



INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR REMINISCENCE AND LIFE REVIEW

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

Winter 2008 - Vol 3, Issue 2

<http://reminiscenceandlifereview.org>

International Reminiscence and Life Review Conference 2009 to be Held in Atlanta



The planning is complete and the contracts are signed for the eighth biennial International Reminiscence and Life Review 2009 to be held on November 19 and 20 in Atlanta GA!

The conference venue is the Holiday Inn Select Capitol Conference Center. All of the guest rooms and meeting rooms were completely renovated in 2007. The friendly and accommodating staff are looking forward to hosting the event. They are offering a rate of \$119 per night plus taxes from the November 17 through November 24. This was negotiated in order to make it more convenient for our participants who also attend the Gerontological

Society of America Annual Meeting that opens just as the reminiscence conference ends. There is a complimentary shuttle at the Holiday Inn Select Capitol that can transport participants to and from the GSA headquarters hotel.

Following the separate pre-conference programs, the full conference will open at 6 PM on Thursday, November 20. The board is excited to announce the selection of

See International Reminiscence, page 4

2007 Plenary Session Highlights



In keeping with our organization's emphasis on raising awareness of reminiscence work around the globe, one of the many highlights of the 2007 conference program was the plenary session titled "International Trends in Reminiscence and Life Review". In that session Drs. Diana Taylor, Juan Pedro Serrano Selva, Toyoko

Nomura, and Bob Woods described innovative work taking place in Brazil, Spain, Japan, and Wales. The authors' papers presenting their work may be found in the Proceedings book for the 2007 IIRLR conference. Brief descriptions of each author's presentation, including extended quotations from their Proceedings paper, are presented below.

Diana Taylor, a faculty member at CSUN and the Autobiographical Studies Center

at UCLA, spoke on "Reminiscence and Life Review in Brazil: Past, Present, and Future". Dr. Taylor described several specific applications of reminiscence in Brazil. For example, she noted that "Intergenerational Reminiscence Therapy has been a common format of reminiscence applied in Brazil, especially in the poorer sections of the populations where illiteracy is an issue. Dr. Elza Maria de Souza (1999) created a program in which older adults and school aged children

Continued on page 3

Next Conference to Offer 14 Pre-conference Workshops

In addition to our evening and full day International Reminiscence and Life Review Conference 2009 program we are offering a true plethora of three hour workshops. Since we are promoting these workshops one full year in advance, we hope to draw many participants to these events even if the participants chose not to attend the conference. Please help spread the

word to others who attend GSA and may want to take in one or more of these workshops. Presenters represent experts from Canada, The Netherlands, Japan, Spain, United Kingdom and from across the United States, The following topics are covered:

Using the Structured Life Review in Practice, **Barbara Haight**, USA; Life Story

Matrix, **John Kunz**, USA; Life Story Work as a Business, **Mary O'Brien Tyrrell**, USA and **Audrey Galex**, USA; Creative Aging: Generating Community Through Living History - Intergenerational Life Review, **Susan Perlstein**, USA and **Gay Hanna**, USA; Creative Reminiscence with People with Dementia and Their Carers, **Pam Schweitzer**, England; Basic Principles and

Continued on page 3

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

A review of critical, person-centered and clinical approaches to reminiscence work for people with intellectual disabilities by Joris Van Puyenbroek & Bea Maes. 2007, *International Journal of Disability, Development and Education*, Vol. 55(1), pp. 43-60.

De Verhalen die we leven: Autobiografische reflectieve als psychologische interventie [Life review intervention for older adults with depressive symptoms] by Ernst Bohlmeijer. 2008, *Psycholoog*, Vol. 43(2), pp. 887-92.

Functions of reminiscence and emotional regulation among older adults by Philippe Cappeliez, Marilyn Guindon, & Annie Robataille. 2008, *Journal of Aging Studies*, Vol. 22(3), pp. 266-272.

On the persistence of positive events in life scripts by Ahu Erdogan, Bengi Baran, Billur Avlar, Caglar Tas & Ali Tekcan. 2008, *Applied Cognitive Psychology*, Vol. 22(1), pp. 95-111.

One-week short-term life review interview can improve spiritual well-being of terminally ill cancer patients by Michyo Ando, Tatsuya Morita, Takuya Okamoto, & Yasuyoshi Nonosaka. 2008, *Psycho-Oncology*, Vol. 17(9), pp. 885-890.

The cultural life script and life story chapters contribute to the reminiscence bump by Dorthe Kirkegaard Thomsen & Dorthe Berntsen. 2008, *Memory*, Vol. 16(4), pp. 420-435.

The guided autobiography method: A learning experience by James Thornton. 2008, *International Journal of Aging and Human Development*, Vol. 66(2), pp. 155-173.

Becoming a teller of tales: Associations between children's fictional narratives and parent-child reminiscence narratives by J.A. Wenner, M. M. Burch, J. S. Lynch, & P. J. Bauer. 2008, *Journal of Experimental Clinical Child Psychology*, Vol. 101(1), pp. 1-19.

Meet the real elders: Reminiscence links past and present by S. Y. Chao, C. R. Chen, H. Y. Liu, & M. J. Clark. 2008, *Journal of Clinical Nursing*, Vol. 17(19), pp. 2647-2653.

The effects of integrative reminiscence on meaning in life: Results of a quasi-experimental study by E. T. Bohlmeijer, G. J. Westerhof, & M. Emmerik-de Jong. 2008, *Aging and Mental Health*, Vol. 12(5), pp. 639-646.

Why recall our highs and lows: Relations between memory functions, age, and well-being by K. C. McLean & J. P. Lilgendahl. 2008, *Memory*, Vol. 16(7), pp. 751-762.

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 Society for Reminiscence and Life Review as a follow up to that conference. The Society board of directors and interested participants have met at the 1997, 1999, 2001, 2003 and 2005 Reminiscence and Life Review conferences sponsored by UW-Superior.

Join 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 and those who are both over 55 years of age and retired.

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

<http://reminiscenceandlifereview.org>

Conference Session Highlights International Reminiscence



engaged in group reminiscence activities. The program was designed to promote individual and group well-being, to impact social isolation, to recover local culture and the history of the building of the capital city, Brasilia, and to provide older adults with an active role in preserving memories, sharing knowledge and experiences that contribute to a community identity". In general, Dr. Taylor finds that "Reminiscence work in Brazil seems to be growing at a slow pace", but that "As healthy aging becomes an increasingly realistic goal, especially for the Brazilian middle class, the demand for reminiscence therapy will increase."

Dr. Serrano described several ongoing reminiscence projects in Spain. First, he cited the work of Pilar de Aspiazu and Raquel Cuevas who have "produced an interesting guide to intervention for older people with dementias: La Habitación de la Abuela [Grandma's Room]". In this project in researchers "provoke an evocation of past situations of the patient (youth or childhood) with the purpose of intervening in the remote memory and emotional aspects of the memory". Second he described the work of Juan Luis Santamaría and Álvaro Mosquera who work with a person over the course of 10-12 hour-long sessions to produce a Book of Life which contains family photographs and descriptions of the memories and feelings elicited by the photographs. Finally, he described the ongoing work of a research team from the Department of Medicine of Albacete, Spain which "has been carrying out controlled studies using Life Review with elders with symptoms of depression in order to check the effectiveness of this type of intervention." In one of their projects, Serrano, Latorre, Gatz, and Montañés found Life Review to be effective "in reducing depression, the feeling of hopelessness and to increase life satisfaction in elders with depressive symptoms".

Dr. Nomura noted that "The history of the Reminiscence and Life Review approach in Japan started in the 1980s with the introduction of Robert Butler's work (1963). Butler's concept of reminiscence and life review soon found its place within the cultural tradition in Japan to value life stories of the elderly as socio-culturally shared knowledge." He also described the high level of interest in reminiscence in Japan, stating that "Reminiscence and Life Review has been applied in multiple ways across fields of gerontology, social work, psychology, nursing, medicine, and rehabilitation. Applications of Reminiscence and Life Review include care for elderly persons with dementia, programs for preventing needs in nursing care, community programs for healthy elderly persons, and cross-generational approaches."

Robert Woods, Professor of Clinical Psychology of the Elderly at Bangor University in the UK, stated that "in the UK, Reminiscence Therapy appears to be the most well-known therapeutic approach to working with people with dementia". However, later he said that "the popularity of reminiscence work has not led to a corresponding body of evidence on its effects". Dr. Woods went on to note the contributions of several controlled studies of the effects of reminiscence on various outcome measures. In particular, he described a recent study (McKee, 2003) of 142 older people that compared outcomes for persons in 12 reminiscence, life review, or disclosure activity conditions to outcomes observed for persons in a control group. Dr Woods stated that "Across the activities, participants had better well-being than those who were in the control group. The exact nature of the activity appeared to be less important than the process of meaningful engagement."

It was interesting to hear authors from four different countries describe inconsistencies in the extent to which reminiscence work is widespread among professionals working with older adults. At the same time, it was gratifying to hear researchers from those same countries report that reminiscence is viewed as a valued activity with practical applications for the well-being of participants. TWP

Next Conference to Offer 14 Pre-conference Workshops

Outcomes of Oral History Work, **Clifford Kuhn**, USA; Life-Review Innovations in The Netherlands, **Ernst Bohlmeijer**, **Gerben Westerhof**, **Jojanneke Korte**, The Netherlands; Digital Storytelling Capturing Lives, Creating Community, USA; The Reminiscence Functions Scale: Opportunities and Challenges for Empirical Work and Clinical Practice, **Jeffrey Webster**, Canada, **Philippe Capelliez**, Canada, **Ernst Bohlmeijer**, The Netherlands and **Juliette Shellman**, USA; Guided Autobiography: Enriching Lives and Enhancing Mental Activity in the Second Half of Life, **James Birren** and **Cheryl Svensson**, USA; Traumatic Experiences in Life Review and Reminiscence, **Marvin J. Westwood**, Canada; Research and Practice of Reminiscence and Life Review in Japan, **Takeo Nakasaka**, USA, **Toyoko Nomura**, **Nobutake Nomura** and **Yuuki Aoi**, Japan; Reminiscence and Life Review Approaches with Depression and Dementia, **Diana Taylor**, **Robin Mintzer**, **John Kunz**, USA and **Juan Pedro Serrano Selva**, Spain and TimeSlips Creative Storytelling Method: How and Why it Works, **Anne Basting**, USA. Please visit our website at www.reminiscenceandlifereview.org for complete workshops descriptions, objectives and presenter biographies.

International Reminiscence from page 1

Susan Bluck, PhD. Associate Professor, Department of Psychology at the University of Florida, USA, as the opening keynote speaker. After her presentation, the Robert Butler and Myrna Lewis Award for Exemplary Research in Reminiscence and Life Review and the James and Betty Birren Award of Exemplary Practice Award in Reminiscence and Life Review will be presented. A celebration and reception will then take place with a performance to follow.

On Friday the conference will feature keynote presentations by the award winners, four short presentations grouped into three sessions and one poster presentations session as selected from those who propose sessions.

The call for proposals to present at the conference are now being distributed. The International Institute for Reminiscence and Life Review board members and staff wanted to open the entire conference to enable more voices within the field to be heard during the conference plenary sessions. As a result it was decided to feature many of the board members and others who have previously spoken at conference plenary sessions in offering three hour pre-conference workshops on Thursday morning and afternoon. This frees up three time frames and topics that will be featured on Friday. These topics are:

- The Practice of Reminiscence and Life Review
- Research in Reminiscence and Life Review
- Reminiscence and Life Review with Unique Populations (children, etc.)

Four sessions will be selected by the board from those who submitted proposals to do a 15 minute presentation. Once all four presentations have been made there will be an additional 15 minutes for discussion.

All other submissions to present will be in the form of poster sessions. However, the poster sessions at the reminiscence conference are distinctly different than at most conferences where there are sometimes 100 or more set up with people passing by with a glazed look on their face. In order to save money and ensure that all participants are exposed to the poster information, presenters will be required to provide a looping power point presentation that features their work. These presentations will be divided and played on two data projectors in the main conference area from Thursday from 4 – 9 PM and Friday from 7 - 8:30 AM. In addition, the presentation slides will be published as handouts in the conference book. What brings the reminiscence conference poster sessions to another level is the selection of distinguished individuals in the field to serve as discussants for the poster sessions areas. Their comments will be published in advance in the proceeding book and they will present those along with additional comments at the plenary session on Friday. This will occur on Friday afternoon.

Excerpts from Peter G. Coleman's address at the International Reminiscence and Life Review 2007 Conference entitled "Memory and Responsibility"



"...If there is one image I would like to leave you with it is of young people bringing shovels and digging on the Gestapo site in central Berlin. From 1933 to 1945 the area bounded by the Prinz Albrechtstrasse and Wilhelmstrasse contained the buildings of the secret state police, the SA, and its successors the SS. It was from this site that the German population was terrorised and the Nazi policy of extermination of the Jews and others worked out and put into operation.

The buildings were raised by the allies after the war and there has been a long debate about what to do with the site. As a result it has remained a wilderness right in

the centre of Berlin, next to some of the surviving remains of the postwar Berlin wall. The 'digging' by the young people is symbolic not archaeological. On one perimeter of the site there are a few walls of basement cells remaining which were used as prison cells and torture chambers, but as far as I know there is nothing else physical to be found. But the image of digging is more evocative for that – as symbol of German young people's desire to find the truth, and to see it come to light and to be properly recorded on that site. This is a continuing part of the huge task which Germans have taken upon themselves. It is I suppose their duty – but also their privilege – and an example for the rest of our nations, who have much to reveal and to atone for as well..."

Dr. Coleman's complete paper is on our at:
website: www.reminiscenceandlifereview.org

International Institute for Reminiscence and Life Review Endowment Fund

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 its mission and goals. We currently have \$5126 in our account. If you are interested in donating to this designated fund contact Heather C. Heart with any questions 715-394-8356 or by e-mail at: 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 reference fund so we can be sure to attribute the donations correctly.