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Preface - Narrative, memories and identities

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Narrative, Memories and Identities

Edited by

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University of Huddersfield
Huddersfield

This book is dedicated to

Dr Noel Gilzean

‘Friend and Colleague’
1951 – 2008

Audere Est Facere

Preface

This book is a collection of some of the papers presented at the eighth annual one-day conference hosted by the Narrative and Memory Research Group at the University of Huddersfield. The conference was held in April 2008 and was entitled 'Narrative, Memory and Identities'. The Narrative and Memory Research Group was set up several years ago by members of the Division of Psychology and Sociology to provide a supportive environment in which postgraduate students and staff with an interest in narrative inquiry and biographical research could meet to share ideas, encourage innovation and work collaboratively.

The eight annual conferences we have organised to date have given us an opportunity to invite local, national and international researchers to join us in this enterprise. Over the last eight years many researchers have taken us up on this invitation and the mix of new delegates and familiar faces at each conference means that it has remained an environment which is as welcoming to those who are new to narrative and biographical research as it is to those who have a great deal of experience. For those who are new to narrative approaches the conference provides an insight into the broad spectrum of approaches to narrative theory and research, whilst for those who have been attending the conference for a number of years it has become an annual opportunity to share the challenges, issues, debates and advances that they have encountered in the preceding twelve months.

As always, this collection of papers reflects the diversity of the backgrounds, experiences, interests and expertise of those who attend the conference and we believe that this means that no matter how experienced or inexperienced they may be as narrative or biographical researchers there is something here for everybody.

Acknowledgements

We would like to extend our thanks to all of those who participated in making the 2008 conference such a success. As always, the biggest thanks for this has to go to Liz Senior in the Conference Office who, despite making it look effortless, works extremely hard behind the scenes of the conference to ensure that everything runs smoothly on the day. Her patience, good humour and efficiency are very much appreciated by those of us who work alongside her to organise the conference. However, we also recognise the contributions of all of those who attended and/or presented papers at the conference and in particular those who submitted a version of their paper for this book – thank you all.

We would also like to thank Susan Smith who is responsible for standardising, formatting and amending the submitted papers to produce a finished product. The demands of organising the conference and producing the book at the same time means that the editorial process can sometimes take longer than anticipated. This means that Susan often has to work to short deadlines and under great pressure as the conference approaches. She always does so with a smile and her calmness and sublime organisational skills are crucial to the production of the book.

March 2009