

Y630

## Narrative Theory and Methodology

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Class Meetings: Thursday 1-3:30 Room 1204

Please message me through canvas and use canvas for all class interactions. Thanks!

### DESCRIPTION

This qualitative research methodology course explores the theory and practice of Narrative Inquiry through readings, discussion, and field work. Narrative Inquiry has become a popular qualitative method in education and we will learn a variety of ways to both collect and analyze the data. I consider myself a critical feminist so we will examine what it means to engage critically with the narratives of self and those of others. In preliminary terms, taking a critical inquiry perspective involves a few core principles.

- Knowledge claims cannot be taken for granted.
- Life can be better. There is a difference between *what is* and *what ought to be*.
- Human equality is fundamentally about the worthwhileness of humans and the extent to which humans can engage with one another in interactions free of distortion and power. This is important to the possibility that humans might reach their fullest potential as individuals and in collectivity. Thus, *what ought to be* can be substantively linked to this potential.

When we add to this, the notion of narrativity which involves the narration of experience into stories which constitute our self-stories. These narratives are never neutral or inactive, but rather always are constructive.

This advanced course examines narrative theory as hermeneutic engagement through which both data and analyses are constituted. Narrative provides us with a keen opportunity to understand the experiences of people on their own terms. There is, also, a critical aspect to this endeavor. Hermeneutic narrative carries forward the potential for consciousness-raising and critique within the stories themselves. Our re-enactment of narratives through the inquiry process enables the articulation of such critiques. In this course you will interact with theory and practice.

Our narratives have a structural aspect to them through which the following core contrasts relevant to methodological practices, namely:

- Subject/object
- Text/context
- Reader/writer
- Structure/agency
- Explicit/implicit
- Truth/fiction

By the end of the course, students will advance their knowledge of theory and practice of qualitative inquiry to include a deeper understanding of hermeneutics and criticality coupled with more creative and exploratory approaches to data and analysis.

## TEXTS FOR CLASS

1. Kim, Jeong-Hee. Understanding Narrative Inquiry: The Crafting and Analysis of Stories as Research.
2. Leavy, Patricia. Fiction as Research Practice: Short Stories, Novellas, and Novels (Developing Qualitative Inquiry)

**In addition to these texts, we will be reading some primary pieces in the field of narrative inquiry and exemplary articles.**

- Adame, A. and Knudson, R. (2007). Beyond the counter-narrative: Exploring alternative narrative of recovery from the psychiatric survivor movement. *Narrative Inquiry*, 17(2), 157-178.
- Bruce, E. (2008). Narrative inquiry: A spiritual and liberating approach to research. *Religious Education*, 103(3), 323-338.
- Causton-Theoharris, J., Ashby, C. and Cosier, M. (2009). Islands of loneliness: Exploring social interaction through the autobiographies of individuals with autism. *Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities*, 47(2), 84-96.
- Goldston, M. and Nichols, S. (2009). Visualizing culturally relevant science pedagogy through photonarratives of Black middle school teachers. *Journal of Science Teacher Education*, 20, 179-198.
- Guenette, F. and Marshall, A. (2009). Time line drawings: Enhancing participants voice in narrative interviews on sensitive topics. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 8(1), 85-92.
- Hunter, S. (2009). Beyond surviving: Gender differences in response to early sexual experiences with adults. *Journal of Family Issues*, 30(3), 391-412.
- Kambutu, J. and Nganga, L. (2008). In these uncertain times: Educators build cultural awareness through planned international experiences. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 24, 939-951.
- Knight, L. and Sweeney, K. (2007). Revealing implicit understanding through enthymes: a rhetorical method for the analysis of talk. *Medical Education*, 41, 226-233.
- Mischler, E. (1995). Models of narrative analysis: A typology. *Journal of Narrative and Life History*, 5(2), 87-123.

- Norton, N. (2008). Singing in the spirit: Spiritual practices inside public school classrooms. *Education and Urban Society*, 40(3), 342-360.
- Pinnegar, S. and Daynes, J. (2008) Locating narrative inquiry historically: Thematics in the turn to narrative. In D.J. Clandinin (Ed.) *Handbook of Narrative Inquiry: Mapping a Methodology*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Smith, B. and Sparkes, A. (2008). Narrative and its potential contribution to disability studies. *Disability and Society*, 23(1), 17-28.

Find some articles of interest to you in the *Journal of Narrative Inquiry*. This will help you connect the methodology to your substantive field. One of your assignments will require this kind of additional reading.

## CLASS PLAN

Date	Topic	Reading	Assignment
1/12	Introduction to Narrative Inquiry and Hermeneutics	Read after: Kim 1	
1/19	Narrative Inquiry Guest Speaker: Bitá Zakeri	Leavy 1	
1/26	Narrative Theory	Kim 2 Leavy 2 Pinnegar and Daynes (O)	
2/2	Types of Narrative Inquiry	Kim 3, 4	Class Project Plan
2/9	Generating Data	Kim 5	
2/16	Interviews and Storying	Guenette & Marshall (O) Causton-Theoharris et al) (O)	
2/23	Diaries, Letters, Blogs, and Self-produced storying as data	Bruce (O) Smith & Sparkes (O) Guenette and Marshall (O)	Sample Data Set
3/2	Personal Myth  Narrative analysis	Kim 6 Mischler (O)	
3/9	Critical Events Analysis	TBA	Completed Data Set
3/16	Spring Break No Class		
3/23	Fiction as Narrative Inquiry as Analysis	Leavy 3 Appendix B	
4/6	Fiction as Narrative Inquiry  Exemplars	Leavy 5 or 6 Leavy 7 Leavy 8 or 9	
4/13	Exemplars Continued	Kim 9 Adame and Knudson (O)	Data Analyses
4/20	Revisiting theorizing Narrative Inquiry	Kim 7 Leavy 4	
4/27	Barbara in Uganda No Class		Fictional Account
5/4	Final Exam Week		Self-Evaluation



## **ASSIGNMENTS and GRADES**

### **Participation**

Students are expected to come to class with the readings completed, ready to participate in learning activities. You will receive a grade for your participation which will include your attendance and your self-evaluation and the submission of a one-page class project plan. This class project plan must contain:

- A description of your research question or interest
- A detailed description of what will constitute your data set

Participation comprises 10% of your grade.

### **Data Set:**

You will be responsible for collecting a set of data for your class project. The set may include interviews, diaries, letters and so forth. These may be already existing, which you then construct into data using the parameters given in class. A set consists of at least 3 examples, so, three interview transcripts or 3 blog posts or 3 letters, etc. The total set should include no fewer than 2000 words so if you are using short blog posts then you would need more than 3. The 2000 is an arbitrary number, but it indicates that minimal amount of data that might provide useful opportunities for analysis.

There will be two assignments related to the Data Set.

*Ungraded Check-in.* One example of data to be included in your set is submitted for feedback, but not for a grade.

*Completed Data Set.* All data are submitted for feedback and grade. This data set has 3 parts. (1) A one-page description of the data and how they were constituted. (2) All of the data. (3) A one-page reflection on the data gathering process.

The data set comprises 35% of your grade.

### **Data Analyses:**

This assignment has several parts all to be included. (1) A one-page description of your analytic approach(es). (2) The actual analysis of the data. (3) A two-page summary of the analyses.

Data analyses comprise 35% of your grade.

### **Fictional Account:**

You will transform your research project into a short fictional story. Include an introduction that talks me through the process you engaged in creating the story and then justify the decisions you made.

This fictional account is worth 20% of your grade.

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