports by people with ADHD reflecting doubts about their ability to express their potential due to having ADHD (Nguyen &



Hinshaw, 2020; Ramsay, 2020; Ramsay & Rostain, 2015), no research to date has explicitly examined the relationship between internalized stigmatization and self-actualization in the context of ADHD. This narrative study entailed a single small-scale, semi-structured interview of an individual diagnosed with ADHD as an adult, to discern within the narrator's life story, themes relevant to the adult ADHD experience. A thematic analysis revealed four broad themes with sub-themes. The presentation includes interpretation of the results with researcher's positionality and critical connection to the topic, research design and rationale for the use of the narrative method, methodological considerations, validity measures taken to increase faith in the results, and the study's implications and future directions.

Sabrina Liccardo

Proposing a visual narrative method for exploring personal and social transformation

In *Psychosocial Pathways Towards Reinventing the South African University: Wrestling with the Ghost of a Bull* (2020, Palgrave Macmillan), I presented an innovative narrative methodology, utilising the myth of the Minotaur to examine the state of the university at the heart of a hierarchical labyrinth in post-apartheid South Africa. The cover image of narrative formations of relational selves was used in the spirit of exploration to think with and through the dynamics of (non)belonging in higher education. This paper focuses on the process and value of developing the cover image into a conceptual artwork as a narrative symbol of psychosocial transformation:

Mario Steinberg

Understanding digital transformation in education through narratives

Any attempt to clarify the possible impact of digitization on educational processes faces the challenge that the design and implementation of learning technologies are shaped by political and pedagogical narratives that are intertwined in novel and often opaque ways. These narratives are both (i) strongly shaped by the prevailing political and moral orders and (ii) deeply embedded in everyday pedagogical life. For actors, they provide strategic resources to shape, implement and evaluate the role of digitalization in ways that seem feasible, appropriate and legitimate. In the proposed presentation I trace how those digital black-boxes, understood as specific ways of imagining, organizing, implementing and evaluating educational practices, influence the everyday usage of digitization in education. As there are always several widely accepted understandings of what constitutes "good and equitable" education



that actors can draw upon when envisaging and adopting new technologies, I will highlight the plurality of orders as a crucial challenge in researching digitization processes in education. The overall aim of the proposed presentation is to show how digitalization-processes in education are articulated through narratives and how they can ultimately be reconstructed through them. *Number of words: 184*

Deena Stewart-Hitzke Bridging Intercultural and Intergenerational Divides Through Mutual Storytelling

Research shows that we all hold generalizing beliefs about others based upon age, gender identity, race, ethnicity, national origin, sexual orientation, status, education, and ability (Fiske, 2019). Such beliefs are rooted in early life experiences, and either refuted or confounded by subsequent experiences (Burkholder, D’Esterre, & Killen, 2019). Left unexamined, these beliefs may prevent us from connecting to others and benefiting from shared knowledge (Kunze & Toader, 2019). This case study therefore examined whether shared experiences of paradigm shifts throughout the lifespan reduce bias, bridging intergenerational and or intercultural divides. The case study utilized Joseph Campbell’s “The Hero’s Journey” motif, focusing upon experiences of reclaiming narrative identity. The survey results of the study indicated that structured life review, within the context of The Hero’s Journey,” transformed the perspectives of both the narrator and reviewer. Applying this method within the narrator’s organization further enabled him to foster collaboration, innovation, and enhanced productivity. Per Kunze and Toader (2019), similar approaches also enhance the transfer of shared knowledge within organizations, increasing human capital (Kunze & Toader, 2019). This case study, added to prior research, suggests that intergenerational and or intercultural story telling can enhance communication and collaboration, fostering perspective transformation. , 1993).

Kizito Okeke Phenomenological Perspective on Authenticity and the Relevance of the Meaningful Structure and Dimensions in Therapeutic Processes

A beautiful human life is agreeably an authentic life, and this means that a human must follow the path to authenticity and reject the path to inauthenticity. My study of this phenomenon of authenticity has shown that it is achievable through acts of intentional consciousness and self-transcendence, but understandably authenticity is a continuous process of being and some are on that path of authenticity not because of a systematic articulation and the



ability to apply the transcendental precepts that engender authenticity; rather, they have been well tutored by their significant life events that are catalysts to authenticity. This paper discusses an empirical research on authenticity from a phenomenological perspective and through the narratives of those whose significant life events brought them to the shores of authenticity and initiated a conscious awareness of authenticity and the resolute decision to follow that path. These narratives on authenticity are useful in understanding the meaningful structure of authenticity, and insightful in facilitating counseling and therapeutic processes.

**4:00p – 5:00p : Featured Afternoon Speaker**

**Derrick Alridge: Oral History as 'Soul Work': Listening to and Retelling the Stories of Civil Rights Era Teachers**

**The Teachers in the Movement Oral History Project at the University of Virginia explores teachers' ideas and pedagogy inside and outside the classroom during the U.S. Civil Rights Movement. From teachers themselves, we learn how their pedagogy, curricula, and community work were instrumental forms of activism that influenced the movement. Our project is guided by several questions: Who were the teachers in the movement? What, how, and why did these teachers teach? How can oral history enhance our understanding of the lives and pedagogy of teachers during the civil rights era? The presentation will cover the theoretical and methodological aspects of researching civil rights era teachers whose stories have gone largely unheard.**

**7:00p – Opening reception – Center for Civil and Human Rights**





## **Wednesday, May 18, 2022**

**9:00A – 10A : Morning Keynote**

**Gerben Westerhof: How to make narrative interventions work**

A large variety of narrative interventions exist in health care and social work, each with its own goals and target groups. They vary from reminiscence groups that support social interactions among persons with dementia to narrative therapies that focus on identity development by re-storying personal experiences. Based on work in the Story Lab of the University of Twente, I argue that three approaches are necessary in order to make narrative interventions work. First, we need evidence that narrative interventions work. Using a quantitative, positivistic approach, the strongest evidence exists for life review therapy that includes a systematic reflection on both positive and negative memories across the entire lifespan. It has been recognized as an evidence-based treatment for depressive symptoms in mental health care for older persons. Second, as these studies do not explain how narrative interventions work, I explore how scientific insights in narrative processes help to better understand change in narrative interventions. Social processes involve finding, expressing, and sharing one's voice: they mainly serve social recognition, support, and mutual learning. Psychological processes include emotion expression, autobiographical reasoning, and autobiographical reflection. They mainly support persons in finding meaning in personal experiences. Although these processes are interrelated among each other, they can help to clarify similarities and differences across narrative interventions. Third, to make narrative interventions work, the best scientific insights need to be combined with values of professionals who guide interventions and participants in these interventions. I will argue how a value-based design approach, focusing on compassion as a professional value and safety as a value for clients, can contribute to making narrative interventions work. Together, the three approaches, involving researchers, professionals, and clients, can help to tell the stories of narrative interventions that are tailored in a systematic way to a particular goal and target group.

### **10:15a-11:15a      Concurrent Sessions #3**

Galen Tinder

Oral Narration and the Construction of Identity

Through empirically based quantitative research narrative psychologists have demonstrated that human identity is comprised in part by the stories about their lives that they tell themselves and others. It has been established that certain kinds of autobiographical reasoning are particularly conducive to psychological growth and well-being. While the outcomes of processing difficult life events through story-telling have been well-examined, the mechanism by



which the healthy recounting of stories is accomplished have drawn less attention.

This paper, based on qualitative research, argues that story-telling and autobiographical processing most constructively take place through oral narration, and that guided story-telling, as in Structured Life Reviews, is inherently prosocial. The author will draw from his own research in Life Review to show how story-telling can result in the reduction of shame, forgiveness, and acceptance and an increase in well-being.

Finally, the paper suggests that many members of the general public are “unstoried,” and can benefit from the insights and practices of narrative psychology.

Justin Ness

The Ethics of Storytelling: A Case Study

Although awarded the lofty Booker Prize, Peter Carey’s Oscar and Lucinda (1987) failed to earn the lesser-known Vance Palmer Prize (renamed the Victorian Premier’s Literary Award); in 1989, George Turner — one of the three Vance Palmer judges — explained why: “I penalised it for cheating on the theme.” Turner was not accusing Carey of plagiarism but rather was echoing Tom Wilhelmus’s earlier review of the novel, which had criticized it for being “gratuitous in offending the lines of plot development.” Several scholars have since taken up the matter and have sided with Turner, explicitly claiming that Carey “cheated.”

My presentation uses the above scenario as a case study to examine whether or not there exists a “narrative ethic,” a responsibility in how a story is told. Moving beyond questions of a novelist’s responsibility for the content of their works, my presentation provides a new examination of the ethical implications of narrative structure. In light of Angus Fletcher’s *Wonder Works* (2021) and other such studies that expound on the psychological and even physiological responses to various narrative techniques, my purpose is to provoke a deep reconsideration of the ethics of storytelling.

Louise Grann

Player, Protagonist, and Plot: A Narrative-Thematic Exploration into Narrative (Identity) Play in Video Gaming

Digital story (DS), a growing phenomenon, is a blend of narratives and digital artifacts in which through deliberate collaboration personal narratives can come



to life (Rebmann, 2012). DS plays an important role in healing and personal growth. DS facilitates participants' ability of reflective thinking and self-discovery to generate an opening for personal growth. Healing and personal growth through narrative storytelling occurs when individuals allow themselves to reflect within and retell their story to promote positive changes in their lives. Presenter will discuss the 5-steps process of DS such as interviewing skills and data editing that assists reauthoring of personal narratives. Presenters will share empowering DS of individuals and their post interview research follow-up that supports the benefits of facilitating and collaboratively creating DS. Through demonstration and experiential learning, participants will understand the process of DS and the skills required to conduct a productive interview. This presentation will focus on the ethics of storytelling, technology in storytelling, and consideration in conducting sensitive multicultural interviews.

Keith Menhinick

Queer Trauma and Resilience

What is traumatic about queerness? Throughout the history of trauma and queer studies, the association between trauma and queerness has been so acute that many scholars consummately equate the two. In fact, theories of trauma and queerness have been entangled from the start, as the history of psychoanalysis attests to how models of sexual perversity and the unconscious emerged concurrently. In this presentation, I briefly review some of this overlap between queer and trauma studies, emphasizing how our conceptualizations of queerness in/as trauma have had deleterious implications for the lives of queer folks. I suggest we might rethink both trauma and queerness by focusing on a unique dimension of the queer experience—the fraught relation to family, kinship, and housing. As the lived experience of queerness illuminates, LGBTQ+ people are uniquely vulnerable to particular bodily materializations of trauma (what I will develop conceptually as queer trauma), yet they also have the potential for a relation to queerness that is generative and constructive (what I will develop as queer resilience).

Roland Messmer

Embodied Knowledge and Narratives in Teaching Physical Education

In teaching physical education (PE), we have, as it were, a double construct of "embodied knowledge". On the one hand, the content and learning in PE is shaped by knowledge and skills that are manifested – not exclusively – through embodied expressions, such as movement, tactics or aesthetics (Heck & Scheuer, 2021; Messmer, 2018). On the other hand, (PE) teachers themselves



possess "embodied knowledge" (Craig et al., 2018), making their actions in the classroom particularly performative. That this kind of teachers' embodied knowledge preferentially accesses narratives, has been demonstrated by Craig (2018). Both aspects – learning in PE and teaching in PE – guide us in asking as to how these two aspects complement and condition each other: How can embodied knowledge be made visible through narratives and how does teaching and learning reveal their effectiveness?

In the paper presentation, the place of stories in PE and sports is shown and interpreted by drawing on an authentic story of a PE teacher from our research data base. The story is also meant to illustrate that narratives not only make embodied knowledge visible, but are probably also important for the transformation of one's own knowledge of learning into knowledge of teaching.

Theresa Chrisman

Effectiveness of Life Story Book for Reducing Depression in Nursing Homes Residents without Cognitive Impairment

Almost 50% of nursing home (NH) residents have a diagnosis of depression. Meaning in life (MIL) has been shown to be a protective factor against depression. The Life Story Book (LSB) reminiscence intervention has had significant effects on depression for NH residents with dementia, but there is a gap in the literature for mentally alert NH residents. Twenty-one mentally alert NH residents participated in this study. Each resident was guided by a trained Listener chronologically through memories of their life for three 1-hour visits. Photos were scanned using a portable scanner and stories transcribed. The compiled LSBs were reviewed with participants for any corrections, omissions, or adjustments necessary. Using a one-way MANCOVA, the results on the combined depression and MIL measures were nonsignificant:  $F(3, 14) = 2.50$ ,  $p = .102$ ; Wilks' Lambda = .652;  $\eta^2 = .35$ . Although the results were statistically nonsignificant, the effect size was moderate. In light of the small sample size ( $N = 21$ ), low statistical power, and meaningful effect size, replicating the study with a larger sample size is advisable. This study provided an opportunity to test the contents of an innovative LSB toolkit which contains all the essentials for replicating the LSB intervention.

Don Smith

Using Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) Scores in Transforming Narratives

The ACEs study (Felitti, V. J., et al., 1998) can be viewed as a triumph of narrative informed research linking childhood abuse and neglect with



brain/body changes resulting increased rates of morbidity, mortality that also may manifest in problems with education, relationships, employment and job performance reinforcing perpetuating oppressive minority and class narratives. The process of generating and/or deconstructing ACE scores for individuals or communities can be used to weave together multiple narrative threads of personal and inter-generational life experiences, e.g., current health status and risk, trauma-related behaviors, individual and group status or stigma, into a richer, less isolating, more coherent stories linked to achievable actions. Examples of the use of ACE scores in advancing narratives to improve lives are presented for the following settings and situations: 1. individual health care prevention and planning, 2. inter-generational prevention, programs (public health), 3. counseling/psychotherapy, 4. community activism, 5. trauma informed education.

Cathy Raymond and Nargis Ehsan

Decolonizing the Presentation of Research Findings: Amplifying One Afghan Woman's Epistemic Authority and Literacy Practices Through Poetic Re-Storying

A narrative inquiry report is frequently not an unbiased third-person account of the findings but rather a creative, dynamic, and often interactive process driven by a desire for a three-dimensional portrayal of life. This presentation is a snapshot from a larger narrative inquiry project with Parvana, an Afghan woman; the larger narrative study is theoretically and conceptually informed by postcolonial feminism and decolonization of research methods. In this presentation, I will focus on the rationale for and excerpts from a poetic re-storying of the narrative research findings. By carefully and collaboratively crafting the research findings in poetic form using original excerpts from interviews, conversations, stories, and artifacts, Parvana and I worked together to amplify and honor her epistemic authority and literacy practices. In addition to presenting the research findings in Parvana's own words, creative re-storying serves to make research findings accessible for academic and non-academic audiences alike; this speaks to a collaborative research agenda to explore an authentic and accessible counternarrative to post 9/11 western portrayals of Afghan women as silent and in need of saving—a portrayal largely based on a static narrative rather than on actual life story interviews with Afghan women.



**11:30a-12:30p**      **Concurrent Sessions #4**

Arnab Mukherjee & Sushmita Sarkar

Entrapped or Enabled? The role of narratives in empowering individuals and preserving livelihoods through skilling: Field Experiences & Analyses from India

Reskilling and upskilling are immense challenges facing individuals, organizations and governments globally. The global working population – comprising almost 2.5 billion individuals – faces disappearance and alteration in the nature of jobs, due to several factors ranging from progress of artificial intelligence and automation to climate change, according to the International Labor Organization’s World Economic and Social Outlook 2019. To address this challenge, organizations across business sectors are facilitating continuous, life-long learning for their workforce, while also extending the ownership of learning beyond the Human Resource function. Individual workers and professionals are being catered to by governments and independent learning providers, although challenges of effectiveness, accessibility and affordability remain daunting – specifically since the requirement is to create and offer solutions that facilitate rapid skilling at scale in sectors or functions that have just emerged or are yet to emerge! Overlooked, often, in this entire process, is the role that community narratives play in the skilling of individuals or groups – an issue which had been examined in a different context by Molly Andrews, Cigdem Esin, Aura Lounasmaa and Corinne Squire, through their workshop conducted at The ABCs of Narratives, University of Twente, 2018. Andrews and colleagues asserted that “narratives are a primary tool by which individuals recognize and affirm themselves as members of a collective...through which individuals shape the conditions of their lives.” This paper distils practitioners’ experiences regarding the role of narratives in impeding or facilitating skilling and enhancing performance of professionals and own-account workers – from field initiatives in metropolitan and semi-urban India – by aiding or preventing individuals’ discovery of ‘purpose’, and; by constraining or liberating ‘curiosity’. Adequate signs – which we will share through ‘before-and-after’ states – of the immense benefits of empowering narratives have already become evident in the projects that we are involved in.

Jason Whitehead

Dangerous Stories: Narrative Theory and Critique in a Post-Truth World

Political and legal scholars use narrative theory to study everything from the framing of policy arguments to the telling of tort tales to the construction of



political consciousness. Such scholarship often relies on post-positivist theories that problematize the empirical validity of narratives. But the stories told by many recent movements in American politics—such as Christian nationalism, “the Big Lie,” and Covid-19 conspiracy theories—so distort empirical reality that they endanger liberal norms and values, not to mention human lives. Scholars who ordinarily eschew objective narrative validity may nevertheless want to critique and challenge such stories on empirical grounds. This paper investigates the options available to narrative scholars studying these types of stories. First, I survey different approaches to narrative, drawn from philosophy, rhetorical studies, critical feminist theory and critical race theory. Second, I highlight the resources and strategies devised by scholars who use these approaches to analyze other empirically problematic and socially dangerous narratives, especially how they have combined post-positivist commitments with concerns for truth and justice. Finally, I make suggestions for how scholars can better study and critique the political and legal narratives associated with the Trump era.

Esther Maeers

From 'married to my house' to employed and empowered: A transformational story of parent engagement

Exploring Rene’s narratives of experience, our paper unpacks her transformation from a mother “married to her house,” as she self-described at the beginning of our research program on systematic parent engagement, to an employed, empowered woman who transformed her life physically, intellectually, emotionally, and spiritually. Rene accepted the paid role of Parent Connector, designed within our research prototype to build relationships with parents, and to bridge home and school contexts. We examine how, as Rene built strong trust and relationships with and between others, she gained confidence, prioritized self-care, pursued educational goals, and re-thought her beliefs, assumptions, and worldview. Research demonstrates that when parents are engaged in schools in ways that address their learning needs, employment levels, health, and knowledge as parents, as well as their children’s learning and wellbeing, both school and home contexts are strengthened (Brown, 2007; Hong, 2011). We use Dewey’s (1938) notion of *experience* to understand the impact of Rene’s role as Parent Connector, inquiring into *continuity* – how her experiences grew out of other experiences and lead to further experiences, *interaction* – how she moved between the personal and the social, and *situation* – how context of the school landscape mattered (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000).



Tabitha Holmes

When Too Much Information is A Good Thing: Public Performances of Personal Narratives

For over 30 years, psychologists have demonstrated the personal benefits of writing about personal trauma. Individuals who construct narratives about their personal struggles have reported improved mood, psychological well-being, and physical health (e.g., Sexton & Pennebaker, 2009), among other benefits. Less is known, however, about the benefits (and potential costs) associated with sharing stories of trauma in a public arena. To address this gap in the literature, we partnered with a local organization that runs a 10-week writing program; 20 participants constructed and shared narratives based on well-established writing prompts in a group setting. Facilitators encouraged participants to delve deeply into experiences that were particularly meaningful in their lives. At the end of the program, individuals selected one of their stories to share with a live audience. We conducted in-depth, qualitative interviews in which we asked participants to reflect on the experience of making their private stories public, how they felt about audience feedback, and how they now view their stories in the context of their identities and life trajectories. Our presentation will focus on the emergent themes identified both within and across participant interviews and will add to the literature on narrative identity and the therapeutic benefits of storytelling

Adele Baruch

Listening to Stories of Courage and Moral Choice

This proposed presentation summarizes a project and associated research focused in two urban high schools and the University of Southern Maine. As the project first began, we initially interviewed participants about their responses to hearing stories of helping under duress. The project grew into a collaboration between teachers and administrators, researchers, and community members, as a result of conversations with school staff who foresaw potential beneficial outcomes for their community. Stories of helping under duress were matched with curricula focused on the history of these stories, as well as opportunities for students to serve in their own communities. Stories of individuals and groups who choose to help in the face of cultural or individual challenge, told in a supportive environment, and paired with opportunities for service, appear to support an emerging identity as “one who helps”. These narratives of helping in challenging situations may offer an imaginal bridge for students, encouraging them to envision what it might look like to choose effective action on behalf of



others. Accounts of this study are described in the forthcoming special issue of Narrative Works.

Bianca Poindexter & Dazzmen Davis

How does disclosure and nondisclosure work in a counseling setting regarding coming out stories of young adults of color?

This presentation or panel will fully describe how it feels for counselors to work with clients who feel comfortable disclosing when they came out and the experience they had. Also, does a client of color feel comfortable disclosing to their families when there is the threat of homelessness, or emotional/physical harm. Clients of color who struggle with coming out will most likely turn to someone they love or their counselor first to get a plan before involving their families.

Tim Craker

Modernity/Coloniality and Narrative Ethics

If modernity and coloniality are two sides of the same coin, can we separate our narratives of modernity from colonial ways of being that formed enduring practices of social inequality?

Tzvetan Todorov seeks to give us a way of reading colonial narratives (from Columbus, Cortés, Las Casas, and Sahagún) that draws on the universality of the study of narrative modes (across cultures, languages, and fields of inquiry) to develop a more specific typology of colonial narratives that, it was hoped, would help us navigate the borders of history and ethics. In this paper I will seek to show how the work of Inga Clendinnen and Matthew Restall call into question some of the fundamental European assumptions of both Todorov and narratology generally.

Finally, drawing on the work of Aníbal Quijano, Immanuel Wallerstein, Walter Mignolo, and José David Saldívar, this paper seeks to explore the enduring role of colonial practices/narratives of modernity in establishing and transforming social hierarchies while asking if it is possible to decouple the colonial-modern axis of power in a narrative ethics that focuses on historicity rather than narrativity, plurality rather than universality, and (awkwardly named) transmodernity rather than pre-modernity/modernity/post-modernity.



Oddgeir Synnes

Poetry, narrative citizenship and dementia

It has been argued that there is a need for a narrative citizenship in dementia care that can support the narrative agency and the capacity to be linguistic agents for persons with dementia. This calls for a heterogeneous understanding of narrative. In this presentation I will put forth how the genre of poetry can serve as one aspect of a narrative citizenship in dementia. The argument will be grounded in a close reading of selected poems from a poetry writing project at a dementia day care setting in Norway. The practice of poetry writing in dementia care might open our eyes to how even smaller fragments of spoken words are imbued with meaning and significance. Poetry and its emphasis on the lyric present can be a productive language when narratives get fragmented or break down. Poetry and poetic language might offer an aesthetical and an ethical reminding of the linguistic capabilities in persons with dementia by opening up alternative forms of expressions and agency, and thus, support the narrative citizenship of persons with dementia.

Danielle Wingfield-Smith

Oral History as a Tool for Justice: Examining the Intersections of Race, Education and Law in the Civil Rights Movement

Gathering, preserving and interpreting the stories of lawyers, teachers and other community leaders of the civil rights era provide a powerful framework for understanding injustice and how to organize movements of resistance. This presentation will offer insights into the theoretical and methodological aspects of conducting oral histories. The discussion will also include how conducting oral histories can inform current movement work.

**12:30p – 1:15p : Lunch Seminar**

**Mark Freeman: Writing and Publishing Narrative Research and Scholarship**

**1:30p – 2:30p : Afternoon Keynote**

**Hanna Meretoja: Transformative Storytelling and Narrative Agency: Narrating Uncertainty in Tumultuous Times**

**This talk discusses the power and limits of narrative by exploring what resists narrativization in times of crises. Narratives are often used to create an illusion of control: by positing us as agents of change they can function as a tool for narrative mastery. They thereby risk taming us, or burdening us with**



responsibility for things that are beyond our control. We can fall seriously ill even with the healthiest life style, and the narrative of fighting problematically posits us as winners or losers when it might be more helpful to find narrative resources to deal with the uncertainty and fundamental randomness of life. This talk explores the challenges linked to living in the middle of intersecting global and personal crises – the pandemic, ecocatastrophe, cancer – that have no clear end and thereby resist narrativization. It delineates a new model of narrative agency and suggests that sometimes the transformative power of storytelling can reside in the way it allows us to confront the limits of our agency, cultivate a sense of connectedness, and embrace the finitude of human existence as part of our existential condition.

**2:45p – 3:45p**      **Concurrent Session #5**

Stephen Bacon

Resolving the Common Factors versus Evidence-Based Practice Debate:  
Supporting an Evolving Constructionist Model of Psychotherapy

The basic question about how psychotherapy works has resulted in an apparently unbreakable stalemate between Common Factors proponents and the Evidence-based/Medical model adherents. A new analysis argues that the resolution of this debate lies in reviewing the literature on therapist training and experience. Put simply, if techniques have inherent power, then trained therapists—who know techniques—should have better outcomes than the untrained. Similarly, experienced therapists should be superior to less experienced therapists because they know more techniques and have practiced them more assiduously. A literature review demonstrates that these hypotheses are not supported; hence, psychotherapeutic techniques have no inherent power and are, instead, culturally-sanctioned healing rituals.

While many narrative therapists and constructionists are already convinced that the medical model of psychotherapy is woefully inadequate, this literature review puts an empirical “nail in the coffin.” Moreover, it pushes us towards visualizing a psychotherapy free from any emphasis on techniques and skills, a new vision that aligns well with constructionist therapies like narrative or collaborative therapy, although the provocative findings have the potential to push extant boundaries even further. The implications of the research analysis will be discussed, particularly in the area of pragmatic interventions, training, and learning from experience.



Bodil Blix

### The Travelling and Turns of Being and Becoming a Narrative Inquirer

My journey of being and becoming a narrative inquirer has involved a series of turns. Hyvärinen (2010) noted the paradox that while a turn “denotes an advance moment every time one performs such a turn”, one is inevitably looking backwards when situated at the turning point. At turning points, we look both backwards and forwards to continue to learn and to move forward. Turning points are openings to learning and surprise. In this paper, I draw on a particular experience from my journey towards being and becoming a narrative inquirer. For me, this experience was a painful turning point with opening to learning and growth. I draw on early American pragmatists, such as Jane Addams and John Dewey and their conceptualizations of perplexity as the critical initial stage of inquiry (Seigfried, 2002). I firmly believe that by looking both backwards and forwards with curiosity, through the reliving and retelling of experience, we can understand ourselves and others in new ways. As such, turning points are crucial in the process of being and becoming narrative inquirers.

Louis Boynton and Richard La Fleur

### Narratives of Health and Wellbeing: A New Hope for Reducing the Stigma in Psychotherapy

As we examine the history of psychological and behavioral work quite often the goal is to detect and determine maladaptive behaviors. After examining such techniques and working with myriad of other theories it becomes clear that we in the profession need a new intervention to help to increase our effectiveness in psychotherapy. It is my assertion we need to focus on interventions that lead to health and well-being being. Quite often we are faced with a narrative that leaves our consumers confused and lacking a destination. This focus using is the narrative of the “good life” and virtues to demonstrate how the narrative of flourishing can help people find better results at psychotherapists. It also could a better destination to create narratives of health well-being and a better tool for practioners. By constructing narratives of virtues, specific virtue practices, and other narrative interventions, maybe actual life and mindful goals may be achieved. The goal is to create an environment of therapeutic conditions that a second order change can occur so why are we not focusing on health, happiness and finding a peaceful life?



Arla Bernstein and Robert Helfenbein

Community Violence as a Mental Health Narrative: A Case Study

As a societal problem, community violence (and its socio-psychological effects) lends itself to an interdisciplinary approach for researching the problem and possible mitigation in the community. We are interested in using a *narrative analysis* approach to researching the City of Atlanta's community of five neighborhoods in south Atlanta marked by poverty and unemployment regarding its public narrative about violence in the community. Researchers use *narrative analysis* to understand how study participants construct story and narrative from their own personal experience, which is useful in studying public awareness of and attitudes toward community violence and its effects on both individuals and communities.

Don Redmond

Present as Prologue: Viewing Personal and Cultural Events in the Context of Story Chapters

Narrative Therapy and/or Narrative Care typically involve a practitioner helping an interviewee author a self-affirming personal narrative. In doing so however - particularly for an individual who has suffered, or currently suffers, some type of oppression or marginalization - it can be difficult to embrace a more positive self-story when a macro-level political/cultural/social environment provides relentless discouraging messages; if one is oppressed psychologically or otherwise by current political realities, how might we cope? Or as Jerome Bruner suggested in *Acts of Meaning* (1990), how might we make sense of it? This presentation will consider ways narrative theory might provide coping mechanisms as reminders that current discouraging realities can be seen not only as temporary, but as a catalyst for change.

Colin Davis

Who's that Girl?: Telling the Story of Catherine Hessling, the Woman Who Wasn't There

In January 1920 the future film director Jean Renoir married the beautiful nineteen-year-old Andrée Heuschling, who had modelled for his father, the great painter Pierre-Auguste Renoir. According to his own account, Renoir entered the world of film in order to make his wife a star. His wife tells a different story: Renoir pushed her into a career she never wanted. Nevertheless, the model Andrée Heuschling became the actor Catherine Hessling, and together she and Renoir made a series of films: *Catherine* (1924), *The Whirlpool*



of Fate (1924), Nana (1926) and Charleston (1927). None of these films was a significant critical or commercial success. Hessling's acting was – and still is, by most critics – regarded as too quirky and idiosyncratic to make of her a powerful screen presence. She did not become a star, her marriage to Renoir broke down, and she is now largely forgotten. After a handful of other screen appearances, she retired from acting and died in obscurity in 1979. Renoir, on the other hand, would go on to be one of the most celebrated directors in film history. This paper examines the transformation of Andrée Heuschling into Catherine Hessling, and the reasons for her disappearance from film history. 'Hessling' is an imaginary identity. Moreover, in her films she appears in a series of inconsistent, ever-changing roles, as innocent victim, ruthless exploiter, virgin and whore; she is sometimes vulnerable, sometimes threatening. She is, the paper suggests, 'the woman who wasn't there'. She could not be pinned down to a stable subject position; and perhaps she embodies a fluid femininity which audiences and critics found and find hard to accept. The difficulty of telling her story encapsulates a problem within life narrative itself: how do you make sense of a life that makes no sense?

Elaine Lux-Koman

Narrative Versatility in Annie Rogers's *A Shining Affliction*

In *Letting Stories Breathe: A Socio-Narratology*, Arthur Frank (2010) asserts that "Stories work with people, for people, and, always stories work on people, affecting what people are able to see as real, as possible, and as worth doing or best avoided" (p. 3). Annie Rogers's (1995) beautifully written memoir *A Shining Affliction: A Story of Harm and Healing in Psychotherapy* is one such story. It effectively brings to life two contrasting stories about psychotherapy, as well as two moving stories of individuals: one a therapist-in-training and the other a young patient she works with. Through the supple blending of rational informative prose and poetic imaginative prose; shifting narrative moods; and intertwining story threads, *A Shining Affliction* affords us the opportunity of listening with open hearts to what Frank (1997) calls, in *The Wounded Storyteller*, the "voices of those who suffer" (p. 25). For, as he points out, "in listening for the other, we listen for ourselves. The moment of witness in the story crystallizes a mutuality of need" (25). This powerful memoir illustrates the versatility of narrative even as it moves us, teaches us, and perhaps even enlarges our understanding of human interrelationships and the importance of stories.



Caroline Fernandes      Discovering Purposeful Meaning in Spiritually Transformative Experiences to Re-author Traumatic Childhood Narratives

Storytelling is how one makes meaning of their lives. Many cultures communicate and flourish through storytelling, narrative processing, and recreating of lives. Narrative story telling provides a culturally sensitive theoretical framework in healing. Focusing on subjective expressions rather than objective viewpoints gives deep value to personal experiences and therapeutic healing journey. As such, sharing spiritually transformative experiences (STE) in a safe environment not only gives meaning to personal experiences but also facilitates deep healing and encourages autonomy over re-authoring traumatic narratives. This is especially true in individuals who have experienced childhood physical or sexual trauma where autonomy, self-identity, and mind-body integration is impaired. The Presenter will share STE narratives and how it provides a unique outcome to internalized perspectives as a tool to construct a new purposeful meaning to life. Presenter will discuss techniques of re-remembering, exploring forgotten aspects of self, the art of re-creating through STE, mindful interviewing skills, ethics of storytelling, including intentional analysis of linguistic characters such as metaphors and symbolism in STE interpretation. The Presenter will share qualitative phenomenology case studies of individuals with STE who also have a history of childhood trauma, and how their STE have changed the course of their personal narratives.

**4:00p – 7:00p Afternoon Featured Speakers:**

**a) Karen Skerrett: The Power of We Stories: To Transform, Heal and Inspire**

All relationships have stories: a first meeting, a failed vacation, a scary fight; and they are as unique as the people who tell them. A “We-story” is a particular type of couple story that captures a joint memory and reflects a particularly positive moment from the relationship. It embodies at least one of the seven key factors identified through research: security, empathy, respect, acceptance, pleasure, humor, and shared meaning and vision. Since the “We-story” affirms what is good about being together, it provides an enduring metaphor for the relationship’s most positive features and most meaningful values. Research suggests that the capacity to draw on a “We” perspective offers proven individual health and relationship benefits, and provides a touchstone that helps a partnership thrive over time. “We-ness” and the related concepts of mutuality and reciprocal practices are the sine qua non of connection and communal relationships; what clinical and relational research often describe as being at the heart of relationship satisfaction. These concepts reflect a move away from the individual emphasis of traditional social psychology to a focus upon interdependence, dyadic coping, inclusion of other in the self and transactional memory.



This workshop will utilize stories from an ongoing Couple Story Project to examine the differences between couple stories and “We stories” in a variety of contexts including psychotherapy, chronic and debilitating illness, and developmental transitions. Techniques for eliciting “We-stories” will be addressed as well as methods to enhance particular elements of the story to further advantage the partnership. Finally, pathways from a “We-story” to the development of a relationship vision will be explored and linkages made to broader family and community narratives.

**b) Ruthellen Josselson: Interviewing for Narrative Research**

Narrative interviewing has as its aim an in-depth understanding of another person and attempts to understand what is not said as well as what is. The goal of this workshop will be to reflect upon and to improve skills as interviewers in the context of narrative research.

We will take up the problems of orienting to the interview through a clear conceptualization of the research question and we will consider the interrelationship between the theoretical context that frames the research and the actual interaction in the interview with the participant. Taking a close look at the interview itself, we will focus on understanding the interpersonal process, thinking about the data, and talking about the problems inherent in communicating the results of what we have learned. Throughout, we will keep in mind the question: What does it mean to know another person?

**Thursday, May 19, 2022**

9:00a – 10:00a : Morning Keynote

**Dan McAdams: American Redemption: Variations on a Good Life Story**

Human beings are, by nature, storytelling animals. Beginning in the emerging adulthood years, we formulate internal life stories – *narrative identities* – reconstructing the past and imagining the future so as to confer upon our lives a sense of plot, purpose, and temporal coherence. In this talk, I go back a few decades to trace the origins of the concept of narrative identity within psychological science (personality and life-span developmental psychology, mainly) and then flash forward to describe research on how American adults, in their midlife years, tell redemptive life stories. Tracking the developmental move from suffering to enhancement, redemptive life stories are positively associated with psychological well-being, civic engagement, and an adult’s commitment to promoting the well-being of future generations. I end by briefly relating the strange case study of one especially prominent American adult who, I believe, never formulated a narrative identity for his life.

**10:15a – 11:15a                      Concurrent Session #6**

Jared Champion                      Repeating the Punches: Christopher Titus, Storytelling, and Traumatic Manhood

Christopher Titus spent the better part of the 1990s developing his breakthrough comedy special, Normal Rockwell is Bleeding, a one-man comedic



performance featuring stories from his childhood with an abusive father. Most notably, almost all of these stories recount moments when Titus failed to live up to his father's standards of manhood. After performing the routine at a show where a few television executives peppered the audience, Fox gave Titus a contract to adapt the performance into a television series. The show, *Titus*, recounted Titus's painful relationship with his father, played by Stacy Keach. The series employed a fragmented structure that opened with Titus offering the audience soliloquys describing his childhood, followed by present-day scenes where Titus, Keach, and others recreate traumatic scenes from Titus's childhood all while jump cuts flash back to childhood memories that inform Titus's present-day behavior. Titus went on a meteoric rise, quickly becoming the highest rated program on the network. In 2003, however, Titus and the network's executives had a falling out over the narrative trajectory, and the show was cancelled at its peak. Titus took all the same material, punchlines and all, on a national tour where he sold out enormous theaters filled with fans he accrued through *Titus*. Titus's performances tell and retell the same stories in the same narrative arc, a dynamic one would think leads to comedic failure, but Titus has built a nearly three-decade long career by repeating the same stories of trauma. But, as trauma theorist Cathy Caruth points out, humans process traumatic experiences through repetition and fragmentation. Far from detracting from the comedic quality of Titus's work, repetition speaks to the very nature of trauma and becomes a critical element of narrative's resonance, especially because the fragmentation leads to further repetition. Most importantly, the following Titus managed to build over the past thirty years suggests that, for many, American manhood is itself a traumatic process.

Megan Sweet

#### Use of Storytelling to Advance Education Reform

Education is on the front lines of our society, reflecting the social and political realities of current events as well as historical influences. The dual pandemics of Covid-19 and systemic racism have revealed the deep injustices in our society, placing our education system at an important inflection point: radically transform to serve all students, or continue to reproduce the inequities that plague the United States. Educators, researchers and policymakers have long known that there exists a profound achievement gap in the United States, and that we are consistently failing to provide our students who identify as BIPOC, low income, and English Learners with the education they deserve. We have been using data and statistics for decades to demonstrate that there is



something very wrong with our system, yet this approach has failed to lead to significant change. This paper shares the conceptual framework of why storytelling is an impactful medium for learning about our professional practice as well as communicating about the needs in education, including a review of relevant research. It goes on to discuss the importance of stories at this moment in the United States as a tool for advocating change in our system. It asserts that we need stories written by educators about their lived experiences--stories that would provide a necessary dimension to the data, stories that would compel true and lasting action.

Gail Hornstein

“I became a human being”: The transformational power of narrative in peer-support groups for voice hearers

The Hearing Voices (HV) approach has emerged from a 25-year international collaboration among mental health professionals, people with lived experience of voice hearing or other extreme states, and their families and allies. It represents a new way of understanding and coping with the distressing aspects of these experiences that is empowering and useful and does not start from an assumption of mental illness. In the HV peer-support groups that have now spread around the world, voice hearers engage in in-depth exploration of their experiences, supported by others coping with similar challenges. Many have spent years in the psychiatric system, labeled “treatment resistant” and increasingly estranged from themselves and others. HV groups offer a crucial alternative, where the transformational power of relationship can foster curiosity and a non-judgmental articulation of the complexities of mental life, however anomalous.

This paper reports on the first large-scale research study of these groups, in which 111 participants from across the US described (via open-ended questionnaires and follow-up interviews) their histories of voice hearing and their experiences in HV groups. The findings vividly demonstrate how powerful the process of narrativizing can be in the lives of people whose experiences are typically dismissed as pathological and meaningless.

Natalie Merrill

Self-event Connections in Intergenerational Narratives and Relations to Identity Development

Intergenerational narratives are stories that parents tell their children about their own childhood experiences. These narratives provide a model of personal



narrative construction across development, and the way that young people create meaning from these stories has been implicated in psychological well-being and identity. In the current study, intergenerational narratives, personal narratives, and narratives about a friend were collected from 100 diverse emerging adults (59 women). As an assessment of identity development, participants also completed the Eriksonian Psychosocial Inventory Scale (EPSI). Narratives were coded for self-event connections, i.e. statements of personal traits, values, and outlooks. Participants generated more self-event connections in stories about parents than they did in stories about friends, suggesting they are deriving a greater understanding of their own sense of self from intergenerational narratives. Correspondingly, the number of connections to self in stories about fathers was positively correlated with participants' EPSI scores. However, relations between self-event connections and EPSI scores for stories about mothers or friends were not found, suggesting a special role of fathers in the process of modeling narrative identity, perhaps especially during the emerging adulthood phase of life.

Panel: Narrative identities and mental health: New insights and applications

In this panel three presentations address the relations between narrative identity and mental health, providing new insights and applications in this field of research. The first presentation describes challenges in narrative identity development and presents findings from a systematic review of narrative identity in the psychosis spectrum. The second presentation argues how studies in narrative identity can contribute to new dimensional approaches in personality disorders. The last presentation takes evidence from the relation between narratives and mental health to develop and test a narrative intervention for persons with personality disorder.

Henry (Raffles) Cowan: Narrative identity in mental illness

*Mental illness can cause profound disruptions to the life story. Clearly, people living with mental illness experience different kinds of life events compared to their mentally healthy peers, leading to different narrative content in the life story. Yet narrative processes—the ways we tell our life stories—might be even more affected. Across various forms of mental illness, life stories take on a more passive, alienated, and emotionally negative tone. In more serious or long-lasting conditions, the ability to coherently structure personal stories also breaks down. Perhaps most troubling, in schizophrenia and related disorders, people lose the ability to derive meaning from personal stories. What is it like to live without coherent, meaningful personal narratives? How and why does mental*



*illness cause narratives to break down? Can people restore narrative identity through recovery from mental illness? These questions will be explored by reviewing recent research evidence on narrative identity in depression, personality disorders, and schizophrenia-spectrum disorders, with a particular focus on a recent systematic review of narrative identity in the psychosis spectrum (N = 30 studies with 3,859 participants).*

Majse Lind: The indispensable turn to narrative identity in understanding and treating personality disorder

*Individuals manifesting personality disorder (PD) display severe disturbances in the understanding of the self and those of others. A recently published review (Lind, Adler, Clark, 2020) emphasizes how these disturbances are also evident in how the patients narrate events from their own and significant others lives. In this presentation, I will present the main findings from the review evidencing how patients with PD display disturbances related to several motivational/affective themes (e.g., negative valence/valence shifts and thwarted themes of agency and communion), autobiographical reasoning (negative self-inferences), and structural elements (e.g., low coherence and fewer life script events). I will use these findings as springboard to argue why, how, and when narrative identity may contribute with an indispensable aspect of identity in PD as described in DSM-5 Section III and in the upcoming ICD-11. I will also highlight implications for therapy as we dive deeper into the new dimensional era of PD.*

Gerben Westerhof: “A Powerful Story”: Design and feasibility of a narrative intervention to promote recovery in persons with personality disorder

*We present a 12-week narrative group intervention to promote personal and social recovery in persons with severe personality disorder. Participants write their life story in a triptych, focusing on the past, a decisive turning point, and the future, which is then printed in a book. The intervention was developed in a participatory design research, integrating the best available scientific evidence, clinical expertise, and clients’ values. An initial prototype was improved in several rounds of interviews, focus groups, and member checks with nine clinicians and eight clients. The intervention was positively accepted, but participants saw obstacles for thinking, writing and sharing often problem-saturated stories. We then carried out a feasibility study with two psychologists and twelve clients. Although some clients dropped out that found it difficult to*



*work on their life stories, most clients adhered to the homework assignments and group participation. Clinicians, participants, and an observer evaluated the sessions positively, although further improvements towards their application could be made. Based on an analysis of the coherence, affective-motivational themes, innovative moments, and self-compassion, it was concluded that most stories might contribute to recovery. A questionnaire assessment showed an increase in recovery during the intervention. A final intervention was developed that can be applied in practice where the effectiveness can be studied more thoroughly.*

**11:30a – 12:30p**      **Concurrent Sessions #7**

Stefan Iversen

Transforming Assumptions: The Rhetoric of Metanoic Reflexivity

Clashes between fiction and non-fiction are key components in a range of contemporary art practices such as autofiction and performances, hoaxes and satire, mockumentaries and experimental documentaries. Recently, however, non-conventional uses of fictionality have migrated into discourses invested in moving and motivating actual people about real issues such as political discourse, public debate and campaigning. This migration is beginning to be picked up in different strands of narrative theory (Brown, Gibbons, and Hatavara 2019; Mason 2019; Iversen 2017, 2021), but more conceptual and analytical work is called for in order to adequately understand what this phenomenon is and how it impacts our shared conversations. In this paper, I set out to examine contemporary acts of public, narrative communication that by design disrupts the audiences' assumption of a narrative as either fiction or non-fiction. Combining insights from pragmatic fictionality theory (Walsh 2019), rhetorical narrative theory (Phelan 2017) and rhetorical criticism (Ellwanger 2020), I argue that such disruptions produce a certain type of transformative reflexivity, referred to as metanoic reflexivity, that comes with a distinct, describable set of functions.

Cherry Estelhomme

African American Christian Clergy Engaging in Pastoral Care and Counseling and Affirmative Counseling with Sexual Minorities

Pastoral Care and Counseling and Affirmative Counseling have been affective tools that are utilized by clergy from all walks of life. However, these forms of counseling are vastly different and often miss the opportunity for the client to reconstruct the details of their experience through story telling or narration. Pastoral Love and Connection Counseling (PLCC) is a form of Narrative Therapy



that would promote love and acceptance by: “Loving people as they are, where they are and connect them to God without judging them or denouncing them.” Using this form of narrative therapy addresses three identifiable roadblocks within the sexual minority community within the church. The roadblocks are identified as; entrenched fear, counseling goals, and respectful dialogue. Addressing and overcoming these roadblocks will make room for a counseling formula that would benefit both the faith community and the counseling community. In order to effectively meet the need for Pastoral Care and Counseling and Affirmative Counseling with sexual minorities within the church, congregants and leaders will have to partner in a way that allows for genuine and transparent conversation

Jacob Stein

To Tell or not to Tell is not the only Question: Israeli Former POW's Considerations, Dilemmas, and Narrative Adaptations on the Path to Narrating their Past Traumatic Events

As every trauma harbors a story to tell, a dilemma regarding the extent to which to tell or remain silent is at the core of the post-traumatic experience. Nevertheless, the vast knowledge accumulating in narrative studies is rarely represented in trauma research. Specifically, while it has been established that narratives form in varying narrative realities, and undergo adaptations to fit those realities, there is a dearth of research into the considerations and dilemmas that fashion trauma survivors' narrative decisions. In the presented study we delved into this issue by examining Israeli former prisoners of war's (ex-POWs) life stories and identifying the junctions wherein they had to decide whether and to what extent to disclose their traumatic pasts. We underscore five overarching considerations: Who to tell? What to tell? How to tell? Why tell? And Why not tell? Each consideration touches upon more specific dilemmatic domains that guide the decision to tell their stories or lean towards remaining silent. In our presentation we will demonstrate and discuss the different considerations and the manners in which they interpenetrate and affect ex-POWs' narrative adaptations. We will discuss clinical implications and implications for future trauma studies devoted to understanding post-traumatic narratives and narrations.

Neill Korobov

Methodological prescriptions for analyzing narratives in interaction

The ACEs study (Felitti, V. J., et al., 1998) can be viewed as a triumph of narrative informed research linking childhood abuse and neglect with



brain/body changes resulting increased rates of morbidity, mortality that also may manifest in problems with education, relationships, employment and job performance reinforcing perpetuating oppressive minority and class narratives. The process of generating and/or deconstructing ACE scores for individuals or communities can be used to weave together multiple narrative threads of personal and inter-generational life experiences, e.g., current health status and risk, trauma-related behaviors, individual and group status or stigma, into a richer, less isolating, more coherent stories linked to achievable actions. Examples of the use of ACE scores in advancing narratives to improve lives are presented for the following settings and situations: 1. individual health care prevention and planning, 2. inter-generational prevention, programs (public health), 3. counseling/psychotherapy, 4. community activism, 5. trauma informed education.

Susan Riva

Autoethnography and Spiritual Journey - Homing In to Narrative Transformation

Engaging in autoethnography generated a spiritual journey leading to relational and narrative transformation. Writing in flow has the potential of connecting the author with a form of living wisdom, providing insights through words, tracing the meaning-making process. Narrative transformation happens as story mandalas are beautified, becoming tapestries of wholeness. In this creative space, flyways open up to new landscapes of meaning where intentions act on relational matrixes. Manumitting, or writing to set oneself free, uses fingers and hands to compose emancipatory pathways. As autoethnographers expose themselves through authorship, they share their spiritual journey with their readership. This relational process is an invitation to enter into individual as well as social transformation. Mediatorship accompanies the process in the daily encounter with living wisdom that inspires the oeuvre. Words become vessels of meaning, carrying recollections to higher levels of insight. Journeymanship is experienced as autoethnographic pilgrimage through encounters with Self and other. Writing "Homing In: A Story Mandala Connecting Adoption, Reunion, and Belonging" has become a spiritual quest. The story arc transitioned from remembering the adoption story, to depicting the reunion synchronicities, ending with visions of belonging on Earthship. My website offers resources for each chapter, providing a teaching story for my readership.



Hanna Cespedes and Halle Matula

Exploration into the experiences of counselor educators with dual relationships

This study is an exploration into the experiences of counselor educators with dual relationships they have had with students. Early in counselors' education and training there is a heavy emphasis on ethical duty and responsibility. Topics like dual relationships, boundary crossings, and boundary violations are all concepts frequently discussed as important topics pertaining to ethics and learning to practice as an ethical counselor. However, during counselors training, it is common to have multiple relationships/ dual relationships due to the intimate nature of the counseling field. Many students work with their advisor or another professor they may have in their educational journey through assistantships or other similar projects. Most of the existing research examines the negative effect of dual relationships with students rather than the lived experiences of these same students. Furthermore, there is little research examining professors' experience of this as well. This study will target the lived experience of both counselors in training as well as counselor educators as it relates to their experiences with dual relationships.

Esther Mearns

What stories do the object-child-backpack assemblage tell us?

As part of the non-human environment of schooling, backpacks have been used to send home materials such as newsletters and homework or to promote targeted literacy and nutrition programs to inform and educate parents and children (Branch, 2009; Hammack et al, 2012; Hong, Bales & Wallinga, 2018; Wilson, 2017). Home objects have been brought to school as show and tell items, perpetuating classism and feelings of inferiority for some children (Deibert, 2013). I contend that all matter is entangled, objects speak to us through their 'thing power,' that all things have agency, vibrancy and animate in different ways (Bennett, 2010). Consider the emotional response a childhood teddy bear invokes (Nieuwenhuys, 2011), how small furniture oppresses female teachers as they conform their bodies (Bone, 2019) or how objects aid in children's literacy development (Thiel, 2015). Within this research, I move beyond backpack learning programs and show and tell events to privilege the untold stories of the contents in the underworld of the backpack. Using the tenants of new materialism as a theoretical framework I look at ways the object-child-backpack assemblage is entangled and meaningful. What do object narratives told by children reveal and photographs bring to our attention?



Toni Monroe and Caroline Fernandes

### The Process of Healing and Personal Growth through Narrative Digital Storytelling

Digital story (DS), a growing phenomenon, is a blend of narratives and digital artifacts in which through deliberate collaboration personal narratives can come to life (Rebmann, 2012). DS plays an important role in healing and personal growth. DS facilitates participants' ability of reflective thinking and self-discovery to generate an opening for personal growth. Healing and personal growth through narrative storytelling occurs when individuals allow themselves to reflect within and retell their story to promote positive changes in their lives. Presenter will discuss the 5-steps process of DS such as interviewing skills and data editing that assists reauthoring of personal narratives. Presenters will share empowering DS of individuals and their post interview research follow-up that supports the benefits of facilitating and collaboratively creating DS. Through demonstration and experiential learning, participants will understand the process of DS and the skills required to conduct a productive interview. This presentation will focus on the ethics of storytelling, technology in storytelling, and consideration in conducting sensitive multicultural interviews.

### 1:30p – 2:30p : Afternoon Keynote

**Isabel Wilkerson : The Warmth of Other Sons**

In her bestselling and award-winning masterwork, *The Warmth of Other Suns*, Isabel Wilkerson chronicles one of the greatest untold stories of American history: the decades-long migration of Black citizens who fled the South for northern and western cities in search of a better life. To this day we have barely understood the full impact of this movement that was driven not by one single leader, but by six million Americans seeking political asylum in their own country. This migration reshaped culture and politics, North and South, and set in motion the current racial challenges and disparities we now face as a country.

3:00p : Closing Roundtable / Announcement of 11<sup>th</sup> Narrative Matters, June 2023, Finland



# NARRATIVE WORKS

*Issues, Investigations, & Interventions*

## **NARRATIVE WORKS: CALL FOR ABSTRACTS -:**

**Theme: Narrative Riddles      Deadline for abstract submission: July 1, 2022**

Riddles are verbal puzzles meant to surprise through misdirection or by linking contrary, seemingly impossible qualities to a single object. Although riddles have been a key element of folklore and a host of literary genres, they are often not explored in the larger context of informal or everyday narratives. We invite essays that consider how riddles shape and change our perceptions, how they trick or enlighten us, and how they cloud or reveal various forms of personal truths. To celebrate *Narrative Works*' relaunching from its new home at Miami University, Oxford, Ohio, the journal's next issue will address narrative riddles and enigmatic narrative presentations.

***Narrative Works*** is an online, interdisciplinary, peer-reviewed journal. This journal provides immediate open access to its content based on the principle that making research freely available to the public supports greater global knowledge exchange. The journal uniquely serves as a venue for disseminating scholarly work on narrative that does not fit neatly within established disciplines. The journal invites contributions from theorists, researchers, and practitioners that cut across conventional academic boundaries.

We welcome submissions including, but not restricted to, the following topics:

### Pedagogy

- Narrative riddles as teaching tools

### Literature and Folklore

- Geographical riddles in fiction
- Short riddles in folklore

### Methods

- Enigmatic discourse in narrative interviews
- Surprise and riddles in narrative data
- Riddles in online narratives (e.g., blogs,

- memes)

### Power/Control

- Power and enigmatic presentations
- Subversive riddles
- Trickster figures and the work of riddles

### Culture

- Riddles in non-Western narratives
- Riddles as counterstories
- Riddles in folklore and children's tales

### Digital Narrative Cultures



Methodological approaches to analyzing riddles in narratives

- Narrative algorithms and narrative bots online
- Memes, blogs and other online riddles

For consideration within this themed issue, please submit a 300 word abstract no later than July 1, 2022. Editors will respond to potential contributors by July 15, 2022. The final paper submission date will be November 15, 2022. Final papers should be a minimum of 6,000 words, excluding references, though manuscripts of different lengths will be considered. Please upload abstracts to the new [Narrative Works](https://openjournal.lib.miamioh.edu/index.php/NarrativeWorks/information/authors) site, located at:

<https://openjournal.lib.miamioh.edu/index.php/NarrativeWorks/information/authors>

Anyone interested in submitting to an issue of *Narrative Works* that is not part of this themed collection, please note that the journal does accept non-themed submissions on a rolling basis.

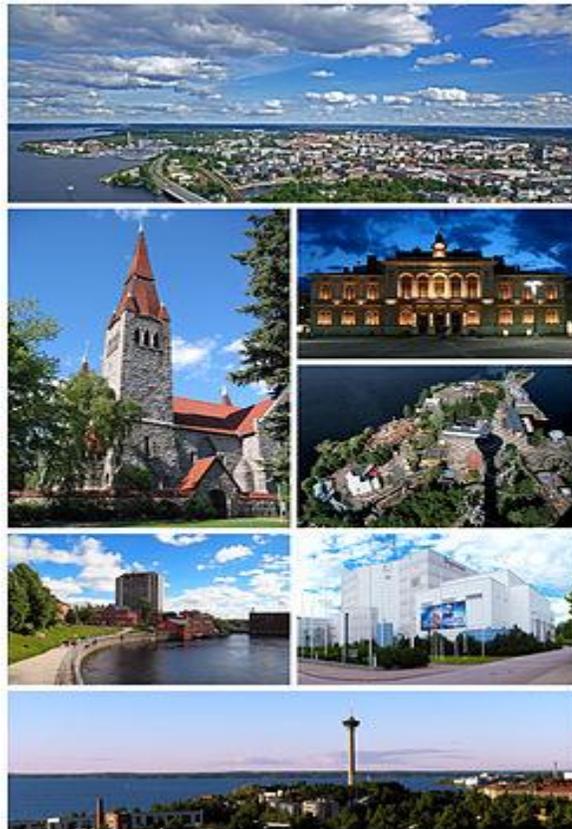
**About Narrative Works.** *Narrative Works* was developed and originally hosted by the [Centre for Interdisciplinary Research on Narrative](#) at St. Thomas University, and the archives of the journal (Issues 1-10) can be found [by visiting this website](#). As of 2021, *Narrative Works* is hosted by the [Department of Sociology and Gerontology](#) at Miami University. No charges are levied to authors to process or publish articles. Copyright for articles is retained by the authors, with first publication rights granted to *Narrative Works*.

**For questions and more information.** please contact Kate de Medeiros, Editor, at [demedekb@MiamiOH.edu](mailto:demedekb@MiamiOH.edu) or [narrativeworks@miamioh.edu](mailto:narrativeworks@miamioh.edu)



***Narrative Matters 2023 - Finland***

*June 15-17, 2023*





***Instrumental Narratives: Narrative Studies and the Storytelling Boom***  
**Tampere University, 15–17 June 2023**

**Main organisers:** Maria Mäkelä, Matti Hyvärinen & Mari Hatavara (University of Tampere, Narrare), Hanna Meretoja (University of Turku, SELMA) & Merja Polvinen (University of Helsinki)

**Keynote speakers:** Jens Beckert, Sujatha Fernandes [remote], Ann Phoenix, Peter Lamarque

**Location:** Main building, A1, A3, A4, C6, C8 and A2a

The eleventh *Narrative Matters* conference is hosted by Tampere University (Finland) and co-organized by the *Instrumental Narratives* consortium project, *SELMA: Centre for the Study of Storytelling, Experientiality and Memory*, and *Narrare: Centre for Interdisciplinary Narrative Studies*. The conference positions narrative scholars in the midst of the *storytelling boom*. Everyone is urged to share their story today, from consumers to multinational corporations, from private citizens to nation states. Storytelling consultants are thriving in today's storytelling economy, but where are narrative scholars? Do the professional analyzers and theorizers of narrative have a say in the current storytelling boom? How to engage in a societal dialogue and debate as a narrative scholar?

The conference will provide a platform for scholars to both seek new applications that might appeal to diverse audiences and to critically reflect on the instrumentalization of narrative studies. Most narrative scholars agree on the rich affordances of storytelling: narrative is a compact and intuitive form for sharing detailed, personal experiences as well as collective, community-forming ideas and outlooks. Thus narrative studies approaches lend generous support to the instrumentalization and commercialization of narrative form in business, politics, media, and personal development. Yet narrative may just as well be put to uses that are dubious if not dangerous. The widespread, uncritical use of narratives of personal experience in journalism and social media may have unintended and unanticipated consequences. Experientiality may come at the cost of informativeness. Furthermore, while narratives are ideally suited to conveying the complexity of human experience, the complexity of large social interactions or material processes, such as climate change, easily exceeds the capacity of storytelling. Now that the benefits of storytelling have caught the public imagination and are recognized in various professional practices, narrative scholarship is in a good position to disseminate *critical practices* for the analysis of the forms and contexts of storytelling as well.

We should also look into future narrative possibilities. The 21st century will no doubt be the era of social media and shared personal narratives, and therefore we should look for productive ways of connecting the personal with the political. How, for example, to bridge the gap between individual particularity and supra-individual concerns at the limits of narrative, such as the climate crisis and global inequality? How to conceptualize and control the afterlife of narratives determined by digital forms of narrative agency? Will new forms of narrative speculation direct our actions as citizens, consumers, and collectives? Which roles will be allotted to specific artistic, digital, and quotidian genres of storytelling? Are these new narrative genres and practices changing the ways people share their experience and use stories in the everyday? Are new affordances for narrative meaning making evolving?



We invite narrative scholars across disciplines to address the following (and related) issues:

- storytelling boom and its social relevance
- novel ways of storytelling today
- emergent methods, ideas, and issues in narrative studies
- sociological analysis of curated storytelling
- the study of storytelling rights and privileges; re-thinking of empathy
- narrative and post-truth
- narrative consultancy business; storytelling self-help and manuals
- story-critical reading in narrative studies; story-critical tools for audiences
- popularizing narrative theory and practices
- social life of narratives vs. analysis of individual texts
- narrative and action: political narratives, positioning and counter-narratives
- professional narratives and narratives of professions refigured
- the limits and affordances of narrative in making sense of illness and health
- the limits and affordances of narrative in addressing the environmental crisis
- uses and risks of viral storytelling and social media sharing
- discourse on well-being and cognitive benefits of literature
- the potential of fiction in analysing and resisting the narrative boom

### **Schedule**

- April 2022 CFP sent out
- October 2022 DL for panel and paper proposals
- January 2023 publication of the conference programme

### **Conference committee**

Maria Mäkelä (chair), Matti Hyvärinen, Mari Hatavara, Hanna Meretoja, Merja Polvinen, Hanna-Riikka Roine, Samuli Björninen, Jouni Teittinen



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*Center for the Study of Narrative*

*The Mercer University Certificate in Narrative Studies (MUCNS)*

The Mercer University Certificate in Narrative Studies (MUCNS) allows individuals with a graduate degree to further explore the broad topic of narrative theory with the flexibility to apply this knowledge to individual areas of study and expertise. The MUCNS is appropriate for a wide range of professionals and trainees in clinical disciplines such as counseling, medicine, nursing, social work, occupational therapy, and can also be valuable for students and alumni in other fields either within or outside the social sciences. These fields include, but are not limited to, literature, journalism, oral history, anthropology, creative arts, community organizing, and a variety of education fields. For graduate students who are earlier in their careers, the MUCNS will position them as they continue their professional training in a range of clinical fields to evolve into narratively competent clinicians who will be able incorporate the value of narrative to clinical and professional competence.

The Mercer University Narrative Certificate (MUCNS) program will take place in a single academic year will be offered through three sections (fall, winter, spring) of two modules each, for a total of 6 modules. MUNC will be comprised of two intensive on-campus residencies; the first in December, and the second in May. These intensive on-campus sections will bookend a winter (January – March) on-line section allowing additional instruction and group based exercises.



[2022-2023 Dates and Overview - MUCNS](#)

Section	Module Title	Delivery Format	Dates
1	Introduction to Narrative	On campus & In person	Friday, December 2 – Sunday, December 4, 2022
	Narrative Theory and Practice		Friday, 6-10p
	Narrative Development: Stories of the self, personality, and interpreting experience		Saturday, 9a-5p
	Narrative Development: Stories of others and Qualitative Inquiry		Sunday, 9a-5p
2	Narrative Care	On campus & In person	Thursday, December 8 – Saturday, December 11, 2022
	Narrative care and the story environment		Thursday, 6-10p
	Narrative Therapy		Friday, 9a-5p
	Narrative Gerontology and “biographical” aging		Saturday, 9a-5p
3	Narrative and the Environment / Personal, Familial, Communal	Online	January/Feb 2023
4	Narrative and the Environment / Meta-narratives such as science, religion, economic, gender; Social Media, and Social Justice	Online	March/April 2023
5	Narrative and the Arts	On campus & In person	Friday, May 5 – Sunday, May 7, 2021
	Narrative and Literature		Friday, 6p – 10p
	Visual Arts including film and television		Saturday 1p-9p
	Digital Storytelling		Sunday, 9a-5p
6	Narrative Synthesis	On campus & In person	Thursday, May 11, 2021– Saturday, May 13
	Narrative Ethics		Thursday, 6-10p

