

Round Table Discussion Friday 3 March 12.00-1.00pm

Session chaired by: Alan Bainbridge

We invite you to participate in a Round Table discussion:

On the Nature of Narrative and Discourse

We have asked four of our network members to present their views on these topics with the intention of stimulating a discussion of how these terms are interpreted across different cultures, disciplines and historical niches.

Following the presentations there will be opportunity for all participants to ask questions and contribute their own views.

Michel Alhadeff-Jones will address: **Temporal constraints and their effects on Educational biography workshops**, arguing that bringing adults to reflect on their life history is a process that requires time to unfold and this is difficult to achieve in contemporary society and requires work on the part of both researcher and practitioner. It involves specific rhythms that may vary depending on the cultural background of participants and the institution they belong to.

Andrea Galimberti will address: **Biographical research as a way to challenge dominant discourses**, taking a systematic approach that considers the interplay of different levels (micro, meso and macro). Andrea explores the complex dynamic in which cohesion and inconsistency in dominant discourses are simultaneously present as a plurality of actors embody and perform actions in different ways, revealing how life history and biographical research have the possibility to challenge linear and deterministic views and self-fulfilling prophecies.

Hazel Reid will consider: **How we can judge the quality of our work** and are there alternative languages that enable us to rise above the discourses around scientific/quantitative measurement. She discusses the use of 'rich and thick' descriptions and how we manage our position to escape the arid arguments around objectivity and subjectivity, asking if reflexivity offers a sufficient defence against issues of power or do we need better alternatives?

Berit Barekstein will take an applied approach and consider: **The discourse of New Public Management in a Nordic context**. She is interested in how our research on narratives and life-stories, by capturing the views of the professionals, can contribute to make a better health care and education system and challenge the top-down regulation and sensorship of professional assessment and discretion.

Come along and make your voice heard!