

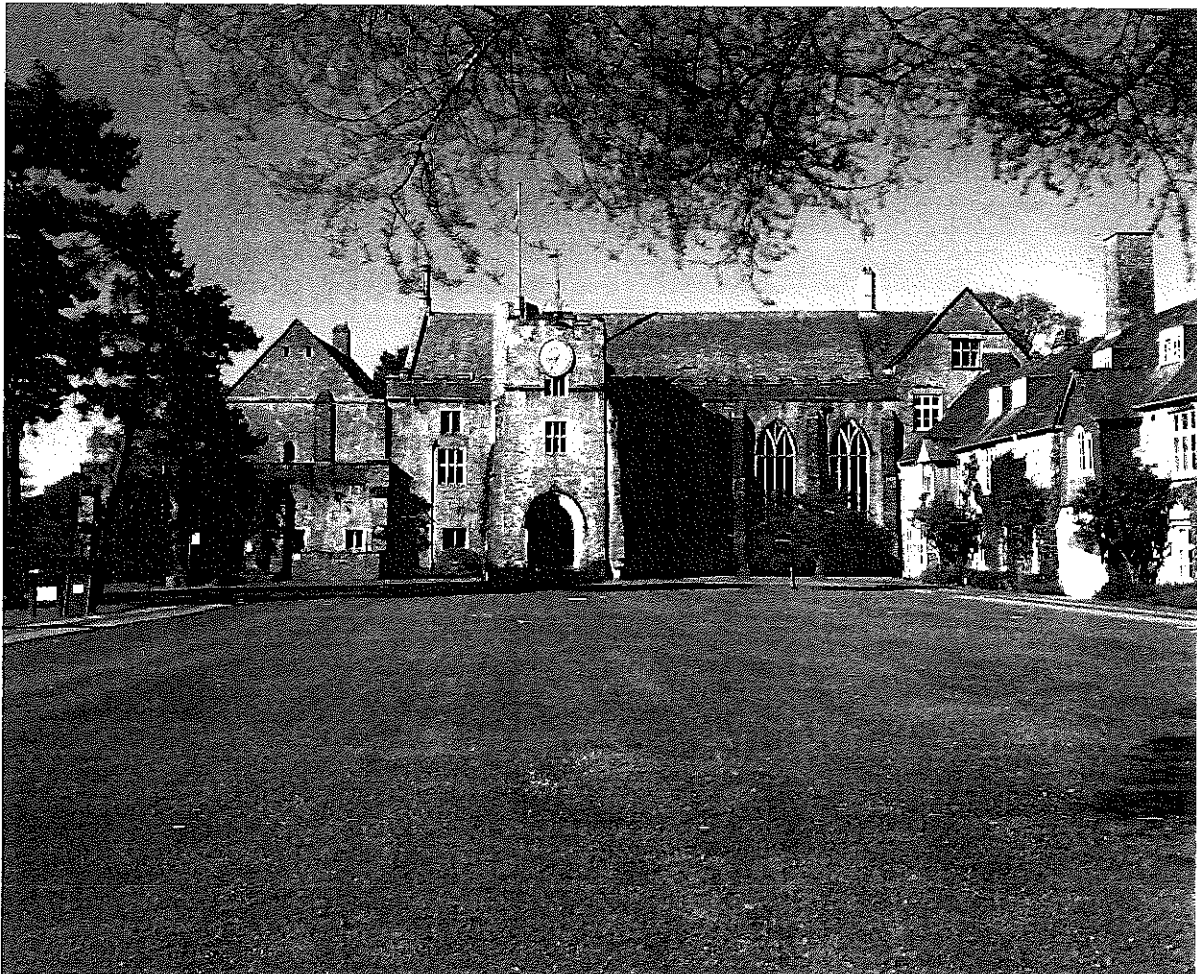


BRITISH  
SOCIOLOGICAL  
ASSOCIATION

BSA Auto/Biography  
Study Group  
Centre for Biography  
and Education  
University of  
Southampton

## **BSA Auto/Biography Summer Conference Dartington Hall, Devon 16-18 July 2015**

*Learning about Lives: educational understanding  
through auto/ biographical analysis*



Dear Friend,

Welcome to the 24<sup>th</sup> Auto/Biography Summer Conference Programme. I think you will agree that we have a programme that looks exciting, varied and interesting. Thanks to all of you for your support and assistance in putting the programme together. Apart from the presentations you will also see that we have good opportunities to socialise, enjoy food and wine in the pleasant ambience of Dartington Hall and its grounds.

Very best wishes,

Jenny and Michael

**Forthcoming Attractions**

Your New Yearbook should be with you by the end of  
June/beginning of July

2015 Christmas Conference, The British Library, London 18<sup>th</sup>  
December

2016 Silver Jubilee Summer Conference will be held at Wolfson  
College, Oxford, 15-17<sup>th</sup> July (Topic: *Auto/Biography and the  
Presentation of the Self*)

## **Delegate information**

### **Contact details**

The Gate House, Dartington Hall, Totnes, TQ9 6EL

Tel: 01803 847147

01803 847150 (evenings and weekends)

Email: [bookings@dartingtonhall.com](mailto:bookings@dartingtonhall.com)

Web: [www.dartingtonhall.com](http://www.dartingtonhall.com) (route planner on website)

### **Directions to Dartington Hall**

Dartington Hall is located 1½ miles from Totnes in the heart of South Devon known as the South Hams.

25 miles from Plymouth and 26 miles from Exeter (both these cities have airports with international connections). Three hours by car from both central London and Birmingham with the M5's link into Devon (the A38) just ten minutes drive away. The nearest railway station is Totnes.

The beaches of South Devon and Torbay are within easy reach, with Dartmoor just 20 minutes away by car.

South Devon is renowned for its beautiful countryside, picturesque villages and mild climate.

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### **FROM LONDON & THE NORTH**

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The M5 becomes the A38 at Exeter. Follow the signs for Plymouth and take the exit signed Buckfastleigh, Totnes and Dartmouth. Head south towards Totnes on the A384. After approximately 5 miles when you pass the Dartington village sign, turn left immediately past the church, onto the Dartington Hall Estate and follow the drive to the crest of the hill. 200yds ahead you will find the main car parks on your left, adjacent to the main courtyard entrance on your right.

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### **FROM THE WEST**

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Take the A38 from Plymouth, the A385 from Marley Head. Upon reaching the roundabout at Dartington village, turn left at the next roundabout go straight over and then turn right before the church, onto the Dartington Hall Estate and follow the drive to the crest of the hill where 200yds ahead you will find the main car parks on your left, adjacent to the main courtyard entrance on your right.

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### **HOW TO FIND US BY RAIL**

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The main railway station is located 1.5 miles away in Totnes. Approximate journey time is 3hrs from London Paddington or Birmingham. Taxis are readily available.



## Finding your way around Dartington Hall and grounds

### On arrival

**By car:** Please park in the carpark opposite the main gatehouse and place the supplied parking permit in the dashboard of your car so that it is clearly visible. Go straight across the road and enter Dartington Hall via the main gatehouse to reception (see map below).

**There is disabled car parking space next to reception.**

**By public transport:** Enter Dartington Hall via the main gatehouse to reception (see map below).

**Check-in is at 2.00 p.m.** but if you arrive earlier your luggage can be stored safely at reception.

### Your accommodation

All delegates will have a room in either the East or West Wing (see map). Rooms have ensuite or a private bathroom, a television, a telephone, tea and coffee making facilities and access to WIFI. Your bedroom is supplied with towels and toiletries and is serviced daily.

# Welcome to Dartington Hall

#### Public Spaces

- A Visitor Centre
- B Guest Reception
- C Box Office
- D The Barn Theatre & Cinema
- E The Roundhouse Café
- F White Hart Bar
- G White Hart Restaurant
- H Great Hall  
(when not in use)

#### Function Rooms Lower Floor\*

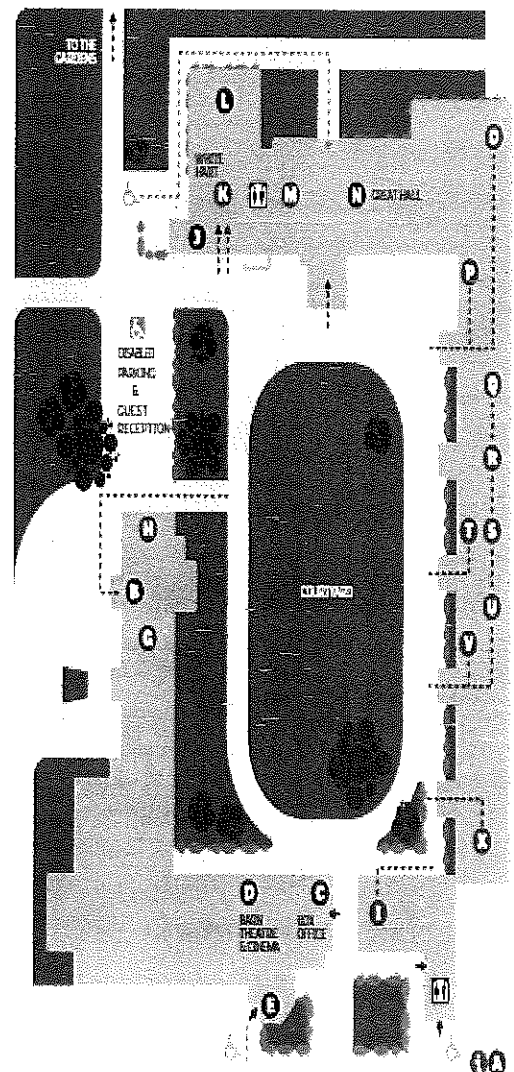
- C East Wing Lounge
- I Griffiths Room
- P Green Room
- F Holland Room
- V West Wing Lounge

#### Function Rooms Upper Floor\*

- I Upper Gate House
- K Cornford Dining Room
- U Solar & Upper Solar
- E Elmthirst Centre
- D Dukes Room
- R Pontin Room
- T Tagore Room
- U Lane Room
- X Ship Studio

→ Easy Access to venue

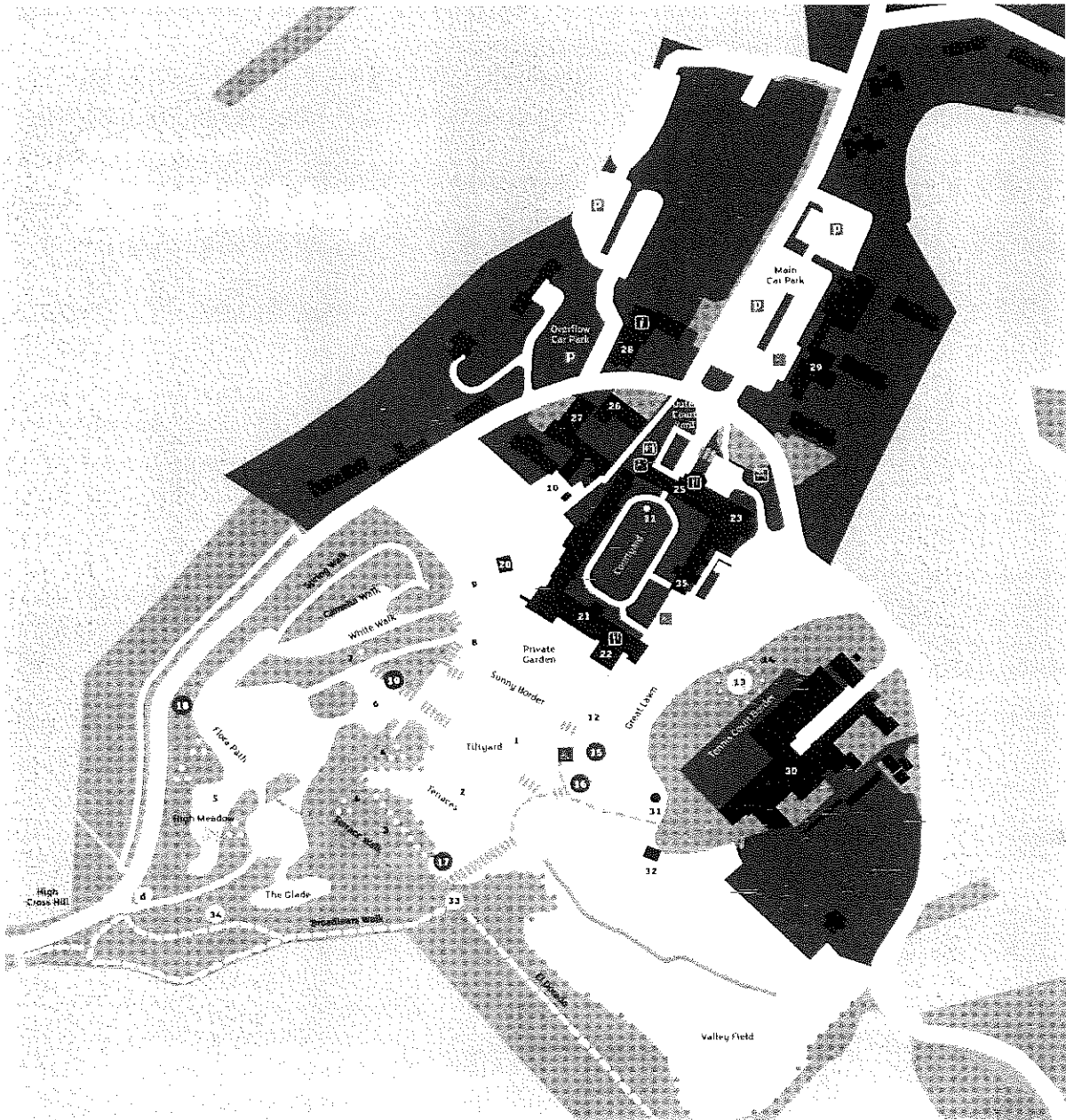
\* We apologise that public access is not available to these rooms.



➔ VISITOR CENTRE

**Dartington**  
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[www.dartington.org](http://www.dartington.org)



**Map Key**

**Garden**

- 1. Twelve Apostles (*Ilex* spp.)
- 2. Monterey Pine (*Pinus radiata*)
- 3. Spanish Chestnuts (*Castanea sativa*)
- 4. London Planes (*Platanus occidentalis*)
- 5. Flowering Crab Apple (*Malus hupehensis*)
- 6. Azalea-Bell (*Rhododendron* spp.)
- 7. Handkerchief Tree (*Davidia*)
- 8. Lucunibe Oak (*Quercus* spp.)
- 9. Ancient Yew Tree (*Taxus* spp.)
- 10. Japanese Garden
- 11. Swamp Cypress (*Taxodium distichum*)
- 12. Flowering Cherry (*Prunus* spp.)
- 13. Turkey Oak (*Quercus cerris*)
- 14. Crocus Ring (*Crocus* spp.)

**Sculptures & Statues**

- 15. Jacob's Pillow
- 16. Donkey
- 17. Memorial Figure
- 18. Flora Sculpture
- 19. Swan Fountain
- 20. The Bridge
- 21. Peter Randall-Page

**Access**

- Road
- Easy Access (wheelchair/pushchair)
- Rough Path
- Path (with steps)
- Steps

**Buildings**

- 20. Old St Mary's Church Tower
- 21. Great Hall
- 22. The White Hart Bar & Restaurant
- 23. Barn Theatre & Cinema
- 24. Roundhouse Cafe
- 25. Box Office
- 26. Glenary
- 27. Print Workshops & Bindery
- 28. Visitor Centre
- 29. Higher Close
- 30. Space
- 31. Summer House
- 32. Garden Office
- 33. Bastion Whispering Circle
- 34. Temple
- 35. Guest Reception

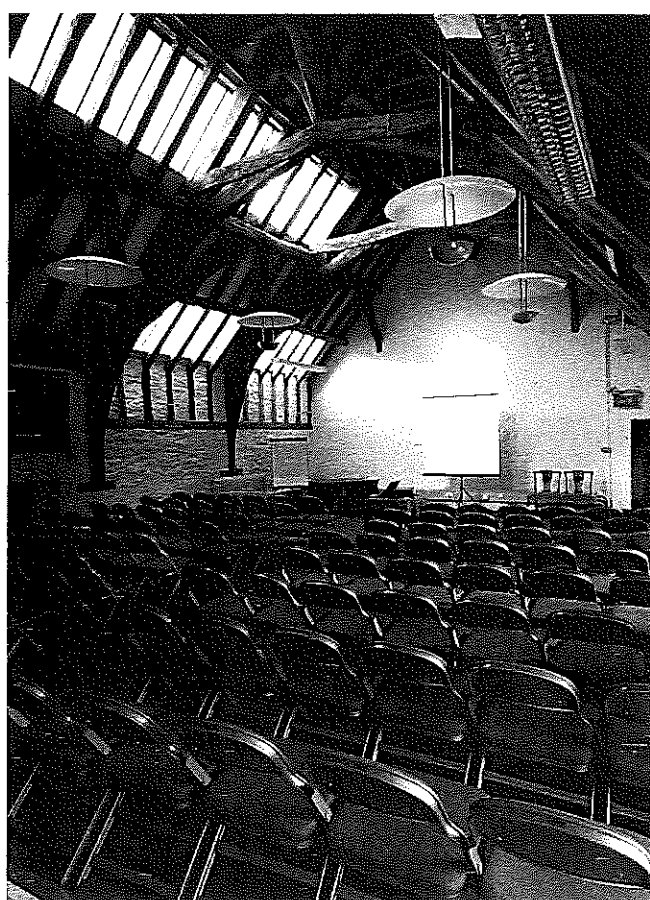
**Facilities**

- Toilets
- Disabled Toilets
- Food & Drink
- Picnic Area
- Visitor Information & Donation Box
- Donation Box
- Parking
- Disabled Parking

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**IT facilities and notes for audio-visual presentations**

Each presentation room has full IT facilities for PowerPoint and access to the internet. There is WIFI internet access in all bedrooms and meeting rooms. A password will be provided for each user.



**The Upper Gate House**

## The programme at a glance

**ABBREVIATIONS:** Dukes Room (DR); Griffiths Room (GR); Solar Room (SR); Upper Gate House (UGH).

**There is disabled access to the Upper Gate House on the opposite side of the building to the stairs**

<b>Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> July</b>	
Delegates arrive from 3pm	Collect room keys from reception
3.15 to 4.10	Registration in Griffiths Room with tea and homemade cake
4.20 to 5.10	Academic Presentations (DR, UGH, GR)
<b>5.20 to 6.30</b>	<b>Welcome to Guest of Honour and Keynote Lecture (UGH)</b>
6.30 to 7.30	Pre-dinner drinks in White Hart Bar (self-pay)
7.30 to 9.00	Dinner in Solar Room
9.00 to 11.00	Drinks in White Hart Bar (self-pay)
<b>Friday 17<sup>th</sup> July</b>	
8.00 to 9.00	Breakfast in White Hart Restaurant
9.00 to 9.50	Academic Presentations (DR, UGH)
10.00 to 10.50	Academic Presentations (DR, UGH)
10.50 to 11.20	Morning coffee and pastries in Griffiths Room
11.20 to 12.30	Academic Presentation and book launch (UGH)
12.30 to 1.15	Buffet Lunch in Solar Room
1.15 to 2.05	Academic Presentations (DR, UGH)
2.15 to 3.05	Academic Presentations (DR, UGH)
3.05 to 3.35	Afternoon tea and homemade cake in Griffiths Room
3.35 to 4.25	Academic Presentations (DR, UGH)
4.35 to 5.25	Academic Presentations (DR, UGH)
7.00 to 7.30	Pre-dinner drinks in White Hart Bar (self-pay)
7.30 to 9.00	Gala Dinner in Solar Room (wine included)
9.30 to 11.00	Drinks in White Hart Bar (self-pay)
<b>Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> July</b>	
8.00 to 9.00	Breakfast in White Hart Restaurant
9.00 to 9.50	Academic Presentations (DR, UGH)
10.00 to 10.50	Academic Presentations (DR, UGH)
10.50 to 11.20	Morning Coffee and pastries in Griffiths Room
11.20 to 12.10	Academic Presentations (DR, UGH)
12.20 to 1.10	Academic Presentations (DR, UGH)
1.10 to 2.10	Hot and Cold Buffet Lunch in Solar room. Delegates depart



**BSA Auto/Biography Summer Conference  
Dartington Hall, Devon 16-18 July 2015**

*Learning about Lives: educational understanding through auto/  
biographical analysis*

Please note the following programme changes

**Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> July**

Thursday 16 <sup>th</sup> July Parallel sessions 4.20 - 5.10	
Upper Gate House	Dukes Room
Barbara Myers <i>Interpretive stories, understanding and making sense of transition and change</i> Chair: Julie Greer	Ian Bryant <i>The Idea of Bildung in Goethe's "Wilhelm Meister"</i> Chair: Maggie Boniface

**Friday 17<sup>th</sup> July**

Friday 17 <sup>th</sup> July Parallel sessions 10.00 - 10.50	
Upper Gate House	Dukes Room
Rebecca Twinley <i>Generating an educational understanding of woman-to-woman rape and sexual assault through auto/biographical research practice</i> Chair: Gayle Letherby	Lynsey Plockyn <i>Formal and Informal Education: lives, work, relationships</i> Chair: Jenny Byrne

## Overview of Academic Presentations

### Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> July

Thursday 16 <sup>th</sup> July Parallel sessions 4.20 - 5.10		
Upper Gate House	Griffiths Room	Dukes Room
<b>Lynsey Plockyn</b> <i>Formal and Informal Education: lives, work, relationships</i> Chair: Jenny Byrne	<b>Barbara Myers</b> <i>Interpretive stories: understanding and making sense of transition and change</i> Chair: Julie Greer	<b>Ian Bryant</b> <i>The Idea of Bildung in Goethe's "Wilhelm Meister"</i> Chair: Maggie Boniface

Thursday 16 <sup>th</sup> July Welcome to the Conference and to Professor David Morgan, Guest of Honour 5.15 Keynote Lecture 5.25 - 6.30 Upper Gate House	
<b>Yvonne ANDERSON</b> <i>A Colossal Waste of Talent: education and the working class in 2015</i> Chair: Michael Erben	

## Dinner

### Friday 17<sup>th</sup> July

Friday 17 <sup>th</sup> July Parallel sessions 9.00 - 9.50	
Upper Gate House	Dukes Room
<b>Deborah Davidson</b> <i>The Tattoo Project: Community Collaboration and Public Storytelling</i> Chair: Viv Martin	<b>Agneta Rahikainen</b> <i>The Blind Men and the Elephant: Reflections on how to Use Biographical Sources - the case of Edith Södergran</i> Chair: Jeni Nicholson

Friday 17 <sup>th</sup> July Parallel sessions 10.00 - 10.50	
Upper Gate House	Dukes Room
<b>Rebecca Twinley</b> <i>Generating an educational understanding of woman-to-woman rape and sexual assault through auto/biographical research practice</i> Chair: Gayle Letherby	<b>Irene Selway</b> <i>Academic lives in a period of transition in higher education: Bildung in educational auto/biography</i> Chair: Ian Bryant

## Morning Coffee

<b>Friday 17<sup>th</sup> July</b> 11.20 - 12.30 <b>Upper Gate House</b>	
Single Session and Auto/Biography Monograph Book Launch <b>Gayle Letherby</b> <i>'Active Recovery': reflections on embodied learning</i>	
Chair: Andrew Sparkes	

## Lunch

<b>Friday 17<sup>th</sup> July</b> Parallel sessions 1.15 - 2.05	
<b>Upper Gate House</b>	<b>Dukes Room</b>
<b>Dennis Smith</b> <i>The Formidable Froudes: another Dartington Tradition</i>	<b>Geraldine Brown and Elizabeth Bos</b> <i>We Were There Too: Reflexive experiences of evaluating a prison gardening intervention</i>
Chair: Hilary Dickinson	Chair: Ronda Gowland Pryde

<b>Friday 17<sup>th</sup> July</b> Parallel sessions 2.15 - 3.05	
<b>Upper Gate House</b>	<b>Dukes Room</b>
<b>Jenny Byrne</b> <i>The Pitmen Painters: working class autobiography and artistic exceptionalism</i>	<b>Anne Chappell</b> <i>Learning about personal lives through a narrative exploration of professional lives</i>
Chair: Josie Abbott	Chair: Debra Laxton

## Afternoon Tea

<b>Friday 17<sup>th</sup> July</b> Parallel sessions 3.35 - 4.25	
<b>Upper Gate House</b>	<b>Dukes Room</b>
<b>Josie Abbott</b> <i>"Do you have night school in the daytime?": the development of Adult Education and its impact upon lives and life stories.</i>	<b>Karen Stockham</b> <i>Educating Dorothy: mountaineering as education for women in the early twentieth century</i>
Chair: Judith Chapman	Chair: Michael Erben

<b>Friday 17<sup>th</sup> July</b> Parallel sessions 4.35 - 5.25	
<b>Upper Gate House</b>	<b>Dukes Room</b>
<b>David Carless &amp; Kitrina Douglas</b> <i>Song writing as auto/biography: Understanding each other through song</i>	<b>Julie Parsons</b> <i>'Another piece of cake': An auto/biographical assemblage, inhabiting the margins and balancing contradictions, lessons on becoming a reflexive researcher</i>
Chair: Kathleen Hegarty	Chair: Geraldine Brown

## Gala Dinner

**Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> July**

Saturday 18 <sup>th</sup> July Parallel sessions 9.00 - 9.50	
Upper Gate House	Dukes Room
<p><b>Debra Laxton</b> <i>A biographical study to investigate the factors that have enabled a family to overcome economic and social disadvantage and return to education</i> Chair: Yvonne Anderson</p>	<p><b>Judith A. Chapman and Caroline Ellis-Hill</b> <i>Narrative of Knee Surgery: exploring my experience to contribute to the education of physiotherapy students</i> Chair: Irene Selway</p>

Saturday 18 <sup>th</sup> July Parallel sessions 10.00 - 10.50	
Upper Gate House	Dukes Room
<p><b>Julie Greer</b> <i>Barbara Low: Psychoanalysis and the outsider on the inside</i> Chair: Agneta Rahikainen</p>	<p><b>Rebeca Pardo, Dolores Tapias &amp; Montse Morcate</b> <i>The camera as mediation: educational understanding through auto/biographical art projects in Barcelona.</i> Chair: Jenny Byrne</p>

**Morning Coffee**

Saturday 18 <sup>th</sup> July Parallel sessions 11.20 - 12.10	
Upper Gate House	Dukes Room
<p><b>Viv Martin</b> <i>The place of autobiographical understanding in medical education: doctors' insights into patient-hood and how personal experience of illness complements medical knowledge and expertise</i> Chair: Anne Chappell</p>	<p><b>Louise Owusu-Kwarteng</b> <i>Lizbet's legacy – analysing the impacts of my grandmother's role in the academic and professional outcomes for her female descendants</i> Chair: Mary McKeever</p>

Saturday 18 <sup>th</sup> July Parallel sessions 12.20 - 1.10	
Upper Gate House	Dukes Room
<p><b>Ronda Gowland Pryde</b> <i>The collaged epiphanies of a Gallery Educator</i> Chair: Gayle Letherby</p>	<p><b>Sue Joseph and Freya Latona</b> <i>Guiding life writers: The supervision of creative doctoral work interrogating personal trauma</i> Chair: Deborah Davidson</p>

**Lunch and depart (1.10-2.10)**

**Phil Salmon Memorial Lecture**

*A colossal waste of talent: education and the working class in 2015*

**Yvonne Anderson**

**Abstracts**

**Josie Abbot**

*“Do you have night school in the daytime?”: the development of Adult Education and its impact upon lives and life stories*

“Do you have night school in the daytime?” – a study of the development of adult education from its early beginnings in the adult continuation schools up to the present day, alongside an analytical view of the impact of it on lives and life stories. “Adult Ed” has always had an important part to play within the wider sphere of “education” but it is a part whose perceived importance has waxed and waned according to many factors: fashion, politics, social need and not least, financial backing. It has enjoyed many metamorphoses, many changes of direction and fashions in nomenclature, but it has always stayed true to its original ethos and declared intention, ie that of bringing wider horizons to those who through circumstances may not always have had the opportunity for personal growth and enrichment in their personal and professional lives. In this paper I take a brief look at the early history of adult education and then from my own involvement on many levels as onetime student, tutor and manager I look in more detail at the trials and tribulations of adult education provision in a particular geographical location – how it began and where it is today. I also offer some case studies on individuals who have been participants on this journey and for whom it has changed their lives in no small measure.

**Geraldine Brown and Elizabeth Bos**

*We were there too: reflexive experiences of evaluating a prison gardening intervention*

In this paper we share our reflections on experiences we encountered carrying out a qualitative evaluation of a prison gardening intervention with male substance misusing offenders. Our aim is to show that there is much we can gain when researchers engage in a process of reflexivity, which includes consideration to the intersection of identity of the researcher, the researched and the forces, of various kinds, operating upon and within such situations (Hammersley and Trainou, 2012). As such, here we share our fieldwork experiences and shed light on how for us, the evaluation was a subjective, power-laden, emotional, embodied experience (Letherby, 2013). We highlight how a human geographer and a sociologist working as part of a multi-disciplinary evaluation team encountered issues associated with choices in terms of how we conduct our work, the emotional labour expended and how we had to assume both chosen and imposed identities. We have been challenged to consider and reflect upon aspects of gender, class, age, ‘race’ and professional status throughout our research experience, with the ‘researched’ and between the ‘researchers’. Finally we suggest that embarking on qualitative research in a prison setting is an outcome of complex negotiations, but in theorising our subjectivities (Letherby, 2013) is a means of illuminating issues that often remain invisible within prison research.

**Ian Bryant**

*The idea of Bildung in Goethe's “Wilhelm Meister”*

The concept of *Bildung* refers to educative self-development through critical self-reflection and the interrogation of experience. It has complex socio-historical roots in the *Aufklärung*, and under the influence of Wilhelm Humboldt came to characterise the main motive idea behind German educational expansion in the first half of the nineteenth century. The concept was never properly understood by conservative/utilitarian/liberal Victorian heirs of the Enlightenment, to the detriment especially of higher education in England - one from which it can be argued we still suffer. Goethe's *Wilhelm Meister* is the prototypical *Bildungsroman*. Both author and fictional biographical character typify the perils and promises of *Bildung*. This paper argues for its virtues, especially when set against the highly centralised and instrumentalised policies and culture which characterises education today.

Jenny Byrne

***The Pitmen Painters: working class autobiography and artistic exceptionalism***

*There's a desire in all pitmen, I think to learn a little more than what they we're taught at school.* Oliver Kilbourn

For many working class people at the beginning of the twentieth century formal education ended at fourteen years of age. However a number wished for more education than that - not for career advancement because of its intrinsic value. This paper examines the lives, the work, and relationships of a group of working class men, who had such aspirations. This group, from Ashington in Northumberland, now generally known as the Pitmen Painters, constituted a unique, self-taught, brotherhood of artists responsible for the achievement of an original working class aesthetic. For almost fifty years they painted scenes of their surroundings that illustrated the inter-connectedness of their art and their everyday lives. Unfortunately many of the paintings no longer exist or are in private hands but those that remain for public view are not only important artistically but form a remarkable social, cultural and historical record of the working lives of miners, within a pit village in the North East of England during the early part of the twentieth century.

Judith A. Chapman and Caroline Ellis-Hill

***Narrative of knee surgery: exploring my experience to contribute to the education of physiotherapy students***

This paper will explore a personal rehabilitation experience following a recent episode of surgery and the subsequent rehabilitation process in the National Health Service (NHS). Our co-created, autobiographical study explores what lessons can be learnt from reflecting on health professional practice, using Total Knee Replacement (TKR) as an example. Auto-biographical research, or the study of life-narratives, has been shown to have a profound effect on self-discovery, self-understanding and self-development (Chapman 2013). Using the auto-biographical genre (Erben 1996; Denzin and Lincoln 2004) to examine, in greater depth, a personal lived experience of a post-surgical, protocol driven Physiotherapy Service, this paper allows additional views into the possibilities and barriers to compassionate physiotherapy delivery (Todres et al 2009). This paper is offered as a 'work-in-progress', as the researchers develop their understanding of co-creating a lived experience (Mudge et al 2014). The research investigator (JAC) is the participant researcher and CEH the additional researcher supporting the co-creation of data. A series of three to five audio-recorded interviews, taking place over a period of months, provide a dialogical space which allows opportunities for creative thinking, alternative interpretations and reflections. This interesting research methodology differs from conventional interviewing approaches, in that normally the interviewer sets the agenda for questioning, yet here, the interviews will be directed by the needs of the participant researcher. The co-researcher will only seek to reflect and clarify the narrative being shared. Data are co-produced by both researchers. The interviews are audio-recorded and are analysed independently by both researchers between interviews, informed in part by the Humanising Values Framework (Todres et al 2009), after which dialog ensues to co-create understandings from the narratives of the lived experience (Mudge et al 2014; Bright et al 2012). The paper hopes to illustrate the multiple perspectives of a life as the participant researcher moves between being a person, a patient, a health-care professional, a researcher and an educator, and the possibilities created in sharing her life with her physiotherapy students.

Anne Chappell

***Learning about personal lives through a narrative exploration of professional lives***

In this paper I will examine the way in which research about understanding teachers' experiences of professional learning led to detailed narratives about their personal lives. The literature indicates the complexity of the relationship between personal and professional lives and, in planning the research, I had expected that there would be references made to personal experiences. However, I had not anticipated the breadth and depth of personal experiences that would be shared by the participants during the research conversations. There were a number of areas that were discussed including family, friendships, partnerships, death and well-being. In analysing the narratives, the challenges came in honouring my commitment to the participants' voices; behaving ethically with the data; and identifying which of the aspects of the personal life were directly relevant to the argument I was developing about professional lives. I will explore examples from the data to demonstrate the steps I took in deciding which data to include and examine the way in which these data add to our understanding about the critical link between personal and professional lives.

**Deborah Davidson**

***The Tattoo Project: community collaboration and public storytelling***

While much has been written about tattooing as a form of stigma marking deviance and as aesthetic body modification, tattooing as a form of public storytelling, as a way to communicate and commemorate, is rarely noted in the scholarly literature. Auto/biographical analysis is used to frame The Tattoo Project, which is a collaborative and intersectoral community effort that involves the creation of a digital archive, as a site for collecting and cataloguing user-generated content of commemorative tattoos and accompanying narratives as cultural and historical data for public access. A commemorative tattoo is one in honour of a living or deceased person, animal, place, relationship, or an important life event or transition. Collecting and archiving commemorative tattoos and related life stories in this way furthers our understanding of complex, interconnected lives in a way that until now has been little considered.

The Tattoo Project is directed at both the co-production and mobilization of knowledge. The purpose of the digital archive is fourfold: 1) to provide a repository for commemorative tattoos, for the public to upload their commemorative tattoos and contextualizing narratives, empowering users to make the project a social tool of their own; 2) to serve as a cultural heritage site, acknowledging important memories and sharing them publicly; 3) to provide scholars with a digital database of commemorative tattoos and narratives for analysis; 4) and to develop ongoing relationships among academics, professionals (e.g., artists, photographers, counselors and social workers, and celebrants), and the public (with and without tattoos).

**Kitrina Douglas & David Carless**

***Songwriting as auto/biography: understanding each other through song***

As neophyte life history researchers we had little reason to challenge the traditional scientific model where 'data collection' precedes the 'data analysis' and 'representation' stages of research. Over time, however, and particularly as we began to use poems, songs, stories and performances, we found it increasingly difficult to differentiate stages of research in this way. We have also become aware that, even in cases where participants' lives appear extremely different to our own, what we come to understand of the Other is often blurred with the horizon of our own experience. In the process of writing a song, it seems, we cannot understand an Other neutrally or objectively, from a distance, but instead *refract through the prism of the self* in order to begin to understand the experiences of the Other. In this performance we aim to illustrate how the process of writing and singing songs can help us illuminate, enrich and understand both our own and an Other's life story.

**Ronda Gowland-Pryde**

***The collaged epiphanies of a gallery educator***

In this paper, I draw upon Denzin's four forms of epiphanies (1989); The Major, The Cumulative, The Illuminative or Minor, The Relived, to create an autobiographical collage that links my personal and professional development as a Gallery Educator. As I discuss, and analyse these four epiphanies, a biographical collage is uncovered. Utilising the technique of collage, within the visual art and literary genres, (Vonnegut, 1981) this fragmented, yet symbolic, layering of significant moments, creates wider meaning (Brommer, 1994). From this process, I have been able to reflect on how my own biographical experiences have impacted on my professional work, particularly with young people in the youth justice system.

By exploring these collaged epiphanies, I discuss how an analysis of my significant life experiences has enabled me to better understand how gallery education can creatively support the learning of young people who have offended, at a point of crises in their lives (Bocock, 1974). From this exploration of my own autobiographical collage, I conclude by highlighting how valuable the notion of epiphanies is as a tool for Auto/Biographical analysis, and as framework for understanding learning at a personal, individual level situated within the wider social-cultural context.

Julie Greer

***Barbara Low: psychoanalysis and the outsider on the inside***

*I of course, was in no way a Pioneer. When the first little group [of psychoanalysts] was formed, of about 6 or 7 Doctors, under leadership of Dr. Jones, I was one of them, the only woman... – for a long time I was the only Jew in it! The little bit of “Pioneering” I did was to write the 1<sup>st</sup> small Text-Book on P.A. ... which had a good deal of success, + Freud approved of it. (Low to Edward Nehls, 1955; Low’s emphases)*

Modest to a fault, Barbara Low (1877–1955) was quietly at the heart of many of the significant movements of the first half of the twentieth century. An early proponent of Freudianism, feminism, Fabianism and educational reform, Low was able to influence key figures through her writing, lectures and correspondence. Although very few of her letters remain, those that do indicate strong friendships with D.H. Lawrence, Dorothy Richardson and her niece Ivy Litvinovas as well as significant contact with H.G. Wells and Sigmund Freud and others.

The daughter of a Hungarian émigré, Low was also the youngest of a large, fascinating family of successful individuals. Consequently she was used to finding her place and her voice amongst the creative and the celebrated. Accomplished and intelligent, she could also be vulnerable and sought an analysis from Hans Sachs in Berlin. This early interest in psychoanalysis was important for her future rôle as a teacher and trainer.

The challenge in writing her biography is filling the gaps left from the snippets of correspondence that she kept. Her self-effacing manner did not allow her to imagine the significance of the many letters she received from the bright stars of her past. This paper will outline Barbara Low’s life and achievements and place her back in the centre of influence, so that her own dismissals can no longer diminish her contribution to key movements for social change.

Sue Joseph and Freya Latona

***Guiding life writers: the supervision of creative doctoral work interrogating personal trauma***

There exists much literature on the student and doctoral candidate relationship across the disciplines. However, there is a gap in understanding this crucial dynamic in the context of creative practices, and an even more pronounced gap interrogating the supervisor to candidate dynamic when a student is conducting life writing involving personal trauma. Despite this, more and more universities are opening their doors to these types of research projects. In 2014, a final year doctoral candidate in life writing and her supervisor conducted a mini research project about their experience of supervision. The crux of their investigation hinged on the relatively nuanced requirements of supervision when the candidate is writing about personally traumatic themes in their dissertation.

This paper is an extension of their original findings, amalgamating conclusions about what worked in the context of their relationship, given the delicate nature of the subject matter that they were investigating academically, and existing literature on the ethics of such supervision and theories of trauma writing in the context of life writing. By combining their analysis of their real experiences as supervisor and candidate and pre-existing academic thought on both the requirements of supervision and the differing needs of post-trauma students, the authors seek to contribute to the growing canon within the creative practices on supervisor/candidate relationships, as well as the relatively fraught ethics of the commodification of life experiences within tertiary institutions.



**Debra Laxton**

***A biographical study to investigate the factors that have enabled a family to overcome economic and social disadvantage and return to education***

Teenage conception within the United Kingdom is a significant issue with rates being far higher than other European countries. Teenage pregnancy tends to have negative associations with state benefit dependency, lack of education and unemployment although paradoxically teenage mothers are also seen as victims of society themselves. This dissertation focuses on one young couple's ability to overcome disadvantage despite having four children within four years. The biographical study seeks to gain the thoughts, feelings and perceptions of the couple. It highlights factors that contributed to their ability to overcome significant challenges and return to education, subsequent employment and financial security.

The research produced a number of key findings and conclusions: resilience was essential to overcoming adversity – this was promoted through various support systems; having family in close proximity provided crucial support – patriarchal support was strong at key times; the traumatic events that led to hospitalisation ultimately provided opportunities - the couple's parenting skills were promoted and an ambition to work within the NHS developed; the education system failed the couple as teenagers but supported them when they later returned to education and the relationship between the couple was mutually supportive and respectful although the mother appeared more driven. Due to the size of the study sample recommendations argue for further research to: widen the study participation to explore commonalities and increase the voice of couples; discover any correlation between age and academic success for teenage parents; investigate the relationship between premature births to teenagers and intensive hospital support. A further recommendation suggests young parents remain within the family home or in close proximity where possible.

**Gayle Letherby**

***'Active Recovery': reflections on embodied learning***

This paper is the third in an A/B series I didn't know would become so. In July 2010 in my paper 'Auto/biographical reflections on personal and other legacies: much more than money' (Letherby 2011, 2014) I focused on my relationship with my late father Ron Thornton (1923-1979) and husband John Shiels (1948-2010) highlighting the interconnections between us and supporting the continuing bonds approach to bereavement and loss. In 'Myself and Other Human Animals (OR Babies and Bathwater)' (Letherby 2014a) presented at the 2013 summer conference I continued my analysis to include my experience of grieving for my mother Dorothy Thornton (1931-2012). In each of these pieces I reflected on how an experience of loss (a miscarriage followed by biological childlessness) brought me to sociology and how I think sociology influences how I experience and cope with loss. In this paper I extend these issues and my arguments further reflecting particularly on my experience over the past couple of years. Amongst other experiences I focus on my changing academic life (not least in terms of focus AND writing style) a new engagement with physical exercise (leading to a changed body shape) and the experience of retraining to become a civil celebrant (qualified to perform non-religious and semi-religious funerals, weddings and namings). I argue, as before, that my relationships with my mum and dad and John (alongside other significant others) are relevant to my life choices and that they continue to have a positive influence in my life. I consider some of the things I have learnt - emotionally, physically and intellectually - in the last couple of years arguing for an embodied, sociological understanding of grief and griefwork and the journey this takes us on.

**Viv Martin**

***The place of autobiographical understanding in medical education: doctors' insights into patient-hood and how personal experience of illness complements medical knowledge and expertise***

Narrative is one of the ways by which we make sense of our lives: a means by which we transform experience into learning, create identity and become aware of the values and processes which inform our ways of being in the world. Medical education in Western societies has traditionally focused on the transmission of knowledge and skills which medical students need in order to become competent and effective practitioners, and has rested on the 'restitution narrative' which views the body as 'a kind of car' which 'breaks down and has to be repaired' (1995: 86). More recently the work of Hurwitz et al (2004), Charon (2006) and others has shown how narrative and reflective practices can enhance learning and contribute to the development of greater insight, sensitivity and critical examination of medical practice. This presentation will focus on the insights gained by doctors through the narrative processing of their personal experience of being patients. As they tell their stories in narrative research conversations with me, they reflect on the impact of their illness experience on their practice. Their stories act as narrative invitations to their fellow practitioners, to medical educators and to any who pay close attention and 'listen with' (Frank, 1995) them. They invite us to respond as human beings whatever our professional sphere, and to develop our own understandings and insight into illness experience and medical practice.

**Barbara Myers**

***Interpretive stories: understanding and making sense of transition and change.***

Anecdotal evidence suggests there are numbers of older women workers in New Zealand who have shifted from a mainstream career (Hoffart, 2006) to undertake a Self-Initiated Experience (SIE), a period of autonomous travel and work abroad (Suutari and Brewster, 2000; Inkson and Myers 2003; Myers and Pringle, 2005).

The aim of this research study was to explore the experiences of older New Zealand women who withdrew from their established personal and working lives to undertake self-initiated expatriation (SIE). More specifically this study examines the SIE phenomenon by asking four broad research questions:

- What were the experiences, motivations and triggers for SIE?
- What were the SIE work and personal experiences?
- Does SIE facilitate accelerated career and personal development?
- Does SIE affords older women an opportunity to reflect on, clarify and enact longer term career and life path goals?

Fundamental to this study is the ontological assumption that the world is open-ended and socially constructed. Subjectivism was core to the research process thus I employed an open methodology that facilitates research within a process of social change. From this epistemological stance, I adopted a reflexive and interpretive methodology and carried out 21 in-depth life story interviews within a narrative inquiry framework. As a research methodology the life story is respectful of the viewpoint of the participant, gives a voice to the unknown and unexamined, and gives space and credibility to stories, reflections and insights not previously documented or understood (Atkinson, 2007)

To ensure the integrity of 'narrative inquiry' I developed a five step analytical framework and presented the findings at four levels. Firstly, 21 interpretive life stories were constructed through a cycle of writing and re-writing. Secondly, five interpretive themes were developed to facilitate an understanding of the participant's process of transition. Thirdly, a number of general themes are drawn out which link more explicitly to the research questions. Fourthly an integrative principal narrative (Riessman, 1993) or collective personal experience story (McCormick, 2004) was constructed to complete the cycle of narrative analysis.

This paper focusses on the first level i.e. the construction of individual interpretive stories as a way of learning about individual lives and for individuals to make sense of their life experiences to date. One of the challenges I faced in the process of analysis was how to summarise each story while maintaining its integrity within a narrative inquiry framework. I rejected a factist approach Spector-Mersel, (2010), and searched for a way to capture the essence of each participant in an individual summary story. I came across McCormick's (2004) concept of interpretive stories (Bold, 2012). These are stories that are created in stages and appealed to me in that it reflects Polkinghorne's understanding of 'narrative analysis' as "studies whose data consists of actions, events and happenings but whose analysis produces stories" (Polkinghorne, 1995, p.6).

The remainder of this paper discusses the three steps of narrative analysis that are the foundation for developing the individual interpretive stories. I created one interpretive story for each participant as a way to describe and understand them in a meaningful way. Each story is rendered increasingly rich as it is constructed and reconstructed through a cycle of analytic activities which enabled me to remain close to the individual participant and the particular. A more detailed discussion of this process will be presented at the 2015 summer residential conference.

**Louise Owusu-Kwarteng**

***Lizbet's legacy – analysing the impacts of my grandmother's role in the academic and professional outcomes for her female descendants***

She was one that saw but did not see.

Familial accounts obtained on my visit to Adumasa, Ghana in 2008, highlighted the powerful role of my grandmother, Nana Elizabeth (Lizbet) Beyie in the academic and career trajectories of many of her female descendants, including myself. 'Lizbet' was perhaps unaware of what she was setting in motion when she insisted that my mother was educated in 1950s Ghana. Despite educational expansion in Ghana at the time, in my mother's words, 'they [families] didn't really encourage girls to go to school'. These attitudes were more prevalent in rural areas such as Adumasa, where gender role expectations for women were narrowly focused and mainly centred on domesticity and childrearing. Sending my mother to school would thus have resulted in disapproval from Lizbet's community. Nevertheless, she was resolute in her decision, especially because she, herself, was illiterate. She was adamant that the illiteracy that had persisted for generations should end, and this would happen with my mother's generation. In that sense 'she saw'. Although she was unable to provide the types of economic and cultural capital that Bourdieu (1986) suggests is necessary for children to succeed educationally, she provided other, alternative forms which were equally as valuable. Moreover, there was a considerable investment of emotional capital (Nowotny 1981 in Reay 2000), which writers such as Diane Reay (2000) have argued provides a useful understanding of mothers' roles in the educational development of their children. Taken together, these factors set my mother in good stead for her later life. There has also been a ripple effect for later generations of Beyie women as many of us have achieved things academically and professionally that 'she did not see', and perhaps could not have envisaged. Drawing on personal reflections, familial accounts obtained from my visit to Ghana, and discussions with my mother and sister, in this paper I present an autobiographical account which explores 'Lizbet's legacy' and the impacts on academic and career success for later generations of 'Beyie' women.

**Rebeca Pardo, Dolors Tapias and Montse Morcate**

***The camera as mediation: educational understanding through auto/biographical art projects in Barcelona***

At the Faculty of Arts (University of Barcelona) we usually work with photographic projects that usually involve autobiographical narratives of the students themselves or about their relatives.

Those kind of projects need a special educational attention and care as sometimes they are related with family grief, death or illness. Those are complicated themes and many students have problems to deal with the analysis and representation of their emotions, feelings and memories.

Dealing with these kind of issues, one of our main challenges as teachers is trying to make the students discern between what is an actual creative process from an underlying auto-therapy process.

A professional guidance during the whole creative process of the student is essential to obtain a good piece of art or project that, even though autobiographical, is able to separate art from personal matters.

**Julie Parsons**

***'Another piece of cake': an auto/biographical assemblage, inhabiting the margins and balancing contradictions, lessons on becoming a reflexive researcher***

In referring to an auto/biographical assemblage I mean the complex configurations; discourses, affective practices, ideas and material objects that coalesce in the process of becoming (Deleuze and Guattari 1998) in this instance, a reflexive researcher. I adopted an auto/biographical approach to my doctoral study on food and identity in 2010. This was particularly fitting given I was investigating food memories and life histories around everyday foodways (the beliefs, behaviours and practices to do with the production, preparation, serving and eating of food). Indeed, as Morgan (1996:166) explains 'food represents a particularly strong form of anchorage in the past [it] serves as one of the links between historical time, individual time and household time'. Throughout my thesis I challenged 'the canons of writing practices' from the nineteenth century that dictate we should not be present in our texts and that the 'I' should be suppressed (Richardson 1997:2-3). Yet, despite rigorously practising 'theorised subjectivity' (Letherby 2013), taking this position has not been easy or a 'piece of cake' and continues to incite opposition. For example in feedback received on a book proposal based on my doctoral study, the reviewer wrote 'an autobiographical method... can sometimes become a bit self-indulgent rather than scholarly rigorous, and I would encourage the author to avoid this and only use autobiography when it is integral to make a particular point'. Hence, not only was negotiating my position within my doctoral study hard work but it continues to be tested. In my role as lecturer and programme manager in a HEI I have also sought to encourage students to become reflexive researchers, if not engaging in an auto/biographical approach, then at least for them as student researchers to consider their positions and roles within the research process. Again, this perspective is often questioned and problematic for students. In this paper I reflect upon some of the lessons learned through the course of my doctoral study and beyond. I consider why an auto/biographical approach can be challenging when it is evidently beneficial. I draw upon auto/biographical field notes from the detailed reflexive research journals that were kept throughout the course of my doctoral study, including responses and reflections upon conference papers, as well as my experiences as a tutor in HEI.

**Lynsey Plockyn**

***Formal and informal education: lives, work, relationships***

The paper explores the complex personal and social relationships that combine together in the formation of educative identity. This is analysed through the autobiography of two students who are on the same course at the same institution, yet arrive in their first year of Higher education following very different prior educational and cultural experiences. As their educational and familial experiences are recounted it can be conceived that these experiences are a work in progress that is partly formed through the process of reflexivity (Archer 2007). Reflexivity mediates the role that structural or cultural powers, including family relationships, play in influencing social action. Looking back at a difficult journey to Higher Education one student reflects on the familial, gang and work relationships that have all contributed to his educational identity and hopes for the future. This interrogates the role of capital and reflexivity and agency as they impact on identity.

This research forms part of a study of young people in Higher Education who have been designated as 'widening participation' students. Drawing on my research into the ways in which these students use stories about themselves and their background to describe their educative selfhood, this paper will consider how formal and informal education combine in very diverse ways to influence their undergraduate experience and perception of themselves as 'struggling' or 'successful'.

**Agneta Rahikainen**

***The Blind Men and the Elephant: reflections on how to use biographical sources - the case of Edith Södergran***

Writing a biography is very similar to criminal investigation. In some sense you create a thriller when you try to collect evidence to be able to tell the story of somebody's life. Sometimes the story is about a person that you as a biographer never have met, in a time and place you never have experienced. And sometimes you cannot find enough information to fill the blanks or you have contradictory evidence. Agendas have ruled which evidence you chose to make a point; at the same time as others are ignored. And sometimes you do as the blind men do in the story with the elephant; you just touch the elephant's tip of the tail and believe that the whole animal is like a brush. In my paper I use the avant-gardist poet Edith Södergran (18092-1923) as an example of how biographies can be created and why they can be so wrong.

Irene Selway

***Academic lives in a period of transition in higher education: Bildung in educational auto/biography***

This paper owes a great deal to Judith Chapman (2014) whose paper 'Autobiographical work as *Bildung*' has enabled me to revisit and analyse my PhD study undertaken previously (Selway, 2008) to illustrate more clearly the process of constructing a professional life using the concept of *bildung*. Five academics who had worked in the same post 1992 university took part in auto/biographical interviews in a larger study (Selway, 2008) and I have re-analysed two of the auto/biographical interviews using Chapman's framework of *bildung* to illustrate how the telling of their professional life story was crafted into a coherent and meaningful account. Their narratives (Connolly and Clandinin, 1990) were crafted ultimately into an account that enabled them to retain their educational values and principles during a 20 year period of considerable change in higher education. The concept of *bildung* is central to auto/biography and can be seen as 'educational self-transformation' within a life narrative. (Chapman, 2014.115).

The auto/biographical interviews enabled the participants to *rehearse* some of these experiences and consolidate and even amend their stories as the interviews progressed. The interview provided them with an *audience* (fellow academic) to rehearse and reflect on these issues in a way they could not in their day to day practice. This was revealed in the self-reflection facilitated by telling the interviewer their story; having an audience encouraged them to create a meaningful life narrative. Their auto/biographical narratives reveal how they have responded to the challenges and changes in higher education in terms of their identity and practice as academics (Barnett, and Di Napoli.(ed)2009).

The research illustrates how each academic transformed himself (all participants were male) in the context of educational change. The two academics *retrospectively* created a life narrative that either cast their professional lives as logical development for them; either as a pragmatic strategy within the context they found themselves; or as persistent resistance to change to preserve their own educational values. The process of the auto/biographical interview had turned the 'chaos of a life as it was being lived' into a more unified life story or narrative. (Chapman, 2014.118).

Dennis Smith

***The Formidable Froudes: another Dartington tradition***

Before the Elmhursts, before the Dartington Trust and Park School, before Rabindranath Tagore, Schumacher College, and the great twentieth-century radical-progressive thrust launched from bohemian South Devon, there was another Dartington tradition. It flourished during the nineteenth century and was equally radical but on the other side of the ideological-political compass. This tradition, conservative and disputatious, was anchored in Dartington Rectory, home of Archdeacon Robert Froude, and his children including Hurrell Froude, friend of Newman and a pillar of the Oxford Movement, William Froude, railway engineer, naval architect and a pillar of empire, and, not least, James Anthony Froude, a brilliant and controversial historian (the Niall Ferguson of his day?) who specialized in pulling down cultural and ideological pillars, especially those constructed by earnest liberalism. Behind Dartington Hall stands the medieval tower of the Archdeacon's church, left behind when St Mary's was relocated in the early nineteenth century. Nearby is a wonderfully spooky graveyard. The Froudes are not buried there but this paper will raise their intellectual and ideological ghosts, wherever they are.

**Karen Stockham**

***Educating Dorothy: mountaineering as education for women in the early twentieth century***

In *Alpine Climbing Past and Present*, the aristocratic Elizabeth Le Blond extolled the virtues of mountaineering for women. Mountaineering, she declared, developed women's "best qualities – unselfishness, self-reliance, alertness of mind, calmness in moments of danger, infinite patience" (1907, p. 537). For women mountaineers such as Dorothy Pilley, mountaineering provided opportunities to learn new technical skills in order to, as she wrote in her memoirs, *Climbing Days*, "test myself against some external standard". Mountaineering also taught her, she argued "when to trust myself, with caution, and when not, and to meditate on matters not merely personal". It also offered "companionship with men and women of all types, often under conditions of hardship and strain", which, she elaborated, "gave useful lessons in human nature" (13). Accordingly, as William Geiger has suggested, mountaineering functioned "as a university" (1982, 82) for Dorothy Pilley, enabling her to receive a rich and varied education.

This presentation will explore, with reference to the auto/biographical writings of Dorothy Pilley and other women mountaineers of the early twentieth century, the richness and diversity of the mountaineering "university".

**Rebecca Twinley**

***Generating an educational understanding of woman-to-woman rape and sexual assault through auto/biographical research practice***

The problem of woman-to-woman rape and sexual assault has globally received a lack of serious attention from those in education (scholars and researchers) and those involved in relevant front-line service provision (criminal justice, health and care services). The aim of my research is to explore the perceived impacts of woman-to-woman rape and sexual assault upon the victims/survivors' subjective experiences of occupation.

I am using an auto/biographical approach and an occupational science perspective to create a research methodology that will support me to achieve my aim. The forward slash between 'auto' and 'biography' enables me to acknowledge the significance of what I bring to the research project. I have chosen to be explicit about my insider status – my positionality within the research – and where my loyalties lie (Letherby, 2013). Through this methodological approach I have been able to explore the traumatic biographical disruption experienced by victims/survivors of woman-to-woman rape and sexual assault, and the meaning of the perceived impacts upon their subjective experiences of occupation.

## List of Delegates

(\* = twice on same page)

Name		Page references
Josie	Abbott	10*, 12
Yvonne	Anderson	9, 11, 12
Maggie	Boniface	9
Elizabeth	Bos	10, 12
Geraldine	Brown	10*, 12
Ian	Bryant	9*, 12
Jenny	Byrne	9, 10, 11, 13
David	Carless	10, 14
Judith	Chapman	10, 11, 13
Anne	Chappell	10, 11, 13
Deborah	Davidson	9, 11, 14
Hilary	Dickinson	10
Kitrina	Douglas	10, 14
Michael	Erben	9, 10
Janet	Finch	
Ronda	Gowland-Pryde	10, 11, 14
Julie	Greer	9, 11, 15
Jonathan	Harvey	
Kathleen	Hegarty	10
Sue	Joseph	11, 15
Freya	Latona	11, 15
Debra	Laxton	10, 11, 16
Gayle	Letherby	9, 10, 11, 16
Viv	Martin	9, 11, 17
Mary	McKeever	11
David	Morgan	
Barbara	Myers	9, 17
Jenifer	Nicholson	9
Louise	Owusu-Kwarteng	11, 18
Rebeca	Pardo	11, 18
Julie	Parsons	10, 19
Lynsey	Plockyn	9, 19
Agneta	Rahikainen	9, 11, 19
Irene	Selway	9, 11, 20
Dennis	Smith	10, 20
Andrew	Sparkes	10
Karen	Stockham	10, 21
Rebecca	Twinley	9, 21
Vanessa	Uren	