



**INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR REMINISCENCE AND LIFE REVIEW**

**The Center For Continuing Education/Extension - University of Wisconsin-Superior**

Fall/Winter 2010 - Vol 5, Issue 1

<http://reminiscenceandlifereview.org>

***Message from the President***

*Thomas Pierce*

Welcome to the Fall/Winter 2010 issue of the IIRLR newsletter! Inside you'll find reports of many remarkable achievements by Institute members and exciting plans for good things to come. In particular, John and Donna have worked very hard to bring together arrangements for the 2011 IIRLR conference in Boston. With your help, the program promises to showcase the excellent work of presenters from a wide range of fields and interest areas. You'll be getting the Call for Presentations soon!

I'd like to pay special thanks to Brian de Vries for his outstanding leadership as President of the IIRLR's Advisory Board through the 2007 and 2009 Conferences and also for his continuing service as Past-President. In addition, I want to thank Mary O'Brien Tyrrell for serving as President-Elect of the Advisory Board and Robin Mintzer for continuing to serve as Board Secretary.

***International Reminiscence And Life Review Conference 2011 to be held in Boston***

*John A. Kunz*

It's hard to believe that it has already been a year since the International Reminiscence and Life Review Conference 2009 in Atlanta and in about one year we will be holding the next conference in Boston on November 16, 17 and 18, 2011!

The Best Western Roundhouse Suites Hotel has been selected as the conference venue. They are offering an affordable rate of \$149 that includes a deluxe continental breakfast. Their complimentary shuttle will be able to provide transportation to a variety of landmarks as well as the conference center where the Gerontological Society of American (GSA) is holding its annual meeting. As in the past few conferences, we are holding our program immediately preceding the GSA meeting.

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***International Reminiscence and Life Review Conference 2009***

*John A. Kunz*



Monday evening, November 17, 2009, the IIRLR board reception honoring international participants was held in Atlanta with sushi, sashimi and beverages. With about half of the conference participants attending, it turned out to be a great opening with a pre-conference dinner at the hotel concluded the evening.

Following a few preconference programs, the main conference opened Tuesday evening with a keynote lecture by Susan Bluck titled "Living Parallel Lives: Reminiscence and autobiographical memory research."

The presentation of the awards, reception and performance were next. Friday morning each of the award winners presented their invited lectures. Patricia O'Neill, recipient of the Florence Gray Soltys Award for Exemplary Student Work presented "Gender Differences Reflected in Autobiography: How men and women interpret their lives."

Philippe Capelliez, recipient of the Robert Butler and Myrna Lewis Award for Exemplary Research presented "From The Clinic To The Lab And Back: The dialogue between basic and applied research on reminiscence." Jeff Webster, also recipient of the Robert Butler and Myrna Lewis Award for Exemplary Research presented "The Future Of The Past: Some developmental reflections."

John Kunz, recipient of the James and Betty Birren Award for Exemplary Practice presented "Shared Life Stories are Heaven."

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# New Publications

Thomas Pierce, Newsletter Editor

The publications below represent just a few of the interesting articles and books that have appeared over the past year or so. Each issue of the newsletter will provide additional listings. Please help us to identify articles, books, and upcoming presentations that would be of interest to Institute members. You can forward suggestions to me at: [tpierce@radford.edu](mailto:tpierce@radford.edu).

The social treatment: The benefits of group interventions in residential care settings by Catherine Haslam et al. 2010. *Psychology and Aging*, 25(1), 157-167.

The effects of reminiscence therapy on psychological well-being, depression, and loneliness among the institutionalized aged by Kai-Jo Chiang et al. 2010. *International Journal of Geriatric Psychiatry*, 25(4), 380-388.

The effects of integrative reminiscence on depressive symptoms in older African-Americans by Juliette Shellman, Melissa Mokel, and Nnewka Hewitt. 2009. *Western Journal of Nursing Research*, 31(6), 772-786.

The effects of integrative reminiscence on depressive symptomatology and mastery of older adults by Ernst Bohlmeijer, Jeannet Kramer, Filip Smit, Simone Onrust, & Harm van Marwijk. 2009. *Community Mental Health Journal*, 45(6), 476-484.

Narrative structure and emotional references in parent-child reminiscing: Associations with child gender, temperament, and the quality of parent-child interactions by Kelly Bost, Eunsil Choi, & Maria Wong. 2010. *Early Child Development and Care*, 180(1-2), 139-156.

Multimedia biographies: A reminiscence and social stimulus tool for persons with cognitive impairment by Karen Louise Smith, Masashi Crete-Nishihata, Thecia Damianakis, Ronald Baeker, & Elsa Marziali. 2009. *Journal of Technology in Human Services*, 27(4), 287-306.

Group reminiscence intervention in Taiwanese elders with dementia by Jing-Jy Wang, Miaofen Yen, & Wen-Chen OuYang. 2009. *Archives of Gerontology and Geriatrics*, 49(2), 227-232.

Factorial structure and psychometric properties of the reminiscence functions scale by Annie Robataille, Philippe Cappelliez, Daniel Coulombe, and Jeffrey Webster. 2010. *Aging & Mental Health*, 14(2), 184-192.

A creative reminiscence program for older adults with severe mental disorders: Results of a pilot evaluation by Bernadette Willemse, Marja Depla, & Ernst Bohlmeijer. 2009. *Aging and Mental Health*, 13(5), 736-743.

Self-continuity across developmental change in and of repeated life narratives by Alexa Negele & Tilmann Habermas. 2010. In "Narrative Development in Adolescence: Creating the Storied Self" (K. C. McLean & M. Pasupathi, Eds.). Springer Science and Business Media, New York.

Coping mediates the relationships between reminiscence and psychological well-being among older adults by Philippe Cappelliez & Annie Robataille. 2010. *Aging and Mental Health*, 14(7), 807-818.

The Dynamics of Autobiographical Memory by Marian Assink and Johannes Schroots. 2010. Hogrefe Publishing. Cambridge, MA.

Effectiveness of integrative and instrumental reminiscence therapies on depressive symptoms reduction in institutionalized older adults: An empirical study by Dolatshashee Karimi, Khodabakhshi Momeni, & Kamrani Rezaei. 2010. *Aging and Mental Health*, 14(7), 881-887.

Mapping the future of reminiscence: A conceptual guide for research and practice by Jeffrey Webster, Ernst Bohlmeijer, & Gerben Westerhof. 2010. *Research on Aging*, 32(4), 527-564.

The impact of life review on depression in older adults: a randomized controlled trial by Anne Margriet Pot, Ernst Bohlmeijer, Simone Onrust, Anne-Sophie Melenhorst, Marjolein Veerbeek, & Wilma de Vries. (2010). *International Psychogeriatrics*, 22(4), 572-581.

## IIRLR Receives Funding for Global Survey and Repository

The UW-Superior Center for Continuing Education/Extension is investing \$9100 in the development and launching of a global survey and repository of reminiscence and life review work that is being done throughout the world. Renowned researcher in the field, Dr. Barbara Haight, has agreed to be the lead consultant in this effort. She will be working with IIRLR staff to develop the research instrument. In doing so, she will be engaging the input of the entire IIRLR membership/subscribers. She will then finalize the research questions and IIRLR staff will work with UW-Superior web-based research resources to launch the survey on the Internet. The goal is to launch the final project on or before the 2011 reminiscence conference. Print-based and web-based announcements and explanations of the global survey and repository will be published in English, Japanese and Spanish. The data collected will be in English only. Members/subscribers of the IIRLR will be able to mine the data collected for research, program development and other purposes. The data will continue to grow over the following decade and beyond. This is a direct extension of the mission of the IIRLR and represents UW-Superior's collective fifteen years of programmatic and economic support of the institute and conferences!

# We've Got the New Board Goin' On

Robin Mintzer, Board Secretary

The life review community is a unique entity. We are by definition interdisciplinary as we come from many different professional backgrounds and training. Our institute is also unique in that our members are in and of themselves interdisciplinary professionals. Take a look at our newly elected Board members. Each has training and expertise in more than one field. Each brings unique perspectives and skill sets to their life review work. All are truly committed and interdisciplinary professionals. The following individuals were elected to our Board because their work supports the mission and goals of our Institute. They are the kind of people who, as Board members, can contribute to and expand our Institute for the future.

## Philippe Cappeliez

Philippe has made significant contributions to the development of the field of reminiscence and life review through research, education and practice. Phillippe is the co-recipient of the Robert Butler and Myrna Lewis Exemplar Research Award 2009 and is a full professor of Psychology at the University of Ottawa. Philippe has many areas of interest to draw upon and has had professional experience in Canada, Belgium and France. He publishes in both English and French and his curriculum vitae could exhaust an entire printer cartridge.

Philippe began his training in cognitive therapy and over the course of his career has contributed publications in areas such as psychology of aging, life review, competence and resilience in aging, personality traits, depression, existential concerns, memory, dementia and community intervention. Phillippe has been the recipient and co recipient of over 19 research grants. He is on the editorial boards of many journals and contributes to organizations such as the Canadian Coalition for Senior Mental Health National Guidelines. Currently he is on projects related to the Reminiscence Function Scales and prevention strategies for depression and anxiety in later life. We are thrilled to have Phillippe on our Board and look forward to his collaboration and contribution.

## Juliette Shellman

Juliett's work is aligned with the goals of our in Institute in integrating both research and practice. Specifically her work provides ways to integrate life review material in formal education, staff training, and volunteer organizations. She herself brings interdisciplinary training and expertise toward the development of innovative practice. She has degrees and experience in both education and nursing and has collaborated on international health projects within the Spanish and Haitian communities. Juliette developed the innovative program CARE-LINK which provides a collaborative model of service creating a partnership with the university population and its community.

Juliette is an Assistant Professor at the Yale School of Nursing. Her commitment to geriatric nursing has been recognized by awards including 2004-2006 John A. Hartford Building Academic Geriatric Nursing Capacity Post Doctoral Fellowship.

Juliette's research interests include areas such as issues of the African American Geriatric community, integrative reminiscence, depression and life satisfaction. She has done research on the CARELINK program documenting outcomes for both clients and student care providers. She is committed to improving the health of older adults. Funded by the Hartford Foundation, she uses integrative reminiscence to decrease depression in community settings. We welcome Juliette to our Board.

## Pam Schweitzer

Pam can easily be described as a pioneer as well as mover and shaker. In her nearly 30 years of work in reminiscence she exemplifies the Institute's goal of promoting increased awareness, knowledge, and skill development in direct practice of reminiscence and life review. Her background is in education and theater. Her pioneering work with the Age Exchange brings together a community of psychologists, healthcare workers, social workers, artists, museum and gallery staff, teachers and many more. She is an Honorary Research Fellow in the Humanities Department of Greenwich University.

Pam has made reminiscence work accessible to a wide variety of people in many countries. Pam founded the Age Exchange Theater Trust and acted as artist director for over 22 years. She has contributed to the establishment of other Reminiscence Centres both in the UK and other European countries. We look forward to having Pam on our Board.

## Robert Woods

Bob is a professor of Clinical Psychology of the Elderly at Bangor University in the UK. He has devoted his career to promoting the health and wellbeing of older adults through research, direct service and program development. His work supports the Institute's goal of furthering reminiscence and life review research activity and providing venues for discussion of results as well as guidance for future research. His most recent areas of research include family care-givers of dementia and stress reduction as it relates to the improvement of the health and well being of dementia sufferers. He is an advocate for the use of reminiscence therapy with dementia patients and their care-givers. He has shown that the meaningful engagement of patients with their care-givers using reminiscence contributes to well-being. Robert has edited books and published numerous articles. He is Co-Director, Dementia Services Development Centre Wales. We welcome Robert to our Board.

## Gay Hanna

Gay has been an advocate of reminiscence work for many years. She is trained in arts management, education and health services for older adults. Her work supports the Institute's goal of promoting increased awareness, knowledge, and skill development in direct practice of reminiscence and life review as well as providing education about reminiscence and life review practice and research. She is the executive director of the National Center for Creative Aging, an affiliate of George Washington University and a designated lead agency of the National Endowment for the Arts. The center provides training and education in best practices and contributes to research and policy development for community programs. Her articles are wonderful resources to learn about arts media programs and research in the area of life review.

Her programs breathe creativity and life into reminiscence work. She believes that the engagement in reminiscence and life review arts processes can provide joy-filled experiences for participants. We are excited to work with Gay and have her on our Board.

## 2011 Conference to be held in Boston - Continued from Page 1

The IIRLR board will be hosting a reception at the hotel on Wednesday evening in honor of our international participants. We have contracted with an excellent caterer as there is no restaurant onsite. The caterer uses local foods with plenty of vegetarian options. This is a wonderful way to warm up for the next two days of meetings.

A total of four preconference programs will be held during the day on Thursday with the conference itself opening up at 6 PM. We hope to have an expert in medicine and reminiscence and life review as our opening keynote presenter this year. We hope to engage more of the medical community with this topic. We expect to offer CMEs for physicians and other advanced medical practitioners along with our regular CEUs for social workers, licensed counselors, LMFTs and nurses.

As part of our awards ceremony this year (please remember to make nominations, requirements are posted on our website) we will be including a video tribute to the late Robert N. Butler. A reception will then take place before a creative arts and reminiscence performance.

We will start bright and early on Friday with keynote presentations by each of the three award winners. This year we will be featuring each of the poster presentations in the plenary format. Each poster session will be presented to the entire group with a discussant to share their thoughts and questions and answers to follow. These poster sessions will be grouped in the order of the award presentations. Research posters will follow the Robert Butler and Myrna Lewis Research Award Lecture. Practice posters will follow the James and Betty Birren Practice Award Lecture and the Education and Volunteer Applications posters will follow the Florence Gray Soltys Student Award Lecture. A gourmet lunch will include focused discussion groups. The conference will conclude with Barbara Haight launching the IIRLR Global Survey and Repository. The open board meeting will follow. Participants may then proceed to the opening of the GSA Annual Meeting and/or attend the post conference dinner that will feature one of Boston's most famous seafood restaurants.

Please mark your calendars now and register early as the registration will be limited to a total of 75 participants.

## 2009 Reminiscence Conference - Continued from Page 1

Other presentations included:

- "The Quality of Self-Continuity, Social-Bonding, and Directing-Behavior Memories Across Adulthood in Trinidadian Samples"
- "Using Creative Writing as a Stimulus For Developing Community Involvement in the Delivery of Reminiscence and Life Story Work: A case study from Northern Ireland"
- "Telling Histories: Reminiscence theory in praxis"
- "Intergenerational Reminiscence and Life Review in the College Classroom: Transforming the storyteller and the

student"

- "Creating Individual Lives through Family Reminiscing"
- "Aging as Treasure: Stories as interface between children and the elderly with dementia"
- "Co-imagination method: Sharing imagination with images and time limit"
- "What Have we Learned and Where Are We Going"

A variety of poster sessions were also presented using a digital format.

A very productive open board meeting

of the IIRLR followed the conference with an elegant "Grand Taste of the South" buffet dinner at Atlanta's famed Mary Mac's Tea Room.

Attendees were from Australia, Brazil, Canada, England, Ireland, Japan, Netherlands, Scotland, Spain, and the United States.

The full conference proceedings and lectures are available in hard copy and/or on a CD. Please go to <http://reminiscenceandlifereview.org> to order one.

## Board Goin' On - Continued from Page 3

### Takeo Nagasaka

Takeo has already made invaluable contributions to our Institute. He has translated documents and training videos for the expansion of life review work internationally. Takeo's work supports the Institute's goal of providing education to others about reminiscence and life review practice, research and ways to integrate the material in formal education, staff training and volunteer organizations. Takeo is a Registered Art Therapist and a Licensed Professional counselor. He provides direct service as well as training in art therapy and life review. His Master's thesis on effectiveness of life review in residential care was presented at our conference in 2005. He was a Board Liaison from 2007-2009. Last year Takeo moved back to Japan and is pursuing creative ways of using life review and reminiscence in his community. We thank you again for all your work previously and look forward to having you as a Board member.

### Ernst Bohlmeijer

Ernst is a faculty member at the University of Twente in the Netherlands. His area of interest is mental health promotion in the elderly using reminiscence interventions. His work supports our mission to further define and develop the interdisciplinary field of reminiscence and life review through discussion and collaboration in practice, research and education.

Ernst brings a wide area of expertise to reminiscence including direct service, program development, outcome research and the development of meta-theory. His work provides insight into the overall effectiveness of variables and interventions for older adult mental health. He has synthesized and described the results from large numbers of studies making a special contribution to reminiscence practice as it relates to both stress reduction and depression in late life.

Ernst not only tackles meta-analysis, he has created a unique gathering place for researchers to share and develop the field. He and his colleagues have developed the online interdisciplinary journal called Narrative Works: Issues, Investigations and Interventions. It throws a wide net to include areas such as narrative theory, inquiry, analysis and narrative practice.

Finally Ernst and his colleagues, Gary Kenyon, William Randall and Gerben Westerhof have been awarded the 2009 Theoretical Developments in Social Gerontology Award by the Gerontological Society of America. Congratulations to all recipients as we welcome Ernst to our Board.

## A Personal Tribute to Robert N. Butler John A. Kunz

Those attending the very first reminiscence and life review conference were on a dinner cruise. It was getting dark and despite it being August, Duluth, Minnesota's notorious 30 plus knot northeast wind from across the largest body of fresh water in the world kept most of the passengers below deck. But a distinguished man in his late sixties stood on the bow and relished the feel of the fresh, strong wind in his hair and exclaimed what a beautiful night it was. Wearing a dark suit with his trademark blue shirt that I can't help thinking was always selected to bring out his blue colored eyes and gray hair, was Robert N. Butler.

I had just met him that morning when I had the honor of introducing him at the conference. Aside from that, I knew his work and had talked with him on the telephone in order to entice him to speak at this small conference with such a tight budget. Little did I know how my meeting Dr. Butler would influence both the development of what became the International Institute for Reminiscence and Life Review and my own personal and professional development.

He became a strong voice in support of our group and conferences. He spoke pro bono for us on many occasions. I had the honor of visiting his office in NYC and looking through all of his files on reminiscence and life review that were kept in a cabinet with pictures of him and many US Presidents and other dignitaries across the top. He has since donated those papers that are being archived for our IIRLR website.

There were many occasions when I would see him at national conferences and he'd be in conversation with several important people in the field. He would see me and waive me over, to shake my hand or offer a hug. Then he would say to the others, "Oh - you must know John Kunz!", and I am introduced. These very important people were suddenly thinking they must have missed knowing someone of supposed importance. It was both flattering and amusing!

I could never write a tribute to the famous Robert N. Butler, without emphasizing the importance of his relationship with his life-long collaborator, intellectual challenger, co-author and wife, Myrna Lewis. Little did I ever imagine that I would have the opportunity to bring a film crew to their home in Manhattan and meet Myrna and their daughter Alexandria, and proceed to do life reviews with both of them and their family. I learned so much over those three days about the field of Gerontology, women's rights and how their collaboration and work had such a major influence on these fields today. I was in awe of the relationships they had with such people as Erik Erickson and Maggie Kuhn! I will never forget their sincerity, openness and graciousness during that visit.

I then learned of Bob's early years. His mother was a dancer and he was raised by his grandparents for a short while until his grandfather died. He was then raised by his grandmother, living in poverty and eventually losing his grandmother's farm during the depression. His experience included understanding both the challenges faced by older adults and the strengths with which they handle them. He learned, first hand, about sexual and financial inequities between men and women. He witnessed ageism long before he coined the term. The values Bob learned during these formative years were never lost and dovetailed perfectly with his intellectual and life partner, Myrna. They spent their lives using their remarkable talents and influence to raise awareness, empower older people, fight sexual and financial inequities, sexual stereotypes and freedom and much, much more.

With the death of Robert N. Butler, we have lost one of the patriarchs in what I often refer to as the "family" of reminiscence and life review researchers and practitioners. The shared values of the pioneers dating back to the late 1950s and early 1960s, and of those who have followed in this field, seem to structure this family. As with any family, when an elder passes on, his or her personal and professional history and experience remains within the culture of the remaining group and is intertwined with the further development of this system. The lessons from the elders become even more important to the remaining group. In this manner, Bob's passion, energy, rigor and humane values continue to live on within our group. Our family is at the point where the founding matriarchs and patriarchs are beginning to move on. This will hopefully propel us to call upon the wisdom of our remaining pioneers while there is still time and to use this process to improve all of the work that we do.

International Institute for Reminiscence  
and Life Review Endowment Fund

The IIRLR would like to **thank and recognize** a \$1000 donation from the following for winning the GSA 2009 Theoretical Developments in Social Gerontology Award for a paper titled Narrative foreclosure in later life: preliminary considerations of a new sensitizing concept. Bohlmeijer, E.T, Westerhof, G.J., Randall, W., Tromp, T., Kenyon, G. They have now submitted it to: *Journal of Gerontology: social sciences*.

**Good luck on your submission!!**

Proceedings from these funds help sponsor the biennial awards programs and other activities that support the IIRLR mission and goals.

In January 2008 the IIRLR opened an endowment fund with the University of Wisconsin–Superior Foundation. This is a tax deductible donation that was opened specifically for the Institute to carry out it’s mission and goals. If you are interested in donating to this designated fund contact Heather C. Heart with any questions at 715-394-8356 or by e-mail at: [hheart@uwsuper.edu](mailto:hheart@uwsuper.edu). Checks can be made out and written inquiries directed to: UW-Superior Foundation, Inc., OM 237 PO Box 2000, Superior WI 54880, and all donors need to reference this fund so we can be sure to attribute the donations correctly.

## IIRLR

International Institute For Reminiscence  
and Life Review

### MISSION

To further define and develop the interdisciplinary field of reminiscence and life review through discussion and collaboration in practice, research, education, volunteer and individual applications across the lifespan.

### GOALS

- Promote increased awareness, knowledge, and skill development in direct practice of reminiscence and life review.
- Further reminiscence and life review research activity, providing a venue for discussion of results as well as guidance for future research.
- Establish a working definition of reminiscence and life review.
- Further integrate research and practice.
- Educate others about reminiscence and life review practice, research, and ways to integrate the material in formal education, staff training, and volunteer organizations.

### HISTORY

The International Institute for Reminiscence and Life Review is a program in the Health and Human Issues division of the Center for Continuing Education/Extension at the University of Wisconsin-Superior. The Center sponsored the premiere National Reminiscence and Life Review Conference in 1995.

Major leaders in the field formed the International Reminiscence and Life Review as a follow up to that conference. The Board of Directors and interested participants have met at the 1997, 1999, 2001, 2003, 2005, 2007 and 2009 International Reminiscence and Life Review conferences sponsored by UW-Superior.

## Subscribe Today and Receive These Participant Benefits

- Identify yourself as a leader in the field
- “Members only” list serve to network, identify and address issues, and develop collaborative opportunities
- Online semi-annual newsletter
- Your listing on the Institute’s official website
- Opportunity to electronically advertise your services

Annual fee: \$48 US dollars  
\$24 US dollars for full time students

Contact:  
Donna Sislo ([dsislo@uwsuper.edu](mailto:dsislo@uwsuper.edu)) or John Kunz ([jkunz@uwsuper.edu](mailto:jkunz@uwsuper.edu)) or call 715-394-8170.

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