



European
Sociological
Association



Sociological
Association of
Ireland

Research Network 03 “Biographical
Perspectives on European Societies” in association with

**Biographical Narrative Interpretative
Method (BNIM) Study group**

A two-day interactive online event: “Biographical work in a time of social distancing: interview(s), analysis, interpretation”, 25-26 September 2020

Organised by the ESA RN03 in collaboration with the BNIM study group of the Sociological Association of Ireland (SAI)

Programme

The ESA RN03 mid-term event in 2020 takes place online in an innovative format as a series of webinars. It focuses on methodological issues of biographical research in new societal circumstances. The ‘social architecture’ of teaching has changed, but how might empirical, biographical research respond to the new challenges? What can biographical methods offer in times of social distancing and isolation? Biographical researchers and PhD students will speak about new evolving landscape of biographical research. At this difficult time the network contributes to wider participation of the PhD students who are using or considering biographical methods in their research and publications.

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Day one - Friday 25 September

9:00-10:30 (BST)/10:00-11:30 (CET) - Webinar One: A new turn in biographical research in a time of social distancing and isolation.

Host: Dr Lyudmila Nurse (Oxford XXI think tank, UK, Coordinator RN03 (2019-2021))

The speakers of this session explore challenges and opportunities of biographical research in a time of social distancing and isolation in social and educational sciences across Europe. It will set a theoretical and practical framework for discussion.

Speaker(s) & Title(s)

Dr Lyudmila Nurse

Introduction: Facing the new turn in biographical research.

Dr Thea Boldt (University of Cottbus, Germany)

Pandemic Diary: Biography in Times of Crises.

Professor Maggie O'Neill (University College Cork, Ireland)

Creative Applications of Biographical Research: walking, experiencing, imagining.

Dr André Epp (University of Education Karlsruhe, Germany)

Triangulation in biographical research.

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11:00am-12:30(noon) (BST)/12:00-13:30 (CET) - Webinar Two: Creative methods (e.g. walking biographies; visual methods, art-based methods).

Hosts: Maggie O'Neill (Republic of Ireland/UK) and Jane Arnfield (UK)

This session reflects upon the creative and imaginative application of biographical methods building upon our long history of research using walking, mobile, performative and arts based methods and the importance of creating time and space for theoretical, experiential and imaginative work in the context of Covid -19.

Speaker(s) & Title(s):

Dr Anne Byrne (National University of Ireland, Galway, Ireland)

Writing Obscure Lives?

Dr Jerry O'Neill (Maynooth University, Ireland)

Walking It – a series of podcasts produced from walking dialogues and reflections which explore the significance of place and walking in people's lives.

Dr Lyudmila Nurse (Oxford XXI think tank, UK) & Dr Chika Robertson (Music Mind Spirit Trust, UK)

Hearing and feeling the music within your steps and around: musical walks and biographical experience of the lockdown.

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1:00-2:30 pm (BST) 14:00-15:30 (CET) - Webinar Three: Ethic and reflexivity in the relationship between researcher and research participants in biographical interviewing in a (post) pandemic world.

Hosts: Dr Katarzyna Waniek and Professor Agnieszka Golczyńska-Grondas (University of Łódź, Poland)

Biographical interviewing often requires face-to-face contact with people. The current situation has not only blocked or severely restricted the possibility of accessing certain individuals (who are digitally excluded, have limited access to the Internet or suitable space to feel free in telling their life experiences), but also challenged our research techniques and methods. The question of building trust, responsibility for interviewees' welfare during and after interviewing, the reliability of the gathered data seems to be more and more important. The session carefully weighs the pros and cons of the online interviewing while also bearing in mind our "immersion" in the situation caused by Covid-19.

Speaker(s) & Title(s):

Ana Caetano, Magda Nico, Anabela Pereira & João Baía (Iscte-Instituto Universitário de Lisboa, CIES-Iscte, Portugal)

Touching from a distance: gaining intimacy with research participants during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Jakub Gałęziowski (University of Augsburg, Germany and University of Warsaw, Poland)

When a historian meets vulnerability - methodological and ethical aspects of research on sensitive topics and with people affected by difficult experiences.

Jerzy Stachowiak (University of Łódź, Poland)

Reliability of data and reliability of analysis. On the risks of making biography a researcher's artefact.

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3:00-4:30pm (BST)/16:00-17:30(CET) - Webinar Four: Turning inwards when studying other people's lives: the effects of biographical research on researchers (PhD students' session).

Hosts: Ana Caetano (Portugal), Baiba Bela (Latvia), Agnieszka Golczyńska-Grondas (Poland) and Lisa Moran (SAI, Republic of Ireland).

This session focuses upon the impact of doing biographical research upon the researcher. Acknowledging that researchers are not "faceless interviewers" is crucial to understand that, on the one hand, the way they deal, at an autobiographical level, with the research affects all stages of the study, and, on the other hand, the research can have a direct influence on their personal perspectives, emotions and actions, as well as on their scientific practice.

Speaker(s) & Title(s):

Fábio Rafael Augusto (University of Lisbon, Portugal)

Stories of food hardship: understanding the impact of sensitivity and vulnerability on the researcher

Aleksandra Sobańska (University of Lodz, Poland)

Studying life stories of transgender women living in Poland

Oksana Žabko (University of Latvia, Latvia)

Reviewing the researcher's "borders": a biographical interview-driven need to expand a researcher's "presence" in a participant story.

Fabienne Seifert (University of Siegen, Germany)

Situational Awareness, Vulnerability, Images of Risk: Insights and Reflections on the impact of my research on me

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Day two: Saturday, 26 September 2020

11:00am-12:00(noon) (BST)/ 12:00-13:00(CET) - RN03 Networking session

1:00-2:30 pm (BST) 14:00-15:30 (CET) - Webinar Six: Application of biographical methods in health and social care disciplines. (RN03 and Carinthia University of Applied Sciences)

Host: Dr Kateřina Sidiropulu-Janků (Carinthia University of Applied Sciences, Austria)

The biographical method was always closely related to the social sphere of caring. With its roots in Gestalt psychotherapeutic tradition, the interconnectedness between self-perception, linguistic grasp of life story, coping and healing is at the core of the research method. What are good practices of training social and health care professionals to be able to properly use the biographical method? How do they face contemporary challenges of the biographical method such as not sharing the native language with their clients or implementation of social distancing? Also, taking into consideration the psychological aspects of the biographical work, the question of how much “narrative work” needs to be done by the caretaker themselves in order to be able to provide efficient reflexive work to their patients and clients comes to mind.

Speaker(s) & Title(s):

Dr Lisa Moran (Edge Hill University, UK), Dr Lorraine Green (Edge Hill University, UK) & Dr Lisa Warwick (University of Nottingham, UK)

Narrative Interpretive Method (BNIM): Critical Reflections on 'Pushing for PINs' with 'Vulnerable' and 'At Risk' Populations.

Franziska Müller. M.A. (Karlsruhe University of Education, Germany)

Identity development in the context of international volunteering.

Dr Elham Amini (University of Durham, UK)

"Women Here", "Women There": Power, Positionality and Decolonising Methodology in Gendered and Sexual Experiences of Iranian Women.

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3:00-4:30pm (BST)/ 16:-17:30 (CET) - Webinar Seven: The Multidimensionality of Vulnerability and Risk in Biographical Research: Ethics, Vulnerabilities and Trauma

Hosts: Dr Lisa Moran and Dr Joan Cronin (BNIM study group, SAI, Republic of Ireland)

This session critically interrogates vulnerability and risk, exploring the multifarious ways that biographical methods are understood in research with people deemed as ‘at risk’ and/or ‘vulnerable’. Conceptualising risk and vulnerability as multidimensional, papers illuminate ethical and practical complexities of utilising biographical approaches with people in vulnerable groups, including young people experiencing racial prejudices and well-educated, affluent women who might not appear vulnerable due to financial status but negotiate social stigma and power relations for choosing career advancement over marriage and children. Significantly, papers illuminate confluence and convergence in societal interpretations of vulnerability and

risk, which do not strictly correspond to people's momentary interactions and narratives. Importantly, papers demonstrate the contested nature of vulnerability, exploring 'hidden vulnerabilities' that are part of people's everyday experiences. Subsequently, we show that more critical commentary is required around risks of re-traumatising participants during and after interviews through eliciting narratives of distressing life events.

Speaker(s) & Title(s):

Dr Lisa Moran (Edge Hill University, UK) and Dr Joan Cronin (University College Cork)

Introduction: The Multidimensionality of Biographical Research Journeys: Vulnerabilities, Risks and Ethics

Dr Tamsin Barber (Oxford Brookes University, UK)

Dr Diana Yeh (City University of London, UK)

Sharing biographical vulnerabilities in the focus group setting: building solidarities, de-individualising racism and protective silences.

Dr Joan Cronin (University College Cork, Ireland)

Women's Experiences of Voluntary Childlessness: A Study of Decision Making, Biography Making and Identity Management

Dr Ciara Bradley (Maynooth University, Ireland)

Situating Stories: Using the 'Interpretive panels' and the 'Four Foci Analytical Tool' in the Biographical Narrative Interpretive Method to better understand our interviews

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5:00-6:30 pm (BST)/ 18:00-19:30 (CET) - Webinar Eight: Orientation session.

Coordinators: ESA RN03 Board and SAI BNIM study group

Hosts: Professor Agnieszka Golczyńska-Grondas and Aleksandra Sobańska (Poland)

The orientation session is a virtual platform for PhD students and other beginners in their 'journey' with biographical methods, with an opportunity to introduce them in person, to meet and to connect. During the first part of the session we will ask you to briefly present yourself and your research interests. Next, experienced biographical scholars will answer your questions which the coordinators of the session will gather in advance and engage in dialogue that both appreciate the benefits and challenges of doing biographical research.

Participation by registration only via email: ESARN03@oxford-xxi.org. (Questions can be sent in advance and during the online event). When sending your questions please clearly indicate:

Your question/ to whom/ your name and affiliation; please indicate your research interests