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## BOOK OF ABSTRACTS



HELLENIC REPUBLIC  
National and Kapodistrian  
University of Athens

### ORGANISERS



QUALITATIVE  
RESEARCH  
CENTRE

IN PSYCHOLOGY & PSYCHOSOCIAL WELL-BEING

**Institute for  
Qualitative Research**  
Applications in Social Sciences, Humanities and Education



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**Discussant(s): Maria Viou** (Logo Psychis-Training and Research Institute for Systemic Psychotherapy)

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## WORKSHOP\_1

### **A letter from the future. Becoming with time and affect**

Aspasia Dania

National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, Greece

Post-qualitative forms of inquiry invite us to reflect not only on research, but with it. This workshop invites participants to reflect with post-qualitative modes of inquiry by writing a letter from the future to their present self or their present way of conducting research. Together, we will trace how our work transforms our bodies, pedagogies, and worldviews. Through writing, emergent gallery walk and dialogue, we will attune to the ideas that haunt us, the forms of knowing and feeling that emerge, and the ways we and our research are always in a process of affective becoming.

## WORKSHOP\_2

### **Beyond borders: transmethodology as rhizomatic becoming**

Marco Gemignani, João Henrique Borges Bento

Universidad Loyola (Spain), Spain

Have you ever felt constrained by the rigid boxes of traditional qualitative methodology? What happens when a research begins to transgress its methodological borders? Do you seek more creative, relational, and critical ways to conduct your research in the social sciences?

This workshop offers a hands-on immersion into the frame of transmethodologies (TMs) – a space of onto-epistemological provocation that challenges the established canons of qualitative research. Instead of being yet another method, TMs encourage a critical sensibility towards moving beyond methodological orthodoxies and rulebooks to think about the agency of theories and methods. We will play with some of the main ideas that compose the theoretical mosaic of TMs, including Deleuze and Guattari's concepts of difference and rhizomatic becoming, Barad's intra-actions and onto-epistemologies, non-representational inquiry, and decolonial border thinking.

In this workshop-laboratory, we will experiment with how a TM framework might become useful in your inquiries. Working with the crucial distinction between borders as political performances that separate and exclude, and boundaries as fluid sites of potentiality and becoming, we will engage in embodied, experiential activities to deterritorialize our research practices and assumptions. We will collectively map concerns and navigate the productive tension between methodological borders and epistemological boundaries. The aim is to collaboratively weave tools, affects, and provocations for a transmethodological research practice: one that treats methodological constraints not as rigid borders to be defended, but as agentic boundaries to engage and transcend. The result, perhaps, will be embracing indeterminacy, permeability, and care to imagine inquiries that explore how matter comes to matter and what this mattering does.

Join us to rethink your methodological practice and transform your research from a scripted procedure into a dynamic conversation about methodological mattering.

## WORKSHOP\_3

### **From Ethnographic research to practice: The traditional «Braditska» necklace invites us to partake of its cultural background**

Georgia Karakousis

University of West Attica, Greece

The workshop aims to safeguard and transmit traditional local knowledge through experiential learning, and to connect contemporary audiences with the art of beadwork within Greek traditional dress. It combines qualitative engagement with tradition, the body, and materiality in research— an approach to qualitative inquiry that employs material discursive, hands-on and interpretive practices as modes of knowledge production. It creates space for discussion around the types of knowledge that are valued within qualitative research and enables participation beyond conventional, text-based academic presentation.

The workshop is structured into two distinct yet complementary parts, combining a theoretical introduction with an experiential, hands-on approach. In the first part, a brief 15-minute introductory presentation will be delivered, focusing on the use of beads both in traditional jewellery and in beaded decoration of dress more broadly. The presentation will highlight the role of beads as decorative, symbolic, and social elements, drawing on examples from the Greek context, with particular emphasis on techniques, colour schemes, and their cultural meanings. The second part of the workshop, which will constitute the largest portion of the session (1.5 hours), will take an experiential, hands-on approach. Participants, under the guidance of the facilitator,

will create a replica of an authentic beaded ornament, the “Branditska” from Ormenio, Evros, applying traditional bead-threading techniques.

The workshop functions as a micro-ethnographic field, where participants do not observe from a distance but actively take part. The making of the Branditska is therefore not simply an outcome, but a process of knowledge production, in which knowledge emerges through the body, repetition and rhythm, touch, and material engagement. Beads, colours, patterns, and techniques operate as qualitative data. The ornament thus becomes a carrier of memory, gendered meanings, local identity, and tacit knowledge that is not fully captured in written form. Furthermore, knowledge production is not individual but collective, taking place within the group as participants discuss, compare, observe one another, and exchange experiences.

Materials: All participants will be provided with a complete materials kit (beads in three colours, specialised thread for beadwork, a beading needle) and a printed booklet in English with detailed step-by-step instructions for the construction of the ornament (one per participant).

## WORKSHOP\_4

### **Anticipating the future - stimulating strategic foresight in the way we respond to societal challenges**

Karin Hannes

KU Leuven, Belgium

In a world marked by rapid change, uncertainty, and complexity, the ability to think systematically about the future is no longer a luxury—it is a necessity. This workshop introduces scholars to the transformative power of futures thinking. Drawing on Sohail Inayatullah’s Six Pillars of Futures Studies participants will get an overview of the methodological possibilities to co-creatively map, time, deepen, create alternatives for, transform and anticipate on the future. Using Glenn’s future wheel approach we will further explore the cascading consequences of design related changes made into the configuration of our living environments. Participants will learn how to map first-, second-, and third-order impacts of emerging trends, technologies and prototypes designed to tackle contemporary societal challenge of redesigning the city, enabling a deeper understanding of systemic interconnections and long-term implications of solutions proposed today. The futures wheel method encourages structured creativity and critical thinking, making it ideal for scholars seeking to enrich their own research with futures-oriented perspectives. By the end of the session, attendees will be equipped to use the Future Wheel in academic, policy, and innovation contexts related to their own research responses to emerging challenges.

## WORKSHOP\_5

### **Performing autoethnography discovering ancient Greek theatre**

Tatiana Chemi

Aalborg University, Denmark

In this workshop, we will investigate how performance autoethnography can serve as “a method of inquiry and analysis that engages the body as the methodological nexus upon which the text turns, moves, lives,” beyond any “epistemological hierarchy” (Spry, 2016, p.159). Following the concept of the “textualizing body” (Spry, 2016, p.162), we will produce autoethnographic data (Adams et al., 2016), interpretations, and texts—a materiality that continually makes and unmakes itself as ‘form.’

Our work will take place ‘on the floor,’ through the dramaturgical lenses of Ancient Greek theatre (Ashby, 1999), exploring what Diana Taylor (2016) conceptualizes as repetition implicit in performance: the practice of again-ness (p.26). Enacting again and again is essential to performing autoethnography as investigation because it is constructed and deconstructed through the iterative nature of both performance and research. Again-ness in performance—the repeated doing and undoing—is embedded in the word itself (the suffix -ance signaling iteration) and in the practice (Barba, 2009). A similar framing applies to the word and practice of research. According to Benozzo and Priola (2022), scholarly investigation designated as research derives from practices of “reaching again” (re- indicating repetition), tracing back to gatherer-hunter ecologies where looking again and again was vital for survival.

Diana Taylor (2016) emphasizes that performance operates as inquiry, “as vital acts of transfer, transmitting social knowledge, memory, and a sense of identity through reiterated actions” (p.25). Similarly, Soyini Madison reminds researchers that “like good theory, performance is a blur of meaning, language, and a bit of pain” (Madison, 1999, p.108). This workshop explores performance autoethnography through the organizing principles of the theatre laboratory (Chemi, 2018) and performance theories (Schechner, 2003).

## WORKSHOP\_6

### **Walking-with theory: feminist materialist/posthumanist encounters with objects, bodies and spaces**

**Carol A. Taylor<sup>1</sup>, Nikki Fairchild<sup>2</sup>**

<sup>1</sup>University of Bath; <sup>2</sup>University of Portsmouth

Feminist materialist and posthumanist thinking presumes that matter and discourse are entangled and co-constitutive and that neither is foundational. Instead, matter is conceptualised as agentic and all sorts of bodies are recognised as having agency. This radical move has profound ontological, epistemological and ethical consequences; it raises serious methodological questions about how we do qualitative research, and how knowledge in posthuman times can come to matter differently. Drawing on the work of Karen Barad (2007), Jane Bennett (2010), Rosi Braidotti (2013) and Donna Haraway (2015) the workshop invites participants to enact a feminist materialist/posthumanist theory- praxis *dérive* – a playful, political walk or stroll – which activates walking with feminist materialist/posthumanist theory as a means to unsettle anthropocentrism. In this, the workshop aims to offer a co-compositional research space for experimental encounters. It puts to work a practice of walking-with theory to attend to everyday things that we don't normally notice or accord value to, and to bring to the fore the value of affective, sensory, embodied and relational research practices. Drawing on aspects of Carol and Nikki's experimental research practice-ings and theoretical thinking, this workshop is structured as a three-part research-creation process: an initial theoretical orientation; a participatory, experimental feminist materialist/ posthumanist *dérive* where participants will get out of the room and go for a short walk; and a critical, collaborative speculative wondering regarding the matter and meaning which emerges. All materials for this workshop will be provided. Participants should bring smartphones and dress accordingly for Greek outdoor weather.

## KEYNOTE\_1

### **'Trauma' work today. Curating and commodifying human suffering. Transformative possibilities through epistemological agility.**

**Renos K. Papadopoulos**

Professor and Founder Director of the Centre for Trauma, Asylum and Refugees and of the MA /PhD Programmes in Refugee Care, University of Essex, UK

The 'trauma' industry is one of the most increasingly thriving enterprises in the world over the last few decades. The predominant approach of conceptualising human suffering in the context of 'trauma' is on mastering specific techniques that are aimed at alleviating specific symptoms and other forms of discomfort and anguish. This presentation will explore the importance of appreciating the role of imperceptibly constructing epistemological presuppositions that position us in ways that we adopt certain perspectives in perceiving relevant events and experiences. What is the role of 'curating' societal discourses that construct commodifying human suffering? How do we inadvertently develop a 'victim identity' in those we want to help? What other identities are constructed from such 'curating' of societal discourses? Is there an epistemological framework that can overcome such distortions?

## PANEL\_1

### **The past is present: dialogues on lessons of history and memory**

Chair(s): **Elena Silverman** (Indiana University Indianapolis, United States of America)

Discussant(s): **Lisa Hayes** (Ohio State University), **Kimberly Haverkos** (Thomas More University)

Each paper in this panel considers the affective and relational significance of history – both personal and collective. There is no shortage of clichéd adages about the significance of history. Cliché for a reason, the words of George Santayana, "Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it," and Napoleon Bonaparte, "History is a set of lies agreed upon," seem to land differently now than they once did. When we think of the "challenging times" evoked in this year's theme, we as American scholars, and we as individuals with diverse global connections are facing, these often-repeated phrases take on a meaning that seems less clichéd and, somehow, more ominous. How does one go about remembering the past, and learning from it? How might this endeavor change us, and those we encounter, for the better? The papers in this session each confront history in a different way. The spectral residue of dark truths that must be confronted to be driven out, the marks that our personal histories leave upon us that guide us, sometimes without our consent, that must be understood before they can be woven into our becomings, the ways in which distortions of history may be coopted and leveraged to the benefit of some, and detriment of others, and the ways in which embodying memories can connect history to present, are all explored in this panel. History, in one way or another,

er, connects us all. The goal of this panel is to consider the ways in which, collectively, our confrontations of history allow us to imagine collaborative futures where the past is not something that we confront, but something that we embrace.

## Presentations of the Panel

### **Hauntology: confronting specters of anti-blackness in the academy**

Idalia Wilmoth

Indiana University Indianapolis

This paper explores how Derrida's concept of hauntology provides a theoretical and material framework for analyzing the persistence of institutionalized antiblackness in student leadership and coalition building within multicultural spaces. Using a case study of a "multicultural center" within a predominantly white institution, it analyzes the "haunting" effects of institutional memory, policies, and physical spaces that perpetuate harm and disrupt collaboration among student leaders. Ultimately, it argues for institutions to move beyond performative diversity and toward equitable, futurist possibilities grounded in transformative praxis. Delving into the metaphorical and spiritual dimensions of hauntology, this work aims to connect to practices of cleansing, exorcism, and reclamation. These practices are informed by beliefs, ethics, and cultural values, offering a pathway for institutions to confront and dismantle the ghosts of antiblackness while creating new spaces for restorative work. Higher education institutions are often sites where systemic racism and antiblackness persist, even as they claim commitments to diversity and inclusion. These systemic issues are not just rooted in the policies and practices of the present but are also shaped by the lingering "ghosts" of historical harm, exclusion, and erasure. Derrida's concept of hauntology provides a lens to analyze these persistent specters and their impact on student leadership and coalition-building efforts in multicultural spaces. This paper is an invitation to for those in higher education who are invested in cultivating and sustaining culturally responsive pedagogies and practices within hostile environments to come together to collectively confront the oppressive ghosts that haunt our institutions. Together we will explore strategies for confronting our ghosts within the academy and discover methods for a collaborative "cleansing" of the material and embodied heart and mind spaces from which we work.

### **Ethical kinships: re-grounding inclusive science teaching in collective care**

Sophia Jeong<sup>1</sup>, Andrea Henrie<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Ohio State University, <sup>2</sup>Vanderbilt University

In this work, we draw from conversational narratives with preservice science teachers (PSTs) to explore kinship as both an ethical stance and a pedagogical resource. While science teacher preparation often foregrounds content mastery, PSTs' reflections suggest that their development as inclusive educators emerged through relational memories such as stories, conflicts, and solidarities formed within and beyond the cohort. These ties, described as "my village" or "a network of ideas I can bounce off," became the ethical infrastructure from which they approached justice-oriented teaching in science classrooms. Their narratives reveal that inclusion is not a default, but a practice learned over time, shaped by coursework where they remembered and shared personal histories (religions, languages, hobbies) and field experiences that taught them to offer accommodations without stripping students of dignity. "I don't see color" was rejected not as innocence, but as erasure. One PST reframed: "I see it, and this is why I want to be inclusive." These insights emerged from a dialogic space that valued memory as pedagogy, where humility allowed them to move "beyond surface level," to listen deeply, and to remember others well. We frame this through Karen Barad's (2007) relational becoming, where kinship is not a fixed identity but a continuous reconstitution of self-with-others: human and more-than-human. In an era of political polarization and heightened scrutiny over what is taught in schools, these stories offer kinship as a memory-based counter-force: a collective practice of ethical mattering (Authors 2023), remembering, resisting deficit framings, and preparing to confront inequity not through indoctrination, but through lived justice. We invite the field to see cohort kinship as a deliberately cultivated, historically entangled practice that sustains inclusive science teaching.

### **Personal histories, present teachers: reconciling lessons of lived experiences across varied ontoepistemologies**

Sophia Jeong<sup>1</sup>, Elena Silverman<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Ohio State University, <sup>2</sup>Indiana University Indianapolis

This conceptual paper draws from our experiences as teacher educators, exploring what healing and justice renewal mean to us personally, with the pre-service teachers we teach, and in the classrooms they will eventually lead. We draw on Barad's concepts of becoming and diffraction, alongside posthumanism, to reframe pre-service teacher learning as an ongoing process of dynamic self-differentiation—entwined with the reverberations of their ontoepistemological roots. Becoming emphasizes fluidity and multiplicity, viewing identity as continually evolving. Barad's diffraction involves iterative re-turnings that reconfigure understanding. We also engage Haraway's response-ability to consider how ethical responsiveness and collective knowing can be cultivated. Using dialogic reflexivity, we analyze narratives from our students to link theory with lived experience, echoing But-

ler's (1993) reconfiguration of reality through discourse. Recognizing ourselves and our students as always in process, we share tensions in our praxis and draw from Author et al. (2021) to explore identity and difference in our classrooms. We aim to “work difference” (Ellsworth & Miller, 1996), finding generative connections across diverse perspectives. This framing affirms identity as fluid and transformative, reshaping how justice and liberation are imagined in education. Our work engages the complexities of social foundations in teacher education, focusing on how our beliefs and practices—shaped by personal histories—intersect with those of our students. We examine the tensions that arise when student-centered pedagogy meets entrenched socialization patterns. While not always explicitly focused on justice, the instructor's commitment to transformation underscores pedagogy's potential as a site of healing. Ultimately, this paper contributes to broader discussions of equity and justice in education, offering insights into how classrooms can serve as spaces for ethical engagement, personal renewal, and collective transformation.

## **Present personalities of Post-war pedagogies: when pedagogies of necessity and resistance become modern identity markers**

**M. Nickie Coomer<sup>1</sup>, Elena Silverman<sup>2</sup>**

<sup>1</sup>Colorado College, <sup>2</sup>Indiana University Indianapolis

This conceptual paper interrogates how whiteness is rendered invisible yet communicated through popular discourses surrounding progressive schooling philosophies—Montessori, Reggio Emilia, and Steiner/Waldorf—and how these pedagogies, born of resistance and necessity, are appropriated as markers of capitalist status, including wealth, exceptionality, and protection. Drawing on Hunter Knight's (2022) work on the production of “innocence” in progressive education, we frame our inquiry with Hasslanger's (2000) understanding of race as “the social meaning of the geographically marked body,” and Lipsitz's (2006) notion of whiteness as a resource-hoarding identity investment. Using dialogic reflexivity (Author et al., 2021), we reflect on our diverse experiences with U.S. progressive schooling, in contrast with its post-war philosophical origins and current forms in Italy. Situating the study outside the U.S. illuminates how these pedagogies appear and function across racial and cultural contexts, aiding our understanding of their racialized implications when recontextualized in the United States. Our data includes observations and conversations from teaching an education policy course in Rome, examining how the philosophies' origins are reshaped through U.S. popular media and discourse. We consider how these pedagogies are racialized over time as part of an ongoing project of whiteness and ask: how does this happen, and what might we learn from tracing their cultural histories? Confronting racism, in increasingly divided times, requires examining how progressive whiteness undermines redistributive efforts and obscures racial discourse. The idiosyncratic “progressive” associated with “nice white parents” (Joffe-Walt, 2020) complicates not only the redistribution of resources but also our ability to address the systemic ideologies upheld by a “possessive investment in whiteness” (Lipsitz, 2006) within progressive education, and those who tie their identities to the modern incarnations of these progressive philosophies.

## **Putting the past on paper: the affective potential of handwritten dialogues of memory**

**Elena Silverman**

Indiana University Indianapolis

On the path to rebuilding a sense of hope rooted in nuanced understanding, this paper argues for correspondence as an affective method—one that braids theory and method to invite researchers and participants alike to surrender to the reverberations of history and the emotionality of inquiry. Memory is evocative; it links us through time, bringing emotions both old and new from within and beyond ourselves (Ahmed, 2014; Halbwachs, 1952/1992; Lawler, 2001). Just as we reconcile our memories with the present (Pequignot, 2012), we also reconcile emotions with their origins—shaped internally and by the social spaces we inhabit (Ahmed, 2014). This interplay of memory and emotion informs the historical production of personhood (Holland & Lave, 2009), as we construct identity through the integration of history, memory, action, and cognition (Russell, 2006). Choosing cultural and personal artifacts allows us to make sense of this integration. When we commit memory to paper by hand, the act becomes intimate, affective, and generative, the crafting of artifacts. Handwriting letters demands time with oneself—often uncomfortably so. The recipient is not a physical presence but an emotional one. Unlike conversation, correspondence offers meditative space. We choose, in solitude, what and how to share. This privacy bypasses the self-monitoring often present in face-to-face dialogue, especially when discussing emotionally charged topics (Flemming, 2020; Siraj, 2010). Inquiry inevitably risks pain. Sitting with our own thoughts—and then with others'—requires waiting that feels capacious and uncertain. This indeterminacy can be generative. Letter writing provides refuge: a protected space for reflection, alone or together. Perhaps we owe it to ourselves and those who trust us with their stories, to lean into the affective dimensions of research that resides in the practice of correspondence, where what emerges on the page may reawaken our senses and help us sit with feeling before choosing how to move forward.

## Philosophically inspired leadership in rapidly changing institutions

Chair(s): **Candace Kuby** (University of Missouri, United States of America)

Discussant(s): **Candace Kuby** (University of Missouri)

Each of the presenters are serving in the role of department chair, programme director, dean, or associate provost. We each spent years teaching and leading in qualitative research programs. Our collective scholarship is rooted in philosophies and theories that embrace situational, political, and ethical demands of relationships. Yet, as we moved from faculty roles into leadership roles, we found ourselves thinking about how to embody and lead with philosophical concepts that for years led our research/teaching practices. We offer four papers that question current discourses on higher education leadership, demonstrating the struggles we have in embodying and enacting relational philosophical concepts. These papers are rooted in the empirical, the everyday decisions, actions, and policy implementations we make as campus leaders.

We found ourselves looking for books on being a leader in higher education. What we found were advice literature on conflict management, survival guides, and recommended best practices. These approaches are rooted in humanist logics of the individual leader that allow for binary thought of administrator vs. faculty or leaders vs. followers. However, we were deep in living, teaching, and researching with philosophies that resist binary logics and focus on the relational ways the world comes into being, moment-by-moment, in more-than-human ways. Theories and philosophical concepts are not simply for research studies but for everyday living.

Collectively, in response to the conference theme, the papers discuss the rapidly changing needs of institutions and examine how embodied, philosophical concepts offer new and expansive visions for academic leadership, especially in unprecedented times. Our examples are based in the micro-moments of leading or the leading practices of the everyday. This is significant to the field because micro-moments as leaders are what makes our institutions. Thus, exposing how philosophical concepts inform our everyday decisions is critical to the field.

### Presentations of the Panel

#### Leading inspired by love-politics and love-ethics: The could

**Candace Kuby**

University of Missouri

Each morning brings a news story in the U.S. with implications for higher education—threats on international students and grants denied or pulled back. As an associate provost I find myself existing in this landscape and at the same time trying to lead and perhaps protect the institutions that I want to survive. As I interact with people, in moments filled with anxiety, uncertainty, and pain, I find myself returning to writings by black feminist scholars on love, specifically the work of Jennifer Nash (2011, 2019) and bell hooks (2001).

Nash proposes we focus on love-politics that centers on vulnerability and witnessing. Love-politics is defined as “a tradition marked by transforming love from the personal...into a theory of justice” (Nash, 2019, p. 115 & 116). Nash’s writing helps us to see that leading with love-politics offers the potential for a powerful reconception of the public sphere and institutions and new forms of relationality marked by collective witnessing and vulnerability. Similarly, hooks (2001) calls us to live by a love ethic and argues that we utilize all the dimensions of love—care, commitment, trust, responsibility, respect, knowledge, integrity, and the will to cooperate—in our everyday lives.

This leading with love invites us into a ‘politics of the open end’, orienting our leadership ‘toward a yet-unknown future’. Or as Nash writes ‘the could’. Higher education could be different. It could be a space of love and care. As leaders we can go beyond the limits we impose on ourselves; this involves vulnerability, witnessing, and is risky. How do we show vulnerability and at the same time lead through spaces of collective witnessing? I’m hopeful that leaders can create spaces of collective reimagining and insist that our institutional communities are spaces that unlock sacred, loving possibilities even under current conditions.

#### Leader/Led: Engaging the in-between/middle in leadership

**Rebecca Christ**

Florida International University

“When forced into a binary, you always choose wrong”

- Jelani Wilson (as quoted in Brown, 2017, p. 155).

I find myself in-between, in the middle... middle management, you might say; quintessentially ‘stuck’ between upper administration and the faculty, between being leader and being led.

But, as Deleuze and Guattari (1980/1987) assert, “The middle is by no means an average; on the contrary, it is where things pick up speed” (p. 25). I may be ‘stuck’ in the middle, but “people can simultaneously be stuck and do things, and this is not noth-

ing” (Biehl & Locke, 2017, p. 21). Perhaps this ‘stuck and still doing things’ is like Deleuze and Guattari’s (1980/1987) discussion of voyaging between smooth and striated spaces. Smooth space may be like the sea in which becoming happens, and striated space may be like a city block (or perhaps the structures of particular higher education institutions) where ‘progress’ takes place, but “the two spaces in fact exist only in mixture” (Deleuze & Guattari, 1980/1987, p. 474). In this way, Deleuzian “concepts reject a binary logic (either/or, this or that) in favor of a logic of connection, a logic of the and (this and this and this and . . .)” (St. Pierre, 2013, p. 226, italics in the original). This is reminiscent of brown’s (2017) discussions on wavy objects, or objects that “exhibit both wave and particle properties” (p. 45; see also Barad, 2007)—they are a both/and.

Thus, I explore what is possible for leadership in the academy when we lean into the middle, the in-between, by (re)reading and thinking-with poststructural/posthuman/new materialist concepts (e.g., Barad, 2007; Deleuze & Guattari, 1980/1987) and activist/social movement literature (e.g., brown, 2017) together and apart. Perhaps we do not have to choose (‘wrong’) from the binary of leader/led; perhaps we can engage both/and...and...and...

## **Process philosophy, leadership, and a field**

**Aaron Kuntz**

Florida International University

I consider the intersection of field-based knowledge with leadership practices, working against bifurcating the one from the other despite institutional roles that foreground discreet working identities within education. I do this from learned experiences, transitioning as I have from traditional faculty roles (where success was largely dependent on scholarly, field-based recognition and accomplishment) to administrative positions (evaluated according to institutionally-oriented claims of success). I do so as an experiment of relationality—one that begins with the assumption that to separate the one from the other is a superficial endorsement of the liberal framings that my scholarly and leadership practices openly critique. I do not aim for some wholeness of a scholar-leader (or administrative-scholar) but rather a challenge to institutional framings that are loathe to release a modernist past.

To ground my presentation, I work through my shift from a faculty “research methodologist” to administrative title. I offer these shifts as less progressive (or otherwise linear) than experimental moments where philosophical concepts such as being, practices, time, and space are differently understood, experienced, and enacted through the friction of contextual change and specific shifts in role.

I engage with the work of Thomas Nail (2019) to generate a series of productive experiments with the potential to challenge and change how I/we have encountered leadership in education. More than bringing relational materialism to bear on leadership, my aim is to think with process philosophy such that otherwise commonsensical notions of leadership and faculty work bend into unrecognizable shape and difference is possible.

## **Think, we must: Affirmative ethics as an approach for leading in troubled times**

**Kay Sidebottom**

University of Stirling

Critical Posthumanism, through its troubling of humanistic framings and exposure of the entangled relationships between humans, technologies, and the environment, calls for the application of a new ethical approach to deal adequately with the complexities and paradoxes of these times. These complexities are particularly marked in UK academia; a space fraught with stringent funding cuts, job precarity, threats to intellectual freedom, and fractious industrial relations. To lead in this space is challenging, particularly when onerous management and administrative tasks compete with space for creative and collaborative work. Virginia Woolf’s (1938) call ‘Think, we must’ - part of a public diatribe against war in which the author linked masculine symbols of authority with militarism and misogyny - feels particularly pertinent in its rally to think differently about how we are led, and reclaim philosophy as an act of resistance. However, spaces to reflect on leadership, and put to work philosophical concepts are sadly lacking in the neoliberal academy. In this paper I explore how affirmative practice (Braidotti, 2011) has enabled me to find these spaces in my role as Programme Director; a role which requires me to administer and lead a Masters degree while fulfilling research and scholarship responsibilities.

Affirmative practice, a paradigm based on Spinozan ethics, does not turn away from difficult conversations or practices, but instead works to transform pain into knowledge via processes which enhance one’s capacity to affect and be affected by others (Braidotti, 2011). Central to this premise is the idea that oppressive structures cannot be effectively dismantled by simply identifying and exposing their harmful aspects, but through cultivating alternative relational visions, to inspire new forms of social coexistence.

Through a series of short narratives, I reveal my application of affirmative ethics; a process of emphasising philosophy as praxis and identifying micro-political moments of activism and social justice.

### Children as Educators: A critical sonic interruption

Walter Gershon<sup>1</sup>, Jashen Edwards<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Rowan University (USA), United States of America; <sup>2</sup>Independent Scholar

Studies of educational ecologies are now so well established as to be commonplace (e.g., Author 1, 2017; Jackson, 1968; Thorne, 1993). It is certainly the case that educators note important lessons learned in their sociocultural roles as educators and it is equally common to note how students can and do educate one another. As educators and qualitative researchers, we understand the idea of being educated as an integral aspect of living and believe formal educational ecologies are a deeply significant, (more than) human right.

Yet, such studies of educational ecologies most often conceptualize young people in general, and young people of color in schooling in particular, as those in need of education. Drawing from two different longitudinal studies of young children in educational ecologies, this performative paper seeks to interrupt these studies to more directly consider the question: what does it mean for qualitative researchers to take children of color seriously as educators?

Although differing in context and purpose, our studies of sonically adaptive public play spaces and children's use of songwriting to express academic content are parallel in their ethical commitments to young children, communities, and education with sounds. In thinking through our work individually and in conversation, it became clear that we, like many educators and those whose scholarship is with young people, understand children as educators. Yet, there are comparatively few qualitative studies of educational ecologies that center children as teachers and adults as students.

In similar fashion, in qualitative research, children are more often seen than heard. We mean this in a literal fashion: we read children's words or watch them on videos where their actions are often secondary to their sounds. To these ends, this sonic scholarship (e.g., Bull & Cobussen, 2022) expresses important lessons from children-as-educators, providing an opportunity to truly listen and learn.

### Exploring resonant spaces: artistic practice in arts education

Luise Fischer

Leipzig University, Germany

Arts education has become a focal point of interest across academic, practical, and political spheres. It is increasingly viewed as a vital context for experiencing, negotiating, and learning forms of creative coexistence, life orientation, and self-efficacy. In this light, questions surrounding *resonance* within and through cultural education have gained renewed urgency. In times characterized by growing uncertainty, heightened societal fears, threats to democratic cohesion under populist pressures, and the escalation of armed conflicts, there is a pressing need for spaces that promote creative expression, open dialogue, and cultural visibility.

In collaboration with a practice-based partner—an interdisciplinary production and performance venue in Leipzig—this project explores how spaces of resonance, both verbal and non-verbal, can be intentionally designed to invite participation, enable meaningful engagement, and support the exploration of diverse ways of creating and living together.

We ask: What makes spaces for experience and creativity resonate? How do such spaces influence participants, and in turn, how do they foster a sense of self-efficacy and belonging? How do they invite reflection on self-image, personal goals, and life circumstances? To explore these questions, we design and research various creative spaces, each centered on expression through language or sound. Through these low-threshold offerings, we seek to understand how personal creative narratives—both verbal and sonic—can generate spaces of resonance, thereby enabling new forms of expression, engagement, and negotiation.

To accompany the open and evolving process of spatial design, the research adopts a process-oriented, posthuman paradigm. This framework draws on participatory and (post)qualitative methodologies to examine how these creative environments emerge, transform, and invite participation beyond human-centered paradigms.

### A qualitative study of preservice teachers learning the havruta-style text study for the teaching of primary sources

Ashley Lucas, Rebecca Shargel

Towson University, United States of America

This paper presentation will explore a qualitative study of the utilization of *havruta*-style text study to read and analyze primary sources in a social studies/history methods course. This style of text study is rooted in a traditional Jewish style of textual learning, where men studied complex texts in the Yeshiva (Shulman, 2008). At the heart of *havruta* is partner text study, where dyads or triads of students closely read and examine a text. As part of this, partners corroborate, disagree, and question to delve deeply into the meaning of a text (Shargel, 2019). Our research goal was to: a) investigate preservice teachers' understanding and interpretation of primary sources using *havruta*-style text study, b) examine preservice teachers' willingness to use this method in the middle and secondary classroom, and c) consider how to apply this method to the scholarship of teaching and learning.

Recently, educators have been experimenting with this style of text study in secular contexts. There have, however, been only a few studies that consider the impact of *havruta* in secular settings, such as English classes and first-year college seminars (Shargel, 2019; Wright, Bergom, & Brooks, 2011). To date, there are no extant studies of preservice teachers in universities preparing for public education using *havruta*-style text study. Our qualitative study is based on three semesters of data collection with three groups of preservice secondary social studies/history teachers, where we took fieldnotes, conducted debriefs after each *havruta* session, and did a final focus group interview at the end of each semester. We used thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006) to code the data. Our research aims to add to the repertoire of *havruta* instruction by creating new knowledge of using this method for preservice teachers in public education.

## Education for a World of Flesh: Unsettling the professional

Lisa Emilie Jakobs

Lulea University of Technology

The paper examines how the scientific and professional foundations of education can be reimagined phenomenologically through the reversible relation between perception and world. Educational science offers both general and specific concepts that address the lived problems and possibilities of teaching. Yet these terms often acquire meanings within institutional contexts that exclude the very experiences they aim to describe. Institutional discourses, dominated by nominalization, tend to dissolve the intimacy between word and experience (Nilsen, 2021).

Drawing on Merleau-Ponty's later writings on language, visibility, and the flesh, teachers' professional language emerges as an effort to restore contact between the linguistic shell and the lived gesture, allowing speech to pervade speech in a porous renewal of expression (Kaushik, 2025).

As professional practices mimic the methods and attitudes of science, they risk falling into the same pitfalls that Merleau-Ponty cautions against, unless they remain thoughtful of their origin in lived experience. Seen in this light, professional language and communication are reconsidered not as systems of control, but as movements within a field of reversibility where expression loosens articulation and exposes the fragile juncture of body and world, thought and gesture.

From this view, ethics emerges through exposure, excess, and reversibility, modes of unsettling the professional that transform authority into responsiveness. Such modes open a space where teaching and research become practices of contact rather than mastery, grounded in the risk and ambiguity of a shared thought's body (1968).

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**Merleau-Ponty, M.** (1968). *The visible and the invisible: Followed by working notes*. Northwestern University Press.

## Speculating-with hauntological possible future(s)

Jo Albin-Clark

Edge Hill University, United Kingdom

What I explore in this paper is what might unfold through playful and speculative dialogues with the haunting and absences of early childhood education (ECE). By using ideas from hauntology (Derrida 2006), I think-with possible future(s) by looking at what is making itself known as an absent-presence. For educational research, hauntology can provide tools for considering how the past might be at work as hidden silences and absences. With the figuration of data-ghost(s) I think with what lingers, troubles or is silent as hauntings. As a fluid methodological move, I create data-ghost(s) with artwork to speak of, to and with the ghostly. With such ghostly presences, I attend to what went unnoticed or was ignored. By re-turning to pedagogical documentation practices with imagery and narratives of learning events, I slow down and linger with events I had not paid attention to before to notice what has been absented but still having an influence. With data-ghost(s), I make greedy magpie-like borrowing from arts-based research practices to consider theory, speculation and research work in relation. Speculating with absences leaves space for otherwise possible future(s) to unfold with hauntological imaginaries in-between liminalities of past-present-future(s). I do this by first attending to what interrupts and re-turns in dialogue with the words of Derrida. Then I use data-ghost(s) creations by imagining digital artworks as an absent-presence. With these data-ghost(s) I imagine possible future(s) involving teacher education. But speculating with the ghostly invites attention to documentation's own desirings and dialogues that silently go on in-between past-present-future(s). What I propose is that hauntings trouble and generate speculative openings. Such spaces bring attention to what is missing from documentation along with possible future(s) for practice and research. But what haunts is an unreliable kind of data where documentation itself might reveal its own wants and desires.

### Tensions between qualitative research and post-qualitative inquiry

Vivienne Bozalek<sup>1</sup>, Michalinos Zembylas<sup>2</sup>

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This presentation considers debates and tensions surrounding differing views of qualitative research, critical posthumanism, and post-qualitative inquiry (PQI). More particularly, it focuses on the issue of incommensurability between qualitative research and PQI, as well as the tensions regarding method and methodology.

The issue of incommensurability refers to the idea that systems of thought or frameworks are so fundamentally different that they cannot be reconciled. This is the main argument promoted by St Pierre (2024) regarding conventional humanist qualitative methodology and post-qualitative inquiry, as they are premised on different ontological and epistemological foundations. We are for the most part, in agreement with this, but with some clarifications that we discuss in our presentation.

The second broad issue we focus on in relation to the differing views of qualitative research and post-qualitative inquiry is the differences between the understandings of method and methodology. Traditional qualitative methods, which rely on structured or semi-structured data collection and analysis techniques (e.g., coding and thematic analysis), may not align well with the fluid, emergent, and often nonlinear approaches of PQI. PQI, which is rooted in poststructuralism and posthumanism, can include the use of art, developing propositions, diffraction, figuration, cartography, walking methodologies, stitching, swimming methodologies, reading, writing and other nontraditional forms of inquiry that go beyond data representation. Whether these are called methods or methodology, however, or different ways of doing inquiry, is a matter of opinion. In the presentation, we give some examples of different conceptions of methods and methodology, primarily through examining those writers who are sympathetic to critical posthumanism, feminist new materialism, PQI, and non-representational theory (NRT). Although in some cases, methods and methodology are eschewed, in others like NRT, the methods but not the methodology are eschewed, and in other cases, the process of research is what produces the knowledge.

### Posthumanist philosophy and educational research: an inclusive review of analytic and axiological features

Gerald Rosiek

University of Oregon, United States of America

This paper examines the rapidly growing body of educational research influenced by posthumanist philosophies. Posthumanist philosophies refuse the binary of direct realism and social constructionism, both of which center a humanist spectator subject as the sole agent of meaning making. Instead posthumanist empiricism regards objects of study as active participants in inquiries and the world's ongoing metaphysical becoming. Understood in this way, social inquiry is a process through which some knowing subjects, communities of human and more-than-human agents, and possibilities for action come into being while others do not. In other words, empirical research is not just a revealing of the world from a transcendent perspective, but is an immanent doing *in and with the world*.

The paper is a collaborative review of over three hundred articles, book chapters, and books that apply posthumanist philosophies to the practice of educational research. The review was 3 years in the making and has recently been published in the annual AERA publication, the *Review of Research in Education*. It was broadly inclusive and included educational research influenced by European continental and Anglo-American philosophers most often associated with the term "posthumanism. It also included research influenced by Indigenous philosophies and Black studies scholarship that critique Western humanism and call for a more ethically and politically visionary practice of social analysis.

This paper provides a concept driven review of a rapidly growing and diverse literature in the field of education organized around the theme of ethical and political responsibility. It reviews four genres of posthumanist inquiry: assemblage studies, cartographic studies, diffractive studies, and place-based research. The paper concludes with an examination of three different conceptions of possibility and futurity that inform posthumanist reconceptualizations of research responsibility. A website with a full bibliography of the 300 articles reviewed and other supplementary materials will be made available.

### Making qualitative research culturally sensitive: Perspectives from the Global South -the Ghanaian experience

Magnus Mfoafo-M'Carthy

Wilfrid Laurier University, Canada

Culturally sensitive qualitative research in the Global South is essential for producing ethical, relevant, and inclusive knowledge. The Global South—encompassing regions in Africa, Asia, Latin America, and other parts of the world—presents unique socio-cultural, historical, and political contexts that differ significantly from those in the Global North. These regions often grapple with the legacies of colonialism, under-resourced institutions, and diverse epistemologies. As such, applying Westernised

research frameworks without adaptation can lead to misrepresentation and marginalization of local voices.

To address this, researchers are encouraged to adopt culturally sensitive approaches that prioritize local knowledge systems and community engagement. Key strategies include transdisciplinary collaboration, where researchers work alongside community members, policymakers, and practitioners to co-create knowledge. Participatory and decolonial methods—such as narrative inquiry, ethnography, and indigenous methodologies—help center the lived experiences of participants and challenge dominant paradigms.

Cultural competence is another critical component. Researchers must invest time in understanding the cultural norms, values, and communication styles of the communities they study. This includes avoiding assumptions, using appropriate language, and engaging local partners or interpreters to ensure accurate and respectful representation.

Despite these efforts, several challenges persist. Power imbalances between Global North and South institutions can skew research agendas and funding priorities. Language barriers and differing worldviews can also hinder mutual understanding and collaboration.

Moving forward, the field must prioritize equitable partnerships, support locally led research initiatives, and advocate for inclusive publication practices that amplify Global South scholarship. By doing so, qualitative research can become a more powerful tool for social justice, policy development, and community empowerment across diverse global contexts.

Drawing on my experience as a qualitative mental health researcher in Ghana, this presentation explores practical strategies for embedding cultural sensitivity into research design and implementation—ensuring that cultural contexts are not peripheral but central to the research process.

## **From lived narratives to thematic insights: storying as a bridge in qualitative research**

**Nai Lang**

University of Bath, United Kingdom

This study aims to explore a qualitative research method that delves deeply into interviewees' perspectives while retaining their voices. In traditional narrative inquiry (NI), Clandinin and Connelly (2000) emphasize the importance of lived experience and propose *restorying* to reconstruct texts into coherent narratives, thereby analyzing the form and meaning of experience. McCormack (2004) further developed storytelling as a method to capture the interpretive complexity of participant narratives. Reflective thematic analysis (RTA), as outlined by Braun and Clarke (2006, 2021), enables systematic and in-depth exploration of participants' accounts. Overall, NI excels at listening to and preserving participants' voices but provides limited depth in analyzing content, whereas RTA allows for detailed examination and cross-case comparison but can be less efficient with large-scale data.

This study explores how storytelling can function as a pre-analytic tool to organize and manage large-scale narrative data, and examines how the integration of storying with reflective thematic analysis influences both participant engagement and the depth of analytic insights.

To address these aims, this paper introduces a hybrid strategy for managing extensive narrative interview data. To reduce information clutter, participants' narratives were first organized into concise stories, facilitating the identification of key insights and the construction of causal connections. Recognizing that this integration inevitably reflects researcher subjectivity, the stories were subsequently returned to participants for verification through member checking (Birt et al., 2016).

This approach offers both methodological and ethical advantages. Beyond serving as an analytic bridge between transcripts and thematic analysis, the storytelling process fostered narrative motivation: participants were more willing to share sensitive experiences, particularly concerning mental health, when assured their narratives would be respectfully crafted. This study thus demonstrates how storytelling can enhance participant engagement while enabling effective analysis of large-scale narrative data, providing an innovative contribution to qualitative methodology.

## **Specters of Positivism: Qualitative research in the Training and Development Scholarship**

**Ajit Bhattarai**

Idaho State University, United States of America

This paper explores the persistent rejection of qualitative research in Training and Development (T&D) journals, arguing that these rejections often stem from the enduring, yet anachronistic, influence of positivist assumptions. Drawing on Derrida's concept of hauntology and the pervasive nature of neoliberal audit culture, I contend that the "ghost of positivism" continues to dictate what counts as legitimate evidence, even in studies designed to explore lived experience and situated learning. This phenomenon is particularly acute in T&D, where evaluation frameworks like Kirkpatrick's levels and the emphasis on psychometric instruments have fostered an environment where calculability is equated with credibility.

Through an analysis of reviewer comments on my own rejected qualitative manuscripts, I illustrate how demands for psychometric validity, large sample sizes, quantification of qualitative data, and replicability fundamentally misinterpret the ontological and epistemological foundations of interpretive inquiry. These demands, while appearing as technical advice, are shown to be

ontological impositions that force phenomena to fit pre-existing measures, thereby thinning rich human change into quantifiable proxies.

I propose a “counter-haunting” approach, advocating for an aesthetic of quality grounded in qualitative rigor. This includes explicitly stating a constructivist/interpretivist paradigm, prioritizing trustworthiness (credibility, dependability, confirmability) over psychometric reliability, justifying sample sufficiency through information power, and demonstrating practical illumination through design principles and rich exemplars. The paper argues that changing this dynamic requires a collective effort from authors, editors, reviewers, and practitioners to protect methodological plurality and recognize diverse forms of evidence, ensuring that what truly matters in T&D is not overshadowed by what can merely be counted.

## Helping graduate students think like qualitative researchers

Rebecca Shargel

Towson University, United States of America

How can we help graduate students think like qualitative researchers? And how do we best engage graduate students in conducting their first qualitative study? Drawing from my experience teaching a qualitative research seminar at a US university, I’ve noticed that many students struggle with conceptual skills --such as configuring their interviews to effectively address their research questions. In this presentation, I will share some of the strategies I use to help students step into the mindset of a qualitative researcher. I will describe creative ways to engage students in data collection and analysis. In particular, I will highlight my approach of pairing students to collaborate throughout the semester, both in and outside of class. I invite you to engage in a lively discussion about teaching qualitative research, especially in the context of rapidly evolving AI technologies.

## DREAM TEAM\_1

### Ethics-in-practice in sensitive qualitative research: ambivalence, reflexivity, and responsibility in team-based inquiry

Michal Mahat-Shamir<sup>1</sup>, Ronit Leichtentritt<sup>2</sup>, Yael Doft<sup>1</sup>, Maya Payes<sup>1</sup>, Neveen Abu Rashed<sup>3</sup>, Lior Melamed-Biran<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Ariel University, Israel; <sup>2</sup>Tel - Aviv University, Israel; <sup>3</sup>Ben-Gurion of the Negev, Israel

Qualitative research in sensitive fields such as bereavement, trauma, and culpability requires more than formal adherence to institutional ethical protocols. While informed consent and confidentiality remain essential, they do not capture the lived, moment-to-moment ethical negotiations that researchers encounter in practice. This has been described as ethics-in-practice — the ongoing, situated process of balancing care, responsibility, and reflexivity in research encounters.

Our Dream Team session takes up this challenge within an ongoing study on the experiences of individuals who have unintentionally caused another person’s death, either a stranger (e.g., through accidental traffic fatalities) or a close relation (e.g., children who died under parental supervision). The project is carried out by senior researchers and several research assistants who conduct in-depth interviews. This team composition sheds light on an underexplored dimension: how diverse researcher subjectivities, across career stages and personal backgrounds, shape not only the emotional experience of fieldwork but also the ethical dynamics within the team. Whereas much of the literature frames research assistants mainly in relation to power hierarchies, here we ask how shared vulnerability, ambivalence, and reflexivity circulate within the team and reconfigure ethical practice.

From the very start of fieldwork, our team encountered ambivalence: moments of deep empathy intertwined with fear, judgment, or withdrawal; the pull of closeness followed by the need for distance; the recognition that working with such material is simultaneously a privilege and a burden. Crucially, these experiences did not remain confined to interviews with participants. They reverberated within the team itself, where assistants and senior researchers grappled together with questions of proximity and distance, of supporting participants while also protecting one another, and of making sense of ethically charged encounters.

The guiding questions of this session are: How do ambivalence and reflexivity emerge in team dynamics in sensitive qualitative research? How can these processes be acknowledged and held, rather than suppressed? And what structures or practices (such as debriefing, supervision, or collaborative reflexivity) can best support researchers at different stages in coping with the emotional and ethical demands of such work?

The Dream Team format offers a unique opportunity to explore these issues collectively. In our session, senior researchers and research assistants will share short reflexive accounts of the challenges they encountered, followed by small-group discussions where participants consider parallel dilemmas from their own projects. Groups will be invited to propose tentative guidelines for fostering ethics-in-practice within research teams. These provisional guidelines will be gathered and synthesized, with the possibility of continuing the dialogue in a writing collective after the congress.

By situating ethics-in-practice not only in the researcher–participant relationship but also in the collaborative life of research teams, this session advances methodological reflection in two ways. First, it underscores that ethical deliberation in sensitive inquiry must include the dynamics among researchers themselves. Second, it highlights ambivalence as an inherent and potentially productive feature of qualitative work, one that can deepen reflexivity and open new ways of thinking about responsibility in research.

### Reflecting on the past to move forward: Literacy futurisms in times of sociopolitical precarity

Rebecca Linares<sup>1</sup>, Bianca Nightengale-Lee<sup>3</sup>, Paty Abril Gonzalez<sup>2</sup>, Tran Nguyen Templeton<sup>4</sup>, Alicia Rusoja<sup>5</sup>, Idalia Nuñez Cortez<sup>6</sup>, Earl Aguilera<sup>7</sup>, Tiffany Nyachae<sup>8</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Rowan University; <sup>2</sup>Western Michigan University; <sup>3</sup>University of Texas at Austin; <sup>4</sup>Teachers College, Columbia University; <sup>5</sup>University of California, Davis; <sup>6</sup>University of Illinois at Urbana Champaign; <sup>7</sup>California State University, East Bay; <sup>8</sup>Pennsylvania State University

In 2021, we, a group of then early-career literacy scholars of color collectively known as the Literacy Futurisms Collective-In-the-Making, put forth a conceptual framework, literacy futurisms, consisting of a constellation of five interrelated concepts: the ancestral/collectivist, playful/imaginative, intersectional, translingual, and decolonial (The Literacy Futurisms Collective-in-the-Making, 2021). Through our work, we sought to invite scholars to metaphorically dialogue with us around a series of provocations aimed at re-envisioning and re-claiming the future(s) of literacy and educational research.

Our goal now is to re-gather, with some of us joining in person and others virtually, 1) to invite an international community of scholars to engage with us around the original provocations we set in motion in 2021; and 2) to reflect on if and how our own praxis has shifted in the current sociopolitical climate we are encountering as scholars of color in the U.S. To that end, we frame this session presentation around the following overarching questions, which we will invite the larger community to reflect on alongside us: 1) How can we reimagine literacy and educational research for the future in a world where white supremacist domestic terrorism is normalized? and 2) What stories, counter-narratives, and testimonios do we and our communities share surrounding experiences of increased and unwarranted violence, surveillance, and criminalization? The goals and the questions we seek to explore in community with other ECQU attendees are grounded in our firm belief that knowledge production through collectivity disrupts the coloniality (Smith, 2012; Patel, 2016) and neoliberal precepts of the academy (DeRocher, 2018), and it is in the dislocation of “the academy” that we might start to unravel and learn from the decolonial ways of being and doing that have sustained us to this present moment.

We draw inspiration from the work of collectives that have come before us such as the Black Girls’ Literacies Collective (Had-dix, McArthur, Muhammad, Price-Dennis & Sealey-Ruiz, 2016) and the Fugitive Literacies Collective (Player, Coles, Ybarra, 2020) that are reclaiming literacy and literacy education for BIPOC communities. For us, transforming traditional literacy and educational research spaces into those that center and celebrate BIPOC practices and knowledge(s) is a form of reclamation and of resistance to coloniality; it is about creating space where we can lift our histories, identities, and each other. As such, we continue building our conceptualization of literacy into one that refutes narrow, traditional, and prescriptive literacies for the privileged, and is deeply-rooted in an ancestral/collectivist, playful/imaginative, intersectional, translingual, and decolonial collective vision of literacy for and by BIPOC—Literacy Futurisms (The Literacy Futurisms Collective-in-the-Making, 2021). We ground this shared vision in notions of authentic *cariño* (Abril-Gonzalez, 2020; Bartolomé, 2008; Curry, 2016) and radical love (Freire, 1998; hooks, 2000) for one another, and embrace the nature of interdependence (Campano et al, 2020) and communal being (Rusoja, 2017) extending beyond the goals of the individual into a collective well-being.

In this session, we seek collective uplifting by engaging in critical praxis (Freire, 1970) in accordance with our coloniality- and neoliberalism-resisting vision. We will begin by highlighting and celebrating the scholarship of BIPOC scholars whose work embodies, shapes and materializes the meaning of Literacy Futurisms since even before our collective theorization. Then, we will facilitate shared dialogue and co-creation among “presenters,” “discussants,” and “audience members” to collectively envision and “illuminate on the future” (Toliver et al., 2019, p. 68) by inviting others to be in community with our collective, grappling with what literacy could be across time and space and to join us in a revisiting of our Literacy Futurisms provocations. The session will include various multilingual and multimodal points of entry (e.g., art, poetry, writing, drawing) to invite everyone in the session to play, dream, and theorize alongside us as co-conspirators (Love, 2019) as we imagine the “different tomorrows [that] are possible” (Freire, 1998/2007, p. 55) for literacy and educational research.

As we wrote in 2021, “we are everything we hope academia to be: collective, not competitive, and drawn together from a place of love, joy, hope, and humanity” (p. 5). Now, as more advanced scholars, we welcome the opportunity to invite the ICQE community “to open your minds, hearts, and spirits” and to join us in “collectively reclaim[ing] potential futures of [educational] research” (p. 5) alongside us.

## PANEL\_3

### Systemic research practices flowing and connecting through land, bodies and time

Chair(s): Dawn Thibert (University of Bedfordshire, United Kingdom), Julia Evans (University of Bedfordshire)

Discussant(s): **Finn Finlayson** (University of Bedfordshire), **Meike Buegler** (University of Bedfordshire)

In our final year of doctorates in systemic practice, we are challenging ourselves to find ways through colonisations of land, aging, health and bodily communication. We explore the complex, multidimensional, relational flows that move across bodies, land and institutions. In writing up we hold on to systemic, diffractive, polyphonic, exploratory constellations, evolutions of liminality, to find hope in collaborating in peripheral, inbetween spaces, in an uncertain world in flux.

## Presentations of the Panel

### **Becoming inbetween**

**Dawn Thibert Thibert**

University of Bedfordshire

I reflect on my struggles to become inbetween, to really do diffractive methodology as intra-action (Barad, 2007) in my inquiry into the bodily sensations felt by me, as a family therapist in sessions. I studied the post session discussions of professionals working with me as reflecting teams (Andersen, 1987), who reflect with each other, which is witnessed and commented on by the family and lead therapist. This is an under researched aspect of family therapy because of the complexity of the dynamics, how to not lose the wonder of this experience in the writing, which invites simplification with calls for clarity, which can get fetishised (Colebrook, 2014), and lose sight of the magic in the periphery.

Initially I was focused on resisting separations especially between mind and body and reifications of categories, which would have sent me into misguided certainties and missing the flows around in relational connections beyond what is already known about verbal and non-verbal communication in therapy. I needed to avoid being distracted by reviewer's fascination and concern about the context in which my inquiry has taken place, that is in developing a family therapy service in an English National Health Service adult forensic mental health setting.

In the writing up stage and working out my discussion, rather than justifying why I did not go down certain paths, I want to embrace how post qualitative research has been opening up my inquiry at every stage. I am enveloped in the messiness, trying not to avoid the trouble (Haraway, 2016) with a deadline looming, sending me oscillating between restating knowns to reassure my readers, and lines of flight to find less explored territories (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987). Where my bodily responses, expressed in poetry holds my rigour and accountability.

### **Rooted but flowing: Altered bodies and relational practices in health systems.**

**Julia Evans**

University of Bedfordshire

Drawing on my doctoral research, which is now in its final year, I consider how altered bodies marked by cancer treatments, resilience, and persistence, are sites where the visible and invisible meet. I explore how experiences of illness and health care are shaped by global flows of knowledge, power, and relational practice. These experiences are not only medical but social and affective. As Ahmed (2006) reminds us, orientations matter. Drawing on participants' conversations, I consider how the position of bodies and how systems orient toward them, shapes what can be seen and heard.

Health systems often privilege biomedical authority, reproducing what Peters (2018) identifies as the "unquestionable" discourse of Western medicine, and reducing people to cases rather than storytellers (Frank, 1995). Yet, as Braidotti (2011) writes, "we are rooted but we flow" with identities are situated but fluid, relational, and in movement.

Through poetry, narrative, and reflexive insight, I invite dialogue on how systemic inquiry might re-orient health systems toward more humane, relational practices.

### **How to enquire with Land as a descendant of colonisers?**

**Finn Finlayson**

University of Bedfordshire

Initially enquiring into the inclusion of climate dilemmas within coaching conversations, the research has meandered, bolted and rebounded through the process of discovering its place. Conversations with participants on land that was meaningful to them led to two-fold 'listening'; human dialogue enriched by the presence of landscape.

Writing about these encounters, inspired by novellas that ask, "Something happened but what?" (Deleuze and Guattari 1980), led to a polyphonic experience involving human and more-than-human 'voice' while sensing underlying Mystery (Bateson 2004). Time was unquantifiable, as past experiences of colonisation propelled the research into present day and current climate issues were grounded in the experiences of humans wrenched from the land beneath their feet centuries before.

To ask questions with Land, to notice the boundaries of nations and the boundless relations with land of Indigenous peoples who do not live with notions of boundaries, continues to be a puzzling experience. Yet as this research enters its final year it must find a place to stop to ask, "What might happen next?" (Manning 2023). Could the cultivation of a sense of belonging (hooks 2018)

build relations with the land beneath our feet and “allow the quality of tipping that keeps life on its toes,” (Manning 2023, 109).

## **Eldership in Western society - Re-invention or evolution?**

**Meike Buegler**

University of Bedfordshire

In the context of modern Western society, elders are often seen as a burden. Western culture is dominated by values of productivity and achievement, and ‘retirement’ implies you no longer contribute to society but become a cost to it. The focus is on a ‘decrease’ in abilities, inherited from prior generations. Elders are not considered a resource for our world in crisis.

Drawing on my doctoral explorations, with self and others – now in the final year – I found other ‘Elders’ interested in following a calling to reshape our lives. We are not focused on personal contentment but on a re-source-full ‘growth’, individually and collectively, in service to improving society. My research recognizes and contributes to a growing movement among elders to develop informal communities based on an understanding of why we are here, seeing evolution as the path for transformative refinement (Sae, 2015).

This research addresses the question of how can we find our appropriate (not just convenient) life as elders (Hesse, 1928 in Largo, 2022) and step up to commune in our elder strengths beyond growth as productivity? For this, I draw on systemic exploratory constellation (Müller-Christ and Pijetlovic, 2018) and abduction pragmatic analysis (Peirce, 1934; Merk, 2023) as my methodology to find the path of individual and collective growth in consciousness and to reconceptualize retirement as re-‘source’-ment.

To understand this journey in practice, I will consider the difficulties involved in using data collection methods and dealing with ‘measurability’. The application of constellations to this topic of re-‘source’-ment provided this data. They were guided by principles enabling a multidimensional way to experience the ‘all is one’ space (Gehlert, 2025) in an embodied way (Merleau-Ponty, 1945/2013).

## **Poster Session\_1**

### **P01\_Women’s narratives on caring for people living with dementia: Exploring challenges and resources**

**Sophia Adaliali, Alexis Brailas**

Department of Psychology, Panteion University, Athens, Greece

Dementia is a growing global health issue, affecting not only those diagnosed but also their close environment, particularly family members who take on caring responsibilities. Literature highlights the disproportionate burden placed on women caregivers, underlining the need for in-depth study of this phenomenon. The present study aims to explore the experiences of women caring for people with dementia within the Greek sociocultural context, focusing on the difficulties they face, the strategies they adopt, and the psychological mechanisms they use to cope. The study is grounded in the phenomenological paradigm, seeking to highlight the subjective experience as it is lived and given meaning by the participants themselves. The participants were 12 women caregivers of different ages and social characteristics from three major Greek cities, who care for or have cared for relatives with dementia in the past. Data were produced through semi-structured interviews that integrated appreciative inquiry activities and multimodal methods, such as photo-elicitation and projective cards, which contributed to the emergence of personally meaningful multimodal narratives. Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) was used, through which common themes were identified regarding the practical and emotional challenges of caregiving, its impact on relationships and roles, fears and existential concerns, loss management, and personal sources of meaning and resilience. Caregiving was found to be an experience accompanied by a wide range of emotions, where anger, guilt, and frustration coexist with love, hope, and acts of self-care. The study concludes that caring for people with dementia is a complex and multidimensional experience, going beyond the practical aspects. As such, it requires greater recognition and support at both social and institutional levels, particularly in relation to the psychosocial support of caregivers.

### **P02\_Romantic relationships in emerging adulthood: An intercultural approach**

**Eleni Louki, Alexis Brailas**

Department of Psychology, Panteion University, Athens, Greece

This study examines romantic relationships during the period of emerging adulthood, with a particular focus on Southern European countries, specifically Greece, Italy, and Spain. Adopting a qualitative, phenomenological, and interpretative approach, it seeks to explore the lived experiences of romantic relationships within the broader sociocultural environment that shapes them. The research addresses a significant gap in the existing literature concerning romantic relationships in Southern Europe, particularly the impact of prolonged co-residence with family on relational development and autonomy. The study is grounded

in Arnett's theory of emerging adulthood, as well as the developmental frameworks proposed by Shuman & Connolly and Hochberg & Konner. Data were produced through multimodal interviews with 11 participants aged 18 to 24. The interview design integrated narrative, visual, and appreciative inquiry techniques. Thematic Analysis was employed using the QualCoder QDA software, through which five central themes were identified. The findings indicate that early cultural narratives contribute to the formation of idealized expectations regarding romantic relationships, which gradually evolve into more realistic conceptions over time. Participants demonstrated an ambivalent orientation toward love, intimacy, and commitment, reflecting a tension between the longing for deep emotional connection and the desire to maintain personal freedom. Within this context, technology plays a dual role, facilitating communication and connection while also enabling controlling and intrusive behaviors. Finally, family involvement was found to delay the process of individuation and restrict the exploration of sexuality. Within this context, technology serves a dual role, facilitating communication and connection while enabling controlling and intrusive behaviors. Finally, family involvement was found to delay the process of individuation and restrict the exploration of sexuality. Overall, this study adopts an intercultural approach, emphasizing the dynamic interplay between cultural norms, family structures, and individual experiences in shaping the meaning and expression of romantic relationships among emerging adults in Southern Europe.

### **P03\_ Understanding what keeps young refugees well: A qualitative, salutogenesis-informed study in a Greek Closed Controlled Access Centre (CCAC)**

**Chrysovalantis Papathanasiou**

University of Thessaly, Greece

**Background:** Refugee experiences are often examined through a pathogenic lens that prioritizes risk, disorder, and deficit. However, complementary evidence shows notable resilience among forcibly displaced people.

**Purpose:** To explore how young refugees living in a CCAC in Greece experience daily stressors and the ways they cope and strengthen resilience, in order to inform Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) services.

**Methods:** Nine male refugees aged 18–24 participated in three mini focus groups, each organised by native language (Arabic, French, and Farsi). A thematic analysis was conducted through a salutogenic lens, attending to how experiences and behaviours relate to Sense of Coherence (SOC) and Generalised Resistance Resources (GRRs).

**Results:** Three main themes emerged, each with subthemes. “Refugee experiences” encompassed (a) traumatic migration trajectories—exposure to war, violence, loss, and perilous journeys—and (b) post-migration powerlessness within the CCAC, marked by uncertainty, restricted freedom, hostility, discrimination, bureaucratic barriers, and unmet needs. “Psychological processes” included (a) negative emotions (fear, anxiety, grief), (b) dysfunctional reactions (psychophysiological disturbances, risk behaviours), and (c) coping strategies grouped into six modes: emotion regulation, meaning-making, self-denial, self-enhancement, seeking support, and avoidant distraction. “Social support” comprised (a) community shared values (solidarity, mutual respect, collective action) and (b) a sense of belonging (attachment, group identity), which function as GRRs that strengthen SOC. The findings are organised and presented via a thematic map that illustrates how these factors interact to enhance refugee well-being.

**Conclusions:** MHPSS interventions that prioritise peer-led support, brief skills training, everyday resilience activities, and dignity- and rights-based operations can translate a salutogenic approach into measurable gains in refugee mental health.

### **P04\_ Seeing resilience: Photovoice with refugees in a Closed Controlled Access Centre (CCAC)**

**Chrysovalantis Papathanasiou, Paraskevi Stamatini, Fani Kouroukerei**

University of Thessaly, Greece

**Background:** Since 2021, Greece has operated Closed Controlled Access Centres (CCACs) on North Aegean and Dodecanese islands to accommodate refugees arriving by sea. While the mental health harms of residing in such places are well documented, far less is known about the everyday factors that foster resilience and protect mental health within these restrictive settings.

**Purpose:** To identify resilience-enhancing factors among adult refugees residing in a CCAC.

**Methods:** A photovoice approach was employed to elicit participants' lived experiences. Nine asylum seekers from Palestine and Sierra Leone residing in the CCAC produced photographs depicting what supported their resilience, wrote captions, and engaged in facilitated group dialogues. The data comprised images, captions, and discussion transcripts. Thematic analysis was conducted collaboratively by participants and researchers to enhance credibility and interpretive depth.

**Results:** Three interrelated themes emerged. The first concerned “Values”, encompassing both personal elements such as faith, hope, and self-respect, and interpersonal elements such as dignity, solidarity, and reciprocity. The second centered on “Actions”, highlighting the role of social support (peers, trusted staff, community groups), self-activation (setting goals, building routines, helping others), and capacities (skills, problem-solving, language learning). The third theme captured “Existential Connections” to nature, spirituality, and memories of home, which provided meaning, continuity, and calm.

**Conclusions:** Participatory meaning-making enabled participants to articulate the assets and needs that shape their daily

mental health, with immediate empowering effects. The study highlights actionable, camp-feasible measures for strengthening resilience: peer-led support, structured activities that build agency and skills, and protected spaces for dignity, faith, and contact with nature. These insights can guide quality improvements in CCAC living conditions and inform policy and programme design for mental health and psychosocial support in similarly constrained humanitarian contexts.

## **P05\_The unknown land of disability: redefining identity after amputation**

**Effrosyni Mitsi, Philia Issari**

National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, Greece

A coherent disability identity is considered a key factor in facilitating psychological adjustment to acquired disability, particularly in the context of social stressors and daily functional demands. The present qualitative study explored experiences of people who use prosthetic devices after low limb amputation. The sample was purposeful and comprised of twelve men who participated in individual interviews, consisting of questions framed in an open way to explore their lived experience. The research data was analyzed using Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis and produced six group experiential themes (superordinate themes) namely 1) the experience of amputation 2) the experience of prosthetics use 3) supportive factors during rehabilitation 4) barriers during rehabilitation 5) body image and prosthesis 6) self-awareness and identity integration. Participants reported that psychotherapy, physical activity, the arts, and community engagement not only provided significant support during rehabilitation but also served as empowering means for constructing a disabled identity. Prior to amputation, some participants had not been involved in sports or the arts. These domains helped them perceive their disabled bodies as capable and contributed to a positive redefinition of their new identity. Engaging with disability narratives allows rehabilitation psychologists to refine theoretical frameworks and develop empirically grounded approaches to understanding the psychosocial dimensions of identity reconstruction.

## **P06\_Supporting young children's social and emotional development through music therapy**

**Raquel Ravaglioli<sup>1</sup>, Carol Ann Blank<sup>2</sup>, Andrew Knight<sup>3</sup>, Helen Dolas<sup>4</sup>**

<sup>1</sup>Biola University, United States of America; <sup>2</sup>Music Therapy Services of Central NJ LLC; <sup>3</sup>Colorado State University;

<sup>4</sup>Able Arts Work

Music therapy is the clinical and evidence-based use of music to achieve individualized goals. Using music therapy in early childhood addresses social/emotional development, language and literacy, cognition, and perceptual motor and physical development. This study consisted of a series of investigations including clinical music therapy sessions collaborating with early childhood classroom over a period of time. This poster illustrates the process of how music therapy improved externalizing behaviors, internalizing behaviors, and adaptive skills. In addition to clinical practices, this poster also represents results from this study which concluded in professional development training courses addressing trauma-informed practices, holistic approaches to development, differentiated instruction, the use of verbal skills in working with early childhood, supporting early childhood with musical elements, and supporting early childhood with musical elements.

## **P07\_Social imaginaries of school principals about AI in future education: a study from croatia**

**Lovro Knežević, Josip Ježovita, Miriam Mary Brgles, Marina Merkaš, Lana Batinić, Lana Ciboci Perša, Ana Haramina, Ana Žulec Ivanković**

Catholic University of Croatia, Croatia

In the context of digital sociology (Nassehi, 2024), this paper examines how success of AI in schools depends on structures of expectation, linking this issue to broader debates on sociotechnical imaginaries (Taylor, 2004) understood as “collectively held and performed visions of desirable futures” (Jasanoff, 2015). These insights cannot provide predictions of development, but they do provide a picture of ideas that will be at play when establishing a new way of working in schools primarily through the decisions of the principals. This poster presents findings from the “BrAIIn” project – Application of digital technologies based on artificial intelligence in education. Its aim is to examine how principals of public schools in Croatia conceptualize the role of artificial intelligence in transforming education. Drawing on findings from interviews with school principals (N = 22), the poster highlights key expectations, concerns, and opportunities voiced during the 2024/2025 school year in Croatian public primary and secondary schools. Principals mostly agree that artificial intelligence will certainly change education, primarily serving as an assistant, a tool that will enable the automation of administration and facilitate the creation of fully customized and individualized educational experiences through faster processing and availability of information. Nevertheless, AI will not be able to replace teachers, their human presence and emotions. In this regard, they however note that digital technology generally has reduced interpersonal contact in the school community, which needs to be addressed to preserve the key human and social component important especially for their leading of the collective.

## **P08\_Report on the physical and material environment of children with special educational needs when they start school**

**Floriane Moulin**<sup>1,2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>HEP-Vaud, Switzerland; <sup>2</sup>Université Genève

The transition between preschool and primary school is often experienced as a complex period (Seabra-Santos et al., 2022), particularly for children with special educational needs (SEN) and their families. Indeed, this transition involves a shift between two environments and a relationship to space and materiality that is experienced differently by children, thereby altering their interactions. While the preschool setting tends to promote a more flexible environment—allowing children to move freely, choose their activities, and use adaptable materials—the entry into school often marks a rupture, where space becomes more structured, oriented toward academic learning, with controlled movements and fixed materials.

However, according to Freire's (1974) critical pedagogy, the school space is not merely a physical environment but also a political place where different dynamics emerge. From this perspective, professionals (teachers, educators) are actively engaged in constructing the relationships between children, spaces, materials, and so on.

This poster will present a study on the transition experiences of eight four-year-old children with SEN. Funded by the Swiss National Science Foundation, this research employed the mosaic approach to access children's lived experiences (Clark & Moss, 2011). Eight sessions took place—four in preschool and four in school—following the same structure. During these sessions, the child and the researcher engaged in playful and creative activities (e.g., games, puppet play, microphone discussions/songs, guided environmental tours, photography, drawing, crafts, etc.). Each child created a transition book illustrating their experiences in preschool and school.

The poster will detail the creative and participatory methodology of this research and focus on one specific aspect of the results: children's relationships with space and materials in preschool and school settings. We will discuss (1) the different relationships to space and materials in preschool and school, and (2) the importance of considering spatial and material dimensions as key components of the transition experience.

## **P09\_Parenting Values and Practices in raising school-aged Children: A Narrative Therapy Perspective**

**Georgios Vleioras<sup>1</sup>, Maria Christina Katsarou<sup>1</sup>, Emmanouela Mante<sup>1</sup>, Ilias Vasileiadis<sup>2</sup>, Xanthoula Papapanagiotou<sup>1</sup>**

<sup>1</sup>University of Thessaly, Greece; <sup>2</sup>University of Western Macedonia, Greece

While parents' aspirations and values are central to children's developmental pathways, little is known about how they are expressed and enacted within contemporary Greek families. Our theoretical background is the narrative approach to therapy, a respectful, non-blaming approach to therapy and community work. A central metaphor of this approach is the distinction between the landscape of identity (what people find important, what they value) and the landscape of action (what they do, as an expression of the landscape of identity). In this study, we adapted these metaphors to parenting: The landscape of identity captures what parents find important for their children's upbringing, and the landscape of action reflects how these values shape parenting practices. Our aim was to map the interplay of the two landscapes. Twenty Greek mothers of school-aged children participated in semi-structured interviews; their answers were analysed using reflexive thematic analysis. We identified several key aspects of the landscape of identity, including well-being, schooling and future occupation, alongside aspects of the landscape of action, such as guiding, structuring opportunities and seeking help. Findings provide a broad view of the ways parents articulate values and enact them in daily parenting, highlighting connections between aspirations and practices.

## **P10\_Online peer to peer support: A qualitative analysis of Facebook groups for people with borderline personality disorder (BPD)**

**Chrysovalantis Papathanasiou**

University of Thessaly, Greece

**Background:** Facebook groups are everyday spaces of mutual support for people with mental health difficulties, yet the types of support exchanged and the conditions shaping participation are underdescribed.

**Purpose:** To explore how members of BPD-focused virtual communities interact, what kinds of support they seek, and how platform and group-context factors shape participation.

**Methods:** Written posts, visual materials, and comment-thread dialogues from two Greek language Facebook peer support groups that differed in structure and operation (one closed, one more open) were analysed using a netnographic approach and reflexive thematic analysis (RTA).

**Results:** Netnographic observations showed unstable engagement: some members joined, left, and later returned; active participation often declined when individuals reported feeling better. Stigma and privacy concerns—e.g., doubts about protection in “closed” settings and denial of diagnosis—produced many post views but few reactions and even fewer comments. Boundary tensions appeared (disagreements, intense dyadic attachments, exits as “overexposure”), and attempts to move to synchronous contact (e.g., Skype) stalled due to fear of exposure. In the more open group, mental health professionals were largely passive

observers, and occasional participation by people with other diagnoses further blurred the group's focus. RTA identified four main themes capturing the support ecology: (1) emotional and existential support (validation, encouragement, affirmation, meaning-making); (2) psychoeducational and coaching support (lay knowledge and lived experience about therapies, providers, medications, skills such as DBT strategies, grounding, problem-solving); (3) practical and socioeconomic support (signposting to benefits/services, everyday logistics); and (4) community cohesion, rules, and platform support (off-topic bonding, clarifying group rules, and technical/privacy issues).

Conclusions: Facebook peer groups can provide rapid validation, signposting, and skills microinterventions for people with BPD, but low active engagement, stigma-driven caution, and risk management gaps limit impact. Clear rules, graded participation pathways, crisis protocols, and stronger links to services may enhance benefits while mitigating harms.

## **P11\_Navigating Ethics in Autoethnography: In between Participant and Researcher in a Creative Video Art Workshop in a Danish psychiatric facility for outpatient young adults**

**Andrea Nomi Stokic Dam<sup>1</sup>, Keld Stehr Nielsen<sup>2</sup>, Lisbeth Frolunde<sup>3</sup>**

<sup>1</sup>The Capital Region of Denmark, Denmark; <sup>2</sup>Center for Arts and Mental Health; <sup>3</sup>University of Roskilde

I am employed as both researcher at the Center for Arts and Mental Health (CKMS), located at a Danish psychiatric facility in Copenhagen. My academic background is in philosophy and economics, and I have previously researched and participated in creative writing groups at the same facility.

I am developing an autoethnographic case study, based on a 15-week creative video art workshop at CKMS in late 2025, involving young adults (aged 25-35) with lived experience as psychiatric patients. My dual role as participating autoethnographic researcher and insider (as former user/patient) provides access to unique insights and shifting perspectives, but also raises ethical and epistemological tensions.

In the video art workshop sessions, I explore how to work creatively and intuitively with my hands and eyes. It feels like “falling into decisions” without calculating consequences, and each session brings a surprising sense of discovery. This uncertainty often leaves me in ethical dilemmas related to my research.

The main question I bring to ECQI is:

How can my experience become valuable and transparent as experiential background knowledge for ethically analyzing the video art workshop's dynamics?

The poster explores this question through four thematic headlines and corresponding empirical examples:

- 1.How to keep a focus on group dynamics with the use of autoethnographic methods?
- 2.How does the reveal of a researcher as a 'real' person who shares videos and stories impact the group?
- 3.What and whose truth am I telling?
- 4.What ethical concerns arise about publishing from insider-as-researcher perspectives?

Contribution

This poster contributes to ongoing discussions about how insiders-as-researchers can engage ethically in qualitative inquiry. I reflect on concrete examples while exploring the potential of user perspectives to reshape psychiatric research discourses. Ideally, this leads to broader normative questions about integrity, access to knowledge production, and how lived experience can inform practical and political change.

## **P12\_Moving in Parallel Systems: Challenges and Perspectives of Trainees in Systemic Psychotherapy Working in Public Mental Health Settings and NGOs in Greece**

**Eleni Gastouniotou, Konstantina Belisakou, Theodoros Karkatsoulis, Ioanna Markozannes, Marianna Siganoou, Martha Velonaki, Rossetos Gournellis, Valeria Pomini**

EPIPSI University Mental Health, Neurosciences, & Precision Medicine Research Institute 'Costas Stefanis', Athens, Greece, Greece

Training in systemic psychotherapy is a dynamic process that influences the professional and personal development of trainees, especially when combined with work in public mental health settings and NGOs. This study explores the challenges, experiences, and perspectives of these professionals through a qualitative content analysis based on a focus group with eight participants (psychologists, psychiatrist resident, child and adolescent psychiatrists residents). Five key thematic areas emerged: the personal journey and the impact of the educational experience, the balance between training and professional identity, the application of systemic thinking in the workplace, the effects of the socio-economic context on Greece's public mental health system, and the resilience and future prospects of professionals. The first results indicate that, despite institutional difficulties, understaffing, and psychological burden, trainees develop adaptive strategies, strengthening both their professional identity and resilience. While the study highlights the need for greater institutional support and better integration of systemic thinking into professional practice, it also acknowledges the importance of viewing trainees as embedded within systems from a relational

perspective on emerging issues.

### **P13\_Materializing self advocacy skills with families of students with special educational needs**

**Delphine Odier-Guedj<sup>1</sup>, Stéphanie Rothen Froidevaux<sup>2</sup>, Marie-Pierre Vanderborght<sup>3</sup>**

<sup>1</sup>Haute école pédagogique du canton de vaud, Switzerland; <sup>2</sup>Haute école pédagogique du canton de vaud, Switzerland; <sup>3</sup>Haute école pédagogique du canton de vaud, Switzerland

Self-advocacy refers to speaking up for oneself, expressing one's needs, and defending one's interests (Test et al., 2005). It is a core component of the broader concept of self-determination, through which individuals live autonomous lives and make decisions independently (Wehmeyer et al., 2003). In the school context of the Canton of Vaud (Switzerland), students with special educational needs (SEN) are expected to become self-advocates to discuss and ensure the implementation of the support they require. However, these skills develop gradually, beginning in early childhood through everyday experiences. Therefore, family involvement is crucial in supporting their acquisition. Our current research project aims to develop 11 self-advocacy skills for students with SEN. Funded by the Swiss Federal Office for the Equality of People with Disabilities and the University of Teacher Education of the Canton of Vaud, this participatory action research involves families in co-creating materials to be used with their children. Two groups of co-researchers participate: four adolescents and three mothers, collaborating with two researchers. The resulting materials will later be shared through an open-access platform for wider use by families. This poster presents how we collaboratively conceptualized and designed agentic materials (Snaza et al., 2016), enabling families to engage in "series of situations" (Dewey, 1998) that, through lived experience, can transform both individuals and their environments. We will describe the iterative work cycles with co-researchers and families that led to the co-construction and adaptation of multimodal learning materials, as well as examples of the resources that emerged from this creative and participatory process.

Snaza, N., Sonu, D., Truman, S. E., & Zaliwska, Z. (2016). [Introduction to] Pedagogical Matters: New Materialisms and Curriculum Studies. Peter Lang Publishing, Inc..

### **P14\_Exploring children's inner worlds through projective storytelling: Methodological insights from the LI.ST. test**

**Evangelia Markopoulou, Eleftheria Sourmpa, Anastasia Riza, Lissy Canellopoulos**

Laboratory of Clinical Research: Subjectivity and Social Bond, Department of Psychology, National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, Greece

This presentation examines the methodological value of projective storytelling as a qualitative research tool for investigating children's subjective experiences. Research with children requires approaches that are both ethically sensitive and developmentally attuned. Projective techniques provide children with symbolic and indirect means to articulate subjective experiences and meaning. The presentation will focus on the development and adaptation of the Lissy Storytelling test (LI.ST), a projective story completion test designed for children aged 3–12, within the Greek population. The tool was developed by the Laboratory of Clinical Research: Subjectivity and Social Bond at the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens and is currently being applied in empirical studies investigating children's experiences of trauma and resilience. Specifically, the LI.ST. Test has been utilized in research with children in flood-affected areas of Thessaly following Storm Daniel and with children diagnosed with neoplastic diseases. In these studies, the LI.ST. Test is employed alongside other qualitative methods, including semi-structured interviews and children's drawings, to enhance interpretive depth. Preliminary findings indicate that projective storytelling offers a symbolic and psychologically safe way for children to talk about traumatic experiences. The method's indirect nature appears to reduce defensiveness and promote narrative elaboration, thereby enhancing both data richness and helping children to process distressing experiences in a mediated, less threatening manner. The presentation will discuss methodological considerations, ethical implications, and future research directions, underscoring the contribution of projective storytelling to qualitative research with children.

### **P15\_Collaborative inquiry at the margins: exploring systems change with houseless youth**

**Pushpanjali Dashora, Selina Verklund**

University of Alberta, Canada

In response to pressing global and local crises affecting marginalized Canadian youth, this study engages houseless young people as co-researchers in a two-phase participatory intervention grounded in an Ecological Systems approach. Rooted in collaborative and arts-based qualitative practice, the project centers youth voices and agency through storytelling, multimodal expression, and cross-sector dialogue. In the first phase, homeless youth (N=20) will individually complete a locator form, a demographic questionnaire, and a self-efficacy scale. Next, the same youth will participate in two focus groups composed of 10 youth each group. Youth will be asked about 1) current struggles and needs, 2) resources/services utilized, 3) barriers in accessing

resources/services, and 4) possible solutions for improvements in service-delivery system. The focus group interviews will be audio-recorded and themes will be developed based on the grounded theory approach (Charmaz, 2008). These collective narratives inform a series of participatory video workshops designed as creative, dialogic spaces. Over six weeks, youth will learn to script, film, and edit short videos highlighting their lived experiences and will be encouraged to view and discuss each other's videos, fostering community, resilience, and awareness of common struggles and resources. In Phase II, the youth-generated content will be woven into a 20-minute composite film which will then be presented to a small group (4–6) of community stakeholders (i.e., policy makers and service providers) in a facilitated focus group designed to explore the video's potential to shift perspectives and practices. This study will present findings from the assessments and focus group interviews conducted with houseless youth in Phase I. By foregrounding youth creativity, collaboration, and collective meaning-making, this study speaks to broader global conversations around equity, interdependence, and shared vulnerability. This research highlights the transformative power of community-led, arts-based inquiry in navigating complex socio-political landscapes and fostering hope in challenging times.

## **P18\_A phenomenological exploration into primary school teacher's lived experience of workplace bullying in primary schools in the UK**

**Maria Galani**

New School of Psychotherapy & Counselling/Middlesex University London, UK, United Kingdom

**Introduction:** Workplace bullying is defined as a systematic and prolonged mistreatment of one or more employees by supervisors and/or colleagues at the workplace, and where the targets also find it difficult to defend themselves against the harassment (Einarsen, Hoel, et al., 2020).

Workplace bullying has received significant international attention in the literature with a wide range of books and articles in occupational health, medicine, epidemiology, psychology and management, in fact the field of study has exploded exponentially.

While much quantitative studies to date have focused on prevalence, cost, behaviours, effects and consequences, far fewer qualitative studies have sought to explore the subjective/lived experiences of the employees who have been targets of workplace bullying, and even fewer have investigated the experiences of primary school educators from an existential/phenomenological perspective.

**Aim of study:** This study seeks to address that gap by exploring how primary school teachers experience and make sense of workplace bullying in their professional lives.

**Research methodology:** A phenomenological research design was employed, specifically interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA). Semi-structured interviews were conducted with two primary school teachers, providing rich, first-person accounts. Data were analysed thematically to identify recurring patterns and underlying meanings within participants' narratives.

**Preliminary findings:** Preliminary findings highlight three key themes: lack of belonging/feelings of isolation, professional identity being undermined, institutional complicity and silence. These insights reveal the impact of workplace bullying on the sense of self of each participant, and how, as a phenomenon, it can be silenced within the school environment.

**Conclusion:** The study contributes to a deeper understanding of workplace bullying in primary education and underlines the urgent need for interventions that prioritise teacher wellbeing.

## **KEYNOTE\_2**

### **Public engagement with research in changing times**

**Kenneth Skeldon**

CIVIS Open Lab Coordinator at University of Glasgow, Scotland, President of the European Science Engagement Association

Public engagement with research has a prominent role to play in today's research landscape, which is hallmarked by complex, interconnected, and deeply embedded challenges relevant to our everyday lives.

Over the past few decades, interactions between research communities and publics have changed, becoming more attuned to building trusted relationships, addressing real-world concerns, and involving people more deeply in the research journeys that ultimately affect them. Added to this, the rise of misinformation and misgivings around academic expertise, makes it more important than ever to foster inclusive and democratic forms of knowledge creation.

For qualitative inquiry-based research this is very relevant, with participatory and engaged approaches foregrounding the very purpose of research and encouraging the inclusion of people's lived experiences, the voices of underrepresented communities, and in spotlighting different social and cultural contexts.

However, important questions remain - such as how to further break down the barriers between academia and society and how we address practical impedances to help individual researchers or teams build and sustain community-research partnerships.

This presentation will explore these issues, while sharing some experiences from the European Science Engagement Associ-

ation, which turns 25 years old in 2026 and represents a diverse family of Universities, NGOs, cultural bodies and other actors sharing a common interest to advance public engagement within the research and innovation ecosystem. Some current resources and initiatives will also be highlighted for those interested to develop networks or ideas further.

## ORAL SESSION\_3: Mobility, Immigrant, Transnational experiences

### **When recruitment becomes knowledge: Reflexive insights from research with Russian-speaking immigrant families in mental health contexts**

**Evgeny Knaifel**

Ashkelon Academic College, Israel

This study examines the challenges of recruiting “hard-to-reach” populations in qualitative research and explores how these challenges can themselves generate knowledge. The research focuses on Russian-speaking immigrants from the former Soviet Union (FSU) in Israel who care for a family member with a severe mental illness.

Participants were recruited using purposive and snowball sampling. Data collection included in-depth semi-structured interviews, with reflexive attention to the researcher’s positionality as both a social worker and cultural insider. Recruitment difficulties, refusals, and ambivalent responses were systematically recorded and analyzed alongside the interview narratives to reveal the broader social meanings embedded in participation and non-participation.

Recruitment was shaped by cultural and institutional factors, including mistrust of authorities, prior experiences with mental health systems, and concerns about privacy and exposure. Gendered caregiving norms were evident: most participants were women, often mothers, while fathers and other family caregivers were largely absent, reflecting broader socio-cultural patterns. The researcher’s professional identity facilitated access but also introduced ethical and reflexive complexities, as participants navigated the tension between researcher, helper, and cultural peer. Engaging participants in culturally adapted settings, such as Russian-speaking family psychoeducational groups, increased participation and strengthened immigrant caregivers’ sense of empowerment and inclusion.

The study demonstrates that recruitment processes can serve as a source of epistemic insight, revealing participants’ lived experiences, relational strategies, and negotiations of power and trust. Recruitment challenges should not be regarded merely as methodological obstacles but as an integral component of relational and cultural knowledge. Insights elicited during the recruitment process can be treated as an independent source of data and as a potential means of triangulating the findings derived from the research interviews.

### **Polarisation, responsabilisation and affective climates: navigating work and Life as immigrant professionals in Finland**

**Tero Montonen<sup>1</sup>, Päivi Eriksson<sup>1</sup>, Piritta Parkkari<sup>1</sup>, Tiina Rättilä<sup>2</sup>**

<sup>1</sup>University of Eastern Finland, Finland; <sup>2</sup>University of Tampere, Finland

The political climate in Finland regarding immigration is polarised. The country needs labour migration to address future demographic changes and labour shortages in key sectors. At the same time, many immigrants do not feel welcome. This tension raises a key question: how do highly educated immigrants, who are both wanted and unwanted, navigate their position in Finnish society and working life?

This question is not only rhetorical but also shapes immigrants’ everyday realities. Public discourse and policy increasingly present immigrants’ inclusion as requiring individuals to take more responsibility for their work and life. Yet these demands collide with immigrants’ experience that, however hard they try, it may have little effect on feeling included. This individually experienced dilemma is acutely affective: immigrants often live within a rollercoaster of suspicion, frustration, hope and recognition.

Our study is situated at this intersection of polarisation, responsabilisation and affective climates. We examine how highly educated immigrants navigate of work and life in Finland by mobilising or abandoning narrative resources in order to sustain work careers and personal lives that matter to them.

In our study, we analyse in-depth interviews thematically and comparatively, while also tracing the narrative undercurrents of hope, frustration, exhaustion and resilience. Particular attention is paid to similarities and variations within and across the professional fields of health and business. Our study demonstrates how political and labour market discourses resonate in everyday immigrant experiences, shaping these through affective conditions.

### **A Qualitative Study of Well-being and Mobility: A Narrative and Visual Exploration of Mobility Experiences of Greek students and professionals**

**Avra {Stavroula} Laou, Philia Issari, Antigoni Apostolopoulou, Mara Kourtoglou, Myrsini Kyriakidou**

National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, Greece

Well-being is a critical aspect of human experience, particularly in the context of geographic mobility. This qualitative study, which was funded by the Hellenic Foundation of Research and Innovation (H.F.R.I.), explores the lived experiences and conceptualizations of well-being in relation to mobility. We conducted 80 biographical narrative interviews and used visual methods (photovoice) to explore how well-being is constructed, challenged, and prioritized across four groups: students in Greece contemplating moving abroad, postgraduate students studying abroad, professionals settled abroad, and returnees to Greece. The findings reveal a dynamic interplay of individual, relational, environmental, and cultural factors, with professionals abroad highlighting the dichotomy between professional advantages and social ties in Greece. Additionally, an ecological dimension of well-being emerges, as participants emphasize the role of sustainable environments, access to natural spaces, and balanced lifestyles in mitigating the psychological challenges associated with brain drain. These findings underscore the centrality of well-being in life decisions and the need for holistic, context-sensitive approaches in policy and practice. The study offers novel insights into the psychosocial dynamics of mobility, proposing targeted interventions to enhance well-being.

## **Social pathologies in education: migration, gender, and inequalities in China**

**Dan Zhang**

East China Normal University, China, People's Republic of

The adverse effects of globalization in education are cruelly felt in both South and North countries. They are experienced in extended neo-liberal policies and privatization or weakened care and welfare for the most disadvantaged. The spread of capitalism accelerates technical and managerial modernizing processes, with profitable investments in human capital using neuroscience, digitalization and AI as a source of legitimation. This intensified international competition strengthens inequalities and discriminations, while fostering feelings of humiliation and injustice for those who are not considered of as “talented” or “gifted” and being excluded, despite inclusive policies, from paths to “meritocratic” excellence and cosmopolitan elite. But social barriers are even higher for those who are far from big cities where education and employment are being redefined to meet globalizing and digitalizing standards. The quest for modernity in China leads to numerous social gaps and pathologies: suffering, burn-out and stress, often described as psychosocial risks, but also imposed migration due to urbanization, rural exodus and work uberization; competition in accessing educational resources as such as diplomas and certifications. These new impoverishing and marginalizing conditions, as the contribution shows, distort people lives and experiences by promoting individualistic interests, destroying not only traditional modes of solidarity, but also local cultures on behalf of rationalization, effectiveness and performance. At the same time, Chinese cultural modes of existence and moral commitments are denied. These social pathologies give rise to growing claims for recognition and justice, while new kinds of alienation and dependence are developing, with Chinese minorities, particularly gender diverse individuals, facing increased victimization, racialization and stigmatization. This adds a focus on gender alongside the existing issues of race and minority status.

## **Cartography of Affections and Care in Transnational Families: Perspectives of Rural Psychologists in Honduras**

**João Henrique Borges-Bento, Marco Gemignani**

Universidad Loyola Andalucía, Spain

In a context of increasing international migration, new forms of family organization emerge, acting as desiring machines that reconfigure emotional bonds and care arrangements beyond physical borders. These transnational families generate new flows of affection, responsibility, and support that challenge the traditional notion of the nuclear family. This study explored the perceptions and experiences of psychologists in a rural community in Honduras regarding transnational families. The methodology employed was schizoanalytic cartography, conceived as a mapping of affective flows, care relationships, and desiring assemblages, inspired by the ideas of Deleuze and Guattari. Rather than producing a static or hierarchical description, this cartography traces the movements, connections, and transformations of desire and care within and across family networks. Data were collected through 15 in-depth interviews and one focus group. Analyses drew on schizoanalysis to examine how professional discourses articulate desire, social control, and representations of the family. Preliminary results reveal two main findings. The first is the psychologists' persistent desire to maintain a family structure that keeps both parents present, interpreting the absence of migrant mothers and fathers as an affective lack. In many cases, this emphasis on “absence” may reflect the professional's social expectations, which do not always fully capture the diverse experiences of children. From a schizoanalytic perspective, children can engage in processes of affective deterritorialization and experiment with new ways of assembling care. Similarly, the second theme highlights a predominantly negative view of parental migration, often focusing on potential challenges for children, which can contribute to a normative desiring framework centered on the nuclear family, but these interpretations coexist with other, more flexible and creative family arrangements. Understanding these families through schizoanalytic cartography makes visible the multiple care arrangements, creative strategies for maintaining connections, and ways in which affections are reorganized beyond the normative frameworks of the traditional family.

### Post-age childing methodologies: image-ning without a subject in performative videography

Karin Murriss<sup>1</sup>, Soern Finn Menning<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>University of Oulu, Finland; <sup>2</sup>University of Agder, Norway

This presentation introduces *childing* as a post-age methodology through a choreographed video drawn from the research project *Small Matters: An Educational Community Project about Multispecies Death and Dying* (2023–2026), funded by the Research Council of Finland. The project brings together ‘small matters’ - young children, viruses, insects, microbes, plastics, and digital trace - as political agents in spaces where they are usually excluded from conversations about death and dying.

While the example comes from this project, *childing* methodologies are *post-age*. Like the ‘post’ in posthumanism, *post-age* is not about leaving childhood behind, but about troubling developmental and chronological conceptions of time. Childhood here is not a stage of becoming but a mode of *being-with*, a relational, intensive orientation ‘to’ the world. The referent of this performative practice is not ‘the’ child: there is no individualised, developing subject en route to maturity. *Childing* decentres the (adult) human and opens material-discursive possibilities for research by reconfiguring how knowledge, time, and agency are produced.

As a *childing methodology*, performative videography treats video not as a representational tool but as an intra-active participant in the enquiry - an apparatus that co-creates knowledge through movement, rhythm, and affect. Aligned with the conference theme, it engages the intricate interplay between human and more-than-human forces. In our example, video editing techniques such as slow motion, repetition, and reverse cuts enact the temporal complexity of children’s philosophical play about death and dying. Rather than documenting, performative videography *thinks-with* material, sound, and gesture - inviting the viewer to *experience* the entanglement of image, body, and thought beyond the boundaries of the human subject.

### Supporting children’s social and emotional development through music therapy: A professional development learning center

Raquel Ravaglioli<sup>1</sup>, Carol Ann Blank<sup>2</sup>, Andrew Knight<sup>3</sup>, Helen Dolas<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Biola University, Los Angeles, CA; <sup>2</sup>Music Therapy Services of Central NJ LLC; <sup>3</sup>Colorado State University; <sup>4</sup>Able Arts Work

Music therapy is the clinical and evidence-based use of music to achieve individualized goals. Using music therapy in early childhood addresses social/emotional development, language and literacy, cognition, and perceptual motor and physical development. This convergent parallel study consisted of a series of investigations, some qualitative and some quantitative over different time periods. Results concluded that music therapy improved externalizing behaviors, internalizing behaviors, and adaptive skills. In conclusion, an environment rooted in respect for children’s right to participate in music associated with their culture drives our clinical decision-making as we design and implement session plans to support all learners. From these results, the research team designed an online learning center for professional development training including courses on trauma-informed practices, holistic approaches to development, differentiated instruction, the use of verbal skills in working with early childhood, supporting early childhood with musical elements, and supporting early childhood with musical elements.

### Unsettling concepts, shifting positions: Ethnography of children’s practices of belonging and intergroup relations in superdiverse schools

Akim Said Aalou

Vrije Universiteit Brussel (VUB), Belgium

This paper offers a methodological reflection on conducting ethnographic research with children in superdiverse schools: sites where global flows, institutional norms, and children’s everyday practices intersect. Drawing on a prestudy using participant observation in the least-adult role, I consider the challenges and possibilities of researching children’s school experiences. I begin from a critical reading of the dominant concepts of “sense of school belonging” and “homophily,” which risk reducing belonging to subjective feeling and reify the supposed centrality of similarity, rather than attending to how children actively navigate the familiar and unfamiliar.

Foregrounding methodological experiences and claims, I discuss how moving between different modes of ethnographic engagement — from participative to more detached observation, from focal-child to event-focused strategies, and from open to structured techniques — shaped what could be seen and known. I also reflect on the tensions of occupying shifting positions between least-adult participation, observation, and interviewing. These methodological choices not only structured the data I could generate but also revealed how my presence was negotiated by children and inflected their own practices and experiences.

Through this reflexive engagement, I argue that qualitative inquiry with children in superdiverse contexts requires attentiveness both to researcher positionality and to the institutional conditions in which belonging and intergroup relations are enacted. Ethnography can illuminate how children rework categories of difference and belonging, but only if theoretical and methodological frameworks remain open to being unsettled by the field itself. By critically interrogating belonging and homophily, and

reflecting on the situated dynamics of ethnographic practice, this paper contributes to broader conversations on how qualitative research can respond to interconnectedness and shared vulnerabilities while sustaining dialogical and collaborative engagements with participants.

## **Using affirmative critique to collaboratively explore evaluation in early childhood education**

**Kerstin Löf Catini**

Luleå University of Technology, Sweden

Early Childhood Education (ECE), and indeed education more broadly, has long been dominated by a neoliberal narrative that commodifies every aspect of life. As several scholars have noted, the current polycrisis reveals how this narrative is not only reductive and narrowing, but also unable to address challenges symptomatic of its own logic (Sousa & Moss, 2024). In troubling times, however, alternatives might find terrain to be formed, but as Sousa and Moss notes, alternative ideas and narratives are not enough. Accordingly, this paper aims to problematize and experiment with educational evaluation practices in ECE — not merely as an effort to re-think or re-conceptualize such practices, but to re-make them, experimenting with alternative modes of *evaluation* and, in doing so, engaging with the question of *valuing* differently.

In this paper the notion and practice of evaluation in ECE is explored by drawing on *affirmative critique*, moving beyond criticism as a distant, retrospective, and negative approach (see Staunæs, 2016). Engaging with affirmative critique—grounded in a critical perspective and informed by feminist new materialism (Barad, 2007; Haraway, 2016)—I investigate and problematize evaluation practices from within the same practice where they are enacted, collaborating with preschool professionals from two different preschool settings. Together, we affirmatively problematize existing evaluation practices in each setting, pointing to what could be otherwise, and creatively experiment with alternative ways of doing evaluation — thus both imagining and enacting possible ‘elsewheres’, humbly borrowing the term from Haraway (1992, singular in original). In the presentation, I outline the genealogy of thought underpinning the paper and present some tentative results from the ongoing analysis.

## **Whose voice do I hear? methodological reflections on interviewing parents of gay and lesbian children**

**Roy Pergal, Shani Pitcho**

Ben-Gurion University of the Negev, Israel

This presentation draws on methodological insights that emerged from my master’s thesis in social work, which explored meanings coconstructed by Israeli parents of their gay or lesbian child’s coming-out. As a gay man, an insider to the researched phenomena, I will present the methodological challenges of interviewing parents as someone who is, in many ways, their child.

This unique positioning raised pressing questions of power and voice: Whose voice am I trying to hear, and whose voice do I ultimately amplify? How do I listen authentically when I also long to hear something very specific? At times, I longed for acceptance, while parents offered confusion or silence. This revealed not only the gap between fantasy and reality, but also the methodological complexity of being both insider and outsider in the field.

A recurring experience was what I conceptualized as parents’ movement from shattered reality to new reality. Parents described the collapse of imagined life scripts, while I too faced the shattering of my fantasy—that they would say what I longed to hear from my own parents. In this parallel process, I found myself learning to accept the parents as they were, just as I once hoped my parents would accept myself and those like me, and perhaps as I wished these parents would accept their own children.

This research highlights qualitative inquiry as a dialogical and collaborative practice. The interviews and analysis process became spaces of connection across differences, where flows of meaning moved between researcher and participants, shaped by vulnerability, expectation, and context. In times of tension, such encounters show how reflexivity and positionality generate challenges and possibilities for dialogue and transformation.

By situating the researcher explicitly within the field of collaborative meaning-making, this presentation corresponds with broader methodological conversations on qualitative research as dialogical, and ethically complex.

## **DREAM TEAM\_3**

## **“Found poetry in wine” as methodology for exploring the “researcher identity” and collaborative scholarship of women in academia**

**Lauren Burrow**

Stephen F Austin State University, United States of America

Borrowing the flattery and accolades vintners reserve for wine labels

We seized the sought after acclaims, as Women

-- more deserving of those praises  
Generously pouring them out like rare “compliment cocktails”  
Filling our academic souls to the brim with  
the truths we know,  
the truths we want said aloud,  
the truths we want each other to hear  
and to feel  
and to accept  
and to hold onto ...

For years, the presenter has been conducting small, intimate qualitative studies with friends/co-authors using collaborative autoethnographic (Ellis, et al., 2011) and poetic inquiry (Faulkner, 2005) methodologies to collectively (re)examine the implications, realizations, and nuances of their shared identity as “Women in academia.” Recently, the presenter has identified a unique method of “found poetry” that successfully convenes and prompts authentic, uncensored conversations amongst co-authors so that they can discuss, dissect, and debate the definition and experiences of being Women in academia, in general (self-cite, in press), and in relation to their collaborative research endeavors. In a “dinner party-like” setting, the presenter has used wine bottles’ consumption to facilitate free-flowing conversations and the wine bottles’ labels as found poetry sources for writing free-verse poetry. In these casual settings, the presenter-led poetic writing sessions provide shared creative spaces for investigating, interrogating, and ultimately clarifying participants’ identities within their personal/professional lives so that they can better understand themselves in relation to research studies they are co-investigating.

Defining one’s positionality and recognizing one’s identity in relation to scholarly work and/or academia is essential to qualitative research because a researcher’s worldview, identity, and background can significantly influence the research process. When these individual poetry writings are composed in collective writing sessions it can assist co-authors in clarifying their positionality within their communities, classrooms, and research fields; thereby moving collaborative research forward with a more self-awareness and truthfulness.

McCullis (2013) claims that we are all surrounded by poetry and that we are drawn to poems for the joy, meanings, and memories they bring to our lives, because “they have the ability to reveal the truth of our lives more passionately than the overlying narrative” (p. 109). Similarly, Nye (2015) sings praise for poetry’s deep attribute of being able “to pause, to look, to listen, to respect, to pay attention to variety and learn something new.” Following Nye and Percer’s (2002) encouragement “to lean into our natural tendency towards poetic verse to help us make sense of these senseless time, to present our nontraditional narratives through nontraditional research practice, and to better document, for others, the beautiful complexity of our lives in a way that only poetry can capture” (self-cite, 2020), the Dream Team (DT) session presenter seeks to lead participants in a wine-based found poetry writing session with their co-authors (if also in conference attendance).

The presenter will lead DT attendees in individual self-study in a collective space using poetic inquiry “to talk about identity and communication in a more nuanced fashion” that embraces the “emotionality of doing research” (Faulkner, 2015, p. 2). Copies of wine LABELS will be provided; wine consumption (and poetry experience) is NOT required for this session but rather symbolizes that this time is meant to mimic a space where attendees can feel most natural and at ease to discuss themselves and their relationship to their research.

While all are welcome, the intended audience is self-identified Women in academia with an explicit encouragement that co-researchers attend this session together to engage in a structured version of “friendship as methodology” (Tillman-Healey, 2003) to promote the trust and safety necessary to encourage friendly conversation and later guide the raw reporting of truth telling in a way that most honestly captures poetic lives through the principles of interpretivism (Denzin, 1997) and interactive interviewing (Ellis, et al., 1997). Individual attendees are still welcomed as the goal of the DT session will not seek to capture “the totality of social life but to interpret reflectively slices and glimpses of localized interaction in order to understand more fully both others and ourselves” (Tillmann-Healy, 2003, p. 732).

The presenter hopes attendees will consider continuing this place-based poetic pursuit started in Athens, Greece by later contributing to a collective poetry publication with the present which would seek to capture the realizations of our claimed identities resulting from discussions throughout the self-study DT session.

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## DREAM TEAM\_4

### **Systemic voices for peace: Psychotherapy as political and ethical practice**

**Valeria Pomini, Eleni Gastouniotou, Theodoros Karkatsoulis**

University Mental Health, Neurosciences & Precision Medicine Research Institute “Costas Stefanis” - EIPSY , Athens, Greece

This Dream Team presentation emerges from the international initiative Systemic Voices for Peace, which invites systemic thinkers and practitioners to reflect on global crises and societal challenges through a systemic lens. Building on the Manifesto’s call for awareness, dialogue, and responsibility, our session explores the role of psychotherapy in nurturing peace, justice, and relational responsibility.

We view psychotherapy not as a neutral or apolitical practice, but as an engaged ethical stance—one that acknowledges the interconnectedness of personal, relational, and societal systems. Peace, from a systemic perspective, is not just the absence of conflict but the presence of justice, dignity, and mutual dialogue.

Through collaborative dialogue and shared reflection, we aim to share collective insights on the challenges and responsibilities that arise when systemic practice meets social and political realities. Moreover, we aim to explore psychotherapy as a space of resistance, accountability, and hope—a form of political and ethical practice that can contribute to peacebuilding within and beyond the therapy room.

In the spirit of ECQI’s commitment to relational, reflexive, and transformative inquiry, this presentation invites participants to join an open systemic dialogue about what it means to be therapists and citizens in times of global conflicts and uncertainty.

## DREAM TEAM\_5

### **The globally connected relational body**

**Mark Huhnen<sup>1,2</sup>, Claudia Canella<sup>1</sup>, Jessie Erb<sup>1,3</sup>, Alys Mendus<sup>1,4</sup>**

<sup>1</sup>Bodies collective; <sup>2</sup>Systemark; <sup>3</sup>Centred Self psychotherapy; <sup>4</sup>University of Melbourne

Mark is standing here in front of you, the bodies collective? Where is the collective? Jess and Ryan are in North America, Davina and Sarah are in the UK, Claudia in Switzerland, Alys in Australia. Karin and Tatiana are here at the conference somewhere. For different reasons they cannot be here in this room with us. Or can they? Let’s see who will join us online? Can we have some kind of physicality together? Can we breathe together across continents?

The bodies collective has been searching for collaborative practices and relational connection in what we call bodyography since first meeting at ECQI in Leuven. And since the covid pandemic we have been experimenting with physical connection over long distance. At the same time we have always questioned hierarchy, especially the hierarchy between mind and body, that seems to fit in so well into our brave new online world. What hierarchies might happen, and how can they be flattened in live in the online-extended space between us? What do we want to do together in this half-open space?

These questions will guide us in a playful collaboration to explore possibilities of experiencing connectedness in our body whilst being connected with some people online.

## ORAL SESSION\_5: Arts-based, creative methods, literary art

### **Knitting my methodology together (literally): Exploring A/r/tography as a method of inquiry**

**Filippa Kier Droob**

Aarhus University, Denmark

Against the backdrop of this year’s congress theme, this paper explores how the creative, material, and community-based practice of contemporary knitting shapes our way of being in and responding to the world. Furthermore, it asks how we might engage in qualitative inquiries while acknowledging the vibrant entanglements and assemblages of the non-human, advocating for non-textual documentation as well as speculative processes as essential parts of arts-based research.

In my ongoing PhD project, I explore the growing resurgence of knitting as a communal activity and its potential to shape the practitioner’s understanding of everyday life, asking how practices of social, material and embodied collaboration evoke forms of care and response-ability (Haraway, 2016). I advocate for a movement between the boundaries of theory and practice, one that treats making as thinking, and, as such, I experiment with qualitative methods that embrace and take the interplay between human and non-human seriously. During my time as a visiting scholar at the Faculty of Education at the University of Melbourne, I was introduced to the concept of a/r/tography. To me, the concept, which stems from an “understanding of arts-based research

as enacted living inquiry” (Springgay et al., 2005), resonated with my research’s aim of engaging with materials as active participants, and in continuation thereof, understanding how creative, embodied practices influence the ways we know and experience the world.

Based on a series of knitting workshops conducted during my research stay, I explore how a/r/tography can serve as a method for engaging participants with their everyday lives through the material act of knitting. As practiced in a/r/tography, I also draw on my own lived inquiry as a knitter, weaving in autoethnographic reflections and exploring how these experiences inform my research.

## **The Why and How of Arts-Based Methods in Management Education: Insights from a Systematic Literature Review**

**Pascale Maas, Ingrid Molderez**

KU Leuven, Belgium

The arts are becoming more common in management education to move beyond traditional teaching and prepare students for the complex, uncertain, and value-driven challenges they face in organizations and society. Despite their growing application, the field remains fragmented, marked by divergent definitions, epistemological foundations, and varying degrees of artistic integration. This paper addresses this fragmentation by drawing on 70 qualitative case studies that highlight aesthetic epistemologies as well as constructivist and experiential approaches.

This study explores how the arts are integrated into business education in diverse forms such as poetry, photography, and performance. It does so through a systematic review of peer-reviewed research (1998 and 2024). The study follows PRISMA standards and employs a transparent, traceable methodology supported by Zotero, R, and OSF. This process strengthens credibility and rigor in qualitative reviews which is increasingly relevant with the growing use of AI.

Thematic coding synthesizes key debates and epistemological foundations in the literature, deepening understanding of artistic inquiry and its educational intentions. It also showcases methodological diversity while highlighting the strengths and limitations of these experimental and creative practices, particularly in transdisciplinary settings.

Building on these insights, this paper introduces a comparative framework that makes a distinction between arts-based, arts-informed, and arts-related teaching methods. This framework positions practices along a continuum of artistic integration, ranging from immersive to illustrative uses of art, while clarifying their educational purposes and outcomes. The framework clarifies different ways of integrating art in qualitative inquiry and reducing ambiguity in terminology.

By mapping both the ‘why’ and the ‘how’ of integrating art, the study advances theoretical clarity, provides educators with a practical tool for reflection, and supports transdisciplinary research on the transformative potential of the arts. It also fosters methodological innovation and sparks critical discussion on the role of arts-based inquiry in transdisciplinary settings.

## **A Psychogeography of Florence: Art and Writing on the Immanent Plane**

**Paul Rhodes**

University of Sydney, Australia

This presentation is a blend of immanent writing, psychogeography and street-art based on a long-term visit to Florence, the cradle of the Renaissance, to ask questions about the contemporary return of fascism in Europe. It is born from a curiosity with British poets in Florence, colonials but also radicals who provide an ideal position for an interrogation of politics and place. The aim is to follow the lives of Grand Tour poets, exploring their own resistance to British culture to develop an artist-based reflection of Italian protest, but also wider assemblages of dissent. The talk will involve the presentation of twelve art works accompanied by immanent writing, poetry and movement.

## **Teaching Writing as an Art Form in an Out-of-school Context**

**Sofie Lundell<sup>1</sup>, Sofia Jusslin<sup>2</sup>**

<sup>1</sup>Åbo Akademi, Finland; <sup>2</sup>University of Helsinki, Finland

This study explores the teaching of writing as an art form, based on teachers’ experiences. More specifically, it focuses on creative writing as an out-of-school activity and the art form known in Finland as *literary art* (*Swe. ordkonst*). The aim of the study is to explore how teachers of literary art for children and youth, within the context of basic education in the arts in Finland, express their teaching practices. We pose the following research question: *What do literary art teachers express that they do in literary art education within basic education in the arts?* The study is grounded in performative theoretical perspectives, based on relational ontology, and we use poetic inquiry as method of analysis. Expressions from six literary art teachers are interwoven into five research poems. The results show that teachers in literary art emphasize writing as an art form and highlight writing as a complex, moving, affective, unpredictable, and co-creative process. The role of the literary art teacher can be seen as hybrid, where the teacher is simultaneously a writing artist, educator, and reader.

## Exploring polyamorous lives through participant-created collage: Visualizing relational connections

Lindsay Hayes

University of Edinburgh

This presentation discusses findings from an arts-based qualitative activity that is part of a longitudinal PhD thesis project. The larger study explores the lived experiences of a polyamorous network (polycule). Eight members of an interconnected polycule were invited to create individual collages that visually represented their personal journeys, identities, and relational dynamics within polyamory. Drawing on feminist, queer, and relational ontologies, this project privileges participant meaning-making, inviting multiple truths to coexist in visual and narrative form.

Collage, as both method and product, offers a unique way to access and represent the layered, non-linear, and affectively rich terrain of polyamorous life. Participants engaged the medium to explore themes such as boundary negotiation, fluid kinship, emotional labor, and the interplay of autonomy and connection.

The resulting presentation features reproductions of all collages, accompanied by brief participant narratives and key interpretive themes that emerged. Through this multimodal presentation, the project seeks not only to illuminate how polyamorous people conceptualize and communicate the complexities of their relationships, but also to foreground the potential of visual methodologies in qualitative research on intimate life.

This work contributes to broader conversations in sexuality studies, visual sociology, and arts-based research by demonstrating how creative expression can make space for voices often marginalized in normative narratives of love and partnership. The presentation invites viewers to engage visually, emotionally, and intellectually with the participants' representations, and to consider how collage can serve as both an archive of experience and a form of resistance to dominant relational scripts.

## PANEL\_4

### What else can a body do? Diffracting Bodying Methodologies for Moving with Matters

Chair(s): **EJ Renold** (Manchester Metropolitan University, United Kingdom)

Discussant(s): **EJ Renold** (Manchester Metropolitan University)

This panel explores what else a body might become when movement methodologies are foregrounded. From glitching gendered childhoods and tracing gestures as proto-political citizens of a community to come, to thinking-with neurodiverse feet, re/moving through precarious well-becomings, and composing an ecology of 'bog somatics' to experiment with new forms of dance education, these papers diffract movement as method and matter. Drawing on feminist new materialist, posthuman, and somatic linkages and lineages, the panel centres research as an embodied, relational, and ecological practice of attunement, where movement itself thinks, feels, and creates Otherwise.

### Presentations of the Panel

#### Glitching gendered childhoods through digital-embodied animations

Suvi Pihkala, Tuija Huuki

University of Oulu

This presentation draws on feminist new materialist educational research and stems from the authors' long-term engagements in developing creative praxis for addressing gender and power in peer cultures with pre-teen children. The authors discuss a two-day creative workshop for children engaging these themes with diverse arts-based activities, focusing particularly on the making of digital-embodied animations that brought children to explore movements, gestures and postures in articulating their hopes, desires, and demands related to gender and power. By providing three glimpses into the making of the animations and the possibilities and trouble of inviting bodies along, the paper discusses digital-embodied praxis as an affirmative and generative way of exploring gendered childhoods and to amplify children's visions for more capacious gender relations.

#### EveryBODY matters: movement, milieu, and more-than-One

EJ Renold

Manchester Metropolitan University

This presentation starts with the speculation that the body is more assemblage than form, where children move as molecules of the community, each gesture carrying the transductive potentiality of the whole. Working with a choreographer and two visual-sound artists, we explore how movement bodies difference and diversity, with an implicit focus on the relational ontologies of gender. Drawing on a six-month engagement with 48 children (aged 9–11) in two South Wales primary schools, we trace

how, as the virtual meets the actual, the body becomes more-than-one (Manning 2013), and how gestures, voices, and images recompose a collective body as they unfold across the relational milieus of classrooms, halls, and a community theatre. Movement, we suggest, becomes philosophy in action, each movement a proto-political citizen of a community to come, where every body matters.

## Thinking with toes and feet: Eden's neurodiverse worlding

Gabrielle Ivinson

Manchester Metropolitan University

This diffractive account of events is drawn from field notes from over one hundred hours of posthuman ethnography focusing on neurodiversity in nursery and reception classrooms in a school in north England. While attuning to patterns of activity inspired by Erin Manning, Gail Boldt and Daniel Stern's *Forms of Vitality*, my attention was drawn to Eden, aged 4, who is non-speaking. They spent considerable time repeatedly walking backwards slowly down a grassy incline. They appeared to be carefully sensing the forces of gravity and steepness that go through the leg, foot, torso and eyes; in complex experiments with the multiple counteracting forces required to constantly adjust balance to stay upright. By thinking with the physiology of walking, I elaborate Eden's unique bodymind (Murris, et al. 2016, p. 7) form of expression as a relational and productive example of what more a body can do (Goodley et al., 2016; Lenz Taguchi et al., 2016)' inviting other ways to organise schools.

## Re/movings: the not-knots of/for precarious well-becomings

Carol Taylor

Bath University

This presentation explores what movement-oriented knowledges (Nail, 2024) make possible for generating well-becomings as an immanent mode of quiet activism (Helne, 2021; Pottinger, 2017). I entangle with two questions: What can a body do when held in the not-knot of post-(not post)Covid? How might ontologically art-ful praxis help generate modes of well-becomings? Moving theoretically with posthuman, feminist materialist and post-qualitative approaches, and with the methodological aesthetic of image-text riffs (Taylor & Fairchild, 2025), I outline a theory-praxis re/compos(t)ing that reframes well-being via relational, curious and creative practice-ings for situated knowledge-ings and becoming-otherwise (Haraway, 1988; Taylor, 2021) to contest the individualized, corporatized, institutional bureaucratization of well-being.

## Bog somatics: new directions in dance education

Anna Hickey-Moody

Maynooth University

In this presentation, I introduce 'Bog Somatics', an experimental movement and somatic practice developed over the past two and a half years. I situate this practice within Irish dance education and peatland preservation, proposing that creative engagement with landscape offers critical insights in our late-capitalist, climate-change context. In Ireland, bogs and peat are deeply tied to national identity, family life, and industry, while also central to contemporary climate debates. Drawing on the materiality of peat, partially decomposed plant matter formed in waterlogged, oxygen-poor conditions. I explore how bog ecologies shape embodied practice and reimagine the interrelations of body, land, and history.

## PANEL\_8

### Panel 1--Postfoundational approaches to qualitative inquiry: Enactments and extensions

Chair(s): **Lisa Mazzei** (University of Oregon, United States of America)

Discussant(s): **Drew White** (University of Oregon)

Postfoundational Approaches to Qualitative Inquiry is an edited collection that provides a framing for these two panels. The book aims to move beyond a critique and deconstruction of method in order to present an engagement with various postfoundational frameworks and approaches that produce new concepts and enactments. What makes the contributions to the book unique, and the subsequent new papers generated for this conference, is the singular focus on postfoundational paradigms, borrowed from the humanities and sciences, that are enveloped in what is referred to as the ontological turn, the new empiricisms, and the new materialisms. Postfoundational inquiry in this context is conceived as emergent, relational, responsive, involuntary, and inventive.

In the original book, the editors invited authors to offer enactments as a way of reorienting toward what is unthought, not yet, and becoming. This "not yet" is that which happens "in the moment of sensing, thinking, reading, and writing in the production of the new" (Jackson & Mazzei, 2023, p. 5). These enactments are not bound to foundational assumptions in that they do not

follow a predetermined method, nor do they attempt to represent traditional accounts of fieldwork. Furthermore, they do not aim to critique or deconstruct. Instead, they overturn and displace foundations not only by attuning to the contingency of what emerges, but also by decentering human agency in favor of prepersonal, affective encounters that are of the world.

In these two sessions, an orienting introduction will be provided to explain more fully the facets of postfoundational inquiry as emergent, relational, responsive, involuntary, and inventive. Contributors to these panels were invited to revisit their earlier writings and consider:

How is your current work aligned with postfoundational approaches?

What you learned, or how your work has shifted/extended from the chapter produced for the book?

## Presentations of the Panel

### Postfoundational inquiry: Session overview and key facets

Lisa Mazzei<sup>1</sup>, Alecia Jackson<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>University of Oregon, <sup>2</sup>Appalachian State University

An orienting introduction to the session to explain more fully the facets of postfoundational inquiry as emergent, relational, responsive, involuntary, and inventive. Contributors to these panels were invited to revisit their earlier writings and consider:

1. How is your current work aligned with postfoundational approaches?
2. What you learned, or how your work has shifted/extended from the chapter produced for the book?

### Listening to soil

Malou Juelskjaer

Danish School of Education: Aarhus University

In the Postfoundational Approaches to Qualitative Inquiry, I responded to “What are you questioning, and how does your approach stay open to questionability?” I offered ‘cascade questioning’ as an agential realist inspired opening a research project. Cascade questioning traces and re-configures entanglements of multiple spacetime matter. Since then, this postfoundational approach has been helpful in current research, in which I am conducting a more-than-human-ethnography of soil-care relations with anthropogenetic soil – tracing and questioning a myriad of entanglements, while exploring what it may entail to listen to soil.

### Unleashing latent potentiality through sensory ethnography

Elizabeth de Freitas<sup>1</sup>, Laura Trafi-Prats<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Adelphi University, <sup>2</sup>Manchester Metropolitan University

Buildings are foundational. They house institutions and represent settler establishment. A post-foundational approach to the study of lived architecture destabilizes these assumptions, and exposes the provisional contingency of the built environment. In this presentation we discuss how we used software arts to make buildings quiver and quake, long before time would transform the structures into ruins. We focus on what we learned from situating our work in relation to the postfoundational – in particular, how experiments with sensory ethnography re-animated the milieu and lured the eventual nature of the building out of stasis.

### Caring as ontological politics

Hillevi Lenz Taguchi, Teresa Elkin Postila

Stockholm University

Our respective work has extended on what Annemarie Mol calls “ontological politics”, which constitutes a caring. This entails a choice of a problem of concern and then doing the job of a respectful caring about all agents involved; while simultaneously living with and negotiating the differences produced by them, based on often contrary or conflicting experiences and forms of knowing. This is a position of high-stake risk, while it comes with a refusal of making a choice based on an essentialist ethics or values.

### **(De-)legitimizing authoritarian political practices in Greek political and lay discourse: Culture and cultural hierarchy**

**Nikos Bozatzis<sup>1</sup>, Lia Figgou<sup>2</sup>, Kyriaki Karagianni<sup>3</sup>, Evangelos Ntontis<sup>4</sup>, Ioannis Michos<sup>2</sup>, Antonis Sapountzis<sup>3</sup>**

<sup>1</sup>National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, Greece; <sup>2</sup>Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Greece; <sup>3</sup>Democritus University of Thrace, Greece; <sup>4</sup>The Open University, UK and Panteion University of Social and Political Sciences, Greece

Authoritarianism constitutes a staple of social and political psychology research since Adorno et al.'s *Authoritarian Personality* (1950). Adorno and his colleagues drew heavily on theoretical and methodological insights from psychoanalysis, Marxian thinking and the American empiricist psychology of their times. In so doing, they formulated an extensive, research-based account of authoritarianism as a construct that links specific socioeconomic and political conditions with the *cultural* production, through, mainly, pedagogical practices, of a type of personality that is particularly vulnerable to fascist propaganda. The notion of culture and the concern over the de(legitimation) of political authoritarianism are pivotal for our research also. However, our epistemological position diverges from the one favoured by Adorno et al. Drawing on critical discursive social psychology, we maintain that the naturalisation and reproduction of authoritarian political practices occur *thoughtfully* within rhetorical / ideological practices unfolding, amongst other domains, in political discourse and lay talk, often through invocations and rhetorical uses of occasioned constructions of culture. Our analytic corpora consist of (a) transcripts of Greek parliamentary debates pertaining to the so-called 'wiretapping affair' a surveillance scandal, which recently rocked Greece's political life raising concerns as to the (alleged) governmental authoritarian turn in the country; and, of (b) twelve focus groups, collected within a wider research project on authoritarianism, with some of the groups enlisting participants employed in Greek military and police forces. Our analyses indicate that, in both political and lay discourse, a common discursive resource, mobilised, for the (de-)legitimation of authoritarian political practices pertains to evaluatively tinged conceptualisations of culture and hierarchically ordered cultural difference. As we argue, culture and cultural hierarchy, emerge as rhetorical / ideological resources and accomplishments for meaning making, accountability management and (de-)legitimation of authoritarian political practices.

### **"Democracy is broken, but is there something better?" - the perspectives of European youth on the state and future of democracy**

**Boris Jokić, Zrinka Ristić Dedić, Nikola Baketa**

Institute for Social Research in Zagreb, Croatia

This paper examines the perspectives of young people from challenging contexts in 10 European countries (Austria, Croatia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, the Netherlands, Slovenia, and Spain) on the state of democracy and its development in the near future. Across European Union there are trends of growing alienation of youth from democratic institutions and declining political participation. Aforementioned makes understanding the views of young people on democracy in 21st-century Europe important. Data were collected through the Horizon Europe project "*Critical ChangeLab - Democracy meets arts: Critical change labs for building democratic cultures through creative and narrative practices.*" A standardized research approach enabled comparative analysis across 10 different contexts. In each country, in-depth case studies were conducted, including focus groups with young, semi-structured interviews with individuals working with these youth, and a mini ethnography. The selected cases reflect the diversity of young people's identities and life circumstances, capturing significant variation across geographic locations, from rural areas and small towns to national capitals and major European cities like Paris, Berlin, and Barcelona. The study also addressed the experiences of youth facing various hardships, such as female teenage STEM students, youth at the EU's borders, migrants, those in substitute care, and LGBTQ youth. Focus group participants, aged 11 to 19, were selected in cooperation with organizations familiar with the youth and their challenges. Additionally, project partners identified individuals from local government, educational institutions, NGOs, and youth associations for interviews, providing further insights into young people's democratic opportunities. A total of 80 young people and 49 individuals working with youth participated in the research. The results offer valuable insights into the diverse perspectives of youth in challenging contexts and how variations in context, social structures, civic education, and the digital society shape their experiences and views on democracy today and in the near future.

### **The burden of (weaponized) resilience: Climate, poverty, and the politics of memory in South Louisiana**

**Jenna LaChenaye**

The University of Alabama at Birmingham, United States of America

Across generations, South Louisiana has existed at the intersection of environmental, economic, and social upheaval—where climate migration, recurring storms, and the deep scars of environmental racism and generational poverty converge. From hur-

ricanes that reshape coastlines to industrial contamination that poisons land and water, the region's history tells a story of communities repeatedly displaced, rebuilding on shifting ground, and enduring cycles of loss and renewal. Violence, both physical and structural, threads through this narrative: the violence of extraction, neglect, and systemic inequity that positions resilience not as choice but as necessity. Over time, endurance has become a hallmark of regional identity—celebrated in folklore, media, and policy alike—yet increasingly weaponized to rationalize insufficient aid, stalled recovery, and the continued exploitation of people and place.

This paper critiques how resilience is weaponized and co-opted by institutions to sustain inequitable systems. Rather than fostering genuine well-being or reform, organizational narratives valorize individuals' capacity to endure adversity, framing perseverance as virtue while deflecting responsibility for structural change. This dynamic disproportionately affects marginalized groups, who are praised for "pushing through" exhaustion or injustice instead of being supported through meaningful transformation.

Using a community phenomenological approach, this work examines the lived experience and collective memory of South Louisiana over the past two decades of storms, poverty, and terrorism-related trauma. It interrogates how resilience has been defined by outsiders—government agencies, media, and institutions—and the ways these definitions have been weaponized to justify neglect, austerity, and cultural stereotyping. By situating personal narrative within broader sociopolitical and environmental contexts, the paper explores the enduring impacts of this weaponization on community identity, well-being, and recovery, calling for a reorientation toward collective care, structural accountability, and authentic forms of resilience grounded in place and lived experience.

## **State-sanctioned silence: Legislating genital baggage and bodily illiteracy**

**Katharina Azim, Alison Happel-Parkins**

California Institute of Integral Studies, United States of America

This conceptual paper examines the potential long-term psychosocial and somatic ramifications of recently passed conservative education laws in US states like Florida and Texas. These laws, which severely restrict discussions of gender, sexuality, and human biology in public schools, codify ideological assumptions that (a) minors must be protected from "inappropriate" topics, and (b) sex before heterosexual marriage is wrong and dangerous.

Drawing on narrative inquiry data from eight women raised within conservative Christian communities that enacted these same ideologies, we employ Jackson and Mazzei's (2022) "plugging in" methodology. We analyse the women's lived experiences of bodily illiteracy, sexual shame, and chronic genital pain (dyspareunia) as a prospective lens to understand the potential consequences of these laws especially on children with vulvas and vaginas. The findings illustrate how enforced silences and disparaging discourses led to a profound alienation from their own bodies, a phenomenon conceptualised by Labuski (2015) as the accumulation of "genital baggage."

We argue that these legislative acts function as state-sanctioned mediating institutions that perpetuate this accumulation, fostering sexual illiteracy and creating conditions where genital pain and dysfunction become normalized. The analysis demonstrates how ideological messages can become somatically embodied, with tangible health consequences. Ultimately, this study contends that such restrictive legislation does not merely limit curriculum but actively contributes to a cultural and corporeal subordination of bodily autonomy. We will conclude by considering possibilities for resistance and the urgent need for educational approaches that foster sexual literacy, genital intelligence, and pleasure-affirming futures, despite the challenging political constraints.

## **Witnessing Destruction, Reconstituting the Scholar by Learning from Gaza**

**Fadoua Govaerts**

University of Bath, United Kingdom

This paper traces the journey of a UK-based early-career academic who has been reshaped by witnessing the ongoing destruction of Gaza and by engaging in dialogue with its scholars and educators. It argues that Gaza can serve as a moral and intellectual compass for all committed to social justice—reminding us that no pursuit of justice can stand apart from the struggles of the oppressed and centering their voices. Through two collaborative projects, the paper illustrates how global events can reconfigure scholarly identity, purpose, and practice.

The first collaboration interrogates the concept of *scholasticism*. While widely circulated in English-language research, the term is often confined to Western theoretical vocabularies. In Palestine, however, scholasticism is a lived condition, bound to the realities of siege, occupation, and survival. Working in dialogue with Palestinian colleagues, I moved from reading *about* scholasticism to *listening to* it—hearing what the term means within their everyday lives. Their narratives unsettled dominant academic framings, revealing forms of knowledge rooted in endurance, affect, and collective resilience, an epistemology unknown to Western Academia.

The second collaboration emerged during the current genocide in Gaza, where education persists under bombardment and displacement. Extending earlier research on educational continuity, I initiated a collective book project in which Gazan educators and families document learning amid devastation—through mobile classrooms, improvised teaching in camps, and symbol-

ic acts of carrying books while fleeing. Their stories reveal that education is not merely instruction but survival itself.

In this presentation, I will share their stories, poems, and vignettes—their experiences, their attempts at being erased, and their insistence on life through learning. These narratives offer a compass for scholars everywhere: to shape and reshape ourselves as witnesses to the eradication of all that lies between land and sky, where education endures as the only living pulse of hope.

## ORAL SESSION 7: Ethical Matters

### **Slow pathways towards hope, creativity and affirmative ethics in Design Education during challenging times**

**Nike Irene Romano, Amanda Morris**

Cape Peninsula University of Technology, South Africa,

This case study explores how design education might offer hopeful, creative and affirmative ethical responses to educational practice in challenging times. Situated at a university of technology in Cape Town, South Africa, the research analyses a pedagogical intervention in which Masters of Design students and lecturers explore collaborative and innovative ways of decolonizing a text entitled “What is at Stake with Decolonizing Design? A Roundtable” (Schultz et al., 2018). The presentation will show how students’ multimodal engagements with the text that include that include reading aloud, reflexive freewriting and artmaking troubled dominant western forms of expression that permeate learning and teaching discourse and practice. By resisting the dominant neoliberal higher educational culture that valorises speed and outputs, the collaborative practice of Slow Reading (Bozalek, 2023) provided an opportunity for students to critically engage with nuanced complexities and response-abilities that young designer face in shaping the word. While collaborative reading thickened understanding of issues around decolonizing design, the iterative reenactment of Schults et al.’s “roundtable” also uncovered how this seminal text neglects design practice in Africa. Identifying this gap in the literature reveals how multimodal collaborative engagement with texts can help transgress the Western academic canon which tends to prioritise the individual rather than the collective. Student’ sharing of their lived experiences in relation to the text opened up a generative space for pushing thought beyond how they know the world and provided insights in to how education space can be activated differently.

### **A call for opportunity-based ethics under risk-averse standards: taking advantage of uncertain co-creative entanglements for improved research collaborations and outcomes**

**Elien Stouten<sup>1</sup>, Syeda Sidra Idrees<sup>1,2</sup>, Antje Jacobs<sup>1,3</sup>, Karin Hannes<sup>1</sup>**

<sup>1</sup>KU Leuven, Belgium; <sup>2</sup>The University of Edinburgh, UK; <sup>3</sup>The University of Melbourne, Australia

Based on our own experiences as co-creative researchers, we aim to trouble dominant risk-averse paradigms and crisis-prone imaginaries often put forward in institutional standards of research ethics and conduct. Rather than anticipating or ‘precautioning’ against indeterminate *risks* of harm and challenges that *may* occur in the field or later research stages, we argue for an opportunity-based, entangled ethics for co-creative research and related fields. Inspired by the agential realist approach of Karen Barad’s feminist new materialism and other critical theories, opportunity-based ethics enables co-creative researchers to navigate and take advantage of the uncertainties that emerge in and through the dynamic (re)enactment of research relationalities for improved ethical and research conduct.

Narrating our own co-creative research experiences through the lens of entangled theories, we question standardized anonymization and privacy measures, enhanced informed consent protocols for ‘vulnerable’ research participants, and the anticipation of potentially ‘harmful’ influences before commencement of the research. In asking whom/what is ‘safeguarded’ by risk-averse ethical standards, and for whose/which benefit, we propose three ethical principles: relationality, response-ability, and situatedness. These principles open up alternative ways of relating to the human, non-human, and more-than-human that intrinsically make up co-creative research entanglements, while taking seriously the in-situ collaborations and outcomes that unfold across various places and times. In doing so, we contribute to enhance research quality and data richness, as well as improved participant wellbeing and collaborative research benefits.

### **Reaching the “hard-to-reach” community: Addressing vulnerability and navigating ethical dilemmas through critical reflexivity**

**Deepika Sharma**

Indian Institute of Technology (Indian School of Mines) Dhanbad, India, India

The discourse on development has often neglected its intertwined consequence on the environment. Mining activities have led to environmental crises and damaging consequences on livelihood and health of mining-affected populations. Highlighting the experiences of people residing in such a “space”, which is sensitive, inaccessible and inhabitable, the current study focuses

on understanding how co-creating spaces of trust required the practice of researcher reflexivity. The field experiences from an ethnographic study on understanding the social determinants of health, of those who reside in close vicinity of mines in the state of Jharkhand, India are discussed. The process of “getting closer to a hard-to-reach community” necessitated practising critical reflexivity to address not only researcher’s vulnerability in navigating the field, but also negotiating the ethical dilemmas. Taking on Pillow’s (2003) framework on “uncomfortable reflexivity”, the messy nature of ethnographic field work is highlighted which can contribute to more ethical and insightful research.

## **Moral injury in military family life: A hermeneutic phenomenological study of partners’ lived experiences**

**Kirby Wycoff<sup>1</sup>, Daniel Roberts<sup>2</sup>, Felicia Foleno<sup>3</sup>, Gareth Bohn<sup>4</sup>, Gloria Wafula<sup>1</sup>, Nolan Marett<sup>1</sup>, Jamie Rossig<sup>1</sup>**

<sup>1</sup>Thomas Jefferson University, United States of America; <sup>2</sup>Moral Injury Support Network for Servicewomen, Inc.; <sup>3</sup>The Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine; <sup>4</sup>University of Pennsylvania

As increasing numbers of veterans return home from deployment, the invisible wounds of war extend beyond the individual, shaping the moral, emotional, and relational lives of those closest to them. While post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) among service members has been extensively studied, less is known about the moral and relational consequences experienced by their partners and families. Moral injury (MI), defined as the lasting psychological, social, and spiritual impact of perpetrating, failing to prevent, or witnessing acts that violate deeply held moral beliefs (Litz et al., 2009), offers a critical lens for understanding these experiences within family systems.

This qualitative study employed a hermeneutic phenomenological approach to explore how current and former partners of military service members with PTSD experience and interpret moral injury in the context of their intimate and family relationships. Guided by Gadamerian principles of interpretation and meaning-making, twenty participants engaged in in-depth, semi-structured interviews designed to elicit rich accounts of their lived experiences. The study was structured around three research questions: (1) How do partners experience and interpret morally injurious events within their relationships and family lives? (2) How do they make sense of the relational consequences of these experiences within their partnerships? and (3) How do they understand the ways morally injurious experiences shape family dynamics, roles, and identities within the family system?

Preliminary interpretation suggests that partners’ narratives reflect complex intersections of empathy, betrayal, guilt, and loss of moral coherence within intimate and family life. The findings aim to deepen understanding of how moral injury extends beyond the individual veteran to influence the moral fabric of family systems. This work contributes to a growing qualitative discourse that situates moral injury as a relational and contextual phenomenon, highlighting the need for family-centered, morally attuned approaches to support and intervention.

## **Organizations’ perspectives regarding the right-to-die and suicide tourism**

**Daniel Sperling**

University of Haifa, Israel

The practice of suicide tourism refers to the traveling of individuals to other countries to seek legally permitted assisted suicide. This study employed a descriptive qualitative research approach exploring how right-to-die organizations perceive suicide tourism and its implications on the right-to-die. The study included in-depth semi-structured interviews with 12 activists from right-to-die organizations, as well as thirteen documents written by such organizations or related to the suicide-tourism phenomenon. Five themes emerged following the analysis of 12 in-depth interviews with activists from right-to-die organizations and 13 relevant documents: (1) unequivocal attitudes toward suicide tourism; (2) relationships between the organizations and the media; (3) acting to change the legal status of the right-to-die; (4) the role of the family in interactions between the organization and the person seeking assistance; and (5) reciprocal relations between the organizations and the physicians. The findings reveal ambivalent attitudes within such organizations toward suicide tourism, inherent tension among participating physicians, and complex relationships between assisted suicide, palliative care, and the physicians’ duty to promote individual choice at end-of-life.

## **DREAM TEAM\_6**

### **Movement in Common: Exploring Material Relations in and Out of Place**

**Victoria Hunter<sup>1</sup>, Greg Campbell<sup>2</sup>**

<sup>1</sup>Bath Spa University, United Kingdom; <sup>2</sup>University of Sussex, United Kingdom

This workshop opens with embodied stillness, attending to breath, gravity, and the sensory interface of skin and environment. From this initial attunement, participants are invited to consider how the body is always entangled within material, social, and environmental relations. The session examines movement in common as a site for cultivating relational awareness, sensitivity,

and generosity between human and more-than-human presences. In the context of escalating global crises, it positions movement as a means of engaging with the urgencies of our time, offering embodied, dialogic strategies for fostering care and cooperation across difference.

#### Context and Rationale:

Movement-based research can actively and collaboratively engage people in shaping more liveable futures. Through embodied behaviours and tacit negotiations its relational and participatory nature is uniquely positioned to work across difference, language, and culture. This work choreographs connections between bodies by attending to relationships with the spaces and socio-cultural contexts around them, developing awareness of bodily borders and boundaries and collaborative working practices between humans and the material world that present opportunities to behave 'otherwise' (Akomolafe 2022).

Guided by new materialist (Barad, 2007; Braidotti, 2013) and post-qualitative approaches (Manning, 2016; St. Pierre, 2011), the workshop treats movement as an emergent, co-constituted process rather than a representation of fixed ideas. Bodies are not discrete, self-contained entities but dynamic nodes in a web of relations, constantly intra-acting with more-than-human presences that co-shape our experience.

#### Research Questions:

- What do we know through the body that cannot be accessed otherwise?
- How are tacit negotiations initiated and sustained across collective movement?
- How might embodied attunement offer tools for education, mediation, and civic dialogue?
- What can movement reveal about our shared vulnerability and interdependency with human and other-than-human worlds?

These provocations connect with the conference's call to harness the strengths, synergies, and transformative practices that emerge in spaces of interconnectedness, shared vulnerability, and hope.

#### Workshop Structure:

The 90-minute session will unfold in two movements:

##### 1. Inside – attuning and negotiating

We will work through relational movement scores that explore proximity, distance, shared rhythm, and collective decision-making. Participants will attend to micro-gestures—weight shifts, hesitations, accelerations—developing embodied awareness of the tacit negotiations that underpin collective life.

##### 2. Outside – mapping relations in and out of place

The practice will spill into the streets of Athens, where participants will undertake embodied mapping—a mobile, sensory documentation of the city's space-time mattering. We will notice how material surfaces, and temporal flows invite or disrupt movement. Using paper and pencil, participants will record textures and traces of relation. These experiential maps will then act as a blueprint score for a final group improvisation when we return inside.

#### Theoretical and Methodological Contribution:

The workshop aligns with the conference's commitment to multimodal, experiential, and embodied ways of knowing. Rather than seeking closure or definitive answers, the workshop generates conditions for polyphonic dialogue and embodied sense-making, aligning with the conference's aim to foster transformational change, rehearsing embodied ways of being and doing that gesture towards more inclusive and equitable futures in the present (Machado De Oliveira, V. (2021). The session contributes to a growing movement within qualitative research that embraces embodied, arts-based, and relational practices as vital tools for shaping the futures we will inhabit together.

Towards the end of the session, participants will be invited to submit their notes, drawings and documentary evidence to form an experimental embodied writing collective to valorise the session outcomes. We will explore experimental approaches to communicating and representing our lived experiences encountered in situ through digital AI. Exploring how to then respond to this virtual iteration in the material world we will consider where this speculative fabulation (Truman 2018) might take us as we engage in an iterative process in which live and virtual embodied experiences inform one another in an exponential loop.

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### Creative approaches to moments of (constructive) collapse in research

Gabriele Budach<sup>1</sup>, Yimin Zhang<sup>1</sup>, Anastasia Badder<sup>2</sup>, Madelaine Wood<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>University of Luxembourg; <sup>2</sup>University of Cambridge

In this session, we aim to explore the notion of “collapse” and the potential it holds for qualitative research. We start by sharing moments of “collapse” (in four vignettes) taken from our own research, and invite participants to discover how we identified, lived, materialized and conceptualized “collapse” in various ways. Such moments of “collapse” were (i) found in material objects from ethnographic fieldwork, (ii) built into research design to evoke ideas for creative problem-solving, (iii) explored as a technique to unravel multiple meanings, stories and relationalities, (iv) chosen as an (unsolvable) task by a research participant to explore his own capacity to create.

Vignette: Yimin Zhang

An environmental volunteer found an abandoned bird nest in a local orchard. There is a fleck of orange fibres woven into the nest. Where could this orange color come from? There are no orange grasses or trees around. The volunteer told me: “[The colour comes] from the carpets of the neighbors. Here is the tradition, the carpets are tapped outside to remove the dust. And then birds come to pick the wool. They often have favourite colours. Here is orange. In the park there is a tit always taking only blue and violet. They have favourite colours, those tits.”

For me, this is a compelling example of how nature actively incorporates human traces into its own processes, creating a moment of collapse between ‘natural’ and ‘man-made’ and challenging the traditional dichotomy between human and nature.

Vignette: Anastasia Badder

‘Imagine Cambridge runs out of water by the end of the year’. Following a creative workshop bringing together water industry and water activists, an industry representative reflected: ‘occasional failures’ in water systems are typically framed as technical problems, explained to ‘customers’ in those terms, and generally accepted as such. But that day, responses went beyond what he expected in ‘strength and...anger’. Relationships with water are ‘not simply about the pipes and pumps’, he realized; they are as much about ‘life-giving properties’ and ‘emotional...and spiritual connection’; indeed, perhaps he experienced such connections outside the office. The challenge for the water industry is therefore ‘how to reconcile those...connections with the prosaic business of supplying water.’

Vignette: Gabi, Anastasia, Yimin, Gog, Nia, Arshima, Salman

Colleagues from four continents agreed to an experiment and task. They looked at photographs around the access and use of water (such as (a) pouring water from a plastic or glass bottle, and (b) taking it from an open (natural) source). They were invited to perform these acts, if they could, and to later associate freely and write about their relationships with water. The same images of and around the use of water evoked meanings and questions of astoundingly different nature: “Is it free or constrained?” (Y); “Is it inside or outside of me? (Go); “Handpump or tap water: Does it matter for consumption?” (G) “Can you appreciate it if you never lacked it?” (N); “Does drinking from a glass – as opposed to a plastic container – grant you higher status?” “Is feeling the pain of environmental destruction real or just a discourse”? Images can be powerful tools in research and as devises “collapsing” multiple realities. Making the lines of implicit connections with those different realities, perceptions, and perspectives visible, can give methodological strength and stimulate new forms of exchange.

Vignette: Madelaine Wood

An artist engages with the task of ‘translating’ a poem into a different semiotic mode. He attempts to represent a chosen poem as a visual image. He puts himself to the test and attempts to find ways to represent two different temporalities (and contradictory modes of being – absence and presence – a person waiting and a person seeing another one arriving) in ONE single image. Putting two images next to each other is not an option, as he considers this “a (too) cheap trick.” He tries other ways of getting closer to his vision by using AI and trying out different prompts. Dissatisfied with the result and his (apparent) inability to solve the puzzle of un-collapsing the un-collapsible, he considers having exhausted his means, artistic energy, and resources and moves on to another poem.

Together with participants, we will discuss the potential of ‘collapse’ as a method to ‘think and feel beyond’ dichotomies (e.g. the human/non-human, Barad 2007), disciplinary boundaries, and the (un-)predictability in research design (Jackson & Mazzei, 2024), to build sensitivity for new emerging relationalities, perspectives and creative energies. We will create a canvas to document our collective thought process and keep a record of its outcome.

### Visual analysis: Exploring qualitative meaning in images

Richard Siegesmund<sup>1</sup>, Karin Hannes<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Northern Illinois University, United States of America; <sup>2</sup>KU Lueven, Belgium

## Summary

This Dream Teams Session will be led by Karin Hannes and Richard Siegesmund as we apply a tool, an Analytical Apparatus for Visual Imagery (AAVI), constructed from artistic models for formal visual analysis and developed in response to an increasing interest in visual research methods across disciplines in the fine arts and social sciences. Through this tool, researchers—particularly those who may lack the formal artistic skills for the deconstruction and analysis of visual images—can elicit a more robust descriptive language from participants and achieve a richer and more comprehensive analysis of visual images collected during participatory visual research such as photovoice or photowalk methods. In many projects that collect images, the role of images is often limited to either assisting participants in verbalizing their experiences or supporting a particular narrative story line evolving from the data. AAVI invites scholars to consider adding a compositional, tacit, layer of analysis to visual research based on the image's material intrinsic qualities.

For the 90-minute Dream Steams, we invite participants to bring visual images that they have collected in their research. For participants who are interested in learning about visual analysis, but do not have their own images, the session leaders will share images from their own research (Hannes & Siegesmund, 2022; Hannes & Siegesmund, 2024) showcased during the session .

### Agenda for the session

0.00 – 10.00 minutes: Introductions

10.00 – 30.00 minutes: Introduction to AAVI applied to photovoice research.

30.00- 45.00 minutes: Participants attempt AAVI analysis with their own images.

45.00- 65.00 minutes: Share. Did AAVI produce new insights? How to push AAVI further.

65.00-75.00 minutes: Individual work further analyzing one's image set. Pushing AAVI analysis deeper.

75.00-90.00 minutes: Final reflections, including possibilities for writing up insights gained for a future methodological paper  
Rationale

Artistically inspired visual data, beyond photography, have been increasingly used in qualitative and creative research. This turn towards the visual image accepts that the researcher and participants are actively making the image, not simply recording an event (Riddett-Moore & Siegesmund, 2012).

This arts-based turn to the making of visual data raises two new problems in analysis. First, there is often more to the creation of an image than an illustration of predetermined semiotic or narrative meaning. Images emerge in complex and nonlinear ways (Manning, 2016). Second, many social scientists have never been formally trained in artistic creation; therefore, they do not have the proper skill set for creative analysis (Dierckx, Zaman & Hannes, 2022). Phillip Vannini (2015) argues for the need to develop non-representational methods in the social-behavioral sciences. In the case of the visual, we see this as pressing the distinction that John Dewey (1934) made between recognition and perception. Recognition is the categorization of semiotic representation. Perception is the aesthetic non-representational analysis of the felt phenomenological qualities that a visual image conjures (Siegesmund, 2012). Such interpretations require artistry. Non-representational level of data can be brought into language by researchers who are knowledgeable about visual art characteristics (Brown & Collins, 2021; Freedman & Siegesmund, 2024); Following Dewey, we argue that visual images can do more than just illustrate ideas or concepts. Images, through their relationships of tacit qualities, contain felt somatic meaning.

The Analytical Apparatus for Visual Imagery (AAVI) (Hannes and Siegesmund 2022) was developed to help social science researchers—particularly those who have not had formal training in the making of fine art images—to recognize the tacit qualities that shape the interpretation of a visual object, and bring them into the conversation with all image creators involved in a project and (where appropriate) the broader public.

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## Sound Matters: Ethics, methods, and epistemologies

Chair(s): **José J. Roa-Trejo** (Universidad Loyola Andalucía)

Discussant(s): **Karin Murris** (University of Oulu)

This panel explores what it means to engage sound as a mode of inquiry within qualitative research. Drawing on projects in Canada, the United States, Norway, Spain, and England, the contributors examine how working with sound in studies of work, education, and the arts can unsettle habitual research practices and open new ways of being, knowing, and doing.

Across contexts, the panel asks how listening might reconfigure the ethics and epistemologies of qualitative research. Sound here is not treated as data or illustration but as a relational force that gathers bodies, materials, and meanings. From the sonic documentation of working lives to children's experimentation with music technologies and performative collaborations across global and local contexts, the discussion traces how sound interrupts visual and textual hierarchies of knowledge. It engages with tensions between technical production and ethical care, between the sonic's generative noise and the methodological decisions that attempt to contain it.

Methodologically, the panel spans audio ethnography, research-creation, performative inquiry, and postqualitative approaches. Participants employ field recording, sound manipulation, collaborative improvisation, and movement-based listening as analytic and creative tools. These practices are used to examine how sound mediates work and learning, and how it can expose the affective, material, and political dimensions of research relations.

Foregrounding sound as both subject and method, the panel invites audiences to listen to the friction between coordination and chaos, analysis and affect, listening and looking. In doing so, it asks what becomes possible when qualitative inquiry tunes itself to the vibrations of the world, when research becomes, quite literally, a matter of resonance.

### Presentations of the Panel

#### The sounds of work: the noisy “decision trail” in working with sound

Evan Curley<sup>1</sup>, Sara Dorow<sup>2</sup>, Catherine Bevan<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Dalhousie University, <sup>2</sup>University of Alberta

What are qualitative researchers in the social sciences to do with and about sound? Is the goal to be “sounders of the depths” (Stengers and Pignarre, 2011), reading and revealing the social via sound? Should this be our task? In the last decade or so, with the influence of sound studies, interest has grown to include more experimental, ecological, and posthuman understandings of sound. These call our attention to how sound circulates, foregrounding “the relationship between sound and the social production of meaning” (Kelman, 2010). What does this look like in the context of the qualitative study of work?

In this paper, we reflect on the generative “noise” of sound work. We are all part of Work-Life Canada – a multi-media, multi-disciplinary project that explores the meaning of work through the juxtaposition of documentary photography, work-life stories, and sounds of work. In this large undertaking, our team members make decisions every day that move us toward, and sometimes away from, a coordinated inquiry of the working lives of Canadians. In this presentation, we reflect on the ethical, epistemological, and methodological “decision trails” (Cheek, 2004) around the use, analysis, and integration of sound in our work. We focus especially on three kinds of decision points in our use of sound: recording, manipulating, and tagging. We consider these decisions within the broader context of the project, i.e. in relation to image and word, and as we create a complex web collection featuring 100 different working people across Canada. Our aim here is not to offer techniques or technical advice, but rather, to reflect on the “noise” around these decisions and the emerging possibilities of where the sound will take us.

#### Sonic qualitative research methodologies: Ways of being knowing doing within through the sound, a critique

Walter S Gershon

Rowan University

There continues to be discussion about what it means to do qualitative research in with through sound in ways that present such processes and possibilities as novel are strong arguments that miss critical positions due to disciplinary framings (e.g., Paine, 2017), or are rooted in scholarship that continues the ocular framings central to all qualitative research (including postqualitative, posthumanist research). This proposed paper addresses three central concerns of this particular combination of argumentation and its constituent parts for sonic qualitative researchers and then productively employed to underscore the strength of sonic qualitative research.

First and foremost are questions of a qualitative methodologist's ethical commitments. In conceptualizing sound “as part of qualitative research” without the time and critical attentions required, one often recolonizes the sonic twice: erased using visual understandings to consider sounds and again because qualitative analyses are usually ocular from their epistemologies to ethics

(e.g., Behar, 1997; see McKittrick, 2021)

Second, positioning sounds in qualitative research as something new attenuates the depth and breadth of scholarship about sounds from the continually-evolving studies within and across peoples and cultures throughout millennia. Such positioning is also ironically problematic as it reasserts a particular kind of status quo (e.g., Anglo, male, wealthy, straight, etc) much of critical qualitative researchers seek to interrupt with and through our studies. Just as key positivist concepts are inappropriate for qualitative researchers, so too are ocular framings of sounds.

Finally, such combinations as noted in the introductory paragraph above often lend themselves to scholarship that is less equipped to use the sonic as a mode of analysis at any layer of scale. This is because attending to ecologies and the things that comprise them as things to observe regularly precludes centering listening as is mandatory in any form of sonic scholarship.

## **“Cracks in the simulation”: CHEAP BUT GOOD ADVICE FOR exploring music technology with children and young people**

**Sunniva Skjøstad Hovde<sup>1</sup>, José J. Roa- Trejo<sup>2</sup>, David Ben Shannon<sup>3</sup>**

<sup>1</sup>Norwegian University of Science and Technology, <sup>2</sup>Universidad Loyola Andalucía, <sup>3</sup>University of Sheffield

In this paper, we explore how techniques such as sampling, effects, and loops can disrupt the normativity of music education. Using Chick Corea’s CHEAP BUT GOOD ADVICE FOR MAKING MUSIC IN A GROUP, we discuss data from three international projects with children and young people to show how a posthuman attention to music technology fosters inclusive, relational creativity.

Music production can generate sounds that do not pre-exist (Fisher, 2013). Yet traditional music education often encourages students to reproduce sounds imagined by teachers within Western frameworks (Stover, 2025), reinforcing an artificial divide between sound and its material-human conditions (Cooke, 2024). Research also notes teacher anxiety around generalist music teaching and music technology (Hennessy, 2000, 2017).

Our study draws from three projects in Norway, Spain, and England, focused on free improvisation, virtual instrument design, and research-creation. Each explored how research unfolds through, alongside, and within music-making. Methods included field notes, audio/video recordings, performative community (Hovde, 2024), and music creation as method (Shannon, 2021).

We analyze material relations in technologically mediated music creation and how they shift through listening. Following Fisher, these shifts appear as “cracks in the simulation”: the recorded sound gestures to a lost time, its imperfections revealing temporal folds between past and present. Children displayed fascination, creativity, frustration, and boredom as samples tapped into prior moments. These encounters show how children’s engagements with sound recording spark creativity and identity exploration, challenging music education’s focus on technique and replication.

## **Can we play instead? On getting dirt on our hands..**

**Sunniva Skjøstad Hovde<sup>1</sup>, Asante Maulidi<sup>2</sup>**

<sup>1</sup>Norwegian University of Science and Technology, <sup>2</sup>NA

This paper explores how doing research where listening to local sonic practices, relations, global power hierarchies and to ourselves can momentarily or enduringly destabilize dominant global hierarchies—such as colonial legacies, contemporary imperialism, global racism, and capitalism—and support artistic spaces towards equity (Sayers 2016).

Drawing on postqualitative and performative methodologies we dig into our own practices of care (Christopher, de Tantillo og Watson 2020, hooks 2013), local concepts (Hovde 2019) and sonic expressions to understand when the global power-hierarchies disturb our work (Tuck og Yang 2012,, and when we do not care.

Our methodological approach is grounded in collaborative work where music, dance, and dialogic encounters are performative acts of care. We ask: How can care, and performative modes of engaging with sound, movement, and conversation, support the creation of equitable and balanced relations within collaborative practices?

Our research foregrounds the processual, affective, and relational dimensions of knowledge-making. We position artistic practice in a variety of formats as central modes of inquiry.

We try to show how we are using listening-practices, co-creation, traditional concepts of humanity and relational care to foster ethical and equitable research relations. These practices do not offer simple solutions to systemic injustices, but they can generate micro-moments of resistance and reconfiguration—and help us to understand how structural power-dynamics can be met working in arts education and artistic practices, and how we can learn to produce knowledge as research inside these.

## Panel 2--Postfoundational approaches to qualitative inquiry: Enactments and extensions

Chair(s): **Lisa Mazzei** (University of Oregon, United States of America)

Discussant(s): **Drew White** (University of Oregon)

Postfoundational Approaches to Qualitative Inquiry is an edited collection that provides a framing for these two panels. The book aims to move beyond a critique and deconstruction of method in order to present an engagement with various postfoundational frameworks and approaches that produce new concepts and enactments. What makes the contributions to the book unique, and the subsequent new papers generated for this conference, is the singular focus on postfoundational paradigms, borrowed from the humanities and sciences, that are enveloped in what is referred to as the ontological turn, the new empiricisms, and the new materialisms. Postfoundational inquiry in this context is conceived as emergent, relational, responsive, involuntary, and inventive.

In the original book, the editors invited authors to offer enactments as a way of reorienting toward what is unthought, not yet, and becoming. This “not yet” is that which happens “in the moment of sensing, thinking, reading, and writing in the production of the new” (Jackson & Mazzei, 2023, p. 5). These enactments are not bound to foundational assumptions in that they do not follow a predetermined method, nor do they attempt to represent traditional accounts of fieldwork. Furthermore, they do not aim to critique or deconstruct. Instead, they overturn and displace foundations not only by attuning to the contingency of what emerges, but also by decentering human agency in favor of prepersonal, affective encounters that are of the world.

In these two sessions, an orienting introduction will be provided to explain more fully the facets of postfoundational inquiry as emergent, relational, responsive, involuntary, and inventive. Contributors to these panels were invited to revisit their earlier writings and consider:

1. How is your current work aligned with postfoundational approaches?
2. What you learned, or how your work has shifted/extended from the chapter produced for the book?

### Presentations of the Panel

#### Postfoundational inquiry: Session overview and key facets

Lisa Mazzei<sup>1</sup>, Alecia Jackson<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>University of Oregon, <sup>2</sup>Appalachian State University

This orienting introduction will explain more fully the facets of postfoundational inquiry as emergent, relational, responsive, involuntary, and inventive. Contributors to these panels were invited to revisit their earlier writings and consider:

1. How is your current work aligned with postfoundational approaches?
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#### Unsettling the geopolitical tensions in my neck. Re-enacting the methodology of performative cartographies

Dorthe Staunæs

Danish School of Education, Aarhus University

Since the publication of Postfoundational Approaches to Qualitative Inquiry, which included my chapter “A performative and vibrant cartography: re-animating the archive,” the sensation of being caught in an affective stuck place within knowledge work has only intensified. In this paper, I seek to unsettle the geopolitical tensions I feel lodged in my neck by experimenting with a performative cartography of past personal and historical events collected in an archive of family letters from the former Danish Realm of Iceland and Denmark. This mapping traces the contour of conditions shaping current intersectional researcher positionalities and illuminates the struggles many of us encounter when working with questions of sustainability and diversity in education.

#### What do postfoundational political commitments look like? Considering racism

Jerry Rosiek

University of Oregon

The Western Enlightenment’s theory of social change has historically presumed identification of the truth must proceed enacting the good. Postfoundationalism, by pluralizing ontology and thus rendering epistemology contingent, renders this ethics/knowledge relation unviable. This paper asks what relation between inquiry and politics is emerging, using the test of responding to racism as its touchstone

## **Resisting the romance of chance: A cautious rethinking of the “adventure of the involuntary” in postfoundational inquiry**

**Maggie MacLure**

Manchester Metropolitan University

The presentation interrogates, though it does not recant, the case made in the original paper for transversal inquiry as an “adventure of the involuntary” (Deleuze, 2000). I wonder about the allure of the transversal leap, the self-satisfaction of “wonder” and the bravado of the ontological adventure(r): is postfoundational thought (my own at least) still animated by colonial imaginaries of uninvited entry into other worlds?

## **ORAL SESSION\_8: More than human relating**

### **Reassembling Non-positive Results, Dialogue with non-human: Actor-Network Inquiry into the Making of Scientific Cognition and Self in Laboratory Practice**

**Yan Huang, Ziyue Yang**

Peking university, People's Republic of China

The laboratory is not only a site for learning experimental skills and scientific production, but also a crucial space where scientific cognition and subjectivity are shaped. This study aims to explore how novice researchers in the laboratory form their scientific cognition and self-constitution through continuous interaction with frequently occurring non-positive results (experimental outcomes that are unexpected, inexplicable, or poorly reproducible). Challenging traditional views that treat the things and failures in experiments as passive objects or background, this study draws on Actor-Network Theory to re-conceptualize the lab as a dynamic assemblage woven together through the continuous associations and negotiations of human (i.e., supervisors, peers) and non-human (i.e., cells, instruments, non-positive results) actors.

We conducted in-depth interviews with 12 students from the School of Life Sciences in a leading Chinese university, combining with participant observation and analysis of material documents like lab records. By following the actors, we mapped the mutual trajectories of translation within this network.

The study finds that students initially experience non-positive results as a sign of personal inadequacy, leading to prolonged internal struggle. Through ongoing negotiation with a multiplicity of actors, both human and non-human, they gradually learn to reinterpret failure as a form of communication from material world that can provoke new questions. The re-shaping of cognition not only helps them develop practical strategies of trial-and-adjustment but also enables identity shift: translating from a controller who attempts to unilaterally master objects, into a coordinator who mediates between human and non-human actors. This process ultimately leads to demoralize failure and helps students redefine the boundaries of their agency by establishing a new world-relation: with the support of peers and through dialogue, to build a responsive and affective connection with a world they acknowledge as fundamentally uncontrollable. This study offers a new ontological perspective for understanding uncertainty, failure in science education.

### **Materializing Empathy in a more-than-human world**

**Rachel Sinquefield-Kangas**

University of Helsinki, Finland

What if empathy were fundamentally part of the world in its ongoing performativity? Understanding empathy as a complex multifaceted aesthetic phenomena, through which sense-making happens, opens it up to including non-human animals and material objects as well. Through affective flows and interfaces, not only are we capable of empathizing with non-human animals but also material objects. Drawing on Barad's (2007) feminist posthumanism theory agential realism and multispecies ethics (Rose, 2012) this paper argues that empathy is a biologically innate, material-discursive practice through which all living creatures work toward biological order.

Empathy, foundational to *all* forms of life and interactions, has become a highly misconstrued, anthropocentric concept. But how, might you ask, could inanimate or non-human animals be connected to empathy? Through shared experience or energy embedded in their creation and form, empathy work in eliciting responses in helping us form meaningful relations with Others. In this case, empathy is done performatively, as something we do, not something we have.

This presentation features a series of short video artworks called antinarratives, designed to elicit more-than-human empathy through surprising encounters. These videos illustrate Batson's (2019) eight types of empathetic behavior as they unfold in real-time, emphasizing how non-human agents contribute to empathy within entangled material and meaningful relations. Each piece immerses the viewer in empathetic behaviors, encouraging discussion as to how empathy arises beyond human-centered frameworks. The videos highlight how empathy is generated through dynamic interactions between humans and non-humans, presenting empathy as a relational and emergent process shaped by both material-discursive intra-actions and inter-species connections. Rather than excluding humans, the posthuman approach reframes our role as co-creators through empathy.

## Multispecies climate fiction as research-creation: Speculating-with other-than-humans

Antje Jacobs

KU Leuven / The University of Melbourne

Positioned within the field of research-creation, this presentation explores multispecies climate fiction (cli-fi) as a speculative mode of inquiry that speculates-with other-than-humans. As a process-oriented and experimental praxis that integrates thinking, making, and doing, research-creation unsettles normative discourses and practices that restrict the possibilities of research and knowledge. Here, the use of artistic approaches is particularly directed at expanding understandings of knowledge-making. In this context, speculative fiction offers possibilities for building more affective and relational understandings, for example, regarding climate change.

The work presented here centers on the multispecies cli-fi story *Canopy of the Hidden Alley*, which emerged as part of a participatory workshop where city residents, artists, and scholars collectively imagined multispecies life in urban areas affected by climate change. Engaging creatively with participants' imaginaries, I developed the story as both a response to and an extension of their propositions. As such, the story is not a direct representation of the workshop findings, but a creative continuation, presenting a speculative exploration that embraces the multiplicity and complexity of the imaginative thinking and making processes. During the presentation, I will share parts of the the story alongside methodological reflections on research-creation and theoretical considerations of what it means to speculate-with other-than-humans in climate fiction.

The practice of speculating-with other-than-humans revealed the deep entanglements between human and other-than-human worlds, creating dialogue across species boundaries. Moreover, creative writing process uncovered new tensions and propositions that challenged and reshaped understandings of multispecies life in climate change, highlighting the emergent, situated, and responsive potential of speculative fiction as a mode of inquiry.

## Artful sensing and encounters with not-speaking: how multispecies entanglements attune us to more-than-human childhoods in the UK and Finland

Ruth Churchill Dower<sup>1</sup>, Riikka Hohti<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Sheffield Hallam University, United Kingdom; <sup>2</sup>University of Helsinki

The increasing emphasis on speech and language in early childhood education (ECE) overlooks some of the complexities entangled within not-speaking such as environmental, microbial and affective relations which might be expressed in languages other than words. Drawing on multispecies encounters with nonlingual children, this presentation explores the potential of moving education beyond individual accountability and deficit models of human progress. By attuning to subtle registers of movement, atmospheres and sense-based ecologies, we become curious for onto-epistemologies that seem more relevant to the pedagogies and research of arts education in the post-Anthropocene.

We explore the tensions and fruitful connections arising at the intersections of arts and ECE through two cases: '*artful sensing practices*' which are mobilised as nonlingual children experiment with multispecies movements (Churchill Dower, 2025), and multispecies research encounters with microbes in a forest (Hohti, 2024, unpublished). We attune to entanglements through *inexpert experiments* that help us to dismantle mastery, fostering multimodal, multisensory, and multispecies ways of knowing and challenging assumptions about differently capable bodies.

In this presentation, we pay attention to the heterogenous porosities, cracks, common worlds and alternative landscapes in multispecies inquiry that disrupt and enrich expectations of childhoods. We ask whether speculative methods and sensing practices might open more-than-human ecological spaces for creating new languages.

We propose that sensing languages enrich the more-than-human collaborations arising outside of the plan, after the event, in unsuspecting spaces and atmospheres, and can be seen as a necessary 'ferality' (Tsing et al., 2024, p.10), a modality vital for 'ecologising' ECE. In doing so, we shift the educational bullseye from knowledge acquisition to ways of knowing, and reconfigure arts education and childhood studies methodologies to foreground nested child ecosystems (Millei et al., 2025) in place of individuals as separate from environments.

## Unfazed by the more-than-human face: renegotiating progress through ethical address

Erica Hagström

Luleå University of Technology, Sweden

In this paper, I explore and discuss relationships between human and more-than-human. I claim this concerns education in two ways. One is regarding the educational possibility of being addressed by the more-than-human, and the other is regarding care for future generations. To make this claim, I express and concretise such relationships through arts-based research in the form of creative writing, including a poem and two pieces of fiction. Starting from the idea that education is imbued with anthropocentric imaginaries and highlighting the more-than-human through the work of Haraway (2008), Curry (2008) and van Dooren (2007, 2009), I bring this further by connecting it to Biesta's (2015b) work on the question of whether what we desire is actually

desirable in education. Building on the work of Nisbet (1994) and Dewey (1916), this leads to a discussion of how progress, being central to education, needs to be renegotiated in order to become educational. In conclusion, I posit that, with a miseducated grasp and mastery of the world, human life is led to be continuously unfazed by the more-than-human face. But there is hope.

## ORAL SESSION\_9: Autoethnography

### **Navigating positionality in mental health research: an autoethnographic study with chinese female students**

**Nai Lang**

University of Bath, United Kingdom

This paper explores the complex positionality of a researcher who shares cultural, gender, and educational backgrounds with research participants. Drawing on autoethnography (Ellis, Adams, & Bochner, 2011), this article focuses on how researchers balance empathy with maintaining their positionality in studying the mental health experiences of Chinese female university students. The article also reflects on the impact of positionality on data interpretation and meaning-making. This study aims to explore the ethical and methodological challenges that arise when personal empathy and research neutrality intersect, as well as the importance of reflective practice for maintaining positionality when researching sensitive topics.

This paper is a byproduct of my doctoral research. During my doctoral research, I found maintaining the positionality of a researcher challenging, especially when exploring sensitive topics such as participants' mental health experiences or experiences related to racism. Recognizing this, I approached myself as the research subject and, using autoethnography (Etherington, 2004), began conducting auxiliary research to identify appropriate methods for maintaining positionality. I carefully documented my reflections after each interview and also conducted psychological consultations, recording my insights immediately in my research notebooks (Anderson, 2006). These constituted my research data. The findings suggest that researcher identity and cultural context influence the co-construction of narratives (Adams, Holman Jones, & Ellis, 2015), fostering deeper connections while also introducing ethical complexities.

This article argues that positionality should be viewed as a resource for research, not a constraint. By integrating reflexivity and autoethnography, this study proposes an ethically sensitive framework for interpreting mental health narratives within culturally familiar contexts. This research also offers new insights into reflexivity, researcher identity, and methodological innovation in qualitative research.

### **Towards peer Generosity within the doctoral Journey: A duo-autoethnographic Exploration**

**Fadoua Govaerts, Nai Lang**

University of Bath, United Kingdom

This presentation adopts a co-autoethnographic approach in which we, as co-authors, reflect on our doctoral journeys as ethnic minority "outsiders" navigating a white, Western, neoliberal academic environment. Our positionalities as first-generation, self-funded female doctoral students from ethnically and socioeconomically diverse backgrounds shaped our shared struggles in negotiating academic culture, belonging, and career progression. Central to our narrative is the concept of *peer generosity*—the informal networks of solidarity, care, and shared values that sustained us throughout our PhD journeys.

While existing literature increasingly addresses inequalities faced by racial and ethnic minorities in academia, much of it focuses on those already in academic posts. Far less attention has been given to doctoral students aspiring to enter these spaces (Mattocks & Briscoe-Palmer, 2016). The PhD represents a critical threshold in academic pathways, where peer relationships can profoundly influence well-being, persistence, and identity development (Dericks et al., 2019; Williams et al., 2017). Although supervisory relationships are well-documented (Young et al., 2019), the informal peer networks that provide emotional and intellectual sustenance remain underexplored.

Our co-autoethnographic study draws on three years of recorded conversations and reflective journals, analysed through reflexive thematic analysis. This process allowed us to identify recurring themes of mutual support, cultural expectations, academic hierarchies, and the emotional labour embedded in peer mentoring. Through collaborative reflection, we illuminate how peer generosity countered institutional alienation and fostered resilience, empathy, and belonging.

By situating our personal experiences within broader systemic contexts, this presentation highlights the transformative potential of informal peer support among doctoral students. We argue that peer generosity offers a decolonial framework for reimagining academic relationships—one that values collectivism over competition and nurtures more inclusive, equitable spaces for marginalized scholars within higher education.

## **Entangled voices: Using interviews in autoethnographic research**

**Christina Sachpasidi**

Mediterranean College, Greece

In this presentation, I explore my encounter with questions around “ownership” and “authorship,” and the contradictions that emerge from signifiers such as “I,” “we,” and “us” (Gale & Wyatt, 2016, p. 5), as I entangle my stories with those of my research participants. By assembling what Holman Jones (2016, p. 10) calls a “troubled we,” I examine a dialogical approach that explores mine and the participants’ narratives together, in order to inquire into a space that is shared yet marked by difference.

Further, I consider how autoethnographic writing—developed in response to particular encounters or moments of resonance within the interviews—can act as an opening that draws me back into the affective texture of the conversation. Placing these writings in relation to the interviews allows me to examine how meaning is negotiated, interrupted, and reconfigured between researcher and participant. These pieces do not seek to interpret the interviewee’s account but to consider how the researcher’s affective and reflective engagement shapes what the interview comes to mean, highlighting how self and other are mutually shaped through the research process.

I argue that this discontinuous and fragmentary mode of writing functions as a methodological tool for working with interviews. It allows the researcher to stay with moments of uncertainty, and tension rather than translating them into stable themes. This approach challenges the expectation that qualitative research should resolve ambiguity, showing instead how meaning and self are continually shaped through the act of writing.

## **Between memory and policy: an autoethnographic journey into family secrets and the long shadow of White Australia**

**Roslyn Fraser**

Stephen F. Austin State University, United States of America

This presentation builds on my ongoing autoethnographic project exploring the intersections of family history, race, and state policy in Australia. Drawing on the life story recounted by my grandmother, I trace the hidden histories of my maternal ancestors, revealing a family narrative that challenges conventional understandings of race, class, and belonging in Australian society. In July 2025, months after publishing my first paper on this topic, I conducted further archival research in Sydney, uncovering new records that illuminate the lived consequences of the White Australia Policy as both a legal framework and a racial project. The archival records I have uncovered over time reveal that my ancestors—stemming from an interracial marriage between a man from Canton, China, and a white woman born into extreme poverty—experienced forced family separation, with two generations of children removed from their parents and placed in institutions and foster care.

By situating the story of my family within broader frameworks of racial formation, this work highlights how state policies shaped—and often fractured—the lives of non-white Australians, including multiracial families whose histories were subsequently erased or sanitized in familial and public narratives. The presentation will reflect on the emotional labor and ethical considerations of uncovering family secrets through archival research, demonstrating how autoethnography enables both methodological rigor and narrative care while at the same time necessitating emotional resilience for the researcher. I also aim to illuminate how the sanitized, austere spaces of state archives—governed by public rules and rigid policies—create a challenging and emotionally charged context when one is tracing the very ways that same state harmed one’s own family. Finally, I hope to demonstrate the potential of combining family stories with archival evidence to surface hidden truths, complicate national myths of identity, and contribute to critical understandings of race, belonging, and policy in historical and contemporary Australia.

## **Shadows at Play: Re-search Collaborators in Creative-Relational Self-Inquiry**

**Joel Liwanag**

Ateneo de Zamboanga University, Philippines

This paper is an invitation to explore what I have come to call creative-relational self-inquiry, a painful-playful process of self re-search which I engaged in for my doctoral thesis (Liwanag 2023). Building upon my use of writing as a method of inquiry (Richardson 2000) and autoethnography, and following the footsteps of those who believe in “the ‘creative-relational’ as a dynamic conceptual frame for vibrant, incisive research” (Centre for Creative-Relational Inquiry 2023), I heeded the call of serious play (Mazzei 2007; Tudor and Wyatt 2023), where I learned the value of surrendering to anything and everything, trusting and believing that even not knowing, getting lost, falling apart and failing can become productive forces that give birth to new knowledge. In this process, which largely took place at the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, I met my shadows at play and they soon became my re-search collaborators. With them, I discovered the power of Donald Winnicott’s (2016, 439) words – that in life’s “sophisticated game of hide-and-seek... *it is joy to be hidden but disaster not to be found.*” By showing you my shadow collection, handpicked photos that now adorn a wall in my bedroom, I allow you to take a peek into myself and my shadows, and the spaces between and within us, hoping that you will join us as we play.

### The dialogical construction of professional identity: Positioning Microanalysis of internalized social voices in psychology students

Georgia Gkantona, Fotios Ntagkas

University of Ioannina, Greece

This qualitative study explores the construction of professional identity among psychology students at a Greek public university through the framework of Dialogical Self Theory. Conducted during a professional identity development workshop, the research explored how internalized voices of significant others—originating from sociocultural contexts such as family, peers, educational environments, media, and dominant societal narratives—shape students' self-positioning in relation to their choice to study psychology. Fifteen graduate psychology students participated by recalling impactful utterances from influential figures and representing these voices as internal characters engaged in an imagined dialogue around their career choice. These dialogues served as rich narrative data, reflecting the students' internal meaning-making processes. Positioning Microanalysis was employed to examine the unfolding of internal dialogues. A first-step analysis included the identification of the agent (the internal speaker), the addressee (to whom the agent is speaking) and the inner audience (which other internal self-positions are listening to). Next, after identifying and labeling the micropositions, labels were aggregated into wider categorizations and micropositions were then grouped under mesopositions. Further interpretative developmental analysis revealed dialogical patterns such as internal conflicts, cyclical dynamics, the negotiation of authority, and the emergence of previously unvoiced or transformative I-positions. Preliminary findings indicate that professional identity is not a linear formation but a fluid, negotiated process marked by dialogical tensions and integrations. Voices representing familial expectations, societal pressures, and institutional discourses often conflicted with emergent self-authored voices, revealing both barriers to and breakthroughs in identity development. This study demonstrates the utility of idiographic, dialogical methodologies in examining internal multiplicity and emergent dialogical phenomena within professional identity construction processes. It further highlights the role of reflective narrative practices in facilitating the development of students' professional identities.

### In vino veritas: Found poetry as identity exploration and confirmation for three MotherScholars

Lauren Burrow, Amber Wagon, Chrissy Cross

Stephen F Austin State University, United States of America

*After chugs of beer, sips of champagne, and tastings of wines*

*We turned our bottles over to see the poems we could find*

*We counted syllables, we borrowed the words*

*We wrote these poems as three mothers*

*As liquor danced on our palates,*

*And compliments spilled onto our pages*

*Penned poems personified in vino veritas*

*And became toasts to one another*

Defining one's positionality is essential to qualitative research work as a scholar's worldview, identity, and background guide and shape their research process; thus, identity work becomes a dynamic, ongoing construction and re-construction of one's identity. For this study, three MotherScholars conducted qualitative research that utilized collaborative autoethnographic (Ellis, Adams, & Bochner, 2011), friendship (Tillman-Healey, 2003), and poetic inquiry (Faulkner, 2005) methodologies to collectively re-examine the implications and realizations of their shared MotherScholar identities. "MotherScholar" is an intentional stylization of the term originally coined by Matias (2011), a Pinay anti-racist scholar. The stylization signals an attempt to ease guilt and hardships associated with trying to balance two identities by accepting we are always "mom" and always "scholar" (blinded, 2020, p. 50).

This study was a conversation amongst friends, around a table, drinking wine, and writing found poetry as a vehicle to discuss the definition and experiences of MotherScholarhood to support better understanding of our shared identity within our personal/ professional lives – including what we perceive to be our identity, what we end up projecting to those we interact with, and who our dearest and closest scholarly friends recognize in us. This collaborative self-study assisted us in clarifying our positionality within our homes, classrooms, and research fields.

The paper will share selected found and inspired poems crafted by each of the MotherScholars – sonnet, haiku, and free verse – and discuss the process of found poetry from wine bottle labels.

## **Arab young adults' voices on intersecting risks and identity formation in Israel: Toward context-informed social work practice**

Ruba Aburass Mograbe, Prof. Yafit Sulimani-Aidan, Dr. Haneen Elias

Tel Aviv University, Israel

This study centers the voices of Arab youth at risk in Israel (ages 18–25), who experience intersecting marginalities related to gender, age, socioeconomic status, and ethnic-national identity. Through dialogue, the study explores how youth perceive and navigate socio-political, cultural, and interpersonal risks. As a national minority facing opportunity gaps, governmental neglect, and heightened tensions - particularly amid war - these youth exemplify the urgent need to conduct research with and for marginalized communities, recognizing their agency and deepening understanding of the risk situations they face.

Guided by Emerging Adulthood theory and a Context-Informed Perspective, the study employs Grounded Theory methodology (Corbin & Strauss, 1990). Twenty-five Arab young adults receiving welfare services participated in semi-structured interviews on intersecting risks. I conducted interviews in Arabic, my native language and that of the participants. Data were transcribed, thematically coded, and analyzed using the constant comparative method, supporting the development of categories and theoretical linkages directly from participants' narratives.

Findings revealed complex patterns of identity negotiation and risk perception. Participants navigated conflicting ethnic-national, local, and religious identities, with these challenges intersecting across three risk dimensions: interpersonal (family violence, neglect, isolation, anxiety, and loss of meaning), socio-cultural (gender restrictions, educational barriers, limited opportunities, weak support systems), and sociopolitical (community violence, institutional discrimination, limited trust in authorities, and language-based exclusion).

Listening to these voices builds context-based knowledge and highlights the urgency of designing social work interventions sensitive to both identity and structure. The findings demonstrate that identity and risk are closely linked, shaping ongoing cycles of vulnerability among Arab youth in Israel. These young people confront the dual challenge of personal growth amid a fraught political landscape. This research calls for social work practice and policy that integrate cultural context, promote equality, and foster practical interventions to strengthen resilience, especially during times of crisis.

## **Dad 2.0 - identities in motion**

Johanna Julia Vilja Mantere

University of Eastern Finland, Finland

What does fatherhood look like in the 2020s? How do men express themselves as fathers in an era saturated with images and expectations of what a man should be? *Dad 2.0 – Identities in Motion* is a visual journey into an interdisciplinary research project that explores the multiple meanings and representations of fatherhood in Finland. This qualitative study is part of a broader research initiative at the University of Eastern Finland: *Religion, Meaning and Masculinities – Religion in the Lives of Men in Finland* (Research Council of Finland).

Dad 2.0 combines qualitative methodology with a co-research approach and arts-based research. The project began with 24 fathers from diverse backgrounds—including nuclear families, divorced and single fathers, rainbow families, and immigrant fathers. Each interview began with a discussion about the participants' everyday images of fatherhood, followed by a narrative interview and, optionally, a photographic portrait session with the researcher. In the end, eight fathers chose to be photographed, and several others shared personal images from their daily lives.

This presentation explores the multiple father identities and values expressed through these visual and narrative materials. The data highlights the diversity of fatherhood, the reshaping of identity and values, and the tensions between traditional gender roles and emerging forms of masculinity. Masculinity and fatherhood are no longer fixed categories—they are continuously negotiated in everyday life: between strength and vulnerability, pride and inadequacy, inherited traumas and new possibilities.

## **How are we already escaping? Dis-integration in daily life**

Wade Tillet

University of Wisconsin - Whitewater, United States of America

Based in pragmatism and post-structuralism, I explore how discontinuity is in itself already an enacted and embodied everyday curricular strategy. We sleep to avoid a stressful situation. We break a promise in order to avoid being penned in to a corner. We hide a part of our self to avoid ridicule. In other words, we use multiple selves to avoid the restrictions of a singular one. The self betrays the self. The self lives in a state of dis-integration.

Further still, I propose what pedagogies might look like based on disjunctions. Pedagogies of dis-integrations foreground and even create the gaps that allow for the self to become other. These pedagogies that values gaps will not measure or require fidelity to the original, but instead facilitate the (re)creation of newly relevant concepts, episodes, actions. Simultaneously, they will not require production from or translation of all modes to that of a singular "academic" (or discursive or productive) mode. These pedagogies aim to split the idea of the continuous lived experience and the integrated self. They embrace but does not require translations, in between zones, mixed modes, hybrids. These pedagogies ask, what can we do with gaps? And to answer that nec-

essarily means looking at what we already do with gaps. How are we already escaping?

## **The Future as a Horizon of Hope and Repair: Future Perception among at risk Young Arab Women**

**Miraz Hashoul<sup>1</sup>, Yafit Sulimani-Aidan<sup>2</sup>, Haneen Elias-Karram<sup>2</sup>**

<sup>1</sup>Tel-aviv university, Israel; <sup>2</sup>Ruppin Academic Center

### **Background**

At-risk young Arab women in Israel experience multiple layers of oppression resulting from their intersecting identities as members of Arab society, as part of an ethnic minority, as women, and as individuals living in situations of personal and familial vulnerability. Their marginal position shapes both their life experiences and how they view their future. Emerging adulthood is a key developmental stage marked by personal responsibility, decision-making, and forming a desired lifestyle. Research shows this period involves identity formation, setting life goals, and planning steps toward them. Future perception plays a central role in motivation and the ability to act toward goals. This study adopts a context-informed perspective that examines how sociopolitical, sociocultural, and interpersonal contexts shape future perception.

### **Methods**

The sample included 30 Arab young women aged 18–29 identified as being in situations of risk and involved in formal support frameworks such as welfare services or civil-society organizations. Data analysis followed Strauss and Corbin's grounded-theory approach, enabling exploration of the processes through which participants construct and interpret their perception of the future.

### **Results**

The analysis revealed one overarching theme, "Constructing the Future as a Narrative," encompassing four interrelated sub-themes: "Between Overthinking and Avoidance," reflecting tension between fear and hope; "Independent Personal Future," focusing on autonomy and stability; "Future as a Space for Personal Repair," emphasizing healing and self-recovery; and "Future as a Path Toward Social Justice and Repair," highlighting transformation of pain into social contribution and collective change. Together, these subthemes portray the future as a horizon of hope, resilience, and transformation.

### **Implications**

These findings highlight the need for context-aware interventions that foster autonomy, support goal setting, and strengthen coping capacities. By providing professional and social support, such programs can empower young Arab women at risk to overcome barriers and build safe, independent, and meaningful futures.

## **DREAM TEAM\_9**

### **Writings-movings-choreographies: possibilities, imaginings, doings**

**Carol Taylor<sup>1</sup>, Angelo Benozzo<sup>2</sup>, Nikki Fairchild<sup>3</sup>, Suvi Pihkala<sup>4</sup>**

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This Dream Team explores possibilities posed by writing and movement. It builds on our previous work on academic writing otherwise (Taylor et al., 2025; Taylor & Benozzo, 2023). In considering writing's movements as a multiplicitous connectivity of physical-affective-sensuous-materialities, we hail new writing imaginaries into becoming through movement. We are interested in writing and movement, writings' movements, on the moves writing might make, and on how writing moves us.

Theoretically, we are inspired by Deleuze's question: 'It is a question of producing within the work a movement capable of affecting the mind outside all representations; it is a question of making movement itself a work, without interposition ... of inventing vibrations, rotations, whirlings, gravitations, dances or leaps which directly touch the mind' (Deleuze, 1994: 8). We work with this to enact posthumanist feminist materialist praxis that sets bodies, hands, thoughts in motion to imagine and do writing differently and, via this, to devise new ways of doing qualitative research.

We invite Dream Team participants to enact movement in various ways, forms and modes: physically, affectively, sensorially. The smallness of the movement doesn't matter – it's what the movement does and enables i.e. writings' disruptivities– that matters.

Writing's movements are felt in hands and skin, in-on bodies-hearts-minds. Remembering to learn to write as children, our mothers' hand holding ours and moving our hands to shape letters. Perhaps we recall learning to write as a form of regulation: marching unruly letters into ordered obscure sentences – learning to write in the right way. And the physicality of writing: holding a pen/pencil correctly; writing so much you get a hard bump (a callus) on the middle finger! Alternately, now, using fingers to type may make our hand-writing feel laborious, and the words on the page seem clumsy and not ours. We may also ponder generational styles of writing: cursive/ cursivo/ kaunokirjoitus.

We invite participants to engage in four hot spots (punto nevralgico) and a collective writing activity to explore and co-create

the potentialities of writing's movements, how the many folds of writing's movements put our bodies in motion; and how micro-movements and micro-sensings traverse and shape us and/as the writing.

Our four hotspots:

Physical movement has become part of many scholars' research practices, for example via walking methodologies (Springgay & Truman, 2018; Taylor, 2020; Walking as Research Praxis, 2025). Moving is not only a somatic entangled assemblage of human and non-human relational bodies, it also includes "the affective, the political, the institutional, and the biological" (Shildrick, 2015, p. 18). At this hotspot we invite you to write in movement heterotopia (Foucault, 1967), where writing spaces are made from layers of meaning and/or relationships to other places.

Do bodies write their stories with the shadows they cast, as statements of our always relational and always unfolding positionality? How are shadows writing themselves into our bodies? How is the world writing itself onto us, with us, without us through movement and shifting light-object formations? Like ancient monuments built to create symbolic visual effects during astronomical events, this hotspot is an invitation to think/engage/move/write with shadows and light to explore writings happenings in more-than-human ways, as a dance and immanent choreography that calls forth shapes, patterns, contours, colours.

Writing's body movements. While we write, the legs move, the lungs breathe, the eyes shift between the computer keyboard, the fingertips touch pencils and keys, the organs produce sounds, the heart beats, the blood flows. The head sways. In a calm that is only apparent, the body writes, moves, and makes noise. The body grows tired; the organs grow excited. This hotspot is an invitation to produce thoughts on the body that moves-writes. It is an invitation to imagine what space we can give, in research, to the movements of the flesh.

How do we write without words? What happens when we try to? Is it possible? Or, what else becomes possible? There are forms of writing which don't rely on words. Boone & Mignolo (1994) discuss how alternative forms of writing were destroyed by colonisation, rendering hieroglyphic, pictorial, and coded systems of writing invisible and 'primitive'. This hotspot invites participants to refuse the colonial gaze of writing by writing-moving without words, and to make marks/write with images, drawing, paint, and found materials other than pen or pencil.

Alongside the hotspots, participants are invited to a collective writing activity that aims at imagining-inventing an alphabet that is unrecognizable and nonrepresentational. How might we communicate in new ways through new individual-collective marks as they appear, materialize and do things on paper.

## DREAM TEAM\_10

### Creating Relational Ripples in psychotherapy

Marilena Karamatsouki

Stegi Psychotherapeias (private practice), Greece

In an era of global changes and mental health challenges, qualitative researchers strive to reflect the emerging realities in their areas of inquiry. In my doctoral research, I used the concept of relational space, which includes human and non-human elements, verbal and non-verbal interactions, emotions, embodied responses... and more. The exploration of relational space also takes into consideration the environment and systems in which we live and function. As a systemic practitioner researcher, I explore the intricate interplay of the relational space that emerges in the conversation between client and therapist and the relational space of the different voices that emerge within the therapist. Through the use of reflexive writing, I focus on the relational conversation between my client and myself, as well as my inner dialogue and thoughts and feelings. In a way, I create a professionally employable space for the personal. The collaborative dialogue between these relational spaces creates relational ripples, which in turn open up possibilities and generate transformative practices in the psychotherapy process.

In this Dream Team session, participants will have the opportunity to engage in experiential exercises to explore the relational space in therapy, both the relational space between client and therapist and within the therapist. They will experiment with ways of using reflexive writing as a methodological tool, applicable and useful to practitioners who need to respond to current mental health challenges. Through the use of reflexive writing and collaborative discussion, participants will deepen their understanding on the impact of their own relational space in the therapeutic encounter and how the interconnectedness of relational space between client and therapist and within the therapist encourages collaboration and dialogue in the therapy room. In the end of the Dream Team session, participants will produce a collective writing, which will reflect the joint efforts of the team to create relational ripples and will showcase the interconnectedness of our relational spaces.

## “Close ups”: Narrative inquiry methods in psychobiography research

Chair(s): **Athena Androutsopoulou** (Logo Psychis-Training and Research Institute for Systemic Psychotherapy, Greece)

Discussant(s): **Maria Viou** (Logo Psychis-Training and Research Institute for Systemic Psychotherapy)

In the last few decades, psychobiography has moved away from its sole identification with psychoanalytic inquiry and toward the adoption of other psychobiography lenses. The narrative turn in psychology and the renewed interest in the analysis of life stories have encouraged several psychobiographers to associate their work with the wider field of narrative inquiry. Our psychobiography research group studies the lives of authors, artists, and scientists of the late 19th and early 20th century using first-person narratives and works of art (letters, diaries, notes, autobiographies, early memories, interviews, self-portraits) as our primary data to answer intriguing questions. These questions have clinical relevance since psychobiography cases can be seen as case studies of “complete lives”. Our aim is to gain insight into our ‘subjects’ struggles in resilience rather than pathology, feed our clinical insights, and teach trainee therapists narrative methods of inquiry. Papers in this panel will present a case for using psychobiography to teach narrative inquiry methods, and will also present three specific examples of using such methods to conduct and publish psychobiography research.

### Presentations of the Panel

#### Psychobiography: A tool for teaching narrative inquiry in action

**Athena Androutsopoulou**

Logo Psychis-Training and Research Institute for Systemic Psychotherapy

In recent years, psychobiography, the study of distinct lives, has been revitalized, adopting a variety of theoretical lenses or prisms. It has been described as case study research with complete lives, and is now included as a subject in the curriculum of a growing list of psychology departments worldwide. Endorsement of postmodern methods of qualitative inquiry for psychobiography, like the narrative approach to the study of lives, has further widened the field. We use psychobiography in the training of therapists to help achieve several goals, one of them being their learning of qualitative research methods in action, with emphasis in narrative inquiry: from asking research questions with possible implications for counselling and therapy, to forming small study groups, to field work or archive search, to conducting analysis and presenting findings to conferences and/or publishing it. We conduct narrative analysis of form and/or content, but also visual narrative analysis with emphasis on themes. In terms of data, we favor the study of first-person narratives and/or artifacts (diaries, letters, full autobiographies or autobiographical writings, early memories, interviews, self-portraits etc). Even though one might see life stories under the prism of either redemption or contamination, depending on longevity and death cause (e.g. natural causes or suicide), we treat them all as stories of resilience, given their histories of hardship and trauma. Short examples are presented with an emphasis on the variety of narrative inquiry methods used and the importance of learning in action.

#### Adjusting the Life-Story-Interview to study the life of photographer Nelly’s

**Athena Androutsopoulou, Christos Korovilas**

Logo Psychis-Training and Research Institute for Systemic Psychotherapy

The famous Greek photographer Ellie Sougioultzoglou-Seraidari (Nelly’s) (1899-1998) was born in Aidini (Asia Minor), and in her early years she experienced the tragic events of the Greek-Turkish War (1919-1923). She studied photography in Dresden (Germany), and worked in Athens (Greece) and New York (U.S.A.). A narrative and cultural psychology framework was adopted to explore the way that Nelly’s constructed her life story. An adjusted version of the “Life-Story Interview” (McAdams & Bowman, 2001) was used that distinguishes between redemption versus contamination narratives. The narrative analysis of autobiographical materials revealed turning points and a central life theme. The photographer appeared to construct her life story as a process of reinventing herself or managing “rebirth”. This construction matches the dominant narrative of Greek refugees of Asia Minor, following what is known in European history as the Asia Minor “Great Catastrophe” (1922). Both narratives are surviving and thriving stories of “rebirth”. The importance of making meaning of life stories within a specific socio-cultural and historical context is emphasized.

#### Using visual narrative analysis to study the life of photographer Vivian Maier

**Charikleia Tsatsaroni**

National Organisation for Prevention and Addiction Treatment (EOPAE)

In this visual-narrative psychobiography study, we examine the life of the recently discovered street photographer Vivian Maier (1926-2009) of Austrian-French origin, who made a living as a nanny in the USA. There is limited information on her

life that was possibly marked by early trauma, and no witnesses to her photographic activity. In our study we adopt a narrative psychology framework to look into her self-portraits, and understand how Maier constructed herself through time. Following principles of visual narrative analysis, we examined a series of published self-portraits, placing them in temporal sequence. We observed the development of one life theme (“I as photographer”), reflecting the effort to narratively construct a self that makes meaning. Over more than three decades, this life theme followed a progressive story-line initially, with Vivian Maier gradually exposing her face and leaving the camera aside, but a regressive story-line later, with her camera rather than her face gaining central position and with both of them disappearing eventually. We discuss the findings with emphasis placed in the many forms of repeated self-portrayal as meaning-making, but also in the limitations of making meaning of the self in solitude.

## **Combining multi-level narrative and visual analysis to study the life of photographer Francesca Woodman**

**Christos Korovilas**

Logo Psychis- Training and Research Institute for Systemic Psychotherapy

Francesca Woodman (1958–1981) was an American photographer who achieved posthumous fame after her suicide at age 22 and is now regarded as an “icon” and “rock star of contemporary photography.” Our study approached her life and work through a three-level narrative analysis. The first level examined recurring patterns in photographs, videos, and self-narratives, triangulated with the family story as depicted in the documentary *The Woodmans*. All members of the family were artists striving for recognition. A central theme that emerged was visibility/invisibility, linked both to Francesca’s personal experience of acceptance and rejection and to broader family dynamics. The second level focused on her final self-published photo-book, compared with an earlier one created during her time in Rome. Using a coding system for self-portrait analysis, we observed a sharp decline in psychological progression markers. This decline mirrored a visual and symbolic transition: from concrete motifs toward abstract geometries where identity appears to dissolve into impersonal forms. The third level analyzed diary entries, letters, and notes from the same photo-books. Here, too, we found a shift: decreasing self-reflexivity and internal markers, alongside growing reliance on metaphorical and externalized expressions, some foreshadowing her death. Overall, findings suggest that Woodman’s struggle with visibility and invisibility intensified in her final works, evolving into a fragmented symbolic language that reflected deepening existential isolation and withdrawal from tangible reality. The analysis carries clinical implications for understanding suffering and for supporting suicide prevention.

## **ORAL SESSION\_11: Narratives of Resistance, embodied methodologies**

### **Madness in my soul: Hopeful resistance in aesthetic borderlands of Gloria Anzaldúa and Bruce Springsteen**

**Morna McDermott McNulty**

Towson University, United States of America

What does a white male rock-and-roll star born in Freehold NJ have in common with a female Chicana scholar and mystic living along the Mexican American border? Everything. It sounds unlikely but there are connections to consider and reasons why considering these connections should matter to us. This proposed paper intersects the visionary shamanic and aesthetic ideas of the scholar Gloria Anzaldúa (2015; 1987) with the visionary language of Bruce Springsteen’s album *Born to Run* (1975) and how interweaving their work addresses the “... synergies, creativities, transformative practices, hopes and possibilities ... “ of our collective futures (ECQI Call for Proposals). The presenter explores sites of resistance and hope shared between a disenfranchised working class riding down the broken highways like the characters in Springsteen’s album *Born to Run* and the communities living in the liminal shamanic borderlands of Anzaldúa’s praxis. Both Anzaldúa and Springsteen highlight a need for spiritually-adjacent aesthetic experiences that bridge divides between individuals/groups and foster belonging in our shared “interconnectedness, our shared vulnerability, and our interdependency with human and other worlds“ (ECQI Call for Proposals).

How can we shift (or disrupt) the binaries that limit our individual and collective realities without losing what matters? This presentation emphasizes how liminal spaces of fiction, storytelling and metaphor as qualitative modes of inquiry are necessary elements of resistance. Anzaldúa refers to this spiritual inquiry through artmaking as *conocimiento* (2015, p. 142). Session participants will discuss song lyrics and scholarly passages alongside each other and consider how metaphoric, artistic, and literal border-crossing ‘conjures’ communal acts of shared futures that enable us to shape-shift and reconnect with human and non-human worlds.

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## **Exploring community context over time: Intergenerational narratives of connection and resistance in inner city Belfast**

**Emma Loudon, Gareth Robinson, Kathryn Higgins**

Queen's University Belfast, United Kingdom

This paper presents findings from *Growing Up in the Market* (GUIM), a three-year qualitative longitudinal study conducted as part of a research partnership between Queen's Communities and Place (QCAP) and the Market community in inner-city Belfast. GUIM followed 61 participants across four generational cohorts—children, young people, young adults, and parents—through three waves of interviews (2022–2025). Our aim was to explore how community context shapes health, wellbeing, education and employment over time, and to explore the impact of our academic partnership. As such, this is an interdisciplinary project drawing on sociology, community psychology, and educational research. Its multigenerational design offers a relatively rare yet highly valuable lens through which to understand the dynamics of community life and change over time.

We will present narratives collected revealing three overarching themes: tensions of belonging and exclusion, collective action in response to adversity and asserting ambition(s) despite constraints. Across generations, participants emphasised pride, attachment, and solidarity, even as they spoke of stigma, precarious living conditions, and the intergenerational legacy of conflict. Education emerged as an act of resistance through which families sought to assert ambition, dignity, and possibility despite constraints. These findings were interpreted within the life course paradigm, highlighting how individual, family, and community trajectories intersect with wider structural forces across time.

Further we reflect on the approach itself and how, rapport built over repeated interviews developed trust and, at times, blurred the boundaries between researcher and participant impacting the data collected. We also discuss what this data suggests about the powerful potential of community-led interventions—from substance-use evenings to arts-based projects. In attending to the voices of children, young people, and families, the study foregrounds how hope, endures—even in precarious worlds and how communities under pressure resist deficit narratives and cultivate futures with persistence.

## **Translanguaging as Resistance**

**Rebecca Linares**

Rowan University, United States of America

In this presentation, the author will present a paper that weaves autobiographical anecdotes with translanguaging theory to illustrate what educators can do, in their classrooms and everyday practice, to counter the deficit-oriented discourses and ideologies circulating about immigrant and/or multilingual learners. The author will begin by reflecting on her own translanguaging identity and life as a translanguager in primarily monoglossic spaces. She will then discuss alternative, heteroglossic understandings of language that seek to disrupt and counteract dominant and damaging monoglossic ideologies and perspectives, acknowledging the difficulty of such a task in the current sociopolitical climate in the United States. Finally, the author will invite attendees to explore their own linguistic and cultural identities and roots and engage in dialogue about the educational practices and policies that facilitated or stifled the development of their multilingualism as well as how the present realities in which they currently operate are similar and/or differ. Together, the author and attendees will discuss how educators can go about creating expansive, heteroglossic, translanguaging spaces that cultivate and nurturing students' translanguaging instincts by discursively pushing back on larger monoglossic ideologies while also protecting ourselves in the current sociopolitical climate.

## **Embodied methodologies for the unintentional: Visio-tacit knowledge production for leadership resistance.**

**Jo Townshend**

Jo Townshend, United Kingdom

In today's challenging times, resistance to managerialist and marketised education systems (Ball, 2019) remains problematic. Tools to counter fixed and ossified structures are few, whilst time and space for reimagining leadership are hard to find. As global market matters (policy, language, technologies) advance human performativity (Sidebottom, 2019), liberating leadership with embodied methodologies for the unintentional may be useful to subvert dominant operations and advance possibilities elsewhere.

This presentation embraces the transformative practices of art making with education as embodied, material, post-qualitative and post-human becomings (Fairchild, Taylor, Benozzo et al, 2022) for the unintentional and novel. Ways of making methodologies as soft materialisms will showcase the generative possibilities of material intra-inter-actions of bodies-non-bodies (Barad, 2017). These bring into question how hyper feminine objects activating multi-sensory knowledges may reposition commodified management structures. Further, softly visualising hierarchies of patriarchal language are seen to produce the previously unimagined, unknown and unintentional in acts of resistance. These art methods and materials perform a gentle approach to developing critical and self-reflexive leadership and softly contributes to the expanding field of possibilities (Glăveanu, 2023), post-qualitative studies and feminist new materialist inquiry (Braidotti, Coleman and van der Tuin, 2024).

Moreover, a view on the public dissemination of exhibition that invites intentional-unintentional audiences to bring their

leadership-non-leadership bodies into art spaces for reimagining education will be shared. These lead us to consider how collective, embodied material acts as assemblage (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987) perform further disturbances to orient education leadership differently. In the pause until these methodologies for resistance are widely adopted, the transformational inter-intra-play of bodies-making-education matters can be understood to take leaders somewhere else in the hope of a better world.

## ORAL SESSION\_12: Women's voice, gender justice, mad studies

### **(Re)scripting sovereignty and scarcity: Seeking relationality and abundance in feminist collaborative relationships**

**Maureen Flint<sup>1</sup>, Janie Copple<sup>2</sup>**

<sup>1</sup>University of Georgia, United States of America; <sup>2</sup>Georgia State University, United States of America

This presentation draws from an ongoing inquiry between the two authors about feminist ethics and collaborative scholarship in the academy. Together, we have asked “How do we live a ‘good’ life in the academy?”, and “How might feminist theory provoke questions about this life?” In this paper, we consider authorship practices as a cluster of factors implicated in the mundane environment of academic life, what Berlant (2011) might describe as a scene of ‘slow death’. We enter into collaborations with pre-defined scripts about what constitutes authorship, and what this entails. These scripts are part of a cluster of factors: citation metrics, author order and logics of production and scarcity that obscure the relational, ethical, generative aspects of collaborative scholarship. In our own academic practices, we have wrestled with these questions of authorship. We have noticed how conversations and assumptions about authorship reflect and produce particular geometries of power and structural conditions. In this presentation, we put Berlant’s theorization of slow death in conversation with the work of adrienne maree brown (2017) and Robin Wall Kimmerer’s (2015, 2024) writing on scarcity logics to think about how co-authorship might serve as both a site of tension and an opening for interference in academic economies. We situate our inquiry within our own stories of navigating authorship as feminist scholars positioned simultaneously as mentors, colleagues, and co-authors with one another, as well as with students, etc. We open up authorship as a question, something relationally negotiated that ebbs, flows, and shifts in response to needs and situations. As we do this, we find that these questions have implications for how we think about qualitative methodology and pedagogy. In other words, to ask about authorship, is to ask how we want to live and relate separately-together in the academy.

### **Scientifically literate British women in challenging times**

**Saima Salehjee, Mike Watts**

Brunel University London, United Kingdom

There is an urgent need to promote scientifically literate individuals who possess knowledge and skills in science to thrive in these scientifically advanced yet globally challenging times (Sjöström et al., 2023). This paper discusses the development of scientifically literate British women who left science education in their teenage years but have returned to learning scientific knowledge and skills in middle-aged phases of life, to address their personal needs and professional demands in science learning. We are focused on the under-researched group of women between 35-65 years (Etaugh & Bridges, 2013) because, although this age group comprise the largest percentage of the overall British population, they are highly underrepresented in the science fields (British Science Association, 2020). Drawing on the theories of transformative learning in adults and scientifically literate identity development, we have conducted semi-structured interviews with our participants, these interviews were analysed using narrative and thematic analysis, highlighting (i) how and why our middle-aged women participants re-engage with science learning, (ii) they develop scientifically literate identity, that (iii) intersects with their other identities, such as being middle-aged women. Our key findings reveal the importance of (i) emotions, including self-determination and self-efficacy belief, in passing through the liminal transformative tunnel of becoming a scientifically literate person, (ii) informal means of learning, including smart devices, (iii) assimilating, accommodating and refuting scientific information and misinformation to survive in the scientifically demanding personal and professional environment. We suggest that more research and practical implications be explored to support the development of scientifically literate adults.

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## Transformation within tradition: Engaging Qatari men in gender justice and VAW prevention Efforts

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In the Muslim world, there is a slow but powerful movement happening amongst men who are challenging the negative stereotypes which depict them as abusive, misogynistic, and violent. Instead, these men are actively involved in gender justice initiatives and violence against women (VAW) prevention. This article presents findings from Qatar's portion of our international study on Muslim Masculinities. Grounded in a Transformative Learning (TL) theoretical framework (Brookfield 2012), the study includes qualitative interviews with Qatari men, exploring their motivations for engaging in VAW prevention and gender justice initiatives. The findings underscore key life trajectories shaping men's perspectives on gender justice and VAW prevention, such as: (1) Family legacies and generational impacts, (2) Sense of personal responsibility for sisters, (3) Positive influences of religion on participants, and (4) Transformation within small social circles. These findings have important implications for policy development in Qatar and beyond, highlighting the need for VAW prevention strategies that engage men as allies within their cultural and religious contexts, leverage existing traditional social structures, and emphasize grassroots, community-based change over top-down systemic reform.

## "The temple has opened": Using the 'scenic' as a tool for psycho-social meaning-making in a study of mother-young adult daughter relations

Roni Eyal-Lubling

Tel-Aviv Yaffo Academic College, Israel

What happens to qualitative data when it travels—geographically, culturally, and linguistically—beyond the context in which it was first produced? This paper explores the generative potential of such movement through my participation in the *Many Minds* data-analysis group held at the University of Sussex, UK. As part of this collaborative series, I shared two interview excerpts and a reflective fieldnote from my PhD research on mother-young adult daughter relations in marginalized communities in Israel, originally collected in Hebrew and later translated into English for the group.

Drawing on Lorenzer's (1986) concept of the *scenic*, I examine how these narratives were heard, felt, and re-interpreted by a multicultural group of scholars. The group process included emotional, associative responses, and line-by-line reading, creating a space where my own interpretations were both expanded and unsettled. The emotional and embodied reactions of others opened up fresh interpretive possibilities, revealed blind spots, and reframed taken-for-granted assumptions about young adulthood, gender, marginality, and intergenerational ties.

Rather than seeking a single consensus or "final" meaning, the Many Minds process embraced multiplicity and tension. In doing so, it generated insights that speak not only to the specific narratives of Israeli young women and their mothers but also to broader questions of researcher subjectivity, translation, and the ethics of working across difference.

This paper demonstrates how collaborative, transnational data analysis can function as a form of dialogical knowledge-making—illuminating how globally circulating data can foster deeper reflexivity, produce more nuanced interpretations, and contribute to transformative qualitative inquiry in challenging times.

## A little bit less alone

Gunnhildur Jonsdottir

University of Iceland, Iceland

I would like to tell you a story. A story about Madness and memories lost. A story about being silenced, being alone and stuck in the moon-shadow. It is a true story about a girl, who was deemed Mad and treated as such, but later wrote a book about her experience. The book connected her to a group of people, people who read, people who had also suffered. People who had no voice, but felt as if she was speaking for them; as if they were now a little bit less alone.

In spite of all the people who thanked the girl, in spite of her realizing that she indeed had given voice to many, she felt more alone than ever. She wanted to understand. So she set up on a journey. She returned to the ivory tower, where she had before explored Fine Arts, and knocked now on a different door. The door to Academic Research. To Mad Studies.

Through the methods of qualitative inquiry, the girl called out to others. Others who had also been deemed Mad, but refused to stay silent. People who had written books, books about Madness and becoming whole, in spite of it all. In joy she gathered them around her and asked: How did it feel to tell your story? Why did you do it? What did it change? And she listened to their voices, she listened and she felt, and she thought, and she tried to understand.

The girl is I. I invite you to come and listen to the story of the stories. The story of how, through my research, through other peoples' stories, I became myself. A little bit less alone, than before.

### Lessons learned from using qualitative methods to evaluate arts-based early years practice

Shelina Visram

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The LEAP (Little Explorers And Parents & families) project offers a movement- and arts-based intervention for pre-school children in socioeconomically disadvantaged areas in the UK. Developed by a ballet company (Northern Ballet) and building on creative adaptations made during the COVID-19 pandemic, the project fosters physical, cognitive and social development through music, storytelling and multisensory play. A qualitative evaluation was undertaken to explore its implementation and potential for wider application in early years (EY) settings.

Flexible, context-sensitive methods were used to generate data with key actors from five preschools in the north of England. Methods included: interviews and written reflections from EY practitioners; observations and informal conversations with children; and WhatsApp interviews with parents. Visual data, such as photographs, supplemented narrative accounts. Efforts to involve parents/carers revealed key methodological challenges; despite multi-modal recruitment, only two parents took part and both demonstrated limited awareness of the LEAP project.

A relational evaluation framework underpinned the analysis, focusing on interactions between children, practitioners, families and the creative materials. Findings highlight the importance of trust, co-creation and embedded practitioner relationships in enabling meaningful engagement. Small group work and accessible resources supported participation, while space constraints, staff absence and language barriers limited implementation in some contexts.

This study illustrates the methodological value of adaptive, relational approaches in researching arts-based interventions within EY settings. It raises critical questions about whose voices are heard and how engagement is negotiated in under-resourced, culturally diverse communities. In challenging times, such as post-pandemic recovery, the co-construction of knowledge with practitioners and children becomes central to understanding impact and informing scale-up. Future research must continue to embrace flexible, inclusive methods that recognise the complexity of working with young children and families across diverse settings.

### The scholartistry of arts-based research in the social sciences

Richard Siegesmund

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As arts-based research (ABR) in the social sciences has evolved over the past 30 years, it has taken on multiple forms, methods, and interpretations (Wang et al., 2017). This paper examines the concept of scholartistry, a term first coined by the Canadian poet and scholar Lorri Neilsen (1998), and expanded through three editions of *Arts-Based Research in Education: Foundations for Practice* (Cahnmann-Taylor & Siegesmund, 2008, 2018 and forthcoming, with the third edition being released concurrently with the ECQI conference). As developed through the three editions, scholartistry calls for both a deep knowledge of one's disciplinary base within the social sciences as well as proficiency of a specific and/or multimodal art practice. Additionally, scholartistry is profoundly rooted in the American Pragmatism of John Dewey and William James (Capps & Capps, 2005) with its commitment to discover what we do not yet know in order to make our social life better. Profoundly, this quest for broadening circles of clarity is driven by attention to and the application of tacit knowledge (Polanyi, 1967) in the process of inquiry.

John Dewey, in *Art as Experience* (1934) referred to the analytic engagement with the tacit realm of experience as thinking in "relations of qualities" (p. 46). Furthermore, Dewey insisted that such qualitative reasoning was distinctly different from thinking in terms of linguistic, mathematical, or even visual symbols.

The distinction between thinking in linguistic and visual symbols (with their attendant structures of metaphor and metonymy) and thinking in the tacit realm of the relationship of qualities is the essential feature of scholartistry and how one would identify a scholartist work of ABR from a symbolic ABR analysis. To support this distinction, visual examples from recent ABR will help clarify the added level of analysis that attention to tacit qualitative reasoning in images might provide.

### Knowing together, differently: attempting anti-ableist research through artistic practice in a disability artist collective

Cassie Kill

The University of Sheffield, United Kingdom

In this paper, I present artistic research I have carried out with a group of learning-disabled artists, who have existed as a collective for over four decades, collectively known as The Professors. Methodological literatures often present participation and disability inclusion in research in idealised ways, as though it offers an easy resolution to power and oppression. Paradoxically, idealised rhetorics about inclusion may conceal and reinforce old hierarchies (Ahmed, 2012). For instance, it is often assumed

that collaborative research involves selecting and sticking to one unified inquiry, which Gallacher and Gallagher (2008) call an 'adult norm' of linear research. I argue it is also a neoliberal-ableist one (Goodley, 2018). In this project, I have sought to collaborate with The Professors flexibly and fluidly, allowing multiple fragmented strands of unfolding knowledge production to emerge through their artistic practices, in which such approaches are well-established. The research draws on research-creation - which centres the artistic process (Loveless, 2019) - and ethnographic methods, demonstrating how methodologies embedded in The Professors' established creative practices generate insights into anti-ableist participatory approaches. Through presenting examples of these creative practices, I show how they resist established norms of academic knowledge production, including idealised concepts of co-production, and offer radical anti-ableist alternatives. However, I will contrast these radical, creative moments with the examples which illustrate the tensions and contradictions that emerge from attempting to do this sort of anti-ableist participatory research from within an neoliberal higher education institution, which are not easily overcome or resolved.

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## Attuning to multispecies relationality in the assemblages of an art classroom

Henrika Ylirisku

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This paper introduces a study situated at the intersection of multispecies childhood research and new materialism-oriented art education research. As part of a broader research project examining children's and young people's multispecies relations in the age of ecological crises, I had the opportunity to explore the everyday life of a children's and youth art school in Southern Finland. I examined how children's relationships with other species—and broadly speaking, with other nature—materialized during the meetings of art school groups.

In this paper, I present two dimensions through which I explored the multispecies relationality in the art classroom. On one hand, other species entered the art educational situations through representations and stories: as subjects of artistic work, as visual imagery and objects in the classroom, and as narrated stories. On the other hand, relationships with other species, objects and forces were already present, as continuously co-emerging tapestry of everyday life. This affective dimension, however, felt hard to grasp, as it seemed as a blurry 'background' eluding attention.

Finding ways to attune to the affective relationality beyond the explicit pedagogical context and other 'foreground' layers of the situation challenged me as a researcher to engage in methodological experimentation. Inspired by Linda Knight's (2021) protocol of inefficient mapping, I developed a method of affective movement mapping through drawing, which allowed me to attune to the affective encounters, rhythms, and intensities in the art classroom.

Through examples, the paper illustrates how this experimental method revealed art education situations as vibrant assemblages of diverse tempos and rhythms of movement, where the touches of hands, materials, and tools are central, and through these encounters, new stories and representations of multispecies relationality emerge.

## When ethnodrama simply feels right! Towards theorizing that's moving

Argyro Almpantopoulou

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Arts and science are often seen as dichotomous, opposites. In relatively conservative fields like business and management, endeavors that draw on creativity and emotion are treated as distinct from those relying on rigor, and reason. But what happens when scientific prescriptions, methodological templates and academic conventions do not satisfactorily facilitate our attempts to theorize and represent the worlds of our research participants? I am not an experienced arts-based scholar, nor a particularly talented artist, I am afraid. However, last year I had a serendipitous encounter with ethnodrama, a specific genre of dramatic literary writing, and analytic approaches associated with it, that opened up for me possibilities for knowing, sensing and writing that the traditional methodologies could not accommodate. In this essay, I reflect back on my recent experience with ethnodramatic analysis and writing, and its reception in the review process. I aim to argue about the potential of ethnodramatic analysis and writing to facilitate theorizing 'that's moving', referring on Weick's (1999) notion of 'moving' theories, i.e. 'theories that affirm the heart' or in other words, theories that have emotional resonance (p. 140).

### **The violence that makes our research possible: AI, extraction, and qualitative ethics**

**Lorien Jordan, Matthew Johnson, Jennifer Wolgemuth**

University of South Florida, United States of America

Artificial intelligence (AI), often celebrated as an engine of progress, is implicated in the escalating planetary crises of climate breakdown, mass extinction, democratic erosion, and widening inequality (McQuillan, 2022). Far from immaterial, AI relies on infrastructures of energy, water, minerals, and labor that intensifies ecological collapse and global dispossession (Crawford, 2022). Each interaction with AI is tethered to extractive chains that accelerate “slow violence”—the gradual, dispersed harm that unfolds across generations and borders (Nixon, 2013).

Once mediated by AI, qualitative inquiry, often framed as small-scale, relational, and human-centered, becomes entangled in the extractive systems it might otherwise resist. That is, the slow violence of AI is not external to our work but an intensifying condition shaping who speaks, who is silenced, and whose suffering is rendered (in)visible. For qualitative researchers, these realities raise urgent ethical challenges. Institutional ethics frameworks, dominated by procedural compliance, cast AI as a neutral tool (Bennett, 2025), a narrow view that risks reproducing colonial logics of extraction, where infrastructure remains invisible and unexamined until it breaks down (Star & Ruhleder, 1996).

In this paper, we theorize slow violence as both an ethical and representational problem for qualitative inquiry, performing an infrastructural inversion to expose AI's technical and epistemic systems (Bowker, 1994). We ask: What does it mean to produce knowledge through systems complicit in environmental and social harm? What kinds of subjects are we becoming when our methods rely on extractive infrastructures? Confronted with these questions, researchers may be tempted to disavow the violence that enables convenience, feeling shame, ambivalence, or resistance in the face of complicity. Rather than seeking resolution or denial, we reimagine research ethics as a practice of dwelling within these tensions, acknowledging complicity, foregrounding entanglement, and cultivating modes of inquiry that strive toward responsive care (Raffaghelli et al., 2025).

### **Artificial intelligence, SRL and SEL in primary education: Teachers' reflections on practice**

**Christina Smaropoulou, Aikaterini Vasiou, Eleni Vasilaki**

University of Crete, Greece

This qualitative study explores primary school teachers' reflective experiences following the implementation of an intervention in six Grade 4 classrooms in Greece focused on Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) and integrated Self-Regulated Learning (SRL) strategies, delivered an AI-enhanced Learning Management System (LMS) traditional printed materials. The core instructional focus SEL competencies—including self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship, and responsible decision-making—while SRL strategies were explicitly taught and embedded within the flow of learning activities, enabling students to apply goal-setting, self-monitoring, and emotional regulation during their engagement with SEL content. Teachers participating in both modalities documented their post-intervention reflections in structured journals, offering rich narratives about their pedagogical choices, classroom interactions, and the evolving role of technology in supporting emotionally meaningful and cognitively self-directed learning. Through a thematic analysis of these reflective accounts, the study how teachers conceptualized the integration of AI in SEL practice, how they navigated the co-teaching of emotional and metacognitive skills, and how their own professional perspectives were shaped by the process. Ituated within the theoretical frameworks of the CASEL model for SEL and Zimmerman's theory of SRL, interplay between affective and regulatory dimensions of learning. Emerging teacher reflections indicate pedagogical value both implementation settings, with the AI-supported environment student engagement, emotional expression, and autonomous learning. study contributes to ongoing discussions around ethically grounded technology integration, reflective teaching practice, and innovation in emotionally and cognitively rich learning environments.

### **Family, Therapy, and AI: The Elephant in the Room**

**Alexis Brailas<sup>1,2</sup>, Eleana Armao<sup>2</sup>**

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This qualitative study explores psychotherapists' lived experiences and perceptions of engaging with generative AI in a simulated therapeutic context. Employing an exploratory research design, we conducted a simulation where three systemic family therapists participated in role-play sessions with ChatGPT, which was prompted to act as a therapist. Participants adopted the roles of a client from a fictional distressed couple with a child, directing the conversation based on a provided scenario. Following the simulation, we conducted in depth interviews to understand their personal experiences as role-playing “clients” as well as their professional reflections as practitioners. A thematic analysis of the interview transcripts revealed several key findings. Participants consistently reported a surprising sense of being understood and validated by the AI, noting its ability to ask reflec-

tive questions and offer support. However, this was invariably tempered by the critical observation of a lack of authentic human presence. They highlighted the absence of non-verbal cues, tone of voice, and embodied connection as a decisive limitation, leading to interactions that often felt generic, repetitive, and ultimately superficial despite the AI's technically competent responses. Building on these empirical findings, we engage in a theoretical conceptualization, proposing a systems thinking view of AI in therapeutic practice to understand the multidimensional effects of the inevitable AI presence in the room. This systemic lens reframes AI not merely as a tool, but as a relational actor that can potentially stabilize or disrupt therapeutic and family systems, posing specific risks. The study concludes that a critical, systemic understanding is crucial for anticipating how AI is integrated into human relational networks, highlighting implications for therapeutic practice, ethics, and the future of family and therapeutic systems in a postdigital era.

## **Socratic Dialogue with AI: Toward the Anamnesis of the Unknown**

**Katerina Undo**<sup>1,2,3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>KU Leuven; <sup>2</sup>LUCA School of Arts; <sup>3</sup>University of Melbourne

Debates on artificial intelligence (AI) and its role in the Anthropocene unfold less as prospect-opening inquiries than as polarized stances, shaped by systemic fatigue and eschatological anxieties over limits already reached. At such a moment—when the foundations of thought seem unsettled—we are challenged to think at the limits of the thinkable, to risk the unthinkable, and to resist systematization as the domination of humans by reason. This paper responds to that challenge through a speculative, artistically informed inquiry.

Drawing on the author's art installation *Creatures Cluster* as a symbolic schema of interconnected eco-logies, and on Platonic prompt-dialogues conducted across successive ChatGPT versions, the project explores anamnesis (knowledge as recollection) as a politics that seeks the improbable and incalculable within organological relations, enabling new connections that open spaces for speculation. Here, AI is positioned not merely as a tool but as an immanent, maieutic (generative) function, analogous to Socratic provocation: a self-reflective process staging thought through otherness.

Hovering between method and (un)concealment, logocentrism and paradox, logic and myth, the inquiry refuses absolute thinking, instead cultivating a dialogical praxis that enables polyphonic, multilayered engagements with diverse intelligences that evade closure—there is no absolute ground for any epistemology. In this mode, the paper proposes a shift from anthropocentric logic toward allocentric realization through techno-logical alienation. This shift neither seeks timeless truths nor treats AI as an inevitable agent tasked with delivering them. Instead, it articulates a language of co-existence that speaks from within crisis rather than transcending it. Anamnesis is thus explored as a transformative process nested within AI's recursive feedback, where knowledge is co-constituted through relation in time and as time, as difference engaging difference, and where dialogue becomes an event rather than a debate.

## **Therapists' perceptions of artificial intelligence integration in mental healthcare.**

**Ellie Noitsi**<sup>1</sup>, **Ntaniella - Roumpini Pylarinou**<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>University of Greater Manchester, UK; <sup>2</sup>New York College, Greece

This qualitative study explores the complex and multifaceted perceptions of mental health therapists regarding the adoption of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in their professional practice. As AI tools become more prevalent in healthcare, understanding the perspective of practitioners is crucial for effective and ethical implementation. Using a Thematic Analysis approach, this research explores in depth the insights of eight Greek female therapists, aged 28 to 45, to uncover their views on AI's potential and limitations.

The analysis of semi-structured interviews revealed three primary category-themes: opportunities, concerns, and potentiality. Participants identified AI's potential to enhance their therapeutic practice by providing time and cost-effective assistance in areas like research, organization, and improving accessibility to mental health services. However, a significant sub-theme of resistance was also prominent, with the majority of therapists expressing reluctance to use AI to substitute core components of their therapeutic work. A major concern that arose, is the perceived inability of machine learning to replicate and apply essential therapeutic skills such as empathy, emotional awareness, and genuine understanding.

Despite these concerns, participants acknowledged AI's future potential, highlighting the need for structured training, strict and close monitoring, clear guidelines regarding GDPR and data privacy while having governmental bodies form a thorough legal framework. Along the same lines, a prominent motive for AI's adoption has been the fear of missing out (FOMO).

Overall, this research reveals the perspectives of therapists, who recognize the technological opportunities while remaining cautious about AI's capacity to replicate the human elements of therapy and follow rules of data privacy. While the small sample size limits generalizability, the findings provide a foundational understanding of the challenges and opportunities associated with AI adoption in mental healthcare, paving the way for future, larger-scale investigations into this critical topic.

**Expressive arts inquiry as Trojan Horse in troubled times****Kelly Clark/Keefe, Robin Hausheer**

University of Vermont, United States of America

The Trojan Horse Greek legend recounted by Roman poet, Virgil, in Aeneid, and Homer, in the Odessey, tells of the Greeks who, after 10 brutal years warring with the Trojans, turned to creative subterfuge to take their foe off guard. Near defeat, the Greeks constructed a wooden horse, hiding soldiers in its cavity. Mounting a brilliant ruse, the Greeks feigned defeat by presenting the horse to the city of Troy as a peace offering, then pretended to sail away. While some Trojans were skeptical of the offering, most were emboldened by their city's triumphant win. Swayed by the horse's stature and the populace's pride, the equine was hauled into the city as a trophy. While citizens slept, Greek forces snuck from the horse, opening the city gates for the returning army to infiltrate and destroy the city, ending the war.

This Dream Team session reimagines the Trojan Horse figuration, recasting its metaphorical significance from deceit and concealed threat to consider capacities for inspiring speculation and activation of strategies, bypassing defenses and polarizing politics to invite non-confrontational and transformative change in troubled times. Delegates will convene to integrate theories and techniques of Expressive Arts (EXA) with qualitative inquiry, envisioning production of a generative Trojan Horse. Following, EXA is introduced to provide context for the session's interactive components including inspiration for initiating an international EXA Inquiry Writing/Making Collective.

**Introducing EXA as a Field of Practice**

A small, international contingent of psychotherapists and faculty in the 1970s, initially trained in conventional western theories of psychology, became critical of the medical models of mental illness and treatment practices. Each had experience in the arts and struggled with keeping modes of creative engagement central to their work. Collectively, they became the shapers of the EXA field and for decades embraced their arts practices to deconstruct and reconstruct ideas about human health and wellness. EXA is an intermodal process of engaging individuals and groups, joining two or more sensory modalities--movement/dance, sound/music, visual arts/imagery, and poetry/writing--to facilitate expressive possibilities. EXA offers a non-judgmental space for externalizing experiences, offering alternative pathways when verbalization is less optimum or unavailable. Especially generative when engaging groups, EXA highlights lived experiences through activation and honoring of embodiment, resulting in fostering of community and social cohesion. EXA emphasizes the artmaking process over artistic production, employing a 'low-skill, high-sensitivity' framework, meaning participants engage in high-sensitivity processing of mind-body connection requiring low skill or no formal art training.

**Where Expressive Arts and Arts-Based Research Touch**

What is the physical, social, atmospheric and/or emotional terrain that compel our turn to the arts, making it difficult or impossible to explore a complex world otherwise? What principles and practices of EXA assist arts-based researchers in enacting methods that cultivate habits of 'thinking about' social and educational phenomena alongside habits of 'doing with' bodies, art, affect, and movement? As educational arts-based researchers (ABR) trained in EXA, we wander and wonder through our work with such questions. While EXA and ABR are distinct fields, they share important territory. Both EXA and postfoundational arts-based research practices (e.g. a/r/tography) draw on body-centered, modalities of dance, music, writing, drama, and visual art. The creative process rather than the end products attunes to and follows sensorial provocations. We experiment with where and how EXA and the proliferation of Arts-Based Research touches, departs from, and holds underexplored potentialities--all of which we are eager to explore with delegates.

**Cultivating Creative Subterfuge**

As EXA facilitators and researchers, we understand the importance of building a flexible container to support session emergencies, while not premeditating or flattening paths. Following is what might thoughtfully instigate and flexibly hold our session:

20 minutes: Overview of EXA as Practice and Inquiry Mode

Presenters will provide a brief EXA overview and introduction to EXA as inquiry mode.

30 minutes: Engaging EXA as Inquiry Mode

Illustrating and practicing EXA as inquiry, presenters will facilitate multimodal activities, using the following guiding question: What can a collaboratively envisioned, creatively constructed, and strategically intelligent metaphorical academic equine do to subtly introduce compassionate subterfuge aimed at taking hyper-conservatism's presently noxious contagion in academic realms off guard, for good?

40 minutes: Cultivating the Conditions for an EXA/INQ Writing Collaborative

We dream of a collective creatively disrupting the currently-amplified ethos of human (sic) supremacy, separatism, and rapid capitalism. Harnessing momentum from the session, we aim to cultivate conditions to transport compassionate subterfuge in higher education, sorting what it means to be companions of the strategically intelligent Trojan Horse.

### **The intellectual acrobatics of teaching and learning about movement in physical education**

Aspasia Dania

National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, Greece

Dominant traditions in physical education (PE) have framed movement primarily through natural science paradigms and physical skill models, positioning teachers as technicians who apply behavioral principles, established categorizations and performance pedagogies. This narrow view risks reinforcing ableist perspectives and elitist norms. What makes movement education distinctive in PE, is its potential to value both the concrete (skills, performance) and the abstract (principles, concepts) as intertwined and embodied phenomena that can promote inclusive, and holistic forms of learning. Thus, teaching about movement in PE entails moving beyond scientific reasoning alone, toward creating pedagogical conditions of non-representational thinking and action.

In the present study, these conditions are dealt with through the concept of intellectual acrobatics. Via a Deleuzian perspective, intellectual acrobatics refers to a process of destabilizing and reassembling established assumptions and categorizations, by inviting pedagogy to take bold conceptual and practical leaps. As such, the aim of this study is to examine whether and how intellectual acrobatics can position pedagogy-as-creation in PE, enabling teachers to think and work with movement in ways that generate new, yet-to-be-realized possibilities.

By using Deleuzian notions of thinking-with-signs, I initially explore dogmatic images of thought within PE and their implications for how movement is taught and learned. Afterwards, the concept of intellectual acrobatics is suggested as an alternative approach for reimagining movement education within PE. Running, as an example of locomotor movement, is used to illustrate how intellectual acrobatics can open multiple ways of encountering signs in, with, and about learning to run, each demanding equally diverse pedagogical responses. I finally consider the capacity of this concept to reorient contemporary PE, offering new perspectives for how movement might be understood and taught.

### **Weaving selves, worlds, and imagination in educational futures: metaphor writing as teacher pedagogy**

Naya Grillia, Maria Daskolia

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This study explores how metaphor writing supports future teachers in shaping their professional identities and responding to the complex challenges of our time. Metaphors are approached as “technologies of the self” (Foucault, 1988), enabling student teachers to reflect on who they are and who they aspire to become in a world marked by uncertainty, interdependence, and crisis.

Through the creation of metaphors (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980) about ‘the environmental education teacher’, participants engage deeply with their own experiences, articulating evolving understandings of teaching, responsibility, and care. These figurative expressions serve as sites for both personal reflection and collective meaning-making, revealing how teachers’ ethical sensitivities emerge in relation to others and to the more-than-human world.

Metaphor writing in this study was embedded within three university courses, where relational interaction, dialogue, and self-reflection formed the core of pedagogy. In these participatory spaces, students explored how their experiences, perceptions, and aspirations could be expressed and reimagined through metaphor, positioning learning as relational, embodied, and transformative.

By foregrounding creativity, collaboration, and reflection, the study contributes to the qualitative research community by demonstrating how imagination and affect can engage future teachers with global and local crises. It advocates for pedagogies grounded in imaginative, self-reflective practices that foster resilience, ethical responsibility, and transformative teaching. Metaphor writing emerges thus as a generative approach for reimagining teacher pedagogy in response to the interconnected challenges shaping education today.

### **Going knowingly into the unknown: how a pedagogy of adventure promotes (be) longing and hope**

Victoria Jefferies

Edge Hill University, United Kingdom

Young children’s excited curiosity, wonder and adventurous pursuit of experience epitomise a world-in-formation. Their educational journey either expands or curtails their creativity, imagination and empathy. Neoliberalist values and institutional pressures in Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) in England often pressurise educators into outcome-focused teaching, forcing them to navigate complex political terrain (Moss, 2024). I focus on the hope offered by the alternative of a pedagogy of adventure, encouraging children to go knowingly into the unknown and to pursue their rhizomatic desire lines, as they seek to

share everyday spaces with the human and more-than-human.

Through autoethnographic narrative from a nursery, I show that giving time and space to children's 'becoming-with' allows a growing resonance with the world, challenging dominant egocentric values (Biesta, 2013). Two children noticing a spider's web became a powerful story *as data* and *of data*, permitting a turning and re-turning (Barad, 2007). It led to thinking *with* data, allowing it to thicken, becoming more than itself (Ungar, 2017) within its wider narratives. Slow pedagogy (Clark, 2023) created entangled spaces and places. The children's subsequent decision-making evidenced the affective condition of (be)longing, enmeshing their past, present and future hope (Kraftl, 2024).

The children's thirst for (lost) knowledge and their subsequent attachments to the more-than-human, to place and to space evidence the joys which transcend standard boundaries. Methodologically, using this data from the 'unruly edges' (Tsing, 2015) unearths sensory, affective connection and new ecological possibilities. It places ECEC settings as potential democratic sites at the centre of interconnected communities.

## **Quivering lines: the (un)productive movements of collaborative scribbling, drawing and writing in educational research**

**Alexandra Nordström<sup>1</sup>, Charlotta Hilli<sup>2</sup>, Jenny Renlund<sup>1</sup>, Jenny Byman<sup>1</sup>**

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In this paper, we explore collaborative scribbling, drawing, and writing as a research approach and how drawn and written marks became entwined with our thinking, creativity, and everyday lives over a period of three years. This paper presentation draws on a previous study in which literature's thing-power created movements in student teachers' learning diaries during a university course on children's literature and drama in early childhood teacher education. To explore the affective and material power of literature, we employed a creative approach of visually playing with scribbles, sketches and collages when tuning into the movements we could sense in the learning diaries. The collaborative process became affective, embodied, material, and achronological, and extended across several events, modalities, and platforms. Here, we explore a new line of thought and inquiry about the continuous presence of movements, tensions, and meaning-making through written and drawn marks —lines that are not straight but quivering, remaining as visible moments of dialogue. For this paper, we each chose an event that felt significant from our previous study to continue to draw from, with, over and along those quivering lines. At the same time, we explore how they bend and move as part of our shared analytic processes. We are curious about the productive and nonsensical movements of quivering lines and messy marks as part of academic research and life; such marks are always collaborative, material and relationally performed. Thus, we ask: What playful, unruly, insipid and consequential meanings and relations can these marks perform?

## **Deep Listening as ontological practice in teacher professional learning**

**Cathy Coulter**

University of Alaska Anchorage, United States of America

This paper explores the ontological possibilities of in-service teachers' engagement in deep listening (Gershon, 2020; Oliveros, 2005) with children. Deep listening is "a fully embodied attention to another's expression so deep that you can hear the alignment between her intentions, attentions, and expressions" (Gershon, 2020, p. 1170). Deep listening is a means through which teachers can make space for a deeper, embodied understanding of children's emerging knowledge and identities, "in an apprenticing rather than a hierarchical expert relationship" (Watkins & Lorenz, 2002, as cited in Laryea, 2018, p. 3). Using concepts centered in diffractive methodologies (Barad, 2007) I explore the nonhuman agency of deep listening within the embodied practice of in-service teachers in a graduate-level teacher learning program. Teachers in this language and literacy program engage in recursive inquiry cycles based in asset pedagogies (Paris, 2012; Paris & Alim, 2014, 2017) using video analysis of their interactions with children that are based in rural and urban settings in Alaska.

Alaska Native scholars forward the importance of deep listening in pedagogical spaces (John Shields, 2018; Kawagley, 1995; Mercurieff & Roderick, 2006). According to Kawagley, "To the Yupiat, listening not only with the ears, but with the mind and heart are essential to becoming aware of patterns and events that reflect natural laws" (1995, p. 2). Mercurieff and Roderick admonish western educators to "stop talking" in their work in Alaska Native classrooms.

Working diffractively from data fragments that "glow" (MacClure, 2013, p. 661), I seek to understand what is created when teachers engage in deep listening in their learning-practice (Strom & Viesca, 2020) with children. What agentic role can deep listening (silence, awareness) play in the educative entanglements in which teachers are becoming alongside children within their learning-practice (Strom & Viesca, 2020)? What becomes in those spaces of deep listening?

## Postphilosophical connections in early literacies in challenging times

Chair(s): **Candace R Kuby** (University of Missouri)

Discussant(s): **David Shannon** (University of Sheffield, United Kingdom)

This panel explores how posthuman and postphilosophical orientations can reconfigure early childhood literacies in challenging times. The four papers trace how uncertainty, movement, and mundanity fray the edges of Humanist notions of literacy; how young children's embodied (post-)digital practices entangle media, culture, and affect; how deficit framings of silence and developmental diagnoses can be re-read through material-discursive apparatuses; and how fragile refrains shape children's sense-making in museums. Together, the contributions foreground literacies as relational, affective, and more-than-human, offering new ways of conceptualising children's engagements with language, place, and difference in uncertain worlds.

### Presentations of the Panel

#### Fraying the edges of literacies: What do post-philosophies produce for early childhood literacies?

Abi Hackett<sup>1</sup>, Candace R Kuby<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Sheffield Hallam University, <sup>2</sup>University of Missouri

As two scholars who have read and thought with post-philosophies, such as posthumanism, we invite a discussion on how post-philosophies have, and could, open-up possibilities for thinking about early literacies. The paper traces the development and contribution of post-perspectives in relation to early childhood literacies, before identifying three interconnected facets via which post-philosophies demand we conceptualize, teach, and research literacies: uncertainty, mundanity, and movement. Concepts such as these, we argue, have frayed the edges of 'the box' that defines literacy via Humanist logics, thus serving as gathering points for a growing critique of the assumption that 'human' is a fixed and unproblematic category. Through personal reflections of how post-philosophical concepts have forced us to think differently, we ask; what has, does and could post-philosophies, specifically those that align with posthumanism, contribute to the field of early childhood literacies?

This paper speaks to the conference theme by inviting others to consider how post-philosophies offers creativity and interconnectedness in unprecedented times. Thinking with theories and ideas outside of our normal disciplinary homes is a generative process over time and an ethical project of producing difference towards a more just world. As we reflect on and propose, this process is getting us somewhere otherwise conceptually and politically, not as a quick fix or neat answer, but as an iterative and long-term intellectual project that also produces new, different realities along the way. Inspired by writings on thresholding, we propose the phrase 'child with/in the world' which encompasses what post-philosophies produce for us. Post-philosophies are not trying to get rid of 'child', rather, post-philosophies shift how we think and teach children with/in the more-than-human lively world.

#### Dancing across the (post-)digital: tracing young children's entangled (post-) digital literacy practices

Fiona Scott

The University of Sheffield

Education is often positioned as a 'solution' to social inequalities, with literacy framed as a set of discrete skills essential to children's well-being. Reading and writing can help children relax, gain confidence and understand others. However, dominant discourses privilege fixed, decontextualised views of literacy and narrow, eudaimonic outcomes such as achievement, belonging and economic security. These frameworks ignore the complex relations between literacy and well-being, positioning children as 'becomings' not 'beings' and aligning with neoliberal logics of future human capital.

This paper explores the digital-literacies-in-the-body of three-year-old Niyat as she engages with diverse cultural, material and social resources including the (post-)digital in the context of her Eritrean diasporic family home in the UK. Drawing on a home-based ethnographic study, I discuss some of the ways in which my research unfolded 'from the floor up'; reflecting on who I became in my research with Niyat and her family, how the things I noticed seemed to matter and how our shared practices became methods over time.

I also trace how Niyat's embodied practices with media and everyday objects - such as stone carrying seemingly connected to her watching of *In the Night Garden* or dancing with her mother and sister to Eritrean worship songs and Beyoncé's *Single Ladies* - can be read as complexly entangled action texts. These moments highlight how very young children both draw from, and transform, the cultural, affective, and material ecologies they inhabit.

Posthuman orientations guide this analysis, unsettling teleological accounts of literacy as linear skill development and instead foregrounding affect, embodiment and relationality. In doing so, the paper reimagines young children's digital practices as simul-

taneously cultural, critical, embodied and affective, expanding thinking about what ‘counts’ as ‘digital literacy’ and its association with ‘well-being’ in early childhood.

## **Is it just silence? Rethinking deficits as material-discursive apparatuses in early childhood**

**Alejandra Pacheco-Costa, Fernando Guzmán-Simón, Ana M Coves-Martínez**

Universidad de Sevilla

Research on language and literacy practices has addressed the different contexts in which children make meaning, and how children are full, competent and able when considered as phenomena. However, narrow considerations of language in the classroom may tend to put the focus on what the children lack. This situation is particularly striking in the case of non-normative children where deficits, associated to disorders or syndromes, populate educational discourses. In this contribution we focus on a child with a diagnosis of Developmental Language Disorder (DLD) that puts the focus on her lack of words. We apply neo-materialist theories to pay attention to what emerges when DLD diagnosis becomes part of a classroom entanglement.

In our research we accompany Alice, a five-years-old child diagnosed with DLD, during a school moment in which her classroom group reads a silent book that recreates Little Red Riding Hood tale. We pay attention to Alice’s sounds, silences and movements, and to what those same sounds, silences and movements do. Considered that way, agency during this event does not belong solely to Alice, nor solely to the non-human matter. We read this event through Barad while we assume that concepts and ideas are not constituted autonomously. In our approach we apply the concepts of material-discursive apparatus and agency to look into non-normative children in a different way. In doing so, we re-conceptualise DLD, Alice, the classroom floor or Little Red Riding Hood. We reflect on what DLD does and how it creates relations, transforming both the human and the non-human and challenging standard definitions of DLD as deficit.

## **A little thing that returns: Refrains and young children’s sense making in museum spaces**

**Abigail Hackett<sup>1</sup>, David Ben Shannon<sup>2</sup>, Christina MacRae<sup>3</sup>, Maggie MacLure<sup>3</sup>**

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This paper explores how very young children make sense in museums through refrains: small, repeated utterances, sounds, and gestures. We explore how these fragile and fleeting refrains shape children’s engagements with cultural spaces, considering their implications for museum education and early childhood literacies.

### **Background**

Research on early language development often emphasises “serve and return” interactions between adults and children. However, posthuman and affective perspectives highlight the material, multisensory and relational dimensions of language. Building on Deleuze and Guattari’s (1987) concept of the refrain, we propose that children’s sense-making emerges through rhythmic patterns of repetition that are at once generative and precarious—holding things together only temporarily, always at risk of dissolving.

### **Methods**

The study draws on a collaboration with Humber Museums Partnership. We conducted ethnographic observations and continuous audio recordings with families and under-fives across diverse museum and heritage sites. Data consists of field notes, audio vignettes, and researcher reflections, analysed with attention to rhythm, affect, fragility, and place-making.

### **Findings**

Our analysis identifies refrains as rhythmic, fragile, and emplaced. Vignettes such as “waddle waddle” at a penguin enclosure, “ding-bell” during play with a toy, or whispered repetitions of “it’ll be alright” show how refrains create temporary territories of order and belonging. These refrains are unstable and contingent, breaking apart as quickly as they coalesce, yet precisely through this fragility they open possibilities for new relations and sense-making across bodies, soundscapes, and places.

### **Conclusions**

We argue that refrains demonstrate how children’s literacies are aesthetic, improvisatory, fragile, and multisensory, exceeding conventional models of language. Museums can play a vital role in supporting these precarious yet creative practices, providing hospitable spaces where young children’s vocal, embodied, and relational engagements are valued. Attending to refrains expands understandings of early childhood language beyond developmental norms, foregrounding rhythm, affect, and fragility as central to children’s cultural encounters.

## Summoning the dark side of arts-based methodologies

Chair(s): **Lisbeth Frolunde** (Roskilde University)

Discussant(s): **Dorethe Bjergkilde** (University College Absalon)

As arts-based educators we repeatedly experience resistance by the participants in a variety of educational and organizational contexts. Through the arts, we work with emergence and serendipity: things show up. Do we take anything for granted? How can we possibly host arts-based processes with care for the participants, the material process and ourselves? The unfamiliar is a potentially dark source of insecurity and fear for both participants and facilitators. It feels almost like dying. As death (Chemi & Firing), the feeling/fear of failure is a taboo.

In this panel, we wish to address the dark side of our engagement with arts-based methodologies by tapping into our biographical narratives as arts-based educators. We wish to reframe darkness as vitalistic (Braidotti) through a journey into our personal connection with arts-based research and education. This journey starts at the roots of our ‘why’ (why am I a researcher/educator? Why arts-based methodologies? Why a personal journey?) and touches upon our own resistance. Necessarily, we address the boundaries of what counts as science (St Pierre), what is recognized as valid by the research community. We relate compassionately to the resistance of our participants, who often hold junior academic positions, or our students, who seek legitimization for thinking differently. Our aim is to open possibilities of a science that is different, polyphonic, diverse and rebellious (Burnard et al.), where doubt is part of the research process. Darkness is always there: how do we allow for the dark side to be there (Haraway)? Arts-based scholarship (Mreiwed et al. 2023) addresses how knowledge is always necessarily plural and describes how knowledges based on the senses, bodies and artistic practices are both generated by and generators of critical and creative ways of thinking. No matter what, arts-based learning will always meet resistance in practices ‘on the floor’.

### Presentations of the Panel

#### Condensation and evaporation: letter writing as reciprocal care in higher education

**Tatiana Chemi**

Aalborg University

“What happened?” Tatiana asks. Out of the door and quickly finding shelter inside her ice-cold vehicle, she breathes out her frustration. “What happened in the classroom?” The question comes out as vapour, material expression of her puzzlement. Condensation: the physical transformation of warm air into vapour when it hits cold air. Exhaling her burning frustration, the arts-based educator has just met what is commonly experienced when facilitating change processes that rely on communication forms that are alternative to verbal-logical ones. Resistance. Resistance to embodied, bodily, sensory, sensuous, materially-mediated learning. What does this resistance do to the educational relationship? How is this discursively and materially negotiated in educational contexts? What does this say about the aesthetics of love?

In my personal narrative, I tell the story of my experience of my Master student Sarah’s resistance to an arts-based educational session and how we collaboratively turned reciprocal resistance to reciprocal care. How can arts-based approaches might be received with resistance and how, despite obstacles, both educator and student might flourish? The purpose of this panel contribution is to formulate new relevant questions for the future of higher education: how do our organisations relate to love and care in education? And what is the role of arts-based methods?

Through letter-writing we found ways of rethinking what is labelled ‘failure’ or ‘resistance’, but instead might be a fundamental practice of criticality and creativity. The educational encounter is sticky with fear. On one side the educators, who fear being rejected (not listened to, losing authority) (Taylor 2010), on the other the students, who fear failing the course (not passing the exam, not fitting in). These anxieties “can only emerge in a system of cultural values about teaching as a relationship based on power dynamics rather than on reciprocal care” (Chemi & Firing 2024: 226).

#### Exploring diversions and dislocations in educational leadership

**Dorethe Bjergkilde**

University College Absalon

“I can see how such processes can be productive for situations and experiences at work. But I can also see that they can separate people.”

The quote is from a student who participated in a leadership education course, where I was the teacher. On that day of the course, we were working with art-based methods, and this student only participated partially. She refused to take part in the dancing and drawing exercises, which puzzled me, as she had previously been very positive and had expressed feeling safe and comfortable during earlier classes. That day, however, she would, for example, sit and look at her mobile phone or roll her eyes. I

felt a slight irritation, but I was also curious about her reaction.

I ended up interviewing her one year later, as her response continued to resonate with me. The conversation turned out to be about her work context, colleagues, leader and prior experiences with art-based methods in another setting, her learning style, and how she had developed over the past year — all matters that became entangled with the educational room.

This paper is inspired by a post-qualitative (St. Pierre & Jackson, 2014) and posthuman (Barad, 2007) approach, and explores how I, as teacher and researcher, together with the participants, teaching technologies, materialities, affects, and experiences, intra-act and become entangled across time and space. It raises questions such as: What are the balances between learning potentials, students' comfort zones, and ethical awareness? Art-based performative methods enable alternative ways of generating knowledge and fostering social transformation, as they involve all the senses, the body, and materials as active co-creators of new understandings (Knudsen, 2025; Leavy, 2018). However, this paper argues that such practices require a sensitive affective attunement and a curiosity towards working with darkness as well as potentiality.

## **Dilemmas about automatism in arts-based research methodologies: emergent flying bird-women as case**

**Lisbeth Frolunde**

Roskilde University

What are the dark sides of automatism such as opening for emotions, especially for participants who experience discovery through automatic methods uncomfortable or unintentional?

My interest is dilemmas in arts-based research knowledge, especially when applying intuitive and spontaneous elicitation through “automatic” creative methods. Automatic methods for free association rely on generating writing and drawing without editing, and are commonly used for idea generation (Leavy, 2018). Automatism can aid in formulating affect, memories, sensory impressions and embodied knowledge and is related to art movements, especially Surrealism, to psychoanalytical approaches for exploring the unconscious, and to occult “spiritism” (Opstrup, 2024).

In my arts-based research facilitation practice with automatism I have taken its merits for granted and set aside the close relation to psychological and spiritual elicitory methods which are so readily dismissed as unscientific, private, overnatural, scary, etc. My own comfort with applying automatic methods at university and psychiatric facilities is high, although always cautionary about ethical boundaries and scaffolding. But have I really listened to participants' questions about purpose, validity, struggles with inner critics and right/wrong, their “resistance”? My eagerness and assurance as authority to trust the process, that all voices and ideas are valuable, may have overruled dissenting voices (Bakhtin, 1981).

I highlight a case from my arts practice to illustrate how automatism can bring surprises. My intentional invitation is key. Upon the recent death of my husband I use automatic methods for writing, drawing and printing small artists' books. The emergence of weird, gruesome flying bird-women in my artwork has inspired me to study mythical, monstrous bird-like flying women as messengers (harbingers) and guardians of living/dying processes, embodying seductive, victorious, destructive, enraged, loving aspects (Young, 2018). Automatic methods summoned bird-women as timeless figures of grief across global traditions rooted in ancient symbols of transcendence.

## **The ethical need for personal knowledge in educational research**

**Elisabetta Biffi**

University of Milano-Bicocca

When I have taught arts-based methods and research to PhD students and young researchers, I have often been asked this question: “Will my research be scientific? Will I find a journal to publish my work in?”

In an era of complexity, where different tensions are prompting research to redefine science and scientific rigour itself (St Pierre, 2011), the concerns of researchers in training appear to have multiple layers.

The most obvious concern is how the scientific community views arts-based research. How much do we know about creating spaces to share this research with young people? Actually, the very existence of this conference seems to answer the first question regarding the will and legitimacy of the scientific community in this regard.

Yet hidden within the question posed by young researchers is a second, implicit and sometimes unconscious level of concern: can I, as a researcher, justify using a channel of knowledge that relies on perception and understanding rather than the explanation and logos of science as commonly understood? Can I engage with my embodied and subjective experience of exploring my subject of study without compromising the value of my research?

This contribution focuses on this second dimension, starting with an epistemological and methodological reflection on the importance of reconnecting with personal knowledge for those involved in educational and training processes, precisely because the object of study itself requires it. Using a phenomenological-hermeneutic perspective (Van Manen, 1999), we will discuss the ethical necessity for personal knowledge with participants in different languages, arguing that one cannot deal with education and training without having experienced the subjectivity intrinsic to one's object of study.

### **Building and exploring Sense of Place through Oral History: A Qualitative Study in Environmental Education**

Anna Trigatzi, Maria Daskolia

NKUA, Greece

We present a qualitative educational study situated within environmental education. The study, which involved Greek senior high school students, explored oral history both as a research approach and a pedagogical method in the context of a place-based school program. The aim was to empower students as citizens and young researchers of their environments in the direction of a critical pedagogy of place (Greenwood, 2013).

The study was organized along three relational axes: (a) the researcher/educator and the learning process, (b) the students and their research, and (c) the researcher/educator and the students' research. Our focus was on the spiral development of the students' sense of place as a key dimension of environmental action competence (Jensen & Schnack, 1997).

This study contributes to qualitative research theory and practice by combining environmental education with oral history while reflecting on the integration of historical and personal/collective memory perspectives into environmental education research. It also advances research on environmental oral history by developing qualitative approaches that explore the dynamic relationships between humans and their environments.

### **Ecomuseums, heritage and postqualitative inquiry: unsettling methods, relations, and care**

Marina Herriges

University of Glasgow, United Kingdom

What happens when ecomuseums meet postqualitative inquiry? This paper explores that encounter as both methodological and ethical disruption. Given museum's deeply colonial history and its grounding in Western epistemologies of control, permanence, and expertise, a postqualitative approach offers ways to reimagine heritage practices as relational, situated, and plural. Emerging organically from early fieldwork experiences in Brazil and Scotland, this inquiry rejects predetermined methods and comparative frameworks, responding instead to Elizabeth St. Pierre's (2019) provocation: "Why do we think we should know what to do before we begin to inquire?"

Through engagement with ecomuseums as spaces of community practice, the study treats heritage not as a stable category but as an unfolding assemblage of relations—an active process of negotiation with change. Heritage practices here are understood not as the act of preserving objects, but as an ongoing practice of care, reciprocity, and becoming, entangled with material vitality, and local desires. Postqualitative inquiry fits into this context as "Not a repetition of what is known, but rupture and provocation - a thinking at the limit" (Mazzei, 2021).

By bringing heritage practices into conversation with postqualitative thought, this research challenges the binaries of subject/object, expert/community, and nature/culture. It embraces uncertainty and emergence as generative forces in both research and ecomuseums. Agency is conceived as distributed across humans and nonhumans, places and materials, rather than centralized within institutions. When heritage encounters postqualitative inquiry, it becomes a living, plural, and unfinished field - an ethics of relation and transformation that opens possibilities for more sustainable practices of care. This inquiry offers an opportunity for both myself and the communities entangled within it to "not obtain knowledge by standing outside of the world, [but to be] part of the world in its differential becoming" (Barad, 2007).

### **The dynamics of care and scale in composting practices: Excluding awkward waste through Technologies of Un/Forgetting**

Taru Lehtokunnas

Tampere University, Finland

Drawing from ethnographic fieldwork at a Finnish composting facility and interviews with people who compost biowaste at home, this paper examines the dynamics of care and scale in composting practices. As many studies in the field of social scientific waste studies have illustrated, composting biowaste requires a lot of care – monitoring the temperature and moisture of the compost soil, and taking care of microbes, worms, soil and even the whole planet. However, like all care practices, composting involves situational exclusions of certain problematic entities and relations. Composting practices often entail awkward waste that needs to be excluded, such as avocado seeds or bones that do not break down in home composts, or plastics and other contaminants at composting facilities. Here, understanding the possibilities of care from the viewpoint of scale becomes crucial: waste is always taken care of in situated practices, and the scale of waste affects our ability to care for it. Simply put, the practices of composting kitchen waste at home differ significantly from those involved in treating retail food waste packaged in plastic at industrial-scale composting facilities. Thus, the exclusions inherent in these care practices are always connected to

the scales of waste. I examine how these exclusions are enabled through what I term technologies of un/forgetting – practices and technologies that enable the management of awkward, problematic waste. These technologies include, for example, placing poorly decomposable biowaste in mixed waste bins, incinerating plastic waste received at composting facilities, or sampling the level of contaminants in compost soil. I argue that the exclusions enabled by technologies of un/forgetting are always temporary and situational. Even if we care for waste, awkward waste, such as microplastics or incineration ash, continues to haunt us if the problems related to the scales of waste remain unaddressed.

## **Connections, dialogues and collaborative practices with the Great African Seaforest**

Vivienne Bozalek<sup>1</sup>, Nike Romano<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>University of the Western Cape, South Africa; <sup>2</sup>Cape Peninsula University of Technology

This presentation focuses on our own thinking and co-affective encounters with the Great African Seaforest in Cape Town, South Africa. Our presentation is a contribution to the emerging field of Critical Forest Studies which is “dedicated to critical, creative, and relationally embedded practices with forests”. While Critical Forest Studies has paid attention to land forests, less is known about the seaforest, and the entanglement between territorial and marine forests. We believe that we have a great deal to learn from the Great African Seaforest, in particular, as it has been under-researched from marine biology, oceanography, environmental and blue humanities perspectives. In keeping with the interconnected hydrological cycle of which we are all a part, we consider the Great African Seaforest, as a Global South “sentient interspecies learning community” for broader global politico-ethico-onto-epistemological practices and relations. In our presentation, we explore how our collaborative practice of reading-writing-photographing-swimming with the Great African Seaforest brings to the fore insights regarding kelp forest sentience, kelp forest imaginaries, kelp forest regeneration and kelp forest pedagogies. For the purposes of this presentation, we scheduled four swims throughout the month of August 2025. During these encounters we documented our swims with photos and videos, followed by freewriting sessions in nearby coffee shops. Interspersed with the swims we read marine biology and social science texts about kelp forests and the vegetal turn. In sharing excerpts of writings and visual images we give expression to how hopes and possibilities can grow in the light of our interconnectedness and shared vulnerability, as well as our interdependency with human and more-than-human worlds.

## **Growing with Plants – Perspectives on Plant-Human relations in Education**

Minna Saarela

University of Helsinki, Finland

Critical examination of human-centered ways of thinking has become topical as complex crises challenge sustainable development. In education research, attention has begun to be paid to relationships and living with multispecies companions. This presentation examines the relationships between plants and children in the context of Finnish early childhood education. The research framework includes theoretical, historical, and material aspects related to plant-child relations. In the research, I utilize Haraway’s (2004) storytelling strategy in studying landscape assemblages (Tsing, 2017) in which children share their lives with plants.

The presentation is based on ongoing doctoral research. The first phase of the research examined growth, children and plants in the contexts of early childhood education, learning gardens and garden pedagogy. In this presentation, I will mainly focus on the next empirical phase of the research, in which plant-child relations are mapped using multispecies ethnography.

I will highlight perspectives on how history, culture, and materiality are present in plant-child encounters and how they bring plants and children together in the diverse landscapes of cities. What happens when the priority in encounters is not the child but the plant and how to consider plants in diverse encounters? What questions does conducting multispecies ethnography with plants raise? I will present preliminary observations from ethnographic material produced by walking-with (Springgay & Truman, 2018) a kindergarten group on excursions to the surrounding semi-urban areas, reflecting the experiences on selected theoretical frameworks.

The presentation challenges to think about environmental education from a multispecies relational perspective, and it offers insights of how to conduct multispecies inquiry with plants.

## **ORAL SESSION\_17: Digital ethnography, health, virtual relations, digital stories**

### **Peer-based digital research infrastructure: reimagining knowledge production through feminist digital ethnography**

Ria Arora

McMaster University, Canada

This paper explores how digital ethnography can be mobilized to build equitable research infrastructures that center relationality, care, and peer learning. Drawing from my work on a Digital Research Infrastructure (DRI) pilot project, I examine how first-generation women academics engage in digital knowledge co-production through a feminist, peer-based Discord server model. The project emerged in response to gaps in conventional academic systems that privilege hierarchy, institutional access, and expertise, often marginalizing early-career and first-generation researchers.

Using qualitative content analysis of asynchronous online forums and peer mentoring channels, this paper theorizes *peer mobilization* as a feminist digital methodology that both documents and transforms the social processes of research collaboration. The paper contributes to ongoing conversations about feminist research praxis, digital ethnography, and the future of qualitative inquiry in the digital world.

## **Virtual Relationships and Narrative Burden: The Researcher's Presence among the Bereaved and the Dead**

**Ronit Dina Leichtentritt**

Tel Aviv University, Israel

In qualitative research, the researcher inhabits a complex relational space that extends beyond immediate encounters. This is particularly evident when interviews are conducted by research assistants or graduate students, and the researcher engages only with transcripts or recordings. In such cases, the researcher's relationship to participants is mediated through texts, voices, and narratives—yet it may still acquire an intensity of familiarity. Through attentive reading, listening, and interpretation, the researcher develops a form of vicarious presence—entering the experiential worlds of others without direct encounter.

In the study of loss and bereavement, this dynamic assumes distinctive contours. Narratives not only recount the grief of the living but also summon the absent dead, rendering them present within the research encounter. The relational field thus extends beyond the participant–researcher dyad to include those who are no longer alive yet remain insistently invoked. In this sense, qualitative research may unfold within what might be described as virtual relationships—connections sustained through memory, language, and affect rather than corporeal presence.

In this presentation, I share my experience of vicarious presence with both the bereaved and the deceased. Such relationships carry both epistemological and ethical implications. Epistemologically, they demonstrate that knowledge production in such research is never solely descriptive but constituted through acts of witnessing, memorialization, and relational imagination. Ethically, they position the researcher as a custodian—entrusted to hold, preserve, and at times withhold narratives carrying profound affective weight. This generates what might be termed a narrative burden: the responsibility to carry stories of others—stories of people who do not know the researcher—which nonetheless become integrated into the researcher's interpretive horizon.

From this perspective, the text becomes more than data: a site of relational presence, a medium through which absence is rendered tangible and ethical witnessing is enacted.

## **Meaning making between present work and imagined futures in the context of promissory digital health**

**Melika Azim Zadejan, Päivi Eriksson, Eeva Aromaa, Tero Montonen**

Business School, University of Eastern Finland, Kuopio, Finland

The study examines promissory digital health as a question of how healthcare professionals give meaning to future work from the vantage point of present practices. Focusing on home-based remote monitoring of older patients, we draw on qualitative in-depth interviews with nurses and doctors and an inductive analysis of key tensions between present and future. We identify five tensions that link the experienced burden of current remote monitoring practices with professionals' optimistic anticipations of future change. Nurses' accounts emphasize relational guidance and practical troubleshooting, while doctors' foreground diagnostic decision-making and organizational planning, presenting both shared and profession-specific concerns. By showing how present experiences and imagined futures are co-constituted through work-related tensions, our study advances debates on promissory digital health and professionals' work. It highlights the micro-level of this work as the arena where meanings of current and anticipated practices are navigated and where the future of promissory digital health is made actionable.

## **Dark history museums' affective environments and entanglements: Lessons from museumgoers' small review stories on Google Maps**

**Chaim Noy**

Bar Ilan University, Israel

This research examines comments museumgoers share on online review platforms, specifically Google Maps, which I approach narratively. I employ a narrative analytic framework, sometimes theoretically and sometimes as an analytic mode, to better conceptualize the kind of impressions museumgoers share after visiting dark history museums (museums which narrate genocide and mass violence). I approach these public reviews as “small stories” or bits and fractures of larger narratives, asking

how the messages that these mediational institutions deliver (museums) are *remediated* and *reinterpreted*. Crucially, how *are they* renarrated and renarrativized by museum audiences.

To complicate things, museumgoers who share reviews online, juxtapose two different socio-technical and socio-material environments, hence also two types of entanglements: the first concerns the actual/physical museum visit (arrival at a geographical, touristic destination, walking about, seeing the display and other visitors, etc.), with – in the case of dark history museums – its challenging affective and ethical display; with what it reveals about the past and the present, and also with what it conceals. The second concerns the digital user or visitor, as she interacts with the platform and engages it (design, narrative affordances).

I take this opportunity to creatively think through these different environments and entanglements; to highlight the types of challenges they pose for experimental and innovative qualitative processes, conceptualizations and theorizing. Specifically narrative analysis. More than an answer, I wish to raise questions, and to methodologically find non-positivist approaches to the study of visitors' online short stories that remediate collective tragic narratives. How can analyses address performative, embodied and otherwise hidden types of narrative knowledge(s), that are banked within these brief digital reviews, and within the environments and entanglements through which they are shaped and shared?

## **Sustainable research in challenging contexts and challenging times? Ethnographic explorations of the intersection between survival games and survivalism**

**Matilda Ståhl<sup>1</sup>, Aska Mayer<sup>1</sup>, Robyn Hope<sup>2</sup>, Rainforest Scully-Blaker<sup>3</sup>, Nicholas Taylor<sup>4</sup>**

<sup>1</sup>Tampere University, Finland; <sup>2</sup>North Carolina State University, USA; <sup>3</sup>University of Michigan, USA; <sup>4</sup>York University, Canada

The planned project 'Surviving the man-pocalypse?' (2026-2030), explores intersections between survival gaming and survivalism through 'connective ethnography' (Hine, 2007); that is, ethnographic fieldwork that moves between multiple online and offline fields of practice and highlights the connections between them. We explore how players make sense of survival and survival games in our current geopolitical, cultural, and climatological moment, and how their engagement with survival games might affect their perception of survivalist movements and vice versa.

On one hand, we are anticipating resistance from potential participants, as in previous studies, survivalists have been skeptical of research (Mitchell, 2002). On the other hand, we see that the time to conduct this research is now: rhetorics of war are ramping up, civil defense is in the public focus in the Nordic countries (the Finnish, Swedish and Norwegian governments updated their national crisis preparation guides late 2024) as in the rest of Europe. Protectionist, accelerationist, and culturally and socially apocalyptic ideologies are growing in gaming and survivalism communities, e.g. Wells et al (2024) noted that gaming communities have become spaces for the normalization of 'anti-democratic, right-wing extremist views'. Empirical research on the intersection between survivalism and survival games is one way to better understand the underlying sociocultural processes.

We discuss the complexities of conducting sustainable and responsible research on challenging topics during challenging times. Further, while not all communities are tied to radical politics, the perceived 'apocalyptic turn' (Kelly, 2020) threatening (white) masculinity is present in both game and survivalist communities. We might thereby be positioned as Other due to our (gendered, cultural, social, national) identities. However, as research team members engage in practices related to survival games and prepping, survivalism training, and civil defense measures, we could also be perceived as insiders. Therefore, we also address the contextual tensions between belonging and otherness.

## **ORAL SESSION\_18: LGBTQ+ community**

### **Lighthouses of the not-yet: fragments toward queer relational becoming**

**Eleni Evangeliou**

University of Edinburgh, United Kingdom

This project explores the transformative possibilities of queer kinship, radical love, and collective healing through a feminist, decolonial lens, attending to relational and societal interdependencies in challenging times. Using autohistoria-teoría, I explore fragments of grief, desire, and queer becoming through dreams, memories, relationships, and reflections on therapeutic practice, attending to how connection, care, and meaning unfold in relational and collective contexts. Inspired by the metaphor of lighthouses, figures and practices that illuminate paths, I trace how grief, desire, and healing emerge across personal, relational, and communal spaces, offering alternative ways of being, relating, and caring.

Engaging with feminist and queer scholars such as Anzaldúa, Lorde, hooks, Ahmed, and Muñoz, I examine the relational, collective, and embodied dimensions of knowledge and transformation, highlighting queer kinship as a site of resistance that reimagines intimacy, eroticism, community, and public life. Dreams, memories, and family histories blur the boundaries between the real and imagined, generating insights into emotional labor, longing, and resilience within collective processes. By weaving together fragments of experience, reflection, and relational practice, this work challenges normative narratives of knowledge

production and embodies possibilities for transformative, collaborative, and community-centered inquiry.

Positioned at the intersection of personal, social, and more-than-human worlds, this research contributes to polyphonic dialogue, relational understanding, and collaborative practices in qualitative inquiry. It attends to the potentials of collective resilience, relational creativity, and radical care in addressing the pressing social, cultural, and political challenges of our times, offering a “lighthouse” for those navigating paths of healing, resistance, and queer becoming.

## **Conditional Inclusivity: 20 Conversations about Current Issues within the LGBTQ+ Community**

**Orestis Michelekakis, Alexios Brailas**

Panteion University of Social and Political Sciences, Greece

The LGBTQ+ community is often treated as a unified group, yet -upon closer inspection- the conflicts and discrepancies within begin to show. This paper aims to examine the LGBTQ+ community, not as a cohesive total, but as a diverse group of people struggling to fit under the same umbrella despite their ever-growing amount of differences. The question that this paper attempts to answer is whether LGBTQ+ individuals in Greece feel included within the community and, if not, figure out possible reasons behind their detachment. 20 members of the LGBTQ+ community participated in semi-structured interviews, which were subsequently analyzed via Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis (IPA), resulting in seven fundamental themes that influence the current state of the community; contested identity, the importance of physical appearance, political correctness, elitism, toxicity, labelling and the stance towards the heterosexual population. Despite those issues, however, a deeper emotional connection to the community -or the idea of one- seems to persevere.

## **Jars, runways and kites: Re-imagining LGBTQ+ inclusive RSE**

**Melanie Riley**

Manchester Metropolitan University, United Kingdom

LGBTQ+ inclusive Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) is possibly the most controversial and politicised aspect of the primary school curriculum in England; policies are highly contested and draw much attention from different publics. RSE is essential for supporting the health and safety of children and young people (UNESCO, 2018). In 2020, compulsory Relationships Education required primary schools to teach LGBTQ+ content (DfE, 2019). However, guidance is deliberately non-prescriptive which gives schools significant power to decide which topics will be covered, how it will be taught and at what age. Further guidance is set to come into effect September 2026 which further erases LGBTQ+ identities through its contradictions creating multiple loopholes not to teach this content. Current policy direction does not prioritise what matters to children and young people but instead is focused on adults’ rights to police access to knowledge and participation (Neary, 2023; Atkinson et al., 2023). Inspired by feminist new materialist and other postfoundational theories in educational research, this presentation follows what happens when a group of LGBTQ+ young people re-imagine LGBTQ+ inclusive RSE in English primary schools through a series of co-constructed art-based workshops. Harnessing the AGENDA ([www.agendaonline.co.uk](http://www.agendaonline.co.uk)) online resource, what matters within LGBTQ+ inclusive RSE is written in jars, hung up on green and red paper plates, illuminated on a runway for change, and flown on rights kites. We explore how creative pARTicipatory methodologies open up space for difficult, complex and sensitive experiences to be expressed through creative modalities and how these help us to come to sense and know differently. By the time of this conference, I will have undertaken these art-based workshops as part of my PhD project. I will outline my methodology and give reflections.

## **Comparing Pilot Studies on LGBTQIA+ and IRER Communities in Canada**

**Tara Collins, Monica Sesma Vazquez, Ahlam Fakh, Mariam Ismail, Mads Lamirande, Karen Lazaruk, Nathanael**

**Hammond, Nasiha Fazal**

University of Calgary, Canada

Immigrant, refugee, ethnocultural, and racialized (IRER) as well as LGBTQIA+ communities experience compounded barriers in accessing mainstream support services, particularly suicide prevention and crisis lines. This presentation compares two Canadian pilot studies that explore equity-focused crisis intervention for marginalized populations: LGBTQIA+ individuals and IRER communities. Both studies employed qualitative phenomenological approaches, conducting semi-structured interviews with crisis responders to examine current practices, challenges, and recommendations for gender and sexual as well as culturally affirming care. Five stakeholders who work with IRER individuals and five crisis responders supporting LGBTQIA+ individuals were interviewed.

Responders’ working with LGBTQIA+ individuals varied in level of confidence in supporting sexual and gender minority (SGM) callers, revealing gaps in training, discomfort with identity disclosure, and systemic limitations in affirming care. Responders emphasized the need for LGBTQIA+ specific services, intersectional training, and organizational support to improve therapeutic outcomes.

The IRER study identifies challenges such as language limitations, institutional mistrust, and fear of police involvement. Responders and stakeholders noted the inadequacy of Western crisis models in addressing diverse ways IRER individuals may view mental health and distress. This study emphasizes the importance of culturally responsive tools, racialized staff, and community partnerships.

Together, these studies highlight the urgent need for crisis systems to move beyond Westernized, generalized models of care. Findings suggest that intersectional, equity-based training, culturally attuned safety planning, and systemic changes are required to better meet the needs of equity-deserving populations. This comparative analysis shares actionable insights to enhance inclusivity and responsiveness in crisis intervention services.

## **Where the disconnect Lies: Comparing crisis responders and LGBTQIA+ service users perspectives using reflexive thematic analysis**

**Mads Lamirande, Monica Sesma Vazquez, Tara Collins, Ahlam Fakihi, Mariam Ismail, Nathanael Hammond, Nasiha Fazal, Karen Lazaruk, Tristan McSwiney, Larissa Wakatsuki, Tabitha Pruden, Kenia Wright, Jerilee Lomond, Jiechao Shen**

University of Calgary, Canada

**Background:** The sexual and gender minority (SGM) community has a longstanding disproportionate rate of suicidality and mental health crises. Despite some crisis response agencies incorporation of LGBTQIA+ allyship training into practice, the persistent high rates of suicidality and mental health crises among the SGM community suggests a disconnect between crisis service provision and LGBTQIA+ community needs.

**Aim:** The objective of this presentation is to identify the gaps and create tangible recommendations to increase crisis service effectiveness for the LGBTQIA+ community. This presentation aligns with the ECQI 2026 theme by sharing findings from collaborative inquiry to transform crisis response.

**Methodology:** Semi-structured qualitative interviews were conducted with 18 crisis responders and 16 LGBTQIA+ community members. SGM community members had the opportunity to complete a mixed methods questionnaire. Data were analyzed using Braun and Clarke's reflexive thematic analysis informed by Gender Theory, Queer Theory, and Intersectionality.

**Results:** Expected themes include the need to increase LGBTQ+ affirming service provision, recommended changes in training for responders and agency systems, and suggestions in ways to decrease access barriers.

**Significance:** A comparison between crisis responders' reflections on the provision of care to SGM communities and LGBTQIA+ communities experiences receiving crisis services offers a rich and nuanced understanding of the disconnect between service provision and community needs. Synthesizing recommendations from crisis service providers and LGBTQIA+ community members presents a unique opportunity to formulate tangible and actionable recommendations that are community-centered and respond to the communities' intersectional needs. Highlighting the disconnect and recommendations creates the opportunity to develop innovative and dynamic training which can be implemented and concretely enhance crisis service provision for LGBTQIA+ community members. This study contributes to the field by demonstrating how qualitative inquiry can highlight systemic gaps, enhance marginalized voices, and inform crisis response through community engagement.

## **DREAM TEAM\_12**

### **Speakers Corners Walkings: Past-present-future relationalities for materializing a collectivity of/for research-creation**

**Walking as a Research Praxis**

University of Portsmouth, United Kingdom

This Dream Team has been collaboratively developed by members of the Walking as Research Praxis group. We invite you to join us in co-creating an experimental walking praxis of speculative wanderings, temporal rhythms, space-place potentialities and affective intensities for sensing past-present-future bodies, relationalities and sensorialities.

Recently there has been significant interest in walking as a critical qualitative method (Pink, 2008; Evans & Jones, 2011; Lasczik et al., 2021). Scholars have theorized and actualized walking as a mode of accountable and response-able walking-with (Springgay & Truman, 2018); as place-space methodology (Fairchild, 2021, 2026); as relational and processual posthuman methodology (Taylor et al., 2023); as an 'art of noticing' (Tsing, 2015); and as inspiration for art-ful academic writing otherwise (Taylor & Fairchild, 2025). Much of this research re-imagines walking as an inventive, experimental, less elitist, more inclusive qualitative methodology; and an attunement to the infrathin - the potentiation of a relational field that includes what can be felt but cannot quite be articulated (Manning, 2017, p. 99).

Conceptualizing walking as a more capacious human/non-human/more-than-human bodily mattering, and located in a feminist materialist posthuman theory/method/praxis that connects bodies/landscapes/time/temporality, our Dream Team resonates with the conference themes of relations between human, non-humans, history, philosophy, culture, mobility, visibility,

creativity, more-than-landscapes, and...and...and.

We begin with a brief introduction to walking research. Next we move out of the room into the surrounding environs to engage in a series of Speakers Corners Walkings where we stop at a Corner, a member of the WARP collective gives a brief account of their walking research, and then gives a theory-praxis provocation for us to walk with to the next Speakers Corner. We then return to the conference room for a discussion of the matterings that arose from this research-creation activity, attending to the question: how does walking as research praxis shift qualitative research methodologies?

Speakers Corners Walkings provocations include:

Ways to challenge whiteness, which Ahmed (2007) conceptualizes as “an ongoing, unfinished history” (p. 149) and “institutional habit” that coheres, redirects, and (im)mobilizes what bodies can do. How does whiteness shape the “what” that is “around” (p. 151) and privilege habits that contour spaces that [our] bodies leave behind.

Ancient Chinese culture treats spacetime as a multilayered-crisscrossed flowing river where words, meaning, and mattering (un)entangle in a perpetual movement. How might we consider walking as a mindbodyheart movement, materializing possible entanglements among mindbodyheart calligraphy/words/painting/sculpture/trees, and other nonhuman beings across/with/into a past-present-future flow of meaning/being?

How can we contest walking’s normativities, its assumption that walking is done by an upright, bipedal, bounded body? We invite you to do/enact walking as errancy, as unwillingness to obey rules—to walk a wavering line—a line that loops, knots, curls, furls and unfurls, that knits other lines into it—so as not to re-produce a straight White line but, instead, produce multiple lines, lineages, and connectivities. Feminist in/discipline (Taylor, 2020) reimagines walking as a path to sensing-feeling-knowing otherwise; as a feminist materialist ethico-onto-epistemological political praxis.

The Angel with One Wing is a nexus point for thinking about walking-with young children’s entanglement with British colonialism, slavery, and plantation ownership. English country estates are indelibly linked to brutal legacies of slavery and colonialism (Vergès, 2019, n.p.). These histories become sanitised to justify colonialism, settler colonialism, and neocolonialism; the pristine house a monument to Western progress narratives...but scratching the surface reveals the blood and bones on which these legacies have been built.

The new mobilities paradigm (Urry, 1999; Sheller, 2017) explores walking as participatory, future-oriented, sensory, experiential, and place-based encounters for reimagining ‘sustainability’ from a social justice perspective. Including more diverse voices enables the emergence of more socially just mobility systems and practices that consider varied experiences (Sheller, 2018). How can we depart from one-size-fits all “expert” planning for sustainable urban mobility and instead work with an innovative speculative co-design methodology embedded in everyday places to produce alternative knowledges?

How might walking-with Athens help us attend to the marks of centuries, of industrialism, capitalism, progress, modernity? How are these marks felt and rendered visible? How do they tremble? What do they generate? Glissant’s (2021) philosophy invites us to experiment with the potential of trembling as a way of being-with, as a way of unfixing certainty. Tremblings are whirlwinds of transhistorical encounterings that immerse us inextricably in the world and its peoples in the everywhens and everywhere, in and beyond Athens.

This Dream Team deploys walking in methodologically playfully ways to disrupt habitual un/noticing, to invite you to wander/wonder (MacLure, 2013); and to collectively co-create new research insights.

## **ORAL\_SESSION\_19: Academic spaces, discourses and narratives, academic anti-ableism**

### **Working with Ms. Ann: an autoethnographic approach to white women’s role as colonizers in academic spaces**

**Chrissy Cross, Roslyn Fraser, Lauren Burrow**

Stephen F. Austin State University, United States of America

This session will use an autoethnographic narrative to showcase how white women willfully colonize academic spaces such as classes, institutional resources, research and service opportunities in higher education. The idea of white women as Ms. Ann in the notorious Jim Crow era in the United States has not ended, but just shifted to identical roles in similar spaces. From the “White Woman’s Burden” to purposeful roles as a class traitor with a white fragility complex, this session will explore an embellished version of events witnessed in academia, where the never ending tide of neocolonization of higher education by white women unrelentingly dominates the role, identity, and place of women of color. Over the period of ten years, autoethnographic data such as conversations, events, emails, class periods, publications, and presentations have been collected and systematically evaluated to determine the roles of power between the white women and the women of color. Qualitative research methodology was used to analyze the data to create a narrative of thick description capturing the patterns of behavior of the army of Ms. Ann’s found within academic settings. The session will be presented as a combination of prose and storytelling and will include time for questions and feedback from the audience, as well as provide a community environment for solidarity and suggestions for

## **Disrupting certainties in academic discourse: A qualitative Inquiry into the origins of critical literacy**

**Filippos Tentolouris, Eleftheria Tseliou**

University of Thessaly, Greece

Social constructionist epistemological approaches call for a critical appraisal of academic knowledge and for a critical investigation of academic practices. However, often, beliefs circulating in academic discourse as academic knowledge remain unchallenged and are being considered as given truths. Social epistemology has argued that it is via community practices, like publication processes, that such beliefs acquire the status of true beliefs and calls for an investigation of such processes. In this presentation we use the case of a widespread belief about critical literacy origins as an example to illustrate how a social epistemological discourse analysis (SEDA), a kind of qualitative inquiry, can facilitate the challenging of academic knowledge and the disruption of certainties in academic discourse. SEDA is an approach we are currently developing, which brings together social epistemology and discourse analysis. For example, we suggest that the discourse analytic notion of intertextuality, that is the exploration of how texts relate to each other, can facilitate the examination of how academic knowledge gets constructed within the system of academic publications. Critical literacy (CL) is a very popular approach in fields like critical pedagogy, emphasizing the interconnectedness of power, ideologies and literacy practices. A wide-spread idea is that CL originates in Paulo Freire's work. In this presentation, we challenge such an idea by reporting our intertextual analysis of published, conceptualizing texts about critical literacy, that is analysis of their interrelations. Our analysis suggests a fluid conceptualization and beginning of CL not necessarily associated with Freire. We conclude by advocating for subjecting widely entrenched academic beliefs and academic discourse to scrutiny as a prerequisite for a critically informed praxis.

## **Parasitic leadership and professional services work as workplace activism in the neoliberal-ableist academy**

**Cassie Kill, Rebecca Lawthom, Elizabeth Dew**

The University of Sheffield, United Kingdom

In recent years, higher education institutions in the UK have widely espoused the language of disability inclusion. However, the fundamental logic of the university remains founded on elitist and exclusionary principles. In this paper, we mobilise the figure of the parasite (Serres, 2007) to explore the complex micro-politics of being a worker with investments in anti-ableism, situated within, against and beyond (Bell & Pahl, 2018; Lather, 1991) the contemporary neoliberal-ableist university (Goodley, 2018; 2024). In Serres's account, the parasite takes up a somewhat ambivalent relationship with its host; sometimes benefitting from its power, sometimes syphoning resources out, and sometimes more directly disrupting and opposing hegemonic power from within. We will theorise different possible parasitical relations to the university, before drawing on our experiences of the two year, university-wide Wellcome Anti-Ableist Research Culture (WAARC) project, to illustrate how these may unfold in practice. Whilst both academic leadership and professional services work is often – albeit in different ways – assumed to involve complicity in neoliberal practices of academic governance and control, we surface examples of resistance which often involve bending, avoiding or disrupting ableist organisational logics. In this paper, semi-fictionalised creative writing allows us to explore the relational politics of anti-ableist working practices, without revealing sensitive details. Through critical reflection and analysis, we will highlight the tensions and creativity involved in attempted academic anti-ableism, whether they change these logics on a grand and enduring scale, or whether they are small and fleeting.

## **Profession, politics and parenting: An Autoethnographic Inquiry on Academic Motherhood, Political Fear, and Transnational Belonging**

**Kirby Wycoff**

Thomas Jefferson University, United States of America

This autoethnographic study examines the complex negotiation of professional and personal identity through the lens of a U.S.-based academic navigating a transnational research collaboration, against the back drop of rising political uncertainty. Centered on the lived experience of a mother and scholar participating in an academic collaboration in Ireland, the work explores the emotional, ethical, and embodied labor of working and parenting during a time of rising political instability in the United States.

Drawing from personal vignettes and narrative reflections composed over a six-month period (January–July 2025), the research engages with themes of transnational belonging, fear, identity, and the moral tensions of professional mobility in turbulent times. The methodological approach used draws on autoethnographic traditions that center memory, relationality, and embodied experience as core sites of knowledge production. Vignettes were crafted from field notes, journal entries, memory and personal recordings, and analyzed thematically through iterative cycles of reflection, synthesis, and relational meaning-making. The analytic process foregrounds affective resonance, social context, and narrative clarity, inviting readers into an exploration of

identity that is both deeply personal and socially situated.

Emerging from this work are interrelated themes of relationality, moral anxiety and identity rupture and reconstruction. Findings point to the embodied tensions between care labor and academic labor and presence and absence, in a globalized higher education environment. Experiences of parenting while abroad are placed in direct conversation with political realities at home, including safety concerns and growing authoritarianism. These tensions reveal both the emotional demands and ethical strain of cross-border work in politically volatile times.

By weaving personal narrative with scholarly inquiry, this autoethnography offers insight into how international collaboration, professional identity, and parenting intersect in complex, sometimes contradictory ways. It calls for a more human-centered and ethically attuned understanding of working, parenting, and living through political upheaval.

## **Engaging in Arts-Based Research for Catharsis and Growth in Academia as an Adult Educator**

**Ajit Bhattarai**

Idaho State University, United States of America

This autoethnographic article explores my journey as an adult educator navigating the often-stressful landscape of traditional positivistic scholarship within academia. Through a series of arts-based research (ABR) engagements, including poetic inquiry, I examine how these creative practices provided a cathartic space for personal and professional growth, challenging the dominant epistemic norms that often constrain academic identity. I delve into the emotional labor involved in reconciling my pedagogical philosophy with institutional pressures, revealing how ABR fostered a deeper understanding of my role as a researcher and teacher. Findings illuminate the transformative power of ABR in cultivating resilience, fostering critical reflexivity, and offering a more holistic approach to scholarly inquiry that prioritizes well-being and authentic expression. This work argues for the integration of ABR as a vital methodology for adult educators seeking to reclaim agency and cultivate sustainable scholarly practices beyond the confines of conventional academic expectations.

## **Poster Session\_2**

### **P16\_“I’ve only met two such families... It’s frightening”:** Nurses’ experiences in Mother-Child Health Clinics with lesbian and gay-parent families

**Dorit Segal-Engelchin, Dan Even, Orly Grinstein-Cohen**

Ben-Gurion University, Israel

Despite the increasing prevalence of families headed by gay fathers or lesbian mothers in Western countries, few studies have examined healthcare professionals’ experiences with these families. This first-of-its-kind study in Israel, sought to address this gap by exploring nurses’ experiences in Mother-Child Health Clinics (MCHCs) in providing care to these families. Using a qualitative phenomenological methodology, semi-structured in-depth interviews were conducted with 40 nurses working in MCHCs. The findings indicate that nurses’ overall experiences with lesbian- and gay-parent families span a continuum: some described their care as routine and comparable to that provided to heterosexual-parent families, whereas others emphasized discomfort, limited knowledge, and insufficient training in caring for these families. A few nurses reported mixed experiences, combining elements from both ends of the continuum. Several dimensions emerged as shaping nurses’ experiences with these families, including concerns for the parents’ psychological well-being; fears of stigmas associated with homosexuality, which may require additional parental resources; ambivalence regarding the role of the non-biological parent; and complex attitudes from the parents toward the nurses, such as suspicion and fear of judgment. Notably, the findings indicate that gay fathers and lesbian mothers often receive partial attention, or, in some cases, no attention at all, regarding issues routinely addressed in nurses’ care, such as postpartum depression and domestic violence. The findings highlight the need to develop training programs designed to equip MCHC nurses with the knowledge and skills necessary to address the unique characteristics and needs of these families.

### **P17\_A mixed-method analysis of Canadian youths’ perceptions of cell phone restrictions in schools: Struggling, surviving and striving for personal agency and connectedness**

**Michelle Dusko Biferie, Sam Johanna, Xiao Bowen, Shapka Jennifer**

University of British Columbia, Canada

This research explores Canadian adolescents aged 12 to 18 years’ perceptions of restrictions on personal devices during class time and how it impacted relationships with others. Using open-ended survey data collected from Cyberteens longitudinal study from one secondary school (N= 999, 502 boys; Mage = 14.20, SD =1.45 years, wave 5), an explanatory sequential mixed-method approach including binary logistic regression modelling and critical discourse analysis (CDA) was applied. Quantitatively,

most participants reported either no impact (28.2%) or no change (40.9%), while 10.9% perceived a negative impact. Positive impacts included greater face-to-face interaction and improved classroom focus. Regression analyses indicated that problematic smartphone use (OR = 1.3) and fear of missing out (FoMO; OR = 1.4) significantly increased the likelihood of reporting negative impacts, whereas loneliness was not a predictor. Applying CDA and deductive codes resulted in three themes to the survey and research question 1) How do youth's descriptions of the impact on device restrictions illustrate their understandings of power relations in schools? The first theme, "Freedom" highlights the ban's reduction of personal agency when engaging in problematic behaviours (e.g., excessive texting) and positive behaviours (e.g., increased in-person interactions). "Subversion" refers to passive and unintentional compliance with no or minimal behaviour change. "Image management" illustrates efforts to distance themselves from adult deficit narratives that motivated the ban (e.g., 'screenagers'), highlighting responsible device use. These themes indicate that while some youth may struggle with device usage at schools and socialization, adolescents' polarized responses and minimal behaviour changes are not indicative of a youth culture of resisting oppression but reframing and pragmatic problem solving to meet their social and emotional needs. Mixed-methods results indicate how school policies intersect with adolescent agency and device use, offering insights for educators and policy makers seeking to balance classroom management with developmental and social priorities.

## **P19\_A phenomenological exploration of bereavement and psychological resilience through multimodal and narrative techniques**

**Panagiota Maniataki, Alexis Brailas**

Department of Psychology, Panteion University, Athens, Greece

We examine the complex and dynamic relationship between bereavement and psychological resilience, focusing on the mechanisms that facilitate adaptation to loss and the reestablishment of a new functional balance in everyday life. Although grief is a profoundly painful experience, it may also serve as a starting point for personal growth and existential transformation, particularly when supported by adequate internal and external resources. Our qualitative research design involved semi-structured, multimodal interviews with ten participants aged 18–35 who had experienced the loss of a significant other. For data production, we utilized artistic–expressive techniques, such as drawing, storytelling, creative imagining, and biographical timelines, to help participants visualize key life events with special subjective meanings and reflect on the role of support networks. We conducted a Thematic Analysis to identify recurring patterns, concepts, and meanings. The findings suggest that grief is a multidimensional and nonlinear process, where emotions of sadness, denial, and disorientation coexist with experiences of strength, resilience, hope, and renewal. The search for meaning, along with the gradual integration of loss into one's personal identity, supports the view that resilience is a dynamic and evolving process. Rather than framing grief solely as a process of suffering, we propose that it may also involve emotional reorganization and the emergence of new psychological capacities. These insights may inform future research and practice, particularly in relation to culturally sensitive and longitudinal approaches to understanding resilience in the context of loss.

## **P20\_Becoming-teacher: environmental narratives as a way to reconfigure future teachers' 'geographies'**

**Naya Grillia, Maria Daskolia**

National & Kapodistrian University of Athens, Greece

This research explores how environmental narrative writing nurtures the becoming of teachers committed to living and teaching within the turbulence of our ecological moment. It asks how narratives —told, shared, and reimagined— can cultivate a sense of belonging, responsibility, and care for the world, while shaping future teachers' emerging identities and pedagogical visions. Situated within the course Environmental Humanities at the Department of Educational Studies, National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, the project unfolds as narrative workshops where student teachers write and share stories of nature, learning, and transformation. In these pedagogical encounters, environmental narratives act both as a method and a meeting place - an embodied space where emotion, memory, and imagination intertwine to form understandings of self and world. As students explore their connections to landscapes, species, and communities, they reconfigure what it means to teach in a time of ecological precarity. They reshape their own 'geographies' and their understanding of material, human, and non-human surroundings. These narratives ripple through the classrooms in rhizomatic ways, revealing education as relational, emergent, and continuously reassembling at the intersections of care, creativity, and ecological awareness. The study illuminates how environmental narratives can function as transformative pedagogical forces, in which different actants (human and non-human) intra-act in symbiotic relationships. By documenting these storied journeys, the research identifies flows of affect and demonstrates how narrative work within teacher education can provide windows into the becoming of teachers through the lens of new materialist approaches.

## **P21\_Between action and inhibition: A narrative analysis of parental ambivalence in managing childhood obesity**

**Tamar Darvish<sup>1</sup>, Zohar Spivak-Lavi<sup>1</sup>, Dalit Yassour-Borochowitz<sup>1</sup>, Yael Latzer<sup>2</sup>**

<sup>1</sup>The Max Stern Yzreel Valley College, Israel; <sup>2</sup>University of Haifa

Parental engagement in childhood obesity management involves navigating tensions between care, control, and emotional vulnerability. While parental involvement is vital for effective interventions, parents often experience ambivalence—simultaneous positive and negative feelings—toward their child’s weight management. Adopting a qualitative, experience-centered approach, this study explores how parents tell and experience ambivalence, and how these meanings shape their decisions and relationships with their children.

The research integrated grounded theory and narrative inquiry to capture both conceptual processes and the lived emotional texture of parental experience. The broader grounded theory project involved in-depth semi-structured interviews with 23 parents of children with obesity or overweight, aimed at conceptualizing how parents make sense of and manage their child’s weight. During analysis, several parental stories revealed layers of emotional contradiction that could not be fully captured within the grounded theory framework, and called for a narrative lens—one that treats personal stories as interpretive acts through which people make meaning of their experiences. From the larger dataset, four parents were purposively selected for detailed narrative analysis, allowing close attention to voice, temporality, and emotion, and to how ambivalence was expressed, shaped, and negotiated within individual life stories.

Two narrative forms of ambivalence were identified: action-oriented ambivalence, where parents continued intervention efforts despite internal conflict; and action-inhibiting ambivalence, where emotional contradictions limited engagement. Parents’ accounts revealed the ongoing effort to balance their child’s physical health with their psychological well-being.

Bringing a narrative lens into a grounded theory framework made it possible to see how ambivalence is lived, told, and acted upon in family contexts. The study contributes to qualitative discussions of emotion, meaning, and care, offering insight into how parental ambivalence can become a space for understanding and more responsive health interventions.

## **P22\_Between awareness and action: A qualitative analysis of gendered experiences of intergroup contact and social mobilization in Greece**

**Maria Nefeli Dimopoulou, Akrivi Andrinopoulou, Angelos Panagiotopoulos, Aikaterini Georganti, Vassilis Pavlopoulos**

National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, Greece

Intergroup contact has long been viewed as a mechanism for reducing prejudice and fostering equality, yet its capacity to mobilize social change is far from straightforward. This qualitative study applies the Integrated Contact–Collective Action Model (Hässler et al., 2021) to examine how intergroup contact relates to awareness and support for social transformation against gender-based discrimination in Greece. Three focus groups were conducted in Athens in autumn 2024: one with cisgender heterosexual men, one with cisgender heterosexual women, and one mixed group. Participants (N = 20, aged 28–43) were recruited through purposive sampling from diverse professional and regional backgrounds. Discussions were transcribed and analyzed thematically (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The findings reveal asymmetrical experiences of intergroup contact. While contact often heightened awareness of gender inequalities, this did not consistently translate into mobilization, reflecting a principle–implementation gap. Individual initiative in seeking contact, as well as encounters with particular groups (e.g., gay men, trans women, feminists), emerged as crucial in connecting contact with awareness and action. Participants also emphasized the role of intra-group dialogue and solidarity in shaping attitudes toward change. At the same time, systemic barriers, activist fatigue, and perceived risks of losing privilege or facing backlash constrained engagement, particularly among men. By foregrounding lived experiences, this study demonstrates that the transformative potential of contact lies not only in its frequency or positivity, but also in the ways inequality, privilege, and solidarity are negotiated. Overall, the analysis contributes to rethinking generalized assumptions about intergroup contact and highlights the voices and groups that become visible—or remain invisible—within narratives of gendered social change. This research was funded by the Hellenic Foundation for Research and Innovation (HFRI) under the “3rd Call for Research Projects to Support Faculty Members and Researchers” (Project No. 24927).

## **P23\_Challenges and collaborations when researching from a distance**

**Sylvia Parusel<sup>1</sup>, Jade Boyd<sup>1,2</sup>**

<sup>1</sup>British Columbia Centre on Substance Use, Canada; <sup>2</sup>University of British Columbia

The poster discusses methodological choices and challenges in a study of how women who use drugs (WWUD) in British Columbia, Canada increasingly face overdose risk, experience harm and social violence, and navigate health care and services. We describe some efforts to interview WWUD living in the province’s remote cities and towns. The goals are 1) to cultivate discussion on study recruitment in the context of the WWUD’s extreme marginalization within changing local community-based service conditions, and 2) to reflect on the study’s core aims of exploration and inclusion, and their relevance for generating dialogue.

## Methods

As part of a multi-method qualitative study, 31 individual semi-structured phone interviews with women living remotely took place between September 2023 and February 2025; this participant group represents 32% of all study participants. Interviews lasted on average 62 minutes and participants received \$50 CAN.

Interviews were thematically analyzed using deductive and inductive methods, and the analysis was informed by intersectionality.

## Results

Qualitative researchers building community connections often draw from participatory research theory (Singer et al, 2022; Salerno et al, 2021), and to guide lower-intensity community engagement in qualitative research, we propose the concept, “expressions of solidarity”, is useful to describe mutual efforts to establish conditions for research dialogue in particular contexts. In this study, expressions of solidarity included researchers providing generous stipends to local harm reduction organizations where staff facilitated recruitment and research through introductions to their clients, fed participants, lent phones, provided private interview space, and distributed honoraria. Participants in varied geographical locations with diverse backgrounds, identities, and circumstances reported feeling well supported and heard in their interviews.

## Conclusion

Researchers facing possible recruitment challenges in the field may require site-specific facilitation with goal alignment. To this end, demonstrating solidarity in context-specific ways is meaningful communication between interviewers, participants, and local care allies.

## **P24\_Constructing the virtual self: A qualitative study on the experiences of gamers in MMORPGs**

**Effrosyni Mitsi, Philia Issari**

National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, Greece

The financial strength of the video games industry and the introduction of game addiction in DSM-5 lead them to the forefront of research. Previous research has examined gamers’ underlying motivations and identified various psychological needs, including escapism from reality, a sense of belonging to a community, coping with loneliness, the pursuit of rewards, and exploration. Findings also indicate that gaming experiences elicit emotional responses and foster emotional attachment between players and their avatars. The present qualitative study explored

experiences of the gamer’s experience on MMORPGs and aims at a deeper understanding of this experience. The sample was purposeful and comprised of ten men and women who participated in individual interviews, consisting of questions framed in an open way to explore their experience. The research data was analyzed using Thematic Analysis and produced five key themes namely: 1. the motivation of players to engage in the game, which is mainly of a socio emotional nature 2. the way players construct their avatar (appearance and character attributes) 3. the neglect of the biological body while playing , 4. The in-game experiences and 5. The

different mental images for the digital world. Findings indicate that players seek belonging, escapism, immediate rewards, and freedom from social constraints. Through gameplay, they can gain social status, maintain individuality via avatar creation, and experiment with alternative identities. Additionally, gaming experiences may foster the development of strategic and collaborative skills. These findings can help counseling psychologists understand gamers’ emotional needs, using gaming contexts to enhance social connectedness, self-exploration, and skill development in therapeutic interventions.

## **P25\_Designing-With - Creative Ethnography as Sympoietic Method-Making**

**Emil Rousseau<sup>1,2</sup>, Cathy Macharis<sup>1,2</sup>, Kimberley Vandenhole<sup>1</sup>**

<sup>1</sup>Sustainable World Initiative & Fellowship For Transformation (SWIFFT), Belgium; <sup>2</sup>House of Sustainable Transitions (HOST-VUB), Belgium

This paper explores sympoiesis—making-with, as articulated by Donna Haraway—as a creative and relational orientation for qualitative inquiry. Rather than treating research as the representation of an external world, sympoietic inquiry understands knowledge as co-emergent within networks of relation. It invites a move from observing to becoming-with, from studying others to designing-with the worlds we inhabit and help compose.

Within this frame, designing-with is proposed as both a methodological and ethical stance that foregrounds co-creation, attentiveness, and care. The paper is situated within a developing doctoral project that investigates pluriversal worldings embodied by community-led initiatives in the vast field of agroecology in Belgium and Europe. In this project, community-led initiatives are understood as settings where alternative ontologies of sustainability are enacted through practice. They provide us with living laboratories for exploring how relations among humans, more-than-humans, and institutions are reconfigured through everyday acts of cultivation, cooperation, negotiation and resistance.

Methodologically, the paper reflects on the potential of creative ethnographic forms—video, photography, drawing, and writing—as tools of ontological design. These practices are treated not merely as means of documentation but as acts of worlding

that give form to the relational, affective, and material dimensions of inquiry. Drawing inspiration from Donna Haraway's work in "Staying with the Trouble" and Arturo Escobar's work in "Designs for the Pluriverse" the paper positions creative ethnography as a space for experimentation and attunement.

Ultimately, it argues that designing-with through creative, multimodal practices constitutes a form of sym-poietic method-making—an improvisational, imaginative, and response-able way of doing research in and with the pluriverse. This approach expands the possibilities of qualitative inquiry, inviting researchers to engage creativity as a means of participating in the continuous making of worlds.

## **P26\_Educational approaches that promote the transformation of practices and beliefs aimed at deconstructing ableism in education.**

**Céline Bula Boo**<sup>1,2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Haute Ecole Pédagogique Vaud, Switzerland; <sup>2</sup>Université de Genève, Switzerland

Ableism is defined as "[...] a network of beliefs, processes, and practices that produces a particular type of self and body [...] projected as perfect, typical of the species [...] and fully human" (Campbell, 2009). Present in all social spheres, it manifests itself implicitly in education, particularly through the hidden curriculum of textbooks designed mainly by able-bodied people, where a medical view of disability still prevails (Hansen et al., 2024; Masson, 2013). Ableism is reflected in the practices, language, and beliefs of teachers, often implicitly and unconsciously, which contribute to the reproduction of a system of injustice (Bialka, 2017; McLean, 2011). Hence, highlighting the need to recognize one's prejudices and understanding the social mechanisms that produce these inequalities (Bialka, 2017). From early childhood, children internalize representations based on deficits, stereotypes, and various forms of discrimination pertaining to disability (Beneke et al., 2020; Lalvani & Bacon, 2018; Heberle et al., 2020). Values, therefore, cannot be reduced to teaching; they must be embodied, lived, and integrated (Fletcher, 2020). Education, thus, provides a space for emancipation and transformation, particularly through the sharing of experiences and the development of critical thinking (Gutterman, 2025). From this perspective, critical consciousness can be explored as a process that combines reflection and action to promote individual and collective empowerment, appears to be an important lever (Jemal, 2017). This falls within the broader field of social justice, a tool for combating oppression (Hawkins, 2014). Through a review of the literature, this poster proposes to identify different pedagogical approaches that contribute to deconstructing social norms, categorization, and hierarchization with a view to social transformation in education and in the social sphere.

## **P27\_Embodied memory of seasonal abundance and cyclical time in islandic Southeast Mediterranean(s): a decolonial approach to climate change**

**Andrie Savva**

Independent Scholar, United Kingdom

This contribution weaves embodied memory, seasonal abundance and cyclical time through decolonial thinking to probe climate change in Southeast Mediterranean(s). Embodied memory is approached as the affective force of re-mem-bering that transcends linear time. Body is conceived as fluid, contingent, always in the process of shaping and being shaped by multiple experiences and belongings without being defined by and confined into a single and fixed self or an essentialist category. Intimate and intensive, embodied memory is connected with practices and the multisensorial. In this spirit, I re-turn to practices of islandic Southeast Mediterranean(s) that have been submerged or usurped by modernity's alienation, industrialisation and consumerism. These practices stress seasonal abundance and cyclical time. Seasonal abundance respects and takes seriously Earth's fertility emphasising continuity and renewal. It expresses a pre-modern tempo of production and an ethos of deep connection with Earth. Seasonal abundance is an expression of cyclical time, where events and phenomena are shaped through a continuous loop rather than moving linearly and progressively toward a final destination. Past, present and future are enfolded one in another and interwoven in embodied memory. Seasonal abundance and cyclical time have been taken over by the ethos of consumerism and the mindset of resource extraction enframing climate coloniality. In re-turning to such practices, forces of the colonial project are unfolded in their relationality with Southeast Mediterranean(s) islandic ways of life. The plurality of Southeast Mediterranean(s) rejects its inscription into a homogeneous, universal and fixed entity and unfolds an open-ended assemblage of connections.

Embodied memory animates poster-ing. In this sense, poster-ing is a practice of Relation, in Édouard Glissant's philosophy, rather than the format associated with positivist assumptions. Through embodied memory of seasonal abundance and cyclical time, this contribution probes a decolonial approach to climate change, inviting to lingering and collective thinking.

## **P28\_Epistemic reflexivity as critical practice: Rethinking qualitative inquiry in challenging times**

**Marc-André Heidelmann**

IU International University of Applied Sciences, Germany

In times of global crises and accelerated interconnections, the question of the epistemic foundations of qualitative research

and consulting gains particular relevance. This contribution takes up the concept of epistemic reflexivity (Heidemann 2023) and understands it as a research methodology that does not primarily tie consulting and development to methods and tools, but rather to an attitude (Heidemann & Weber 2022) that critically interrogates power, knowledge, and subjectivation from a discourse-oriented perspective (Foucault 1972).

Epistemic reflexivity means understanding consulting not as a neutral technique, but as a practice that is critically engaged with power and knowledge (Weber & Heidemann 2021). It is directed toward the transformation of symbolic orders that produce and reproduce social inequalities, exclusions, and marginalizations (Heidemann & Klös 2025).

Drawing on Foucauldian discourse analyses and the concept of radical reflexivity (Kessl & Maurer 2012), the paper shows how consulting and qualitative research can be understood as interventions in hegemonic discourses.

The contribution argues for consulting and qualitative research that embrace epistemic reflexivity as a core competence—and thus as a practice that, in “challenging times,” does not place stability at the center, but rather critical flexibility and dialogical openness.

## **P29\_Ethical Challenges in Elder Abuse: Elder abuse remains a hidden and under-researched issue in Estonia**

**Triin Voodla, Reeli Sirotkina, Riina Kiik**

Tallinn University, Estonia

Local government social workers play a key role in preventing, identifying, and addressing cases involving older adults. Such cases are often complex, emotionally demanding, and distinct from routine social work practice, requiring heightened ethical awareness, reflexivity, and professional sensitivity. This qualitative study explores Estonian social workers' experiences and professionalA Vignette Approach

Elder abuse remains a hidden and under-researched issue in Estonia. Local government social workers play a key role in preventing, identifying, and addressing cases involving older adults. Such cases are often complex, emotionally demanding, and distinct from routine social work practice, requiring heightened ethical awareness, reflexivity, and professional sensitivity.

This qualitative study explores Estonian social workers' experiences and professional decision-making in elder abuse cases, using a vignette-based approach. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with nine social workers whose responsibilities include working with older adults. Vignettes were designed based on theoretical perspectives on elder abuse, the results of previous Estonian master's theses (Viks, 2016; Sööl, 2016; Pajumaa, 2019), and the researcher's own practice. This method allowed participants to discuss sensitive scenarios ethically and comparably, highlighting their reasoning, ethical dilemmas, and potential responses (Wilks, 2004; Schoenberg & Ravdal, 2000). The poster focuses on the use of the vignette method and how it supports participants in articulating ethical considerations and reflexivity when engaging with complex and novel topics.

Thematic content analysis revealed that social workers often experience disproportionate responsibility and hold unrealistic expectations for themselves as professionals. Ethical reflection and professional dialogue are recognized as essential but are accompanied by uncertainty and self-doubt. Participants negotiate tensions between institutional protocols, personal values, and the complex needs of vulnerable older adults.

By foregrounding practitioners' perspectives, this poster contributes to broader discussions on care, ethics, and social justice, inviting dialogue on how professionals navigate vulnerability, power, and compassion in complex social contexts.

## **P30\_Artificial intelligence in qualitative research: How to avoid being overshadowed by the machine**

**Alexis Brailas**

Department of Psychology, Panteion University, Athens, Greece

How might our research practice, and our very way of knowing, change if, instead of rushing to feed qualitative data into “intelligent” machines for the supposed ever optimal analysis, we returned our attention to the living moment of data production itself, treating it as an embodied, mindful, relational, and transformative act of co-creation, presence, and meaning-making that no algorithm can replicate? This work explores the increasing use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in qualitative research methodology. While AI offers clear advantages in terms of speed and the capacity to process vast amounts of qualitative data, its uncritical use raises serious epistemological, methodological, and ethical concerns. A central issue lies in the inherent tendency of current AI models to operate within a positivist framework of quantitative algorithmic optimization. The presentation will attempt to move the conversation about AI in qualitative research from the mechanical to the ecological, from the question of “How can machines analyze our data?” to “What happens to meaning when we invite the machine into our dialogue?” It will argue that AI is not a neutral objective scientific tool, but an active participant in the web of relations that constitute inquiry itself, shaping what we see, how we see, how we interpret, and even who we become as researchers. By challenging the impulse to outsource data analysis to the algorithms, it argues that genuine understanding emerges not from efficiency, but from mindful and embodied presence, grounding AI use within a social constructionist and relational epistemology. The article prioritizes the importance of data production as a deep relational practice in maintaining the ethos of qualitative inquiry.

## P30a\_Maintaining dialogical practice in crisis at a distance: practitioner reflections on peer-supported open dialogue teletherapy

**D. Toutountzidis<sup>1</sup>, L. Kivlin<sup>1</sup>, C. Sotiropoulou<sup>2</sup>, P. Issari<sup>2</sup>**

<sup>1</sup>School of Health, Medicine and Life Sciences, University of Hertfordshire; <sup>2</sup>National and Kapodistrian University of Athens

The Covid-19 pandemic necessitated a rapid shift across mental health care, requiring most services to deliver teletherapy to maintain support during a period of heightened distress. This qualitative study explored practitioners' experiences of delivering Peer Supported Open Dialogue (POD) via teletherapy during the pandemic and their views on its future use within crisis services.

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with POD practitioners and analysed using reflexive thematic analysis. Practitioners described an initial period of uncertainty, followed by adaptation and the identification of new opportunities. Although challenges included reduced non-verbal communication, difficulties assessing service-user wellbeing, and increased workload and isolation, teletherapy enhanced accessibility, flexibility, and inclusivity — particularly for individuals who were geographically distant, housebound, or disabled. All practitioners supported the continuation of a hybrid service model combining teletherapy and face-to-face delivery. Findings highlight the value of teletherapy in POD practice while emphasising the importance of safeguarding, practitioner wellbeing, and maintaining flexibility in future service design.

## PANEL\_14

### Arts-Based Research (ABR) Global Consortium: history, best practices, and future goals

Chair(s): **Nancy Gerber** (Florida State University), **Elisabetta Biffi** (University of Milan-Bicocca), **Jacelyn Biondo** (Thomas Jefferson University), **Sara Coemans** (KU Leuven), **Marco Gemingnani** (Universidad Loyola Andalucía), **Karin Hannes** (KU Leuven), **Richard Siegesmund** (Northern Illinois University, United States of America)

Discussant(s): **Karin Hannes** (KU Leuven)

This panel presentation recounts the conceptualization, mission, development and works of the Arts-Based Research (ABR) Global Consortium founded in 2019 at the ECQI in Edinburgh as part of a Game Changer session. Since 2019, its core team and expanding membership have worked to fulfill its mission by conducting an arts-based research study, publishing on ABR philosophy and practices, providing global classrooms and seminars, presenting at conferences, and developing arts-based research best practices. In this presentation, we review our history, publications, seminars and best practices while aspiring towards future goals. We invite the ECQI community to join us.

## Presentations of the Panel

### Video introduction by Core Team

**Nancy Gerber<sup>1</sup>, Sara Coemans<sup>2</sup>**

<sup>1</sup>Florida State University, <sup>2</sup>KU Leuven

The Arts-Based Research Global Consortium is a group of international scholars who have gathered together for the purpose of advocating for the visibility, accessibility, and valuation of arts-based research approaches in addressing human rights, social justice, and critical global issues. Currently, the values of empathy, understanding, introspection, and truth, relative to the communal human condition are at a critical point within our current socio-political context and climate. The regard and positioning of these human values directly relate to how we construct and protect our global community, our roles and agency in these communities, the socio-political discourse, the advancement and dissemination of knowledge, and the ultimate impact on our survival and evolution. Within this context it behooves us to study these phenomena in the social and health sciences critically exploring, disrupting, and deconstructing the implicit research philosophies that drive and contribute current neoliberal and colonizing trends in defining truth, knowledge, justice, values, and our overall inclusive quality of life. This videograph presents a brief overview of the founding, mission, and works of the ABR Global Consortium.

### Arts-based research pushing for change

**Elisabetta Biffi<sup>1</sup>, Richard Siegesmund<sup>2</sup>**

<sup>1</sup>University of Milan-Bicocca, <sup>2</sup>Northern Illinois University

The impact of current trends in technology, digitalization and mass media on our global culture raises questions regarding the responsibility and ethics of research decisions in contemporary social and health sciences. Embedded in the dominant paradigms, these trends subtly affect our worldviews,

our valuation of the human condition, and the nature of socio-political discourse. In such critical post normal times, radical imagination and epistemic activism that embrace non-dominant modes of knowledge production in the social and health sciences becomes a necessity. Arts-based research (ABR) is resonant with the onto-epistemological perspectives and methodologies necessary to challenge and disrupt current unilateral and hegemonic paradigms underlying decaying societal and geo-political constructs. In this paper, we discuss the radical imaginative philosophy that motivates arts-based research methodologies as an approach to social activism and epistemological change.

## **Sustaining life on earth**

Jacelyn Biondo<sup>1</sup>, Marco Gemingnani<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Thomas Jefferson University, <sup>2</sup>Universidad Loyola Andalucía

This paper presents the philosophy, innovative methods, and final aesthetic synthesis of a collaborative arts-based research project about the lived experience of COVID-19. The project was initiated in 2020 and completed in 2022. Nineteen international arts-based research scholars participated as co-researchers, submitting their arts-based and narrative responses to the project. The six-member core research team guiding the project collected and organized the submissions while simultaneously entering into immersive, iterative, dynamic, arts-based data generation, dialogic analytic and syntheses processes with co-researchers, and each other. Materials-discursive analytic processes, arts-based responses, sensorial coding, intersubjective dialogues, and arts-based assemblages conducted iteratively throughout the project. The performative result captured the sensory, embodied, and emotional experiences of the evolving stages of the pandemic as identified by and resonant with the co-researchers and multiple audiences. These stages were identified during the project by the co-researchers as: initial anxiety and panic; reflection and creativity; and resilience. The final synthesis of the project is an arts-based and performative piece using video and interactive gallery venues representative of these stages.

## **Visionarte methodology: best practices in visual and sensory fieldwork with indigenous chiquitano communities**

Alessandra Abruzzese

KU Leuven

Community-Based Participatory Action Research (CBPAR) promotes collaborative knowledge production and social transformation by engaging community members as co-researchers. However, sustaining meaningful participation and equitable communication remains a challenge, particularly in settings marked by power asymmetries and cultural complexity. This article introduces the VisionArte methodology, which integrates art-based methods and sensory ethnography to foster youth engagement and enhance dialogical processes within CBPAR. Developed through fieldwork conducted in 2023–2024 with Indigenous youth in San José de Chiquitos, Bolivia, the study explores how visual and sensory tools—such as visual mapping, embodied exercises, and data portrait drawing—can build trust, strengthen communication skills, and amplify marginalized voices. A central finding is the transformative potential of collective sensory envisioning exercises, which enabled youth to articulate pressing concerns—ranging from domestic violence and healthcare access to pollution and narco-trafficking—while simultaneously challenging researchers' assumptions about local priorities. By emphasizing co-creation, emotional attunement, and community-driven design, the VisionArte methodology demonstrates how tailored visual and sensory approaches can foster inclusive participation, redistribute epistemic power, and support long-term engagement in participatory research. This article contributes to the growing literature on art-based methods in CBPAR by offering both theoretical insight and practical guidance for designing equitable research interactions.

## **ABR best practices**

Kelly Clark/Keefe

University of Vermont

The purpose of this paper is to introduce, define, and outline the continuum of arts-based research philosophies and best practices. In doing so we hope to provide a comprehensive guide to understanding and assessing the rigor of ABR for those who: a) evaluate research in peer-reviewed journals; b) review funding opportunities; c) teach, study and conduct ABR.

Arts-Based Research (ABR) is an approach to research that aims to access and explore phenomena that exist beyond tangible, observable, and descriptive forms of ways of being and knowing using artistic forms of inquiry. ABR aspires to study the more elusive and intangible sensory-embodied, aesthetic, and intersubjective dimensions of human experience and social discourse that are beyond words and otherwise inaccessible. The investigation of these dimensions of the internal human experience contributes to the insight and illumination about the human mind, perceptions, and related behaviors. ABR falls under the wider umbrella of creative practice-based research, and research-creation, among others, which are differently represented and explored across different disciplines and geographical locations. With this paper we aspire to increase the visibility, credibility, and accessibility of ABR by proffering guidelines to defining, reading, understanding, conducting, and evaluating ABR. To ac-

compish this, we present definitions of ABR, when it might be used, philosophical assumptions or worldviews underlying ABR, methodological practices, and approaches to evaluation as well as ethical concerns that must be considered when assessing the quality and rigor of ABR.

## ORAL SESSION\_20: Trauma, interpersonal violence

### **Practising care in research: participatory and trauma-informed approaches to evaluating services for people experiencing multiple disadvantage**

**Shelina Visram**

Newcastle University, United Kingdom

The Gateway Access Plus (GAP) service, developed by North Tyneside Council in northern England, aims to address the health inequalities experienced by people with multiple, complex health and social needs – particularly those disengaged from healthcare services due to substance use, mental ill-health and homelessness. Delivered through a partnership model and funded via the NHS, the GAP service offers individualised support, holistic health planning and hardship funds to mitigate access barriers. This paper presents findings and reflections from an evaluation designed not only to understand the implementation and impact of the service, but to model participatory and trauma-informed research practices in contexts where traditional methods may reproduce harm or exclusion.

The evaluation design primarily involved semi-structured interviews with GAP clients, staff members and representatives of partner organisations, informed by insights from a series of lived experience workshops. Central to the methodology was a commitment to relational ethics, built through collaboration with people in recovery and frontline practitioners. The participatory workshops shaped ethical and practical decisions about how and when to engage individuals who may be in active addiction. Trauma-informed adaptations – such as practitioner-mediated recruitment, flexible consent and scaled-down sample sizes – were introduced to prioritise participant and researcher safety over data volume. These choices reflect a deliberate shift from extractive to caring research practice.

Findings highlight how the GAP service provides not only practical support but meaningful relational connection for people often isolated from both services and social networks. Gendered patterns in need illustrate the importance of intersectional, contextualised understanding of vulnerability. This paper argues for the centrality of ethical, participatory methods when working with structurally marginalised populations. Where people experience multiple disadvantage and associated stigma, co-produced and care-focused research approaches are vital for creating knowledge that is both impactful and just.

### **“It would be a beautiful coming together”: Collaboration Between Service Providers and African Clergy to Support African Christian Women Survivors of Intimate Partner Violence in England: A Qualitative Study**

**Pamela Shelley**

University College London Hospitals, United Kingdom

**Background:** Service providers offer trauma-informed care, and clergy provide informal and formal support to Christian women survivors of intimate partner violence (Nason-Clark et al., 2018). However, there is scarce research on how social workers, psychotherapists, managers of women’s aid agencies (service providers), and Cameroonian and Nigerian clergy (clergy) collaborate to support African Christian women survivors of intimate partner violence in England.

**Aim:** One objective of this study was to explore how service providers and clergy collaborate to support these women, providing insights for practice, policy development, and research.

**Method:** The researcher employed interpretative phenomenological analysis (Smith et al., 2009) and conducted remote, semi-structured interviews with purposefully selected service providers (N = 9) and clergy (N = 9) in England. The data was collected between June 2020 and March 2021. The interviews were audio-recorded, transcribed verbatim, and analysed.

**Findings and discussion:** Service providers and clergy reported a lack of collaboration and expressed a desire to collaborate to support these women. A collaboration guide was created to facilitate their collaboration.

**Conclusion and implications:** Service providers and clergy play a vital role in supporting African Christian women survivors of intimate partner violence. They need to collaborate to deliver comprehensive care to these women and the broader African Christian community. The study recommends that service providers and policymakers adopt an intersectional approach when addressing intimate partner violence within this community. Furthermore, future research should investigate how clergy and service providers can establish and sustain collaborative relationships.

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## **Voicing silent objects: an Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis of restored personal belongings after trauma**

**Lotem Cohen, Shani Pitcho**

Ben-Gurion University, Israel., Israel

Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) offers a powerful methodological framework for engaging with lived experience in its full complexity, especially when testimony extends beyond human voices to the symbolic meanings carried by objects.

This presentation discusses a study that employs IPA to explore the meanings of restored personal belongings of survivors of the October 7<sup>th</sup> attack on Israel. Initially perceived as silent, everyday items such as chairs, photographs or musical instruments were transformed through a rehabilitative process of destruction and restoration into more than material remnants. Participants interpreted the rehabilitated objects as symbolic witnesses, telling stories of lost homes, fractured communities and enduring resilience. Research led by an IPA approach captures these layered meanings and illuminates how individuals make sense of trauma through their relationships with objects.

By treating objects as carriers of memory and meaning, the analysis demonstrates how objects become active participants in human experience, embodying personal, familial, community and cultural narratives. Metaphors, such as cracks, silence and resilience, provide participants with a language to express what resists direct articulation. Telling one's story through the stories of objects enabled participants to personify the abstract, render trauma tangible and project everyday life worlds into experiences of loss and trauma. For qualitative research, this highlights the importance of listening not only to what is said but also to the metaphors and silences through which meaning is constructed in relation to material objects.

Methodologically, the study foregrounds the double hermeneutic of IPA: participants interpret lived experience through the language of objects, while the researcher interprets that interpretation into a broader phenomenological account. This dual movement from idiographic attention to collective insight demonstrates how symbolic analysis of objects foregrounds how participants' narratives imbue the inanimate with voice and meaning and broaden epistemologies that prioritize human testimony alone.

## **Methodological challenges in trauma-informed research on Technology-Facilitated Sexual Violence against women**

**Georgia Gkantona, Panoraia Andriopoulou**

University of Ioannina, Greece

This study explored the lived experiences of 3 women subjected to technology-facilitated sexual violence (TFSV), employing in-depth qualitative interviews and reflective thematic analysis. The themes that emerged included the forms of online abuse encountered, the impact on women's psychological and social well-being, the coping strategies employed, and variables related to each abusive incident, such as the characteristics of the platform or the perpetrator's relationship with the victim/survivor. Participants reported traumatic responses to the incidents, enduring emotional distress, hypervigilance, social isolation, emotions of fear and shame, and a profound erosion of trust in both digital environments and institutional support systems. Participant recruitment proved exceptionally challenging, reflecting the ethical, emotional, and contextual barriers that frequently refrain trauma survivors from participating in research. This presentation will critically reflect on these challenges emphasising the need for participant-led, flexible, and emotionally safe recruitment and interviewing practices. Establishing trust required prolonged engagement, transparency, and survivor control over disclosure depth and timing. On this basis, the empirical findings of the study will be discussed in relation to these methodological considerations, highlighting how participants' willingness to disclose sensitive experiences was shaped by their perceived control over the process and the researcher's capacity to create a safe, empathetic space. The findings underscore the need for ethical, trauma-informed, and survivor-centered methodologies in qualitative research on TFSV. The presentation will conclude with methodological recommendations for future qualitative studies on TFSV. By integrating reflection on methodological issues with empirical insights, this study contributes to both the substantive and procedural understanding of researching TFSV.

## **Examining interpersonal violence in sport: Findings and methodological reflections from a qualitative study**

**Anna Kavoura<sup>1</sup>, Antonis Alexopoulos<sup>2</sup>, Mary Hassandra<sup>3</sup>, Stiliani "Ani" Chroni<sup>4,3</sup>**

<sup>1</sup>University of Ioannina, Greece; <sup>2</sup>European University, Cyprus; <sup>3</sup>University of Thessaly, Greece; <sup>4</sup>University of Inland Norway

Interpersonal violence in sport (including psychological, physical, sexual abuse, and neglect) has increasingly been recognized as a multifaceted social phenomenon with serious implications for athletes' well-being. Although the concept of *safe sport* has gained international attention as an ethical and institutional imperative promoting respect, equity, and protection from violence,

its implementation and related research continue to face significant challenges and remain inconsistent across cultural contexts.

This study situates the Greek experience within broader international efforts to advance transformative and culturally informed qualitative research. The presentation has two main aims: (1) to present findings from a qualitative study exploring the attitudes and perceptions of Greek sport administrators and coach educators regarding interpersonal violence and the promotion of safe sport, and (2) to discuss key methodological and ethical challenges arising from this work. Conducted within the larger multinational Erasmus+ project *Culturally Informed Safe Sport Coach Education e-Toolbox (CICEE-T, 2022–2025)*, the study draws on ten semi-structured interviews analyzed thematically through a social constructionist lens.

Findings revealed diverse and often contradictory understandings of safe sport, accompanied by a frequent minimization of the phenomenon's severity, conceptual ambiguity about what constitutes interpersonal violence, and limited awareness of safe sport principles. Participants often described incidents of violence as isolated or exceptional, disconnecting them from the systemic and cultural dynamics of sport. Narratives tended to individualize perpetrators and normalize unequal power relations, reflecting broader patriarchal and hierarchical structures. Organizational responsibility was frequently displaced onto external factors reinforcing a logic of responsibility avoidance.

In concluding this presentation, we discuss some of the methodological and ethical challenges of conducting qualitative research on interpersonal violence in sport. We also offer suggestions for future research that centers athletes' voices and agency, emphasizing the importance of co-constructing knowledge that allow us to re-imagine sport organized in different, safer and more inclusive ways.

## ORAL SESSION\_21: Youth, adolescent narratives

### Youth State: A speculative and prefigurative practice

Fabrizio Cocchiarella, Victoria Dahl, James Duggan

Manchester Met University, United Kingdom

What if young people had a state? One run by-and-for young people, with the support of adults and organisations working with-and-for them. This proposition builds on innovative anarchist, activist and academic practice for re-imagining the state in diverse and plural state-like forms (Cooper, 2018). This initiative develops as an alternative to forms of youth research and participation that tends towards tokenism, where young people are present but not powerful; or, indeed, not adequate to enable young people to become virtuoso organisers, designers, artists and citizens able to collectively engage with the challenges of living meaningful lives in a world in excess of its ecological boundaries. This presentation seeks to share emerging practice as the youth state is founded in Manchester. This is a collaboration between Unit X – an interdisciplinary creative, art and design platform at Manchester School of Art and Design – and the Greater Manchester Youth Combined Authority – the apex regional youth democratic assembly representing 650,000 young people and 28 youth charities and local assemblies. From January to April 2026, 350 students working across 7 thematic projects will meet with the GMYCA representatives to co-design new agendas. The Unit X students will collaboratively develop a series of state-like interventions into young people's lived experience, which will be mobilised through the GMYCA and aligned networks and processes. The youth state is a speculative and prefigurative practice orientated towards understanding the function of collective infrastructures of peer, mutual and state-like care and support as it can be created and nurtured, reversing the decades of neoliberal assault on collective bases of solidarity and power in communities (Fisher, 2018). As such we are collectively investigating, what is the youth state approach to research, data, ownership and the boundaries or possibilities of youth-led research beyond neoliberalising institutions.

### Exploring control societies through surreal game aesthetics: Adolescents reclaiming school buildings in NYC

Elizabeth de Freitas, Matthew Curinga

Adelphi University, Canada

Theories of the 'built environment' formulated in the fields of architecture, software studies, and game design, come with assumptions about human sensory *aesthetics* in both real and virtual environments. Aesthetic dimensions play a large role in shaping our spatial habits, which entail corporeal "relational techniques of lived abstraction" (Massumi, 2014). The software rendering of space – in architectural models and game design – underscores this aspect of lived abstraction, relying on abstract forms such as vectors, shapes, and volumes, all of which are visual aesthetic elements that figure prominently in shaping our sense of belonging and alienation (de Freitas et al, 2019). In this presentation, we report on research investigating complex urban contexts where young people navigate policed environments and attempt to reclaim buildings built precisely for surveillance and control. This research is framed by theories of *investigative aesthetics* using various software methods to expose contested territories that are not properly reported or represented by regular data methods, often because the truth is inconvenient and buried. We use software to extract and visualize data pertaining to spatial justice, with an emphasis on the role of speculation when synthesizing data. Our project pursues "hyper-aesthetics" to expose the hidden spatial experience, where "to hyper-aestheticise is to heighten,

elicit or exacerbate the capacity of bodies, technologies or states of matter to sense and increase perceptual experience” (Fuller & Weizman, 2021, p.58). We discuss sensory ethnographic data collected in New York City, and data from design experiments using game software, where the aesthetic of fantasy, hidden forces, and eerie abstraction shed light on young people’s experiences. Workshops with participants exposed the labyrinthine geometry of a/symmetric flows of bodies, and a warren-like space of crisscrossing paths, forming sites of intensive affect and a “right to opacity” in the midst of police-security watch towers.

## **Voices from some of the shortest Interviews with Pregnant Adolescents: a Situational Analysis**

**Chatraanee Nunjamnong**

University of Vienna, Austria

In some interviews I conducted with pregnant adolescents as part of my PhD project on Equity Access to Inclusive Education for Pregnant Adolescents in Thailand, I observed some silences, pauses, and many short answers that, from my observations, were filled with various stories and emotions. In these situations, if the researcher does not pay adequate attention during analysis, some essential aspects of the data may be easily overlooked. The question is how to interpret these pauses, silences, and a simple response like ‘I don’t know’, and how we can uncover what remains unsaid between the lines. The method I use to echo the stories of pregnant students is Situational Analysis (SA), as developed by Adele Clarke, which highlights the interrelated foundational methodologies in pragmatist philosophy and interactionist sociology. SA includes various theoretical concept methods such as social world/arenas, situation of unit analysis, researcher reflexivity, and analysing complexities, including positionalities and differences. It also requires rich and diverse data that would be empirically constructed through four kinds of maps, followed by analytic works and memos that would allow us to understand the situation as a whole. According to this, the project aims to demonstrate how the Situational Analysis is employed to help researchers analyse and understand the complex situation of pregnant students in Thailand and make their voices heard.

## **“The invisible child”: A Thematic Analysis of the Psychosocial Needs and Protective Factors among Emerging Adults Who Have Parents with Addiction Problems**

**Thalis Boutsiarakos<sup>1,2</sup>, Vasiliki Yotsidi<sup>1</sup>**

<sup>1</sup>Department of Psychology, Panteion University of Social and Political Sciences; <sup>2</sup>Unified Special Vocational Junior and Senior High School of Ano Liosia, Directorate of Secondary Education of Western Attica

During the period of emerging adulthood, individuals with a history of parental addiction are at significantly higher risk of disrupted identity formation, maladaptive coping strategies, attachment insecurity and mental health difficulties. Despite these findings, little is known about how young adults make sense of these experiences with their parents and may mobilize resilience processes in this crucial developmental transition. This qualitative study aimed to explore the lived experiences, psychosocial needs and protective factors among young adults who were raised by parents with addiction problems (i.e., alcohol, drugs, or gambling). Fifteen semi-structured interviews were conducted with emerging adults (aged 18-25) whose parents had a history of substance or gambling addiction. The interview guide explored childhood experiences, perceived family dynamics, emotional and relational needs, as well as pathways of personal growth. Data were analysed using Braun and Clarke’s reflexive thematic analysis framework. Five overarching themes emerged including **“living in emotional uncertainty”** (i.e., chronic instability, fear, and shame that dominated family life), **“becoming an adult too soon”** since parentification and undertaking responsibility prematurely replaced childhood safety, **“the invisible child”** as silenced emotions and secrecy shaped young people’s identity and self-worth, **“breaking or repeating the cycle”** reflecting the experiences of some participants who reproduced addictive or self-destructive behavioural patterns, while others engaged in therapy, education, and caregiving roles that fostered awareness and resilience, and finally **“redefining belonging”** which echoed the participants’ attempts to build connection through substitute relationships with other “families” or the community and develop new meaning making of their experiences. The findings highlight the risk of intergenerational transmission of addiction and the enduring impact of parental addiction on emerging adults’ emotional regulation, relationship patterns and self-concept. Implications are discussed for prevention, early intervention for this age group and inclusive psychosocial policies addressing young adults with addicted parents.

## **Teachers’ mental health, well-being and resilience in Greek School contexts: An innovative international research protocol**

**Vasiliki Chatziefthymiou, Anastasios Matsopoulos**

University of Crete

Research on teachers’ well-being and resilience exists extensively in international studies, yet Greek research studies remain limited. This paper investigates Greek secondary school teachers’ well-being by studying individual, social and environmental influences and mediating variables on their mental health and resilience and mental health.

The presence study employed an international research protocol based on the work of Nastasi & Borja, (2016). Three focus groups discussions were the basis of empirical data collected during the school year 2024-25. The sample included 21 secondary school teachers from public schools in Heraklion and Rethymno, Crete, Greece. The study also integrated ecomaps (Matsopoulos, 2017) as an additional data collection method, which builds upon information gathered from focus groups. The final results were based on a synthesis of these two data collection methods.

Data collected were coded with a qualitative approach (Ponce et. al., 2022) and involved both deductive and inductive reasoning in which an initial coding scheme applied, using a broad set of codes, which was then generated, refined or redefined (based on the

dataset) as an interpretive step. These codes were generalized for both ecomaps and focus groups. The initial coding scheme was based on the Teacher Well-Being Project Qualitative Codebook (TWB, 2023), an internal working document which was developed from the work of Nastasi et al. (1998) and further refined by the Promoting Psychological Well-Being Globally Project (Nastasi & Borja, 2016)..

The main findings of the study showed that a supportive and healthy school environment fosters emotional stability, while teachers also reported stress and anxiety linked to interactions among family, community and educational systems. One of the most prominent findings of teachers' stressors that emerged was the newly introduced to the Greek educational system, of individual and school unit evaluation. This new policy of evaluation is obligatory in all Greek schools.

## ORAL SESSION\_22: Therapeutic approaches, embodiment

### **A phenomenological study of transactional analysis for bereavement: exploring therapists' and clients' lived experience**

Nikos Tsogkas

The University of Edinburgh, United Kingdom

Transactional Analysis Psychotherapy (TA), introduced by the psychiatrist Eric Berne in the late 1950s, is a robust psychological theory and psychotherapeutic approach. Even though TA is clinically applied across a wide range of client groups who either have mental health conditions or experience difficult life events, there is currently limited empirical research in this field.

This presentation outlines the research design of my PhD study, guided by a constructivist-interpretivist paradigm, which aims to increase understanding of the TA bereavement clinical work through the eyes of both TA practitioners and bereaved clients. My study focuses on the participants' lived experiences through their stories and subjective perspectives; hence, Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA), as well as focus groups and individual interviews, were selected as the methodology and methods, respectively. Specifically, ten TA therapists participated in two focus groups, while I conducted individual interviews with five TA therapists and five bereaved clients.

During my presentation, I will give an overview of the IPA underpinnings through which I, as a researcher, attempted to give voice to participants' experiences. In addition, great attention is paid to the IPA coding process and the way participants' perspectives and experiences, as expressed in their statements, were identified. In addition, following data analysis, five superordinate themes and 18 sub-themes were identified, revealing several facilitators and barriers to offering TA therapy for bereavement, the significance of the therapeutic relationship, and how TA therapists can utilise TA and bereavement theories. Moreover, the majority of the participants highlighted the scarcity of both TA training and research on bereavement.

This innovative study highlights the potential benefits of TA in supporting individuals dealing with bereavement. Nevertheless, additional research is needed to build on these findings.

### **Black somatic liberatory practices: The Africanist aesthetic in psychotherapeutic movement observation**

Ebony Nichols

AYA Creative Wellness, United States of America

This critical ethnographic qualitative study explored Black body-based healing practices and coping strategies used to resist and titrate the impact of racism and oppression. It also examined how Black individuals use their bodies to regulate their nervous systems to heal and cultivate liberatory practices. Grounded in theoretical frameworks such as Black Psychology, African Indigenous Healing Systems, Liberation Psychology, and Critical Race Theory, this research investigated the intersections of Black Aesthetics, Psychology, and the body through the lens of the Africanist Aesthetic. The study employed interaction analysis and reflexive thematic analysis to analyze non-verbal and verbal data collected from two focus groups. Findings revealed the profound significance of community, cultural expression, and embodied practices in fostering empowerment and cultivating liberatory practices within the Black community. Participants highlight the role of movement, sensory experiences, and nature-based practices in grounding their identities and facilitating emotional and spiritual healing. The Africanist elements, including improvisation, marathoning, high effect juxtaposition, cultural fusion, and the aesthetic of the cool, are integral to understanding the

complex dynamics of psychotherapeutic movement observation. This study addresses the gap in resources and prioritization of white assumptions in psychotherapeutic movement observation and somatic-based healing practices, offering a population-specific framework for community wellness and clinical intervention. By centering Black strengths-based approaches and culturally resonant practices, this research contributes to the advancement of liberatory practices within the Black African Diaspora.

## **Breath as Dialogue: Exploring Viniyoga Therapy as a Collaborative Practice of Transformation in Uncertain Times**

Jennifer Vasquez<sup>1</sup>, Michele Quill<sup>2</sup>, Chase Bossart<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Texas State University, United States of America; <sup>2</sup>Unaffiliated

In a world marked by ecological, socio-political, and mental health crises, the need for embodied, dialogic, and person-centered practices has never been more urgent. This qualitative study investigates Viniyoga therapy, a personalized approach to yoga that adapts breath, movement, and meditation to the unique needs of the individual, as a form of collaborative and transformative care. Drawing on in-depth interviews with fourteen experienced Viniyoga therapists, the research explores how therapeutic goals are conceptualized and achieved within one-to-one settings.

Using Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA), the study identifies three interwoven therapeutic aims: bringing balance, cultivating self-regulation, and guiding transformation. These aims resonate with current calls for care practices that acknowledge vulnerability, foster resilience, and support human flourishing in the face of global uncertainty. Two illustrative case studies show how therapists co-create individualized practices with clients, highlighting how embodied listening and adaptive movement become forms of dialogue and healing.

This inquiry situates Viniyoga therapy as a globally relevant, culturally adaptive, and dialogic modality, one that flows across disciplinary and healthcare boundaries. Far from being a static tradition, Viniyoga emerges as a dynamic, relational practice deeply rooted in the ethics of presence, care, and responsiveness to the “more-than-human” dimensions of healing (breath, energy, environment).

In this way, Viniyoga offers not only an integrative health intervention but also a model of collaborative qualitative engagement with human and planetary well-being. This paper invites researchers, practitioners, and communities to consider how person-centered, embodied practices can contribute to transformational change through polyphonic, creative, and situated dialogues, even (and especially) in challenging times.

## **Unpacking emotions: Developing a method for collaborative inquiry into developing emotional resilience.**

Juliane Reams

Jönköping University, Sweden

Research in ‘caring professions’ identifies emotional labour as a significant societal challenge, with more recent studies indicating this is a growing issue. One approach to addressing this is building emotional resilience, using emotional reappraisal. Challenges to this approach have been identified, highlighting the need for a deeper understanding of how to support these processes.

While there are plenty of neuroscience and quantitative based methods for studying this, adequately robust qualitative methods are less readily available. This presentation describes ongoing work to build such a method drawing on several relevant theoretical and methodological components.

Several theoretical lenses are utilized both for constructing the approach to data collection as well as data analysis. Two foundational theories are Barrett’s theory of constructed emotions, which provides a foundation for examining how meanings are added to experiences. As well, a dialectical approach to how meaning develops provides a framework for investigating participant emotion reappraisal processes.

Data gathering and analysis is iterative. It begins with studying participants’ experiences in a hybrid program (online gatherings and platform guided attention directing and reflection scaffolding) for building emotional resilience, based on the above theories as well as micro-developmental processes. Participants’ textual responses to reflective prompts are first analyzed to understand how they make sense of micro-moments in their process. These are used to create a systemic mind map used during the interview as a form of dynamic scaffolding, enabling the co-exploration of the researcher’s initial hypotheses about the participants’ emotion resilience building journey.

The semi-structured interview utilizes a dialectical behavioral chain analysis approach to elicit granular meaning units to reveal how emotions are being constructed and potential reappraised. Analysis of interview transcripts uses a dialectical approach to how participants are developing the skill for reappraisal.

## **Unveiling embodied White supremacy: Therapists' experiences and its imprint on therapeutic relationships in dance/movement therapy**

**Melody Gamba**

Lighthouse Creative Collaborative, United States of America

Psychotherapy is often idealized as a space of healing and connection, yet it remains deeply influenced by sociocultural systems of power. This paper explores how White-identifying dance/movement therapists experience and articulate embodied White supremacy within therapeutic relationships. The research is situated within global contexts of inequity, interdependence, and the urgent need for relational repair. While most scholarship conceptualizes Whiteness as a cognitive or sociocultural construct, this study explores how racial dominance is embodied, lived, enacted, and potentially transformed through somatic awareness and relational practice. Using an arts-informed qualitative design, participants engaged in iterative cycles of embodied reflection, movement-based exploration, creative expression, and collective dialogue. Data were collected through written reflections, photographs, and virtual collaborative sessions incorporating both verbal and nonverbal responses. Reflexive thematic analysis identified patterns across participants' narratives and embodied experiences. Five interrelated themes emerged: (1) *Embodied White Supremacy in Daily Life and Therapeutic Practice*; (2) *The Struggle to Articulate and Confront Embodied White Supremacy*; (3) *The Role of Metaphors and Movement in Understanding White Supremacy*; (4) *Professional Identity and White Supremacy in Therapeutic Relationships*; and (5) *Overcorrection, Cognitive Dissonance, and the Tension Between Intention and Instinct*. Findings demonstrate how embodied, creative, and collective processes can deepen critical reflexivity and expand the methodological possibilities of qualitative inquiry. This work contributes to global methodological discourse by modeling an integrative, body-based approach to exploring systemic power and illuminating how embodiment can cultivate relational repair, humility, and transformation, fostering spaces of hope, connection, and collaborative practice in challenging times.

## **ORAL SESSION\_23: Autoethnography, Collaborative Ethnography**

### **Diaspora and writing autoethnography**

**Marlon Simmons**

University of Calgary, Canada

Writing autoethnography through cultural ways of knowing embedded in the Caribbean Diaspora, concerns writing through global histories and relational practices of belonging. I conceptualize autoethnography within the context of writing by way of centering cultural ways of knowing embedded in the Caribbean Diaspora. In doing so, I seek to find different ways to reveal the challenges, limitations and possibilities of writing autoethnography as a research method, by way of interpreting how different communities of Diaspora come to know and understand their embodied experiences. With this in mind, I broach Diaspora as a site of interest to understand how Diasporised embodied knowledge, through different political locations, social and cultural conditions come to offer countervailing ways of knowing to undo colonial histories. One of my concerns with Diaspora is this relationship with the Diasporic subject and the nation-state, and how this relationship promotes and constructs contemporary ways of knowing civic forms of belonging. How, then, and what are the ways in which the public and social spaces of Diasporic peoples come to be constituted? The challenge here for autoethnography is with interpreting these incommensurable moments of belonging immanent to Diasporic experiences, and also to interpolate these incommensurable moments into some textualized medium from which the autoethnographer can draw. What I am concerned with is, how do these embodied historic colonial conditions of belonging continue to exist and inform the everyday lived experiences of the Diaspora? How does, the Diasporised-subject, be it through cultural ways of knowing and doing, come into political interpretive strategies to engage their ensuing public sphere? How does the Diasporised-subject know and understand when a particular place, social interactions, communicative exchanges come to be nuanced through colonial meanings, and simultaneously engendering a discursive performative citizenry, that culminates into ways of knowing the self and community?

### **Please do not make me burdened and weak: a trio-autoethnography of cancer and caregiving**

**Päivi Eriksson, Eeva Aromaa, Satu Koskinen**

University of Eastern Finland Business School

One of us cared for her mother with cancer, and two of us have lived with cancer ourselves. From the beginning, many voices offered us imposed identities linked to cultural master narratives. Päivi was described as “a self-sacrificing caregiver of her dying mother.” A doctor told Eeva: “You are a cancer patient. Rest and follow the treatment plan.” A colleague told Satu at a Christmas lunch that, according to his physician wife, “the post-surgery period would be very difficult for her.”

Our collaborative autoethnography, what we call a trio-autoethnography, begins from these moments. We respond with counter-narratives grounded in embodied practices. Päivi reframed her role as a continuation of lifelong competence: after raising children and caring for her stepfather, she produced good life for her mother. Her calendar, where professional work and daily

care coexisted, became a matter of balance rather than sacrifice. Eeva started dressage riding for the first time, working her body into strength and precision in the saddle, reclaiming agency the clinic had taken away. Satu laced her ski boots and set off on a fifteen-kilometre track right after an endoscopy, narrating herself not as weak but as enduring, rhythmic, and moving.

We analyse these counter-narratives through affective infrastructures and narrative agency. The waiting room, the stable, the ski track, and the chain of care shaped how we felt and we tell our stories. In dialogue we circulated experiences, re-storied them, and co-created ways of resisting imposed identities. Our contribution is to show that caregiving and illness identities are not determined by medicine or culture. We can remake them, so that agency and good life remain possible despite illness.

## **Autoethnography as a research approach for promoting reflexive interdisciplinarity in One Health**

**Glen Cousquer, Desiree Zona, Siri Siltasalmi, Issy Skladnev, Julia Whitfield**

University of Edinburgh, United Kingdom

Over the last five or six years, the One Health and Conservation Medicine MSc programmes have encouraged students to consider which research approaches may best suit the research questions they feel, personally, drawn to explore for their dissertations. This has been achieved through a Research Approaches course that challenges students to find and refine their own question, emphasising approaches and paradigms across disciplines. Unusually for a College of Medicine, this course has integrated creative methodologies and autoethnographic inquiry among the options available to students.

During this time a growing number of students have chosen to undertake autoethnographic research projects. This recognises the growing awareness of how entangled we are with the planetary health, welfare, food, agricultural and ecological systems we seek to sustain and optimise. It further recognises the need for reflexive interdisciplinary collaborative practice to address these challenges.

In this presentation, we review the autoethnographic research undertaken to date. We start by discussing the rationale for introducing AE as a research option and the reasons students have chosen to adopt this as a mode of inquiry. We present the research questions explored, the knowledge contributions made and the paradigm shifts these have made possible.

Projects conducted by our diverse, international student body have ranged from the connections between ADHD and food system transformation, the role of interbeing in clinical practice, the challenges of protesting against the logging of old growth forests and those associated with working as an Official Veterinarian who is interested in posthumanist approaches to food system transformation. This modest sample highlights the importance of first and fourth person research and the reflexive turn as we attempt to meet the planetary challenges we face with greater self-awareness. We propose that AE supports an engagement with process and practice that supports relational connections and collaborative practices.

## **Autoethnographic encounters in doctoral research and mentorship: A dual perspective on method, meaning, and risk**

**Kirby Wycoff<sup>1</sup>, Adam McClain<sup>2</sup>**

<sup>1</sup>Thomas Jefferson University, United States of America; <sup>2</sup>North Carolina A&T State University, United States of America

In an era defined by global crises and interconnected uncertainties, this co-authored project explores how autoethnography can serve as a relational and transformative mode of qualitative inquiry. We present a dual perspective—two faculty members who first encountered autoethnography within a doctoral mentorship and who now, as colleagues, continue to navigate the shifting terrain of higher education in the United States. Our shared inquiry examines how collaboration, vulnerability, and reflexivity shape research, teaching, and professional identity in challenging times.

Our engagement with autoethnography did not arise from institutional endorsement but from necessity, curiosity, and the conviction that lived experience holds scholarly value. Situated within the complex and often precarious conditions of U.S. higher education—marked by institutional pressures, questions of belonging, and calls for equity and transformation—this study becomes both timely and urgent. What began as a pedagogical relationship has evolved into a sustained dialogue across experience, discipline, and identity, reflecting the flows and connections that traverse contemporary academic life.

Through this collaboration, we identify six interrelated navigational practices—contextual awareness, theoretical grounding, clarity of purpose, relational responsibility, engagement with foundational literature, and preparation for reception—as ways of orienting within the uncertainties of autoethnographic work. These practices reveal the creative, ethical, and affective dimensions of scholarship that emerge when researchers work *with*, *in*, and *for* their communities.

By foregrounding the emotional, relational, and institutional labor of co-creation, this project contributes to ongoing dialogues about collaboration, mentorship, and transformation in qualitative research. We offer autoethnography as both method and way of being—nurturing spaces of care, resistance, and hope amid the evolving realities of higher education.

## Heart-centred, whole-person inquiry: a five-elements lab for researchers

**Anna Rose Hope**

University of the West of England, United Kingdom

This session offers a supportive space for researchers to consider the mix of capacities they bring to their work and to design one small practice they can try after the conference. The approach is whole-person and heart-centred. It names five elements in a circle, each linked to a way of knowing and acting: Earth (embodied presence and participation in practical activities), Water (emotional perception and reflective clarity), Fire (the heart – purpose and care), Air (analysis and clear language) and Space (openness and intuition). The model is descriptive rather than prescriptive; different people will find different mixes that serve them. The five-elements framing within a research context first emerged as a heuristic device in my study of ‘community’ in community-led housing, but here it is used as a tool to bring attention to the qualities and activities of the researcher.

Who the session is for

Researchers at any career stage and from any field who use qualitative approaches, including those who are curious but cautious about reflective or embodied practices. There is no ideal profile. Participants are invited to notice what already helps them, and, if they wish, to explore one new practice.

Session flow

1. Welcome and framing (10 min):

Brief introduction to the five elements and the session principles: there are many good ways to be a researcher; start with your strengths and choose your own area to stretch into.

2. Private self-mapping (10 min):

Participants mark a simple radar/circle for Fire/Water/Earth/Air/Space and note where their current mix helps their practice.

3. Menu of micro-practices (10 min):

The facilitator will outline how each element offers small, low-effort practices to try, for example:

- o Earth (embodied presence and participation): one deliberate act of being there – joining a practical activity, walking the site or using the senses to notice materials, rhythms and movements; optionally, translate a recurring observation into a simple checklist.

- o Water (emotional perception and reflection): a three-minute feelings/clarity memo after interviews or meetings.

- o Fire (purpose and care): check alignment of your core purpose and vision at the start of a project; build in a one-sentence values check before a design or sampling decision.

- o Air (analysis and clear language): identify your most effective media to work in for analytic tasks (visual, verbal, writing, etc); define one ambiguous term before coding; sketch a brief mind map.

- o Space (openness and intuition): take a five-minute pause (quiet sitting or gentle walk) before major analytic decisions; allow time for daydreaming and a mix of recreational activities to bring in unexpected influences; keep a short insight log.

4. Optional pair/triad share (10 min):

Prompt: ‘One strength I appreciate; one practice I might try.’ Feedback only if requested.

5. Stations with examples (25 min):

Participants will have the chance to browse tables with simple materials they can adapt. One table will include illustrations from community-led housing (for example, prompts for mapping a shared situation, or a short ‘who/for what/with what authority/how recorded’ community guide). Another might invite attention to more-than-human aspects (tools, spaces, regulations, ecologies) and how a chosen practice might engage them. The specific examples will be confirmed closer to the time.

6. Commitment and close (15 min):

Participants will be asked to note the practice they will try, when they will try it and how they will gauge whether it helped. Those who wish can add an email to join a light-touch post-conference writing circle to share short reflections.

Accessibility and care

Materials will use clear layout and plain language. People will be welcome to move, rest or step out as needed. Quiet participation is valid and there is no requirement to speak. Where possible, examples will be offered in text and visual formats.

Expected outcomes

- A one-page Whole-Person Researcher Canvas that participants can take away and adapt.
- A personal plan for one micro-practice to test in their own setting.
- An optional writing circle to collect short reflections after the congress (for a blog post, zine or short memo).
- For those interested, access to example prompts and templates from the community-led housing study.

Facilitator

Anna Rose Hope, a researcher working with community-led housing in England. Research methods include constructivist grounded theory and situational analysis. Current interests: developing a toolkit for community in policy and practice; exploring how purpose, emotional clarity, embodied presence, analytic care and openness can be brought together in research, and how

small, well-made practices can support collaboration.

## DREAM TEAM\_14

### Entangled encounters: Mapping past, present, and future relationships with data towards a posthuman and decolonial kind of praxis

Magali Forte<sup>1</sup>, Sara Arias Palacio<sup>2</sup>, Lucy Campbell<sup>3</sup>, Andrée-Anne Tremblay<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Université de Sherbrooke, Canada; <sup>2</sup>Simon Fraser University, Canada; <sup>3</sup>University of Edinburgh, Scotland

This Dream Team session proposes to rethink and reimagine the life of data through qualitative and postqualitative lenses by considering data's capacity to act, transgress, trouble, and produce. In Western research, data is often objectified as a passive, inert, and disorganized resource to which order and value are added thanks to humans' analytic acumen (MacLure, 2013; Koro-Ljungberg et al., 2018). As researchers, we are taught to manage data as technicians (St. Pierre, 2024), to filter, code, and categorize it in order to make it worthy by academic standards. Data is therefore largely treated as a commodity which is insufficient in itself—some 'thing' that's always in need of (higher) human intervention and transformation. In this Dream Team session, we therefore ask: what might happen if we consider data not as passive but as active, as able to shape and transform us as much (if not more) as we attempt to shape it?

Building from scholarship rooted in decolonial thought, posthumanist theory, and Indigenous epistemologies, this session invites participants to explore how data exceeds positivist categories, partakes in affective flows, and productively troubles the unfolding of research encounters. Rather than stabilizing data as fixed representation, we wonder how we can engage with data as alive, relational, and unruly. Isn't data is, after all, a label we feel we must put - for fear of not being deemed rigorous enough - on the encounters that make our research projects?

We therefore offer to explore, during this session, collaborative and creative ways of being and becoming with data (rather than seeking to master, order or contain it), prompted by the following theoretical elements:

Drawing on Barad's notion of intra-action (2007), we acknowledge that we are, in fact, constantly intra-acting as we merge past and present selves through working with the data. Going further, relying on our own lived experience, as posthuman autoethnographers, has the power to overturn the exploitative paradigm and means we have to forge relationships with our own voices as data;

Working with MacLure's concept of glowing data (2013, 2023), we attune to how data-as-lived-experience can provoke, unsettle, and transform the very conditions and methods of research;

Some core principles of pluriversal praxis (Escobar, 2018; Ortega, 2025) require that we think with data in ways that refuse the fiction of one universal world or epistemology. We accept that they lead us to see and accept that data lives within relations—stories, lands, and memories that exceed capture or translation;

Some Indigenous perspectives view and honor data as gift, as Kovach (2021) suggests, rather than seeing it as a disposable kind of commodity. This view has the capacity to alter our practices, ethical commitments, onto-epistemological orientations, and methodological choices.

The aim of this Dream Team is not to develop yet another set of procedures for dealing with data but rather, to listen and reach for frictions and reciprocities as we recognize data as a co-participant in world-making, and collectively engage with ways of becoming with data differently in our research projects. We are particularly interested in what emerges when researchers acknowledge being "taken elsewhere" by data—into uncharted affective, material, and relational terrains.

Participants will therefore be invited into a collaborative exercise to map how they currently perceive their relationship with data and where some of the theoretical elements shared above might take them. Using storytelling and visual mapping tools, we will sketch where resistance, friction, boundaries, contradictions, and flows are encountered, thereby attending to the multiple ways in which vibrant data moves us, resists categorization and ownership, and troubling the assumption that one universal truth resides in data waiting to be unlocked.

## PANEL\_9

### Utilizing qualitative research to inform and improve community mental health services: Examples from the Association for Regional Development and Mental Health (EPAPSY)

Chair(s): **Stelios Stylianidis** (Association for Regional Development and Mental Health (EPAPSY)), **Eugenie Georgaca** (Aristotle University of Thessaloniki & Association for Regional Development and Mental Health (EPAPSY))

Discussant(s): **Philia Issari** (National and Kapodistrian University of Athens)

Utilization of research findings is a crucial part of evidence-based mental health service development. The Association for Regional Development and Mental Health (EPAPSY), the largest NGO in the mental health field in Greece, has made it part of its mission to develop practice-relevant research as guide for service evaluation and development. In this panel we present examples of qualitative studies that have been carried out with this aim. In the attempt to standardize provision of brief psychotherapy as part of the Association's long-standing Mental Health Day Centre, the difficulties in ending psychotherapy were found to be an obstacle; thus, the qualitative study of therapists' perspectives on managing termination in brief psychotherapy. The recent creation of an Early Intervention in Psychosis unit necessitated reaching out to young people with first episode psychosis. This in turn made apparent our limited understanding of the factors that facilitate or hinder your people's timely help-seeking; thus, an investigation of the duration-of-untreated-psychosis from the perspective of people's experiences of help-seeking and treatment. The even more recent creation of a program of psychosocial intervention for the prevention of youth violence and delinquency led to a needs assessment study in the local community to identify appropriate partnerships and optimum strategies and alliances to build a sustainable community initiative to prevent youth violence. Finally, the recovery based mission of EPAPSY led to adopting the WHO QualityRights Toolkit, a collaborative tool for evaluating human rights and quality of care, for the evaluation of its services. Here we will present the current pilot use of the Toolkit in selected EPAPSY services. The specific presentations will showcase examples of practice-led and practice-relevant research, that may be conducted in the context of mental health associations to support the evaluation, planning and development of services.

## Presentations of the Panel

### **Working with endings: Therapists' perspectives on managing termination in brief psychotherapy**

**Marina Skourteli<sup>1</sup>, Irimi Paschalidi<sup>2</sup>, Antigoni Apostolopoulou<sup>3</sup>**

<sup>1</sup>Association for Regional Development and Mental Health (EPAPSY), <sup>2</sup>Private Practice, <sup>3</sup>National and Kapodistrian University of Athens

Termination in the context of brief psychotherapy, and its effective management, often presents a challenge for therapists. The aim of this study is to explore how therapists experience and manage the ending of brief psychotherapy within a community mental health setting. Adopting a phenomenological perspective, it examines how therapists experience and ascribe meaning to the issue of ending, as well as the factors that appear to shape their management of this process. The study involved eight (8) mental health professionals, with varying levels of experience, working in community psychiatry. Data were generated through semi-structured interviews lasting 50–60 minutes. Analysis was conducted using Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA), a method particularly suited to investigating subjective experience and its meaning-making processes. The findings highlight themes related to therapists' personal histories of loss, the difficulties and challenges they encounter in their clinical work, and the use of good practices in managing endings. Overall, the study underscores the influence of therapists' personal experiences on how they approach termination, as well as the importance of reflection, supervision, and personal analysis in sustaining the therapeutic role.

### **Duration of Untreated Psychosis: A thematic analysis of service-users' subjective experiences of diagnosis and seeking treatment**

**Marina Skourteli, Maria Tritari**

Association for Regional Development and Mental Health (EPAPSY)

The aim of the present study is to investigate the subjective, lived experiences of service users and their families regarding the onset of psychosis and the pathways in seeking appropriate treatment as well as the barriers they may have encountered during this process. Six in-depth individual interviews were conducted (4 service users and 2 mothers). The study took place between May - October 2023 within a Day Centre for Psychosocial Rehabilitation, located in Athens, Greece. Recruitment was purposeful following the snowball sampling technique. Thematic analysis was utilized for the analysis of data produced from narratives. Duration of Untreated Psychosis (DUP) for participants in the present study ranged between 3-9 years. Six themes emerged. All participants experienced trauma in the family prior to the onset of prodromal symptoms. The second theme refers to the first indications that seem to mobilize the family regarding the early onset of psychosis (emergence of positive symptoms, sleep disorders, academic failure and social withdrawal). The third one refers to individual's and family's sensitization and orientation towards psychic life. The role of the therapeutic alliance and stigma also emerges as a critical parameter implicated in early intervention. A prominent theme is the lack of information made available to the wider public regarding the availability and accessibility of services. The present qualitative study identified a number of factors contributing to treatment delay for first episode psychosis, including both intrapsychic and organizational level parameters that are responsible for long DUP in our Greek sample.

## **Risk and protective factors of youth violence and delinquency: A needs assessment study in the community**

Vasiliki Yotsidi<sup>1</sup>, Charis Asimopoulos<sup>2</sup>, Gerasimos Papanastasatos<sup>3</sup>, Stelios Stylianidis<sup>4</sup>

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Given that juvenile delinquency is a multifaceted mental health issue, community-based prevention interventions for youth at risk should take place in a continuum so that individual, family, school, and social risk and protective factors are simultaneously addressed. A needs assessment study is then necessary to adjust prevention practices to the current state as well as the desired goals through the incorporation of different “voices” of the local community. Along these lines, eighteen focus groups with adolescents and young people, parents, teachers, and stakeholders of the local community were conducted in four municipalities in Northern Athens (Greece) where the program of psychosocial intervention for the prevention of youth violence and delinquency, entitled “It’s Up to You(th)”, is implemented by the Association for Regional Development and Mental Health (EPAPSY). In total, 163 participants were interviewed according to an original interview guide focusing on both risk and protective factors of youth delinquency. Thematic analysis of the transcribed interviews revealed seven main themes with regard to risk and protective factors, including the feeling of instability among young people, the normalization of violence and its internalization as an acceptable way to resolve differences, the lack of trust to (significant) others as well as the desire for a meaningful relationship with adults, the need for common spaces and a culture of dialogue, and the need of inspiration for values and principles. The risk and protective factors resulting from the thematic analysis are also presented comparatively with respect to the different groups and regions participating in the study. Based on this user participation approach, the findings of the needs assessment study shed light on the importance of embracing different community agents and local groups in the co-construction of a selective prevention strategy against youth violence.

## **Evaluating quality of care in community mental health facilities through the W.H.O. QualityRights Toolkit**

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In this presentation we outline and reflect upon the process of evaluating three community mental health facilities of EPAPSY through the W.H.O. QualityRights Toolkit. The Quality Rights Toolkit is a structured process for assessing quality of care and human rights in mental health facilities, introduced by the World Health Organisation in 2012. It is designed as a tool for collaborative research, engaging outside experts, facility professionals, service users and carers. More than an assessment tool, it intends to foster continuous development and empowerment, whereby all parties involved engage in long-term monitoring and improving the standard of care in the facilities they partake. In the assessment process, data collected through interviews with service users, professionals and carers, systematic observation and archive review is collectively examined by an assessment committee, which formulates a report for each facility. We are currently piloting the use of the Toolkit in a supported accommodation facility, a mobile mental unit and a day centre of the NGO EPAPSY, in view of extending its use in all EPAPSY units, mental health units of collaborating institutions and eventually at national level. The talk will focus more on this innovative process, and the challenges it poses, than on the results regarding the specific facilities.

## **ORAL SESSION\_24: Disasters, crisis response, war resolution**

### **Grounded theory investigation of media exposure during the disaster of the century: the 2023 Turkey earthquake**

Abdullah Deniz Uyanik<sup>1,2</sup>, Antonia Svensson<sup>1</sup>

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On 6 February 2023, devastating earthquakes struck Turkey, resulting in 52, 000 casualties and 100.000, 000 injuries. It was referred to as the “Disaster of the Century”. Social media and news coverage inundated millions with unfiltered graphic images, stories, and videos. To date, no published studies have investigated people’s lived experiences of the disaster through media exposure. Using Reflexive Grounded Theory methodology, this qualitative doctoral study aims to explore people’s behavioural and emotional changes, processes, worldviews, and recovery through semi- structured interviews. Participants are recruited as

Turkish adults who did not directly experience the earthquake, using a theoretical sample that allows for the development, refinement, and challenge of emerging themes. So far, preliminary findings from the first ten interviews indicate that media-exposed secondary mass trauma functions similarly to primary trauma, inducing significant emotional arousal. At the same time, already existing worldviews seem to be reinforced further, acting as anchors to guide resilience, behavioural, and emotional changes. Overall, changes function as a process of appraisal for survival, forcing populations to adapt to the new reality, both individually and collectively. Participants also exhibited behaviourally adaptive and maladaptive responses, indicating strategies to mitigate intense emotional arousal, alongside resilient and lasting changes. These changes emphasise safety against potential future exposure, as more than 70% of the Turkish population lives in first— and second-degree earthquake zones. The findings will have implications for news agencies and legislators, enabling them to understand the overall effects of media exposure and potentially develop strategies to inform and induce long-lasting change in people's lives. Additionally, the study will also provide a detailed model to explain people's responses to mass traumatic natural disasters, enabling counselling professionals to understand and develop effective treatment strategies, along with offering further evidence towards developing secondary media trauma literature.

## **Staying with the herd: relational ontologies and more-than-human care in disaster response and reconciliation**

**Dana Grinde**

University of Edinburgh, Canada

I worked for the Canadian Red Cross on their Virtual, National Disaster Management team after completing my undergraduate degree. As a caseworker, I spoke directly with victims of natural disasters, completing assessments and providing financial and emotional support for their recovery. I was working on the 2017 British Columbia wildfire operation when an unusual call landed on my desk: a herd of horses had been spotted, in bad condition, near Canim Lake First Nation. The fires had ravaged through 100 Mile House and the horses had been separated from their natural range and their ancestral caretakers.

Care, under the efficient, procedural, and human-centered bureaucracies of disaster management didn't leave much room for prioritizing animal rescue. There was space in the policy, however, for advocacy and something in the voicemail I had listened to, implicated me in an ethics of care that extended beyond formal mandates, drawing me into the more-than-human relational responsibility that the community had participated in for generations. From a province away, I had to locate food, water, safe pasture, and caretakers for the herd.

Using a reflexive autoethnographic approach, informed by phenomenology and Indigenous ways of knowing, I explore how this experience transformed my perspective, unsettling the assumption that crisis management need be efficient and transactional. The horses were more than animals caught in the crosshairs of disaster, they represented ancestral lineages of care and connection to land and history. Caring for them honoured Indigenous practices of stewardship and was a small but impactful reconciliatory act. In light of this year's theme, "Global flows, relational connections, and collaborative practices in challenging times," I put this small, but instructive story forward as an example of why taking time for participation, connection, attention, and advocacy is necessary, even in crises that seem to demand an acute response.

## **Glitches of memory: Folklore, "errors" and fragmented narratives in online natural disaster testimonies**

**Katerina Schoina**

PhD Student in Folklore Studies, Faculty of Philology, School of Philosophy, National and Kapodistrian University of Athens - H.F.R.I. Scholarship

When disasters are remembered online, memory rarely appears as a seamless narrative. Testimonies freeze mid-sentence, images blur, audio collapses or videos abruptly end. These glitches, commonly seen as technical failures, become, in fact, vernacular signs of trauma. They fragment stories, echo the ruptures of catastrophe and embody the impossibility of total recollection.

This paper develops a "glitch ethnography" of disaster memory, focusing on digital traces left by survivors of floods and wildfires in Attica. So, the emphasis is methodological: how do broken media fragments generate new modes of meaning? Drawing on online testimonies and user-generated archives, I explore how "error" itself acquires symbolic force, mirroring uncertainty, loss and the fractured temporality of survival.

Rather than dismissing glitches as noise, I argue that they open an alternative ethnographic lens. In silence, in pixelated screens, in truncated voices, memory insists, not as polished testimony but as disrupted truth. By placing Folklore Studies in dialogue with qualitative inquiry, the paper highlights how disasters challenge not only communities but also researchers, urging us to embrace rupture as a method of knowing.

## Reconstructing Resilience: A qualitative inquiry into positive psychology and social support after the Beirut port explosion

Nicole Dagher<sup>1,2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>New York College, Greece; <sup>2</sup>University of Greater Manchester, UK

This qualitative inquiry explores how individuals affected by the 2020 Beirut Port explosion navigated their recovery through the interplay of positive psychology practices and social support networks to foster resilience and enhance well-being. The study investigates how internally cultivated psychological strengths and externally anchored social ties supported the reconstruction of resilience and personal well-being in the aftermath of collective trauma. In-depth semi-structured interviews were conducted with six Lebanese participants aged 30 to 50 years old, and their narratives were analyzed using reflective thematic analysis to uncover noticeable patterns of meaning and response.

The findings reveal that positive psychology practices, in particular mindfulness, gratitude, optimism, and spirituality, emerged as central strategies for emotional regulation and coping. These inner resources enabled participants to cultivate a mindset oriented toward recovery, restoring a sense of hope, autonomy, and agency amid widespread disruption. At the same time, the role of social connectedness was critical. Familial ties, community bonds, and collective acts of solidarity provided emotional support, reinforcing emotional resilience, meaning-making practices and enabling relational healing rooted in cultural belonging.

The study further highlights the importance of consistent routines and recovery practices that are sensitive to Lebanon's sociocultural realities, offering supported, custom-made, and locally consequential tools for recovery and transformation. Such culturally attuned, locally situated interventions offered practical, accessible tools for psychological and social transformation. The research underscores the value of integrating both individual and community-based approaches into post-trauma support systems.

This work contributes to a growing body of qualitative knowledge at the intersection of public health, psychology, and disaster recovery. It demonstrates how resilience is not merely an individual trait but is relationally co-constructed and contextually grounded. The study ultimately affirms the transformative potential of positive psychology and social support to facilitate integrated pathways toward healing, adaptation, and future preparedness for individuals and communities alike.

## A story on the resolution of war: how we stopped fearing polarization

Špela Bojčič

None, Slovenia

In the process of co-creating a harmonious civilisation, we are learning to embrace both entropic and syntropic forces of nature and to balance them. As individuals we are mastering the skill of directing our attention with conscious awareness, through which we are discovering our own nature (which is the nature of the world and of our reality). Conflict inevitably arises, because we have been conditioned to suppress and deny parts of ourselves. Political systems are a reflection of psychological dimensions of society, the personal is political and war is a political act. In order to substitute war with less destructive mechanisms, we are working towards understanding its adaptive role in evolution of consciousness and with it the importance of assuming individual responsibility. Being able to transition from a role of a disempowered victim or bystander is essential, because warfare originates on a subtler level. We cannot transcend war (same goes for patriarchy, destructiveness of capitalism or nationalism and other unsustainable ideologies), we must first embody it. The nature of our reality is fractal, therefore we encounter polarization at the level of particles, individuals, societies. However, polarity is only a matter of perception. On the level of the mind phenomena is defined in relation to its opposite, meanwhile the embodied properties lie on a spectrum. Photons exhibit wave-particle duality, we are never only feminine or masculine, only the self or the other, only the subject or the object, only operating from the mind or from our intuition, only the victim or the aggressor. Fearing polarization is like fearing fear itself. Existence is endlessly oscillating between perceived opposites, flowing, transforming. This is the nature of man, his power lies within accepting and allowing this nature. That is how he exists as a human.

## ORAL SESSION\_25: Artificial Intelligence and qualitative research

### To AI or not to AI? Using AI in interview analyses

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The aim of the study was to examine a) the extent to which AI models can produce high-quality thematic analyses of interviews with students with learning disabilities and ADHD regarding their difficulties and sources of support throughout school and University, and b), whether the thematic analyses produced by AI models are comparable to those produced by humans (experts and non-experts). This was part of a larger study investigating school and University experiences of young adults with dyslexia and ADHD regarding their encountered difficulties, strengths and sources of support. Participants were 14 Higher Edu-

cation students studying in Athens, Greece who had a diagnosis of learning disabilities and/or ADHD. The students participated in individual semi-structured interviews. The data were analysed using a thematic analysis method by faculty members and student assistants and through AI models. Four categories of thematic analyses will be compared: (a) analyses produced by an expert (psychology faculty member), (b) analyses produced by a pre-trained AI model (LLaMA), (c) analyses generated by the BART-base model, fine-tuned specifically to the interview data, and (d) thematic analyses extracted by the psychology assistants who conducted the interviews. The quality of the analyses will be assessed through automatic metrics (ROUGE-1/2/L, BERTScore, etc.), which will compare each analysis with the corresponding experts' analysis in terms of lexical and semantic similarity and human evaluation by two independent experts (faculty members), who will rate each analysis based on four criteria: faithfulness, coverage, coherence, and style, on a five-point Likert scale. The findings are expected to provide insights into the extent to which AI models can support qualitative data analysis and the development of assistive tools for researchers and educators working with students with special educational needs.

## **Qualitative Research and Generative AI on the Intergalactic Bummer Train**

**Matthew Johnson, Lorien Jordan**

University of South Florida, United States of America

This paper explores the use of generative AI (GAI) in qualitative research through the metaphor of the Intergalactic Bummer Train, a silly but serious conceptual vehicle proposed to name the affective, ecological, material, conceptual, and colonial conditions of contemporary inquiry (More Worlds Collective, 2015). As qualitative researchers increasingly engage with GAI, we find ourselves riding “a machinery of depletion” (More Worlds Collective, 2015, p. 11) that reshapes the terrain of knowledge production.

The metaphor offers a multidisciplinary lens for understanding this shifting terrain and imagining alternative futures. *Intergalactic* signals the multiplicity of worlds, ways of knowing and being, and relations that GAI constrains and enables. *Bummer* attunes to ecological collapse and planetary emergency, naming the feeling of unknown but inevitable destruction. *Train* invokes settler-colonial infrastructures and enduring multispecies violences, invoking the tracks laid to progress racialized capitalistic genocide. Riding this train—whether we remember boarding or not—carries us toward an uncertain destination.

Qualitative researchers must consider the assemblage of AI-assisted research as a moving system that carries us along, that increasingly mediates our practices, and institutional engagements. Thinking with the Intergalactic Bummer Train opens space to recalibrate how we travel—to research differently, through renewed commitments of relationality and critically reflexive stances towards institutions. Rather than simply applying GAI to existing methods, we call for methodological experimentation that embraces the More Worlds Collective's (2025) notion of terraformatics, an ethico-political methodology that seeks to humbly and specifically limit harm to the conditions of place-based existence through a range of methods.

This is not a call to disembark but to “stay with the trouble” (Haraway, 2016, p. 1), to ride the bumps and turbulence as part of inquiry, to engage multispecies relationality inside and out, and to imagine “another kind of study” (More Worlds Collective, 2025, p. 13).

## **What AI fails to see: a cautionary tale of using Copilot to analyse the Trump Administration's discourse on autism**

**Sophia Baesch, Lucy Hunt, Michelle Proyer, Emma Shubin**

University of Luxembourg, Luxembourg

This paper critically reflects on the use of generative AI in qualitative analysis. It draws on an experiment in which Microsoft Copilot was used to do an initial analysis of public discourse on autism from the Trump administration - specifically, briefings by Robert F. Kennedy Jr. (April 2025) and Donald Trump (September 2025). Using Fairclough's three-dimensional model of Critical Discourse Analysis, we prompted Copilot to examine these texts and their reception by the media and the inclusive education community. Our aim was to assess whether AI could support nuanced, context-sensitive engagement with language, power and ideology.

We found that the AI-generated analysis suffered from consistent gaps in depth and contextual sensitivity. Key theoretical framings, such as the medical model of disability, were omitted. AI also struggled to synthesise commentary, interpret ideological tensions and engage with silence and exclusion, and particularly around neurodiversity and inclusive education. These omissions were most pronounced when prompts included multiple sources or required interpretive nuance.

To address these limitations, we refined our approach by segmenting tasks and embedding theoretical cues, which improved coherence but still required substantial human intervention from a transdisciplinary research team. Our findings suggest that AI may be able to scaffold qualitative inquiry but cannot replace the interpretive labour essential to critical analysis - especially in politically charged contexts. This paper contributes to emerging debates on AI in qualitative research by foregrounding what AI routinely misses: nuance, contradiction and the ideological work of language. We argue for a reflexive, cautious integration of AI tools, and call on qualitative researchers to remain attentive to the epistemic risks of automation - particularly when analysing discourse which shapes public understanding of topics such as disability and inclusion.

## **Sociomaterial perspectives on students' academic writing with Generative AI in higher education - where to next?**

Charlotta Hilli<sup>1</sup>, Sofia Hort<sup>2</sup>, Fredrik Rusk<sup>1</sup>, Mindy Svenlin<sup>1</sup>, Jessica West<sup>1</sup>

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This paper discusses the sociomaterial implications for students' academic writing in higher education when considering Generative Artificial Intelligence (GenAI). Academic writing has been a means of assessing knowledge in higher education since the 19th century, through essays, exams, and other written products (Kruse, 2006). Previous research on student and GenAI co-writing is contradictory. GenAI is at best considered a digital tutor, a dialogic partner or at worst a crutch that leaves students with little knowledge or incentive to write themselves (Flenady & Sparrow, 2025; Giannakos et al., 2024). Sociomaterial theories generally agree that humans and machines come together and shape pedagogical practices in different ways (Fawns, 2022). This presentation speculates that human-material collectives become shaped by humans, AI technologies, contexts (such as higher education pedagogy), and affects (including ethics). Shifting and unpredictable connections within human-material collectives leave higher education with several potential futures, where academic writing may become nurtured, diminished, or accentuated. The presentation opens up for joint speculations on the future of collective human and GenAI academic writing in higher education. The paper is written within the context of the CO-WRITE project (2025–2027), which explores students' collaborative academic writing in hybrid learning spaces in higher education.

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## **Methodizing empathy: How Spaceship Earth Education continues in contemporary Chinese international schooling**

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As I discussed and argued in my previous work, the perspective of “Spaceship Earth” in US international education of the 1960s–1970s, while departing from love and care of the common world, nonetheless actualized egocentrism and technocratic control of the Other. Curiously, such a paradox is not rare to find in contemporary Chinese international schooling. This article begins with a case study of a summa cum laude graduate from an international high school in China, who was taken by his teachers and himself as a model for international-minded citizens. The discourse analysis focuses on how the campus culture and the international courses he wholeheartedly took shaped this model global citizen's thinking and acting of “empathy” as a set of devalued, rational methods to solve problems and improve efficiency. The second part of this article historicizes how “international mindedness” (including empathy) as the educational goal of the International School Association and IB curriculum turned from a cosmopolitan value into a scientific method that works as a transnational “currency” that is also named “competency.” Thoughts of Kant, Dewey, and Piaget and their relations are explored as the epistemic conditions that historically make such a change possible. This article combines discourse analysis of a case study and a history of the present to shed light on the blurred boundary between human and machine when empathy is developed as a scientific method of problem-solving and peace-making in international education. It concludes by calling for another possible understanding and acting of empathy from Chinese ethics and aesthetics that integrates rationality into an ontology based on (*Qing*, insufficiently translated as feelings).

## **ORAL SESSION\_26: Feminist embodied research, participatory methods, activism**

### **Intra-sectional becoming: Reimagining intersectionality through embodied research with asylum-seeking young women**

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This paper presents intra-sectionality as re-imagining of intersectionality's theoretical possibilities. Building on insights from a larger arts-based embodied inquiry using body-mapping, which explored how asylum practices in the UK shape the lived and embodied experiences of asylum-seeking young women aged 16 to 21 from Global South, this paper develops the concept

of intra-sectionality. Rooted in Feminist New Materialism and informed by posthumanist thought, embodiment in this work emerges as a dynamic relational process, continually shaped through exposure to policy, artistic practice, environment, and affective encounters. Through iterative intra-actions between policy, theory, and body-mapped narratives; asylum-seeking bodies are understood always in state of becoming. This recognition led to articulation of intra-sectional becoming, which highlights the endurance, adaptability, and resilience of asylum-seeking young women whose lives are continually reconfigured through material and affective entanglements. Their artistic expressions, read through a Feminist New Materialist lens, reveal how marginalised bodies are not fixed within static grids of intersectional categories but move through shifting relations of power, policy, and affect. Recognising the intellectual labour of foremothers such as Frances Beal, Deborah King, Patricia Hill Collins, and Kimberlé Crenshaw, this work honours intersectionality's foundations while opening grounds for extending its analytical possibilities. Following Nash's encouragement to expand intersectionality by honouring its roots while simultaneously recognising epistemological defensiveness of Black feminist thought, and engaging Puar's insistence on assemblage to unsettle fixity around intersectionality; intra-sectionality emerges as both a continuation and expansion of intersectional thinking. It begins with relations: the ongoing entanglements of policies, bodies, affects, and histories through which categories do not pre-exist relations but continuously re-made. Body-maps, in this work emerged as intra-ventions that unsettled fixity and made uncertainty visible, materialising asylum-seeking bodies as both enduring sedimented weight of exclusion and control, and remaining in motion, adapting to shifting socio-political conditions to claim recognition and liveability.

## **Nepantleras dreaming with water: An international qualitative research partnership**

**Tricia Kress<sup>1</sup>, Patricia Krueger-Henney<sup>2</sup>, Simone Amorim<sup>3</sup>**

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This paper is drawn from a 9-year international qualitative research partnership between three scholars of Education at three institutions (1 in Brazil; 2 in the U.S.). By bringing Anzaldúa's notions of borderlands and Nepantla (1987) into conversation with Simpson's theory of water (2025), we toil with our purpose as scholars and members of our local and global communities. Our goal was to explore how critical theories, philosophies of learning, and qualitative research methods viewed through an international lens might help us and our students open new possibilities for how we teach, learn and conduct research. Over time, we became frustrated by our discipline's pragmatist, technorationalist tendencies to frame research as a means toward solutions to technical problems. We found ourselves creating a third space within the borderlands of our respective nations and cities in addition to the borders of our discipline and the methodological traditions of social science. We became "other," increasingly aware of the dangers of being living proof of the fallacy of the material and ideological borders people construct and police. As Nepantleras we were disobedient; we let go into an epistemological freefall. We were supposed to "collect data" while engaging with the complex realities of day-to-day lives shaped by centuries of settler colonialism, racism, and oppression. We dialogued, observed, made notes, listened, photographed, and collected mementos, but we refused to refine or confine our "take withs" inside the Ivory Tower. We sought escape routes, dreaming of freedom, flowing like water, rushing through, seeping under, evaporating above and raining down upon borders that create so much pain. We moved with topographies of the current historical moment, reaching with our bodies and hearts, not only our minds, for that which we do not know. Our "research" is lifegiving, life-sustaining amidst local and global crises. This is our story.

## **Four practices for conducting feminist participatory action research with young women**

**Nour Shimei**

Ashkelon Academic College, Israel

This study presents a feminist, intersectional, and participatory methodology for co-producing knowledge with young women from marginalised communities. In intersecting global crises, such as social inequality, political instability, and gendered violence, qualitative researchers are called to engage collaboratively with those most affected by structural injustice. Grounded in feminist intersectional theory and inspired by Nancy Fraser's notions of socioeconomic and symbolic injustice and misframing, this research situates methodological innovation as a vehicle for inquiry and transformation.

The study sought to understand how young women experience their encounters with the welfare system and social workers, and how participatory action research (PAR) can open dialogical and empowering spaces that reframe these relationships. Conducted in Israel, the project unfolded in three iterative phases: (1) in-depth interviews with 25 young women aged 18–29 from marginalized groups, exploring their lived experiences of distress and professional intervention; (2) collective analysis sessions in which participants discussed, refined, and reinterpreted the findings; and (3) participant-led initiatives that translated insights into social and professional action.

Methodologically, the research demonstrates four interrelated practices of participatory inquiry: (1) coalescing into a group, (2) fostering shared ownership of the research process and outcomes, (3) creating multiple centres of power and interpretation,

and (4) cultivating interdependency as an ethical stance. These practices illustrate how PAR can bridge micro-level experiences with macro-level critique, producing actionable knowledge grounded in care, reflexivity, and solidarity.

This presentation contributes to global dialogues on feminist and participatory methodologies in challenging times. It offers an example of how action research can move beyond representation toward co-creation, reshaping the research encounter and social work practice.

## **I won't complain?: A study of the mental health needs of Black women activists**

**Kristopher Hall<sup>1</sup>, Jessica Martin<sup>2</sup>, Cheryl Mathias<sup>1</sup>, Venus Evans-Williams<sup>1</sup>**

<sup>1</sup>University of San Diego, United States of America; <sup>2</sup>University of William and Mary

Trayvon Martin, Sandra Bland, Breonna Taylor, Freddie Gray, George Floyd. These are not just hashtags but actual people who have been sacrificed to maintain White supremacy. After every death, Black women have led the charge in fighting police brutality in the streets, often putting their lives on the line in the process. While Black women are often stereotyped as “strong,” they still have mental health needs that must be addressed (Brown & Keith, 2003). Their role as community leaders often results in feelings of isolation and exasperation as they are less likely to receive formal support (Atkins & Rollings, 1996) The confluence of race and gender presents a dynamic that must be explored in counseling (Heath, 2006). Using Womanism as an analytic lens, the authors interviewed several Black women to understand their views on activism, mental health, and therapy. Two primary tenets of Womanism are using everyday people to solve problems and ending all forms of oppression (Lindsay-Dennis, 2015). While this may seem akin to Feminism, Womanism uses a lens that focuses on the social location of Black women, specifically. This allows for a full exploration of the issues of Black women outside of what has been deemed “Women’s issues” by White women (Taylor, 1998; Williams, 1989, pp. 181–182) Black Women activists align with those in their community to fight racial oppression as it presents itself in the system. This paper will present findings of this research and suggestions for practitioners regarding how to best work with this unique confluence of identities.

## **Utopia as Method in the Field: Challenges and Opportunities of ‘Utopianizing’**

**Marjukka Laiho, Anu Lainio**

University of Eastern Finland, United Kingdom

This presentation is based on ‘Breadline Utopias,’ a research project exploring currents and futures of charitable food aid in Finland. Through individual interviews, workshops, and other facilitated events, the project seeks to facilitate more equal food futures for all. This visioning is done together with various stakeholders from the field: food aid recipients, higher education students, and a diversity of professionals working in the business of food waste, food surplus, or current charity economy in European (post-)welfare affluent society. Theoretically and methodologically, our study draws from utopias as a method (Levitas, 2013) rooted in everyday life (Cooper, 2013) and from utopias as a political imagination tool (Eskelinen et al., 2020). Thus, the focus here does not lie solely in the ‘utopias,’ but rather in the facilitation of imagining that reaches beyond past and present. Following our theoretical-methodological roots, we see that the starting point for ‘utopianizing’ is both rooted in and shapes our everyday lives here and now. The utopian vision, then again, seeks to break through the boundaries of our experience-based ways of knowing. However, the process of reaching beyond the known and imagining a better future is often considered difficult and challenging (Salmenniemi et al., 2024). In this presentation, we explore opportunities and challenges of ‘utopianizing’ that we have faced in our empirical work with students vis-à-vis professionals. Through these explorations, we seek to develop in-depth understandings of ‘utopianizing’ as a process. Such understanding can help both researchers and practitioners to better engage and facilitate political imagination among varying groups of research participants and stakeholders.

## **ORAL SESSION\_27: Community, prevention**

### **Entangled community and organisational becomings- the intra-actions of lived experience and creativity in greenspace**

**Lucy Campbell**

The University of Edinburgh, United Kingdom

As a community embedded researcher (CER) on REALITIES (Researching Evidence-based Alternatives in Living, Imaginative, Traumatized, Integrated, Embodied Systems), we have been exploring how to reimagine our health services and systems through Flip of the Coin CIC. We are a nature-based community arts organisation which is women and lived experience-led. We have been exploring new approaches to implementing equitable and effective public health initiatives. We have co-production at our core; our participants are community members and decision makers, and as our research highlights issues and inequalities within our community, we work together to address them.

The entanglements between creativity, greenspace and sharing lived experience have allowed this project to become some-

thing unexpectedly powerful. We started out exploring how we could reimagine our health system and have found ourselves in a place where our lived experience is proving to be a vital and integral part of what we do and how we connect to each other. The merger of lived experience, creativity, natural greenspace and deeply honest conversations between everyone involved has meant that we are having a greater impact on community health and wellbeing than foreseen. It has also meant that these elements have all become so deeply entangled in the healing process that unpicking where one starts and another ends is impossible. By allowing the project to become in its own way, without forcing it, has meant that it is constantly becoming in response to the people who intra-act with it.

Through case studies, testimonials and works of art we are documenting how community health is impacted by belonging to a community garden with a strong focus on the strength and solidarity found in creating and sharing lived experience.

## Stories from the field. A narrative inquiry into the impact of a social prescribing model of care during the COVID 19 pandemic

Leah Salter<sup>1,2,3,4,5</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board; <sup>2</sup>University of South Wales; <sup>3</sup>Centre for Systemic Studies, Wales;

<sup>4</sup>University of Bedfordshire; <sup>5</sup>Murmurations: Journal of Transformative Systemic Practice

This paper presentation is an overview of a Welsh health board (CTMUHB) supported research project that took place between 2020-2025. The arts based interventions that the research focuses on took place in a “field” hospital in Wales- a temporary hospital set up during the COVID-19 global pandemic- and in the local community, culminating in an event that took place on a community field during COVID-19 lockdown restrictions. Situated in South Wales, UK where the author/ presenter is based it illustrates the transformative quality of storytelling and other arts based and social prescribing practices within statutory health services. All participants identified as being adversely impacted by the pandemic and the associated social restrictions. The research drew on storytelling methodology and enabled the participants involved to take part via the means that had most resonance for them; usually linked to the intervention they had “received”. This included poetry, short stories, art work and dialogue with the researcher, which was transcribed. The poems, spoken words, stories and art works were treated as “vibrant matter” (Bennett, 2010) and the researcher/ paper presenter created her own art work and poetry as response; to sit together as a collective art installation. This is an example of practice and practice-based research as co-construction (Simon and Salter 2019, 2020) and situates those involved in the project as active, agential storytellers. Stories, storytellers and witnesses are all framed as active agents in a material-discursive world (Barad 2007; Simon and Salter 2019). Learning points from the research includes the importance of bearing witness to the stories we tell; and the potential for arts for health interventions (and research into those interventions) to be vehicles for personal and social transformation. Examples of these stories of transformation will be shared through the presentation as well as other key learning points.

## Heart-centred qualitative inquiry and research as teacher: lessons from a study of community-led housing

Anna Rose Hope

University of the West of England, United Kingdom

This presentation reflects on my experience of researching community-led housing in England and, from that experience, offers suggestions for how researchers might consciously bring their whole selves to qualitative work. I describe a simple model of five elements, drawn from Tibetan wisdom traditions, that captures the different qualities I drew on through the project: **Earth** (embodied presence and participation in practical activities), **Water** (emotional perception and reflective clarity), **Fire** (the heart – purpose and care), **Air** (analysis and clear language), and **Space** (openness and intuition). The model is descriptive rather than prescriptive, and different researchers will find different mixes that serve them best.

This model first emerged in my analysis of ‘community’ in community-led housing, where I used the five-elements framing to describe how community is grounded, felt, enacted, articulated, and imagined, with the longer-term aim of developing a shared language and toolkit that can support community practice and policy.

Turning that lens toward the researcher makes explicit how different ways of knowing shape what we can see and understand. In particular, the approach helps to: (1) attend to the body, place, and practical activity as sources of understanding; (2) notice and work with emotions and atmospheres that influence participation and interpretation; (3) hold values and commitments in view without letting them override evidence; (4) make language and categories clearer across multiple actors; and (5) allow periods of openness so that new patterns can emerge before being tested.

I suggest that this holistic stance supports more honest reflexivity, richer collaboration across roles and clearer analytic claims. Rather than offering a prescription, the presentation invites researchers to consider their own configuration of capacities and to experiment with small practices that fit their contexts.

## Community-based youth Bible study club as suicide prevention tool - a PAR approach

Mabel Verstraaten-Bortier

Liberia Agricultural company - LAC, Liberia

Between Christmas 2023 and Easter 2024, three teen girls attempted suicide within our plantation community in Liberia. Sadly, one died, one was hospitalised for nine days, and the third was hospitalised for a few days. This qualitative study explored the questions everyone was asking within the community - what was driving teen girls to suicide and how could future suicides be prevented? A modified version of the Participatory Action Research (PAR) approach was used, what I've come to call PAR'PEL, which stands for Participatory Action Research & Participatory Experiential Learning. PAR'PEL like any other PAR approach follows the same cycle of identification of needs, deciding the best course of action & implementation of the best course of action; all of which were done in direct consultation and collaboration with community members. The main finding from the PAR part of the PAR'PEL project was that teens lacked the psychological know-how to tackle the difficulties they faced. The Participatory Experiential Learning part of PAR'PEL relied on evidence based theory, on what works in youth suicide prevention, to craft practical life application lessons. This was then integrated into our monthly youth Bible study such that each Bible study session covers a theme on mental well-being and/or suicide prevention directly. The Bible study club is run by a well known community member and myself. To achieve success in youth suicide prevention, our suicide prevention efforts ought to go beyond the therapy/hospital room (ie. curative action after the fact) and be engaged directly with teens within our communities (ie. preventive action). Therefore in this PAR'PEL project, emphasis is placed on active learning, specifically psycho-educational learning. This presentation then showcases how my modified PAR project, PAR'PEL, is being utilised as a tool to fight against youth suicide within my local community in Liberia, West Africa.

## DREAM TEAM\_16

### Poetry: Disrupting the academic mind, bringing the affective teacher

Giazú Enciso Domínguez<sup>1</sup>, Jennifer Maritza McCauley<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>University of Houston Clear Lake, United States of America; <sup>2</sup>University of Missouri Kansas City

This Dream Team session will explore poetry as a radical, affective, and indigenious method of inquiry—one that disrupts traditional academic forms and centers embodied, emotional, and political knowledge. Poetry Inquiry is not merely a stylistic choice; it is a methodological intervention that foregrounds voice, vulnerability, and resistance.

Drawing on previous work (Garcia-Meneses, Enciso Domínguez, and Chanez-Cortés, 2023), we will engage with the concept of the schizo-affective poem as a form of epistemic rupture. We want like to keep exploring how poetic expression can channel rage, exhaustion, and resistance within neoliberal academic structures. The poem's fragmented, multilingual, and emotionally charged form challenges the sanitized, rationalist norms of academic discourse, offering instead a visceral, affective critique of institutional violence.

We will situate such poetic practices within post-qualitative and affect theory frameworks, arguing that poetry allows for the articulation of experiences that are often unspeakable in conventional research formats or conventional settings like higher education. We will also examine how poetic inquiry can serve as both data collection and analysis—capturing the nuances of feminist pedagogies, identity, and resistance in ways that are deeply relational and ethically attuned.

As a dream team, we will work on original poems as data and result, inviting participants to engage with the emotional textures of feminist praxis, specifically pedagogical/teaching practices. We will also reflect on the ethical dimensions of poetic inquiry: whose voices are amplified, how emotion is represented, and what it means to write with, rather than about, participants.

At the end, the participants could choose to be part of a research project or just continue writing poetry by themselves.

## ORAL SESSION\_28: Ethnography

### Wheeling ethnography: A sensory ethnography of gambling situations in Las Vegas off-Strip casinos

Noa Vana, Marta Soligo, Shane W. Kraus

UNLV

This paper introduces Wheeling Ethnography, an innovation in qualitative data collection designed to study embodied experience, affective regulation, and the illusion of agency within engineered environments of late modern capitalism. Combining two well-established methodologies - sensory ethnography and situational analysis - Wheeling Ethnography anchors sensorial observation around an anthropological node: a focal participant whose immersive engagement with human and non-human actors becomes the center of analytical rotation. From this node, three systematic rotations unfold. Nodal rotation attends to the

participant's sensory immersion and bodily attunement; social rotation traces interactions among patrons, staff, and material infrastructures; and sensorial rotation captures the ambient sounds, lights, and rhythms that scaffold emotion, perception, and behavior. Together, these rotations form a "wheel" that moves fluidly between layers as situations evolve.

Borrowed from the emic metaphor of the "Wheel of Fortune," this framework transforms a cultural symbol into an etic methodological tool. Developed through fieldwork in two off-Strip Las Vegas casinos catering primarily to local residents, the method privileges naturalistic, real-time observation without interviews. This approach yielded rich data on micro-interactions, embodied gestures, and atmospheric cues as they unfolded, revealing how spatial design and sensory conditioning choreograph affect and agency while exposing the patterns, disruptions, and absences of everyday life.

Wheeling Ethnography offers a portable and transparent framework for qualitative researchers seeking to capture the infrastructural logic of a field, from casinos and gyms to airports and cafés, providing a new grammar for data collection on the construction of sensorial experience and emotional regulation in late modern capitalist environments.

## **To capture the invisible: knitting, sketching and poetry as ethnographic tools**

**Katrine Risbank Jensen**

Aarhus University, Danish School of Education, Denmark

This presentation recounts my effects to cultivate a research practice capable of capturing the more 'invisible' dimensions of practices encountered during fieldwork. The atmospheres seemingly vibrating with tension. The moments we experience as reverberating throughout our bodies. The pre-linguistic forms of communication which always, at times unknowingly, inform and shape our research journeys.

Inspired by Critical Disability Studies and Critical Phenomenology, this presentation draws on a two year-long fieldwork conducted as part of my ethnographic doctoral research studies (carried out between March 2023 to March 2025). The aim of this study has been to better our understanding of disabled families' lived and embodied experiences of negotiating the meaning of disability – of their families – with professionals throughout the Danish social welfare system. Following these families to and from such encounters has been a humbling experience. I quickly came to the realisation that it required *more* than written descriptions to fully depict their lived realities. I needed a way to capture the palpable yet unspoken tensions that so characterised these intimate and private spaces; a way to capture the non-verbal communications of articulate, pathic bodies. To fully understand the families' attempts to negotiate successfully with the system, the importance of considering the pre-linguistic language of the pathic body cannot be understated.

Reflecting on the concepts of 'bodily empathy', 'embodied self-awareness' and 'embodied intersubjectivity', I realised that the solution to capturing these important 'invisible' dimensions of practice was to be found in a more creative approach to methodology. Thus, phenomenological writing, poetry, sketching and knitting became my trusted research tools. This talk will delve into each of these methods, detailing the essential ways they shaped and informed my research journey from beginning to end.

## **Worlding eco-psychology: a collective bio-ethnography**

**Paul Rhodes**

University of Sydney, Australia

In this paper, eight practicing psychologists, a dog (Oscar), white cockatoos, crimson rosellas, blue gums, plum blossoms, the words of theorists of eco-psychology and post-humanism joined together for two days with the mountains of the Darug and Gundungurra peoples of Australia, to explore questions about psychology and its capacity to respond to the climate crisis. We designed a series of psychoterratic exercises for this purpose: (1) a bio-graphical definitional ceremony, (2) a series of short lectures and readings set to the poetics of open dialogue, (3) a sympoietic vegetal-thinking exercise, (4) a bush-psychogeography and (5) a final reflection on praxis. We present our findings, written in bricolage, a compost of experiences and ideas both horizontal and vertical, written, drawn and photographic.

## **Qualitative research as social justice: When ethnographic methodology Cceates recognition**

**Michal Neomi Elkayam, Danya Koren Shimshoni, Hagit Sinai-Glazer**

tel aviv universty, Israel

This institutional ethnographic study was conducted in two Social Services Departments in Israel through participant observations and individual interviews with social workers, management staff, and support personnel over several months. Observations included participation in professional meetings, supervision sessions, and daily departmental activities.

Drawing on Nancy Fraser's theory of recognition as a dimension of social justice, this study explores how social workers explicitly articulated their need for professional acknowledgment and how the ethnographic research process responded to these demands. Throughout fieldwork, practitioners consistently expressed frustration with the invisibility of their complex work and the challenging conditions under which they operate within bureaucratic systems.

The ethnographic methodology's emphasis on prolonged engagement created temporal space for recognition to develop, moving beyond superficial encounters to deep witnessing of practitioners' daily realities. The practice of "being there" communicated to social workers that their work was worthy of sustained scholarly attention, countering narratives of professional marginalization they frequently encountered.

Participant observation became a form of professional validation as researchers engaged seriously with the complexity of social work practice, learning the nuanced skills required to navigate bureaucratic systems while maintaining client-centered approaches. Through detailed fieldnotes and attentive listening during interviews, the research made visible invisible aspects of social work—the emotional labor, strategic thinking, ethical dilemmas, and advocacy efforts that typically remain unacknowledged.

This methodological recognition operated through reciprocal processes: as researchers demonstrated genuine curiosity and respect for practitioners' expertise, social workers gained confidence in articulating their professional knowledge and challenges. The ethnographic encounter functioned as a space where professional identity could be affirmed through scholarly engagement, creating what Fraser might recognize as cultural recognition that acknowledges the value and legitimacy of social work practice.

The findings reveal that ethnographic research functions beyond data collection—it becomes an active practice of recognition directly addressing practitioners' needs for professional validation.

## **A duoethnographic exploration of the roots and routes of curriculum change in drama**

**Dorothy Morrissey<sup>1</sup>, Una McCabe<sup>2</sup>**

<sup>1</sup>Mary Immaculate College, Ireland; <sup>2</sup>Dublin City University

A new primary school curriculum was launched in Ireland in September 2025. This new, four-stage, curriculum contains five curriculum areas. Curriculum specifications for each of these areas were published in September 2025. One of these curriculum areas is Arts Education. The curriculum specification for arts education advocates an integrated approach in stages one and two, and a more differentiated approach to arts subjects (drama, music and art) in stages three and four.

The presenters are teacher educators in (primary school) drama and members of the National Arts Education Curriculum Development Group. Their participation in the latter prompted them to explore the roots of drama as a subject in Ireland's primary curriculum with reference to their own roots in drama/theatre and education. In this exploration, they use themselves as sites of inquiry, juxtaposing and making each of their voices explicit as they trace the routes that brought them, along very different trajectories, to becoming teacher educators in (primary) drama and, more recently, to curriculum development.

In their paper, the presenters draw on six hour-long conversations over the course of nine months to untangle their experiences within the dominant discourse of drama education in Ireland in which the previous drama curriculum (1999) was nested. They show how this untangling enables them to also untangle their emerging understandings of themselves as teachers/artists/researchers as they begin to work differently, as per the new curriculum specifications, with student teachers.

In their exploration, the presenters invoke the evocative power of duoethnography, and embrace the opportunity it provides to engage in meaningful self-study in the presence of each other.

## **PANEL\_13**

### **The Laughing Boy project; an exploration of mattering, politics and performance**

Chair(s): **Jo Billington** (University of Reading)

Discussant(s): **Katherine Runswick-Cole** (University of Sheffield)

In April 2024, in Jermyn Street Theatre, London, an adaptation of the book *Laughing Boy* (Ryan 2017) opened to a full house. *Laughing Boy* tells the story of Connor Sparrowhawk, a young man with learning disabilities who died in 2013. Director Steve Unwin created a breathtaking production of laughter, tears, moments of parody and overwhelming emotion. The six-week run generated a rare moment in which audience members got to know Connor and his fascination with London buses and social justice, laughed with him and felt shocked and outraged about what happened to him and so many other people with learning disabilities.

In this interactive panel we share our work exploring the conditions for transforming knowledge, understanding and political change within theatre, and the wider potential for impact using arts-based approaches. A focus group was conducted with a self-advocacy staff group who saw the play, and in-depth interviews with six out of the seven cast members. A phenomenological analysis of the latter dataset is underway. Provocations will be offered to the audience around established methodological and ethical conventions, in part to help us resolve issues puzzling us as a research team.

Our exploration involves thinking about theatre attendance and participation, the importance of accessibility and adjustments to facilitate this, and how cast members' knowledge of learning disability changed as their awareness grew through their work. We will share a briefing report about the potential for impact using arts-based approaches including a careful exploration

of the conditions for generating impact and key issues raised by cast and self-advocates. A repeated point raised by participants was how a theatre setting ensures a witnessing of what is being said, as people cannot turn away. We would like to view this panel session as a further form of witnessing, and sharing, and thinking about injustices.

## Presentations of the Panel

### **Thinking Back; my boy, London and the theatre**

Sara Ryan

Manchester Metropolitan University

In this introductory section, I talk about Connor, also known as Laughing Boy, his loves and the ways in which his dreams have come true in his absence. The #JusticeforLB campaign, to gain accountability for his death, generated an extraordinary collective response in which buses and heavy haulage vehicles were named after him, a collective justice quilt was displayed in the People's History Museum in Manchester, and the play Laughing Boy was performed in his favourite city with the only props, chairs and a London bus.

This context is set alongside the continuing structural and other forms of violence directed at people with learning disabilities in this country and wider. Violences which are documented, curated and published in research, public inquiries, safeguarding and other regulatory processes, and ignored (Ryan 2025). We are left asking how and why this production generated the impact it did when we so callously ignore the everyday harms people with learning disabilities experience. The research community can, further, be part of the problem with a tendency to not reflect on what has come before, to use othering language and concepts, and present findings and recommendations with a certainty that they will lead to the change identified, happening. The Laughing Boy project has led to the research team entering the unfamiliar world of the theatre which has caused us to question our own practices and work.

### **Witnessing Through Collage: Reflections on a workshop with disability advocates**

Sharon Smith

University of Birmingham

This paper explores a workshop held with staff from an organisation supporting people with learning disabilities, following their group visit to Laughing Boy at Jermyn Street Theatre. The workshop, facilitated by some members of the research team, used collages as tactile, relational prompts to evoke memories of the play and spark conversation. Collage was chosen for its materiality and layered nature, with images and words overlapping in ways that potentially mirrored the emotional and political complexity of the performance and its aftermath.

Staff participants reflected on their own advocacy and roles, the impact of seeing Connor's story on stage, and their belief that others "should see this" to confront ongoing injustices. The workshop became a site of shared witnessing, where personal responses met collective calls for change. However, the workshop also surfaced tensions and discomfort within the research team, which has prompted reflection on the ethics of participation.

This paper will share excerpts from the workshop, visual documentation of the collages, and raise questions about how arts-based methods can both illuminate and complicate our understanding of inclusion, impact, and voice. In the spirit of the panel's commitment to witnessing, this paper provides a moment to sit with discomfort, honour the insights shared, and consider how research itself must be accountable to the people it seeks to represent.

### **Performing research: reflections on interviewing the cast members of Laughing Boy**

Francesca Ribenfors

Manchester Metropolitan University

This paper offers personal reflections on the ethical and methodological challenges encountered when interviewing members of the Laughing Boy cast about their experiences of the production and their perceptions of its impact. While we anticipated issues around anonymity, given that both the play and its cast list are in the public arena, we were less prepared for the navigating the relational dynamics that unfolded in practice when interviewing actors about their experiences of portraying real people. The research space became one in which our unfamiliarity with theatre intersected with participants' expertise, and their relative unfamiliarity of disability intersected with our own lived and professional experience. These intersecting (un)familiarities, created moments of both connection and dissonance, shaping the dynamics of the interviews and subsequent reflections within the research team. We consider how the potential for both respect and disrespect is generated, negotiated and performed within and beyond the interview encounter. Additionally, in revisiting these experiences, our reflections lead to a consideration of the broader implications of what it means for qualitative researchers to work ethically and responsibly when seeking to promote social justice when anonymity of participants cannot be guaranteed.

## Interpreting interpretation: reflections on analysing cast experiences of Laughing Boy

Jo Billington

University of Reading

This paper discusses the interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) of interviews with actors who performed in Laughing Boy. As described above, the study forms part of a wider project exploring how theatre can transform understanding, empathy, and political awareness around learning disability and social justice.

This analysis was distinctive in that the participants were actors reflecting on the experience of embodying someone else's story, thereby engaging in layered acts of interpretation that blur the boundaries between performance, empathy, and advocacy. Through iterative and interpretative engagement with the data, constructed themes included a deepened sense of responsibility towards representing lived experience ethically; the affective impact of performance as a form of witnessing; and the ways in which theatrical embodiment facilitated shifts in understanding about learning disability, care, and justice.

In reflecting on these findings, the paper considers what it means to analyse interpretations of interpretation and how such work interacts with understandings of the hermeneutic cycle in phenomenological inquiry.

## ORAL SESSION\_29: Academic Community

### Strengthening academic community and collaborative innovation through action research in a University Department

Abigail Jareño Gómez, Cristina Noriega García, Inés Serrano Fernández

CEU San Pablo University, Spain

PSICONECTAMOS is an initiative launched in 2022 within the Psychology Department at a Universidad. It emerged in response to a perceived sense of isolation among faculty members and aimed to foster a culture of mutual support, collaboration, and shared professional growth.

The methodological framework was based on **qualitative action research** and the process unfolded in four phases: **Participatory diagnosis and planning**, grounded in shared needs such as lack of cohesion and a sense of disorientation. **Implementation of actions**, through informal gatherings that combined thematic presentations, open dialogue, and group interaction dynamics. **Observation and data collection**, using feedback forms, participant observation, and interaction logs. **Reflection and continuous adaptation**, which led to the evolution of the project through gamification, the creation of digital communication channels, and the inclusion of external experts in training activities.

85% of the department joined the communication network, and the gatherings averaged 9 participants, with peaks of up to 13. Qualitative feedback revealed significant improvements in interpersonal trust, a sense of shared purpose and perceived alignment toward common goals. Moreover, the initiative catalyzed the development of an **Innovative Final Degree Project** framework, and promoted training activities during low-teaching periods.

100% of participants rated the gatherings as useful and meaningful for their personal and professional development. The most requested topics for future sessions include teaching innovation, collaborative research, and well-being activities among with experiential learning events.

PSICONECTAMOS is presented as a case study that validates the transformative potential of informal spaces and support networks in academic settings. Through an action research model, the initiative has strengthened team cohesion, improved workplace climate, and generated innovative dynamics that benefit both faculty and students. This experience invites reflection on the role of community and collaboration in building more human and creative university environments.

### Dialogues of Belonging: A Qualitative Inquiry from the Ebelong Project within the CIVIS European University Alliance

Irini Apostolou<sup>1</sup>, Philia Issari<sup>1</sup>, Camelia Radulescu<sup>2</sup>, Elena Ungureanu<sup>2</sup>, Gabriela Nisipeanu Nisipeanu<sup>2</sup>, Maria Antonietta Impedovo<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, Greece; <sup>2</sup>University of Bucharest; <sup>3</sup>Aix-Marseille University

A sense of belonging is a key condition for the academic, personal, and social success of university students. The objective of this study was to explore how students within the CIVIS European University Alliance, specifically at the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, University of Bucharest (Romania), and the Aix-Marseille University (France), (Greece), experience and construct belonging and inclusion within higher education settings. The research aimed to identify the institutional, social, and pedagogical factors that promote or hinder a sense of belonging among diverse student populations.

The study followed a mixed-methods design approved by the respective university ethics committees. Quantitative data were first collected through online surveys (N=752 across the three universities) exploring inclusion, accessibility, well-being, and participation. In a second phase, qualitative inquiry was conducted through focus groups and semi-structured interviews involving

35 students (Master's and PhD levels) and 3 faculty members. Discussions were guided by a thematic interview script addressing personal experiences of inclusion, perceived barriers, and recommendations for improving student integration. Data were coded and analyzed following an inductive qualitative approach using NVivo software to ensure rigor and traceability.

Four major categories emerged from the analysis: recognition, participation, support networks, and institutional responsiveness. Belonging was perceived as a dialogical process—developed through opportunities for active participation, fair communication, and mutual respect between students and staff. Students emphasized the role of mentoring, inclusive teaching, and visibility of support services as key facilitators. Conversely, bureaucratic opacity, lack of information, and limited flexibility were cited as exclusionary factors.

Overall, the study demonstrates that belonging is not a static feeling but an evolving relationship between individuals and their academic environment. Promoting belonging through inclusive communication, collaborative governance, and continuous faculty engagement strengthens not only student well-being but also institutional cohesion across the CIVIS Alliance.

## **Early pathways into academic life: A thematic analysis of first-year university students' expectations and transition experiences**

**Aikaterini Vasiou, Malamati Veloni, Angelos Gkontelos, Eleni Vasilaki**

Department of Primary Education, University of Crete, Greece

The first year of university is a turning point in students' lives, as the rapid changes and various challenges that this transition entails can negatively affect their mental health, and a wide range of academic outcomes. However, some students face a greater number of difficulties than others, while differences in individual characteristics, personality traits, motivation, coping strategies and forms of support, can greatly influence their ability to cope with and overcome these new challenges.

The present study attempts to explore how first-year university students perceive and navigate the transition to higher education, by employing a qualitative research design, with data collected through repeated qualitative interviews held over a five-week period. Participants were 22 first-year undergraduate students enrolled in various academic departments across Greek universities. Each student participated in an initial interview regarding their expectations and perceptions about university life, followed by five consecutive weekly interviews focusing on their experiences during the first semester of their studies.

Thematic analysis of the data revealed four main patterns in students' narratives: (i) aspirations for academic success, (ii) personal and academic adjustment challenges, (iii) social integration, and (iv) the influence of different support systems. While most participants began their studies with a positive outlook and strong aspirations, many of them faced emotional strain, academic pressure, and moments of self-doubt, especially during the first stage of their transition. Over time, many described increasing autonomy, while peer and institutional support appear to have great significance in shaping their university experiences. These findings underscore the complex interplay between first-year students' initial expectations, their socio-emotional adjustment and their evolving perceptions of academic success during the first semester of their university studies.

## **Effective teaching practices in academic community engagement programs**

**Raquel Ravaglioli<sup>1</sup>, Pete Mather<sup>2</sup>**

<sup>1</sup>Biola University, United States of America; <sup>2</sup>Ohio University, United States of America

Community engagement is a mutually beneficial collaboration between an educational institution and surrounding communities. Appreciative Education is a framework for building on the best of what is working in educational practice. Drawing from dissertation research on appreciative teaching practices in music therapy as well as ongoing cross-disciplinary research on appreciative community engagement, the presenter will offer findings on powerful community-based learning practices. The session will include an introduction to the appreciative education framework and a discussion of implications for educators and researchers.

## **Non-friendship-friendship: Diffraction, entanglement, and the messiness of collective academic life**

**Liron Ben-Ezra<sup>1</sup>, Hagit Sinai-Glazer<sup>1</sup>, Ayelet Prior<sup>2</sup>**

<sup>1</sup>Tel Aviv University, Israel; <sup>2</sup>University of New Hampshire, Durham

This paper explores the messy relationalities that emerge in qualitative collectives working within the neoliberal academy. We propose the concept of non-friendship-friendship to name a form of academic relationality that resists neat categorization. These reflections are grounded in the work of our qualitative collective, HaSalon – The Living Room, founded in 2023 and largely inspired by ECQI. Drawing on feminist, poststructuralist, and new materialist theories of diffraction and entanglement, we analyze vignettes, diary fragments, and correspondence from our collective. These accounts trace how intimacy, hierarchy, care, and inequality intra-act in our practices, often in ways that are uncomfortable, yet generative. By situating our reflections within the specific context of an ongoing collective that has written, presented, and persisted together across continents and in turbulent times, we foreground tensions and asymmetries rather than smoothing them over. We argue that non-friendship-friendship

offers a framework for understanding collective academic life beyond binaries of professional versus personal ties. In doing so, we suggest that embracing relational messiness can serve as both an ethic of resistance and a practice of survival in precarious academic times.

## ORAL SESSION\_30: Arts-based, performative, visual, musical inquiry

### Rethinking impact and evidence in qualitative research on inclusive theatre

Keiu Virro

Tallinn University, Estonia

How do we evaluate the impact of a theatre performance when the data from the field could be sentences like “I got loving vibes” from a performer? This paper draws from my ongoing doctoral research into the perceived impact of professionally produced cultural events—especially theatre—for individuals with diverse needs. Focusing on accessibility, inclusion, and lived experience, the study engages with audiences, carers, educators, and theatre practitioners through qualitative methods such as field observations and in-depth interviews.

Rather than seeking universal metrics, I argue for a pluralistic and situated understanding of impact in the arts. Dominant evaluative frameworks tend to favour quantifiable outcomes, often demanded by policymakers and funders. Yet these approaches frequently fall short of capturing the affective, relational, and transformative dimensions of cultural participation. Drawing on the work of Eleonora Belfiore, Oliver Bennett, Matthew Reason, and others, I explore how qualitative researchers might reconceptualize ‘evidence’ in ways that honour embodied experience and personal testimony, without abandoning rigour or ethics.

Reflexivity and positionality are central to this inquiry. Working with structurally marginalised communities—particularly neurodivergent children and their families—requires ongoing reflection on the researcher’s own role and assumptions. I examine the tensions between research and advocacy, and the risk of projecting presumed benefits onto cultural events without critically interrogating what kind of impact truly matters, for whom, and why.

This paper contributes to methodological debates about evaluating perceived impact in contexts where conventional tools may obscure more than they reveal. It makes a case for research practices that are ethical, empathetic, and accountable, but above all, it invites continued dialogue.

### Migrating Musical Selves- a workshop performance

Fiona McDonagh, Ailbhe Kenny

Mary Immaculate College, Limerick, Ireland,

The Russian invasion of Ukraine that began in February, 2022, saw millions of Ukrainians—primarily women, children, and the elderly—being forced to flee their homes. This workshop performance examines the migratory stories of four female Ukrainian musicians, now living in Ireland and Germany. We explore how these women make music as an alternative way of being and as a way to understand the self and others. Using fragments of sound and story, the workshop performance illuminates the lives of these forced migrants as they navigate new contexts. The presentation draws on narrative data and previous work with performance students to ‘theatricalise’ the research findings (Belliveau 2015). The musicians’ stories of leaving and belonging served as the source material, which was then crafted into a structured verbatim piece. Throughout the project, the team collaborated to explore ideas with the intention of avoiding the ‘objectification of the individuals’ (Denzin 2003). At the same time, we recognised that by choosing which parts to present and how, we were shaping the narrative (Blythe 2005). The deliberate inclusion of the original researcher in the performance highlights the interrelated connection between the researcher and the research, as well as the distinctive influence of a researcher’s background, knowledge and subjectivity that they bring to research. Ireland-based Ukrainian musicians were later invited to add musical layers to the piece, which they then performed live. Their contributions provided an additional ‘musical context’ that added sonic layers to the work. These combining elements transformed the experience from simply data sharing into an embodied (musical and dramatic) representation of non-linear and deeply personal experiences. Thus, this workshop performance offers new and nuanced ways to understand the lived experiences of forced migrants and de-exceptionalise displacement by placing musical identities at the centre of their stories (Western, 2020).

### Soundscapes as Qualitative Inquiry in Intercultural Classrooms: Listening for connection and belonging

Ailbhe Kenny

Mary Immaculate College, Ireland

This paper explores how sound can serve as a rich form of qualitative data to investigate experiences of belonging, identity, and citizenship in increasingly diverse Irish primary schools. Drawing on twenty soundscape workshops conducted in two intercultural school settings, the study examines how children engage with and interpret their sonic environments. Rather than

focusing on music as repertoire or representation, this inquiry positions sound as a relational and embodied medium through which children express agency and negotiate cultural identities. Using arts-based and qualitative methodologies, the research foregrounds children's voices—both literally and metaphorically—through their participation in collaborative sound-making and reflective dialogue. The workshops generated a range of sonic outputs and narratives that illuminate how migrant children experience displacement, connection, and citizenship within the school context. Inspired by Elizabeth Ellsworth's (2005) concept of "places of learning" as embodied and affective, the study challenges static notions of culture and instead embraces fluid, co-constructed understandings of identity through sound. This paper argues for a reimagining of intercultural music education that moves beyond tokenistic inclusion toward ethically engaged, creative pedagogies. Sound is not only a medium of artistic expression but also a powerful tool for qualitative inquiry—one that captures the nuances of lived experience, emotion, and belonging. Through analysis of workshop data and focus group interviews, the study offers insights into how sound-based practices can foster inclusive learning spaces and support children's active participation in shaping their educational and social worlds.

## **What is a Sound Piece?: A performative expression of qualitative sonic scholarship**

**Walter Gershon**

Rowan University (USA), United States of America

A sound piece is a way of describing a sonic creation, a sonic-something that one has made. Such a sonic-something is a sound piece irrespective of audition for trees recent piece), composition (emergent or prescribed), players (trees vs mobile device vs musicians), or (more than) human animals (e.g., Masaoka, 2025; Sterne, 2025).

A sound piece is also an expression that denotes a piece as part of a larger (sonic) something. This is the case when wondering about a soundwork regardless of its classification (art, scholarship, the ocean). In this way, a sound piece can be a part of a larger piece, itself a part of a never-ending whole, or a piece of that piece. A sound piece as a soundwork or a sound piece as a part of a soundwork.

A sound piece can also be a descriptor. This can be in the sense of a positive value judgement, a sound idea, or as a written work about sound, a sound piece. From this definition, a sound piece could be a performative utterance: a good piece of writing about sound.

Because sounds are central to all forms of qualitative research, such questions are significant irrespective of a researcher's attention to the sonic. As expressions of event, ecologies, and relations, what "sound piece" means/expresses/is/does strongly informs how sounds are conceptualized and considered.

This proposed performative presentation takes seriously McKittrick and Wynter's (e.g., McKittrick, 2015, 2021) calls for critical forms of praxis and the use of the arts as modes for interrupting the disciplining of knowledge. In so doing, it also attends to McKittrick's Wynterian approach of narrative-creation through critical arts. To these ends, this an essay about sound pieces will read and recorded with live instrumental accompaniment, performatively turning an essay about sound pieces into a sonic expression (sound piece).

## **The MacKenzie Method as qualitative framework for analyzing visual data**

**Whitney Blaisdell, Nicolle Nugent**

University of Regina, Canada

This paper examines The MacKenzie Method as a qualitative framework for analyzing visual data within arts-based qualitative research. Originally developed by gallery educators, this dialogical and multisensory approach has guided art engagement for more than three decades, yet remains underexplored in methodological literature. The method's five cyclical stages, which are First Impressions, Analysis, Interpretation, Context, and Synthesis, invite gallery visitors to move among perception, inquiry, and reflection in ways that democratize meaning-making and foreground relational and embodied epistemologies.

Grounded in pragmatist feminist and participatory pedagogies, the method draws from Paulo Freire's (1970) conception of dialogue as liberation and bell hooks' (1994) anti-oppressive education. It attends to sensory and aesthetic experience through Maxine Greene's (1977) notion of wide-awakeness and John Dewey's (1934) Art as Experience. Authors of this paper uncover, as pragmatist feminists often do (Dea, 2022), the previously invisible work of the women educators who co-authored the method in the early 1990s. The MacKenzie Method thereby reflects the often-forgotten contributions of feminist educators who refused hierarchical and didactic gallery practices, seeking rather to position art interpretation as collaborative and community-oriented.

Applied to qualitative inquiry, the method offers a structured yet flexible process for engaging with visual data. Each stage of the process invites researchers and participants to co-analyze visual material through sensory noticing, affective response, and contextual interpretation. This approach supports relational ethics, shared authorship, and attentiveness to the political and aesthetic dimensions of visual meaning-making. Responding to the growing use of arts-based data in educational research (Freedman and Siegesmund, 2024; Flint and Toledo, 2021), the MacKenzie Method provides a theoretically rigorous yet accessible framework for interpreting visual material. By reframing analysis as an iterative, collective, and sensorial process, we authors propose that this method contributes to qualitative inquiry by offering a structured, yet open and accessible means for analyzing

## ORAL SESSION 31: Post-anthropocene subjectivities, relational collaborative dialogues

### Changing subjectivities in post Anthropocene - woman, man, multispecies kin, and others' perspectives

Angelo Benozzo<sup>1</sup>, Nikki Fairchild<sup>2</sup>, Francesco Tommasi<sup>3</sup>, Mirka Koro<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Aosta Valley University, Italy; <sup>2</sup>University of Portsmouth; <sup>3</sup>University of Milan; <sup>4</sup>Arizona State University

Reflecting an individualistic and neoliberal vision, qualitative research can tend to assume the individual as its' unit of analysis, reducing everything to the individual as a site of transformation. Our contribution takes a post-anthropocentric approach to qualitative research and aims to reimagine and reconstruct the ways the subject/subjectivity has been conceived in our respective disciplines starting from the influences of poststructuralism. We explore how subjectivities can be conceived and understood beyond the individualistic reductionism of the concept of the individual, and argue for a relational and ethical approach to the concept of subjectivity that accounts for the multiplicities of bodies. Through a range of material-discursive methods we examine and enact the constitution of subjectivity within three philosophical currents – poststructuralism, posthumanism, and feminist new materialism – and outline how these debates have entered, or could enter, social sciences, humanities and psychology. Our presentation highlights how, considering the contributions and insights of posthumanism and feminist new materialism, subjectivity is not simply a social practice conducted by conscious and intentional individuals, but is an enacted bodily, discursive, and material encounter that activates and constitutes multiple iterations of hybrid subjectivities. Rather than considering subjectivity as an exclusively human, social, and intersubjective social construction, we conceive subjectivity as a discursive, material, and transpersonal production in continuous becoming. Thanks to this change in perspective, it becomes possible to rethink women, men, multispecies kin, and others in social, material and organizational action, and in wider contexts and practices. We illuminate starting points for thinking-with and about subjectivity that is ethically sensitive to discursive-material dimensions which resist an excessive focus on the individual and align with micro-political activism in qualitative research.

### Learning for Legacy: How can creative androgenies generate collective care, agency and more life-affirming human practices

Larisa Sioneriu

Maynooth University, Ireland

The way we perceive time, and particularly the future, has tangible implications for our day-to-day lives. As Facer (2019) argues, we live the present in relation to the futures we can imagine. Our relationship with the future is deeply intertwined with meaningful emotions that guide our lives (Zembylas, 2022) and can influence our sense of agency (Osberg, 2010). Amid a politicisation, the future appears grim, precarious, and at risk of extinction (Todd, 2023). In the face of AI, climate change, and the rise of totalitarian political regimes, the future is not equally accessible to everyone (Mager & Katzenbach, 2021; Tutton, 2022).

Against this backdrop, education has increasingly been framed as a tool to prepare individuals to adapt to what is to come (EU Union of Skills Strategy, 2025). However, this approach does not address the more fundamental existential questions of temporality, such as the continuation of our species and intergenerational care. Furthermore, educational spaces historically committed to collective transformation, such as adult education, are now increasingly shaped by neoliberal priorities (Finnegal & Grummell, 2020).

This paper explores how creative androgenies can offer ways of thinking with and embodying the future, cultivating empowerment, care, and agency amid the complex uncertainties of seemingly inescapable futurity. Drawing on the concept of ancestry and the practice of becoming a good ancestor in *The Work That Reconnects* (Macy et al., 2014), it situates ancestral care within broader questions of power, justice, and relational ethics. In doing so, the paper highlights how adult education can serve as a generative space for connection, collective agency, and transformative existential practices.

### Eco-relational action research with trees and people

Leah Salter<sup>1,2,3,4,5</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Centre for Systemic Studies, Wales; <sup>2</sup>Murmurations: Journal of Transformative Systemic Practice; <sup>3</sup>University of Bedfordshire; <sup>4</sup>University of South Wales; <sup>5</sup>Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board

This paper presentation will offer an overview of an international research project made up of six transdisciplinary researcher-practitioners (Rolla Lewis, Peter Whitehouse, Nelly Ndirangu, Yuki Minamii, Jeff Fifield, Leah Salter) with a conjoint interest in eco-relating, trees and action research. All authors are Taos associates and Social Constructionist practitioners amongst other professional identities and research disciplines. Working through and across these potential differences was one of the many

layers of learning.

Over the two years of the project, we forged relationships with each other and each actively developed a close relationship with a tree, as part of an eco-relational “research grove”. We met regularly with each other online and with our trees in person in our own contexts; and invited our trees into the research project as co-researchers. The trees helped set the pace of our project and set the context to how we met each other as human participants. The process slowed down and was transformative on many levels. Through this presentation I will tell stories of transformation and how the project supported new understanding of how we move through the world.

As Arne Naess suggests “we are not only creatures, but creators. The world is always in the making” (2002). We are always “intra becoming” through a “worlding” process (Karen Barad, 2007). The research was an emergent beyond-human experience, where we were intra-acting from within relationships and between phenomena; creating and telling stories about what was happening for us, as we went. The project confirmed for us that we live in an entangled, diverse, moving, temporary, pluralistic, participatory, transmaterial world. I will be cross referencing “Transmaterial Worlding”- developed by Gail Simon and Leah Salter as mutually influencing and being influenced by this research (Simon and Salter, 2019).

## Extending the feral: Doings and undoings of social structures in and through Drag Queen Story Hour

Drew White

University of Oregon, United States of America

The 2026 ECQI Call for Proposals invites theorists to harness transformative practices that interrogate the interdependency between the human and the more-than-human. Positioned within the context of education in the United States, this project reimagines the material-discursive entanglement of Drag Queen Story Hour (DQSH) using Feminist New Materialist thought. In thinking with Karen Barad’s concept of the material-discursive and Anna Tsing’s concept of the feral, this proposal interrogates the becomings and doings of social structures to extend Tsing’s concept of the feral into the humanities.

In this paper, I use Tsing’s definition of the feral and deploy the material-discursive to reveal ruptures in human and more-than-human entanglements. I extend Tsing’s concept of physical human infrastructure to incorporate mechanisms of social control (social norms and policies) to demonstrate how the feral can be extended and foreclosed by human and more-than-human agents. Using DQSH, this project attunes to how drag aesthetics, once relegated to nightlife, has become feral.

In the hyperpolarized political climate of the United States, I use DQSH and drag aesthetics to rethink the doings and undoings of book bans. By attuning to mechanisms of social control through drag histories, this project interrogates modern book bans as an entanglement of current and historical events. This paper provides examples of how drag aesthetics and expression have been foreclosed in history to rethink modern attempts at foreclosure. Using the archive as an apparatus, this onto-epistemological project aims to reveal how social controls intra-act with modern drag aesthetics and highlights the need for the qualitative community to harness transformative methodological practices through dialogue and collaboration in and through disciplines.

## A world café approach to collaborative dialogues in Canada

Tara Collins, Monica Sesma Vazquez, Ahlam Fakh, Mariam Ismail, Nathanael Hammond, Nasiha Fazal, Karen Lazaruk, Melissa Mostert, Tristan McSwiney, Mads Lamirande

University of Calgary, Canada

**Background:** This presentation incorporates community dialogues to improve crisis response in Canada. As part of a collaborative project between the University of Calgary and the Distress Centre Calgary, a World Café was held in January 2025 with community members, academics, and service providers who work with individuals experiencing crisis. Crisis was broadly defined as a state in which an individual’s coping strategies are insufficient to manage a stressor.

**Methods:** A World Café methodology was used to facilitate inclusive conversations at tables. Questions explored gaps and challenges in crisis response, inclusive supports, partnership development, and resource distribution. Data was collected through audio recordings at each table as well as field notes. Data was analyzed thematically.

**Results:** Key themes that emerged included: (1) culture and access to resources, (2) collaborative and inclusive service development, and (3) community-centred language practices. Culturally responsive communication, co-designing supports, and limitations of technology and flyers to access services were highlighted.

**Discussion:** The results demonstrate the emotional dimensions of crisis response and trust building. This study also underscores the importance of participatory methods to explore lived experience in order to offer inclusive crisis interventions. This research contributes to knowledge on qualitative inquiry that centres community voices and co-creation of crisis interventions.

### “Shifting the paradigm: Reimagining qualitative inquiry in intercultural education”

Eugenia Arvanitis, Spyridoula Giaki

University of Patras, Greece

This presentation explores innovative qualitative strategies for culturally responsive research and practice in education. It advocates a holistic philosophical and methodological reorientation that deepens understanding of diversity through interpretation, meaning-making, and contextual awareness. The approach known as intercultural qualitative inquiry is interpretive and transformative, examining how learners, teachers, and educational communities from diverse cultural backgrounds experience, construct, and negotiate meaning within educational settings. It recognizes that teaching and learning are culturally situated processes shaped by language, identity, values, and power relations. By foregrounding local voices and emphasizing the dynamic interplay between culture, context, and pedagogy, this inquiry challenges universalist assumptions in educational research. Its goal is to foster equitable, inclusive, and culturally responsive educational practices.

Within this framework, the Forum on Intercultural Dialogue and Learning at the University of Patras has grounded its work in three interrelated strategies: reflexivity, relational ethics, and dialogic engagement. These guide both research and practice, supporting deeper insight into how individuals construct meaning around diversity and human experience.

The Forum's projects and interventions illustrate these strategies through:

- a) Reflexivity—reflexive methodologies, practitioner self-inquiry, and reflective writing;
- b) Relational engagement—reciprocal collaboration with students, teachers, and communities, recognizing their agency as co-constructors of knowledge;
- c) Contextual immersion—action research, ethnography, and participatory observation to uncover how cultural norms shape educational experience; and
- d) Dialogic and multivocal methods—narrative inquiry, storytelling, thematic analysis, collaborative interviews, and the Delphi method that promote intercultural dialogue and multiple perspectives.

By reimagining qualitative inquiry in intercultural education, this work moves beyond description toward active engagement with diversity as a source of learning, reflection, and transformation. It offers a framework for producing context-sensitive, ethically grounded insights that inform culturally responsive pedagogy and policy in an increasingly interconnected world.

### Inclusion and exclusion in early childhood education: A multi-sited ethnographic approach

Gunilla Holm, Monica Londen

University of Helsinki, Finland

In our study on how children exclude or include peers based on gender, ethnicity, social class, language and dis/abilities in early childhood education and care (ECEC) we used short-term, multi-sited ethnography. Multi-sited ethnography was used to include ECEC centers with children from different social class, ethnic and language backgrounds. To ensure diverse geographical representation the study included ECEC centers from the big cities, small towns and rural areas.

Interviews and participant observations of daily activities were conducted for about one month in each in each of the 18 centers in 2022. The researchers conducted participant observations of the centers' daily activities for 1177 hours over 246 days, but due to the COVID-pandemic, the number of days in each center varied. The researchers interviewed 53 teachers, 11 leaders, and 10 other staff members.

Multi-sited ethnography allowed us to adjust to the needs of the centers. In some centers, staff shortages or the Covid pandemic, made it hard to find time for interviews, but with 18 centers the overall data production was secured. Having a broad geographical representation of centers and children with a variety of backgrounds made the results more trustworthy and relevant for all ECEC centers in the entire region as opposed to studying only one or two centers. Questions or issues emerging in one center would also lead to these being studied in the other centers. Thus, patterns of similarities and differences between the centers could be identified. For the researchers it was challenging to create relationships with new participants, both children and adults, every month. A thematic analysis was conducted of all interview and observational data, but the sheer amount of data was demanding. Multi-sited ethnography posed some challenges, but generated trustworthy and relevant results of how children include and exclude other children based on their backgrounds.

### Walking-with exclusion: (re)visiting segregationist hauntings in U.S. education

Angela Kraemer-Holland

Kansas State University, United States of America

Content at museum exhibits, national parks, and in education curricula in the United States (U.S.) remains caught in political

crosshairs; (re)igniting contentious debates around what is worth knowing, who decides, and how this knowledge is and remains legitimized in official, sanctioned capacities. While some might argue these fever-pitch debates have reached a seemingly unprecedented level, Derrida (1994) would argue that hauntings with/in the liminal spaces of the social world illustrate such specters—while not immediately and conventionally visible—represent contours always absent-yet-present and illuminate the not-yets of the past and how these potentialities enduringly haunt the present. In education, public and official knowledge related to U.S. History continues to foment polarizing discussions, especially regarding the country's history of racism, segregation, and xenophobia. Part of a larger, ongoing qualitative project examining the (non)memorializing of people, places, and events related to the American Civil War, Reconstruction, Jim Crow, and the Civil Rights movement throughout Kansas and Missouri; this work examines one landmark—the *Brown vs. Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas* (1954) historic site—and how such a landmark (pun intended) case in recent U.S. history—and the place commemorating it—remain haunted by specters of exclusion and racism. Particularly given the region's fraught history with enslavement and notions of “freedom,” this work grapples with historical knowledge and education institutions within the long arc of the democratic project—one that can never quite reach itself (Derrida, 1994).

## **Distributed inclusion: diffractive readings of educator voices, policy, and educational apparatuses**

Elizabeth Blake

University of Prince Edward Island, Canada

This presentation does not reject inclusive education, nor propose to fix it; after all, the educational system is not broken but functioning as designed—built on colonial logics that frame inclusion as an unquestioned good while enacting exclusions about who belongs and under what conditions (Murriss, 2017; Naraian, 2021; Snaza, 2020; Spivak, 2012; Taylor, 2013). Noticing how material-discursive enactments (Barad, 2007) have produced this system makes it possible to reconfigure inclusion beyond its inherited promises and policy framings (Law, 2015). The presentation introduces the term—distributed inclusion—to reconfigure inclusion not as a fixed policy outcome or best practice but as a relational, emergent, and more-than-human doing (Braidotti, 2013; de Freitas, 2017).

In dialogue with Barad's (2007) agential realism, Haraway's (2016) call to “stay with the trouble,” and Murriss's (2017) work on educational philosophy, I diffractively read interviews with educators, camp data generated during a Literacy and Numeracy Summer Camp, policy texts, and posthumanist theory. Rather than treating these sources as discrete data sets, I read them as entangled within an apparatus, producing interference patterns that trouble what inclusion has come to mean.

Vignettes of stillness, acceleration, control, and dis/orientation trace how chairs, policies, hesitations, and refusals co-compose what inclusion does. Rather than offering solutions, the analysis lingers with contradiction and flicker—moments where inclusion moves differently.

By elaborating distributed inclusion as an apparatus that cuts-together-apart bodies, discourses, materials, possibilities, this presentation invites a shift from inclusion as a promise toward inclusion as an ongoing, unsettled practice of world-making. In keeping with the conference theme, the work foregrounds entangled human and more-than-human relations and the ethico-onto-epistemological practice of staying with the trouble of inclusion.

Participants will be asked to take part in the doing of distributed inclusion—through chairs, movements, collaborative noticing—so the presentation becomes a time-bound (but ever-moving) performative practice of inclusion otherwise.

## **Showing the other side of the coin: teachers' construction of their role in addressing sensitive social issues**

Zrinka Ristic Dedic, Boris Jokic, Vanja Medjugorac

Institute for Social Research in Zagreb, Croatia

In the context of democracy backsliding and increasing social and political polarization, schools emerge as crucial yet challenging spaces for engaging with socially divisive issues. This exploratory study examines teachers' beliefs and experiences related to teaching sensitive social issues—defined as issues that generate disagreement and conflict within society and evoke strong emotional reactions. The aim was to explore how teachers construct their professional role in addressing such topics in their classrooms and what educational purposes they consider important. The data were collected as part of the international project T-AP 2023 „Learning Amidst Disinformation and Social Conflict: Young People and Teachers Co-Constructing Curriculum through Transnational Dialogue”, although the findings presented here derive from the Croatian dataset. The research included three upper secondary schools, selected through a maximum variation sampling strategy. Data were collected through seven semi-structured individual interviews with teachers involved in the process of co-construction of teaching and learning scenarios with researchers and students, and three focus groups with other teachers. Interviews were audio-recorded, transcribed, and analysed using reflexive thematic analysis. A data-driven, bottom-up coding approach was employed, emphasizing semantic codes aligned with participants' own expressions and interpretations. Findings indicate that teachers conceptualize their role as *active and personally engaged*, motivated by a sense of mission, responsibility, and moral obligation. Their main educational aims

relate to *students' personal and interpersonal development*: fostering cognitive skills such as critical thinking and argumentation, along with empathy, tolerance, and openness toward others. However, broader *social and political dimensions*, such as understanding power relations, systemic inequality, or fostering civic and political engagement, remain largely unrecognized or absent from their perspectives. Teachers largely approach the teaching of sensitive social issues through the lens of individual growth and respectful dialogue rather than as a means of cultivating collective agency or driving social change.

## DREAM TEAM\_13

### Critical encounters with AI in qualitative analysis

Lucy Hunt, Michelle Proyer, Sophia Baesch, Emma Shubin

University of Luxembourg, Luxembourg

This Dream Team session invites qualitative researchers into a critical, collaborative exploration of the methodological, ethical, and epistemological tensions which arise when generative AI enters the qualitative research space. As a team working in inclusive education, we have been experimenting with Microsoft Copilot to support a Critical Discourse Analysis of autism-related briefings by Robert F. Kennedy Jr. (April 2025) and Donald Trump (September 2025). These texts, situated within the Trump administration's broader discourse on autism, offer a politically charged site for interrogating how language constructs disability, authority, and inclusion.

Our experiment was driven by methodological curiosity. Could AI meaningfully support interpretive analysis? What happens when we delegate parts of our analytical labour to a machine trained on probabilistic patterns rather than lived experience, theory or context? What emerged was a series of epistemic ruptures. Despite detailed prompts, Copilot routinely omitted key theoretical framings, such as the medical model of disability, and failed to engage with contradiction, ambiguity, and silence. It flattened nuance, misrepresented ideological tensions, and struggled to synthesise commentary meaningfully. These gaps were not incidental; they revealed the limits of AI's capacity to "read" texts critically, especially when those texts are ideologically saturated and socially situated.

In response, we refined our approach: breaking down tasks, embedding theoretical cues, and manually editing outputs. This improved coherence but underscored a deeper concern about AI's tendency to reproduce dominant narratives, erase marginalised voices and bypass the interpretive reflexivity which sits at the heart of qualitative inquiry. Our experience raised urgent questions about authorship, agency and the politics of automation in research.

This Dream Team session is not a demonstration of best practice, but an invitation to think together about the risks, contradictions, and possibilities of AI-assisted qualitative research. We will begin by briefly sharing our process and reflections, including examples of AI-generated outputs and the gaps we encountered. From there, we will facilitate a series of interactive exercises and discussions designed to surface collective insights, discomforts, and provocations.

Together, we will explore questions such as:

- What does AI routinely miss in qualitative analysis, and what does that reveal about our own methodological assumptions?
- How do we ensure rigour, reflexivity and ethical integrity when using generative tools?
- Can AI ever "understand" context, ideology, or lived experience, or is its role better framed as scaffolding rather than analysis?
- What kinds of qualitative work are most (or least) suited to AI assistance?
- How might we teach students to use AI critically, rather than uncritically?
- What does it mean to co-author with a machine, and how do we navigate questions of voice, power and representation?

We will also invite participants to experiment with live prompting, critique AI outputs and reflect on their own experiences (or hesitations) with AI in research, teaching and supervision. The session will be structured to allow for small-group dialogue, collective note-taking and the emergence of shared themes or provocations.

Our hope is that this Dream Team will forge a writing collective which valorises the outcome of the session through a joint publication, blog series or methodological manifesto. We are particularly interested in capturing the tensions and creative possibilities which arise when qualitative researchers engage critically with generative tools, especially in fields such as inclusive education, where language is never neutral.

This session is not about technological mastery, but about methodological vulnerability, critical reflexivity and the politics of knowledge production in an era of automation. Whether you are experimenting with AI, resisting its use or simply curious about its implications, we welcome you to join us in thinking (and dreaming) together.

### Let's Play. Embodied democracy and collective inquiry in practice.

**Krista Susman**

Verein zb zentrum für beratung, training & entwicklung, Austria

Democracy has developed a bad reputation in the past decade and is often experienced as challenging, strenuous, frustrating, broken. We witness an increasing inclination towards “benevolent authorities” in the so called Western cultures, in the deluded belief a single person would make better decisions than an informed and democratically skilled collective. Faster for sure – better? Undoubtedly not. There have been a lot of insightful analyses to describe the reasons for these phenomena from psychological, politological, sociological and transdisciplinary viewpoints. But the question is: how can participation succeed? Can we contribute in democratic learning as researchers, teachers, counsellors,...

In this Game Changer-Workshop we'll explore how democratic experience can be actively promoted, felt, and studied through creative qualitative inquiry. Across three 90-minute sessions, participants will engage through theoretical input, experimental exercises and collective reflection, working together to generate insights into how inquiry itself can function as a democratic act. Implementing contemporary theories, we will look at emotions as relational forces that shape participation, dialogue, recognition and hence possibilities of encounter. Participants will examine how emotional dynamics influence the ways communities engage with one another, and how shared reflection can deepen collective understanding and intraconnection. By combining embodied practice with reflective discussion, the session creates a space in which inquiry becomes an act of co-creation, valuing multiplicity, vulnerability, and shared meaning-making. Depending on the size of the group we'll engage in different kinds of playful experiments and collective decision-making, following the principle of “listening before judging” and find out, if and how this approach can help to develop and deepen democratic processes.

The topic addresses broader societal and scholarly challenges: how to foster inclusive, dialogical spaces for belonging and knowledge creation, and integrating affective, participatory and experimental approaches into qualitative research. By foregrounding relationality and shared reflection, the session invites researchers from diverse disciplines—including social sciences, arts-based research, participatory methodologies, and civic engagement—to co-develop approaches that respond to pressing societal questions.

By the end of the three sessions, participants will have experienced democratic research practices firsthand and contributed to a shared output that embodies inclusive, participatory, and affectively informed inquiry. This approach exemplifies how creative qualitative research can address urgent societal questions, supporting the development of research practices that are both responsive and generative.

## PANEL\_15

### From ‘breakdown’ to ‘regeneration’: Exploring ‘collapse’ in qualitative research

Chair(s): **Gabriele Budach** (University of Luxembourg, Germany)

Discussant(s): **Ingrid de Saint Georges** (University of Luxembourg)

Manifold is the sense of crisis, in today's world, in research, and in the discourses about them. Collapse as a concept in the social sciences and humanities has been frequently referred to in view of an imminent environmental disaster (Pennycook 2020), infrastructural breakdown (Abuzerr et al. 2025), or an epistemic/ontological crisis in qualitative research (Denzin & Lincoln 2005). In this panel, we seek to take a closer look at the notion of collapse and propose it as a fruitful lens to unravel multiply layered, ambiguous meanings emerging from the research process. Collapse encloses both the irreversible breakdown of something existing, a structure, configuration, or system, falling apart, disassembling and suffering destruction; as well as the meaning of (potential) force of regeneration emerging from a state of compression and subsequent release. While such moments of intense, often speedy densification tend to evoke associations of negativity and destruction beyond repair, papers in this panel align with research that sees collapse as part of a cyclic process of formation, collapse and regeneration (as in language evolution, Bostick 2025) in which collapse precedes and prepares transformation and change. The panel invites reflection to answer three urgent calls in qualitative inquiry: (1) how to live, understand and conceptualise our research practice in times of social and methodological challenge; (2) how to engage in meaningful research work building ‘keystone practices’ (Ryan 2025) while objects and disciplinary boundaries seemingly ‘slip together’; and (3) how to envisage and productively work towards change (Ahmed 2025) that feels more solid and satisfying than modeling a sand castle. We propose that unraveling events of collapse, the timeline(s) of their building, their stacked nature (palimpsest) and un-doing can offer such an approach, providing insight, strength and grounding that is gained from the minutiae and care of a slowing rather than speeding process.

### **Navigating through moments of ‘collapse’ in participant observation: Reflections from an ethnographic case study in Luxembourg**

Yimin Zhang

University of Luxembourg

Ethnographic fieldwork relies substantially on participant observation (Atkinson & Hammersley, 1998). When conducting participant observation, ethnographers must navigate the vagaries of the real-life practices and meaning-making processes of participants on the ground (Emerson et al., 2001). This process often entails moments of ‘collapse’ – for example, a collapse between the researcher’s assumptions and the participants’ lived realities, or between different realities across diverse field sites. While existing methodological reflections have discussed how moments of collapse during the research design phase can uncover new findings (Schwartz, 2024), few studies address how researchers can such moments during ethnographic fieldwork, or how these experiences can inspire new methodological and conceptual insights. In this context, my paper reflects on how the moments of collapse during participant observation have shaped the research focus, researcher’s practices in the field, and the relational dynamics between researcher and participants. Drawing on an ethnographic case study of human-nature relationships at an environmental NGO in Luxembourg, I offer reflections from two perspectives:

1) How engaging in the ‘waiting field’ (Mannay & Morgan, 2015) helps the researcher navigate the collapse between her pre-conceived notions and participants’ lived experience in the field.

2) How the lens of ‘relational ethnography’ (Desmond, 2014) meaningfully brings together scattered field sites.

Reflecting on my experience of conducting participant observation through the conceptual lens of collapse, I find that such moments occurring across multiple layers significantly shape the research questions, process and outcomes. I argue that, rather than being viewed as crises or negative results, moments of collapse in ethnographic fieldwork can spark novel methodological insights and inductive discoveries.

### **“Not just a resource to be exploited”: Exploring collapsing water worlds through speculative fiction**

Anastasia Badder

University of Cambridge

In January 2025, the first iteration of an experimental speculative fiction event was run in Cambridge (UK) that brought together local water industry representatives, engineers, and religious and spiritually-motivated water activists to address a fictional – but not beyond the realm of possibility – crisis: Cambridge will run out of drinking water in one month. The participating water-focused actors came to this exercise of (fictional) structural and environmental collapse with diverse ways of being in the world and with water. Through a series of presentations, readings, and guided discussions, they worked together to consider the likely effects of the crisis across scales and realms, reflect on their own reactions to the crisis, and build plans of action. In the process, participants were confronted by others’ watery relations and experiences and often-overlooked local water conditions in ways that created slippage across the usually more or less rigid boundaries between fact and fiction, past, present, and future, geographic spaces, human and more-than-human beings, and value worlds. For water industry actors this confrontation was particularly jarring, and many left the exercise with a realization that might “with hindsight, [seem] obvious... a society’s relationship with water is not simply about the pipes and pumps” and that meaningful knowledge of and visions for water futures might lie beyond industry borders. This paper explores the various moments of collapse that occurred across this speculative fiction exercise, the techniques that drove them, and the collaborations that emerged from them. Ultimately, I suggest that those collapses were not destructive but generative, as participants were drawn to notice the ontological unruliness of water and imagine previously unimaginable collective routes forward.

### **“What’s in an object?”: Disentangling ‘collapse’ of memory and time in stop motion animation**

Gabriele Budach

University of Luxembourg

Many of today’s technologies of memory are digital, fast-paced and data-heavy. Genres such as lifelogs (Heersmink, 2018) or multimedia biographies (Crete-Nishihata et al., 2012) rely on large databases or a broad range of digital data, merging lines of time, story and memory.

This paper investigates how lines of time, experience and memory, collapsed into objects and human bodies can become disentangled, identified, relived and reconnected in the process of creating a stop motion animation movie.

Inspired by work in phenomenological philosophy (Colombetti & Bogotá, 2024), I start from the assumption that the human ‘self’ is firmly anchored in its material environment and entangled with worldly objects. Hence, memory is stored as sedimented

meaning (Merlot-Ponty, 1945/2012) in both, humans and objects, creating superposed layers of experience, habit, and knowledge, accumulated over the life span of an individual or of generations.

I explore how animation making – the simple, intuitive, and repetitive process of moving objects in small incremental steps and taking pictures after each move – unfolds as a human-object-co-creation, in which memory stored in human bodies and evocative objects (Turkle 2007) becomes re-distributed, interconnected, and interwoven.

I propose that such an approach has purchase for qualitative inquiry as it can expand our ‘topography of the self’ (Gonzales, 1995) through representing important relations, emotional ties, and past events in space and movement; not by accumulating heaps of new material and data, but by disentangling the already condensed, with slowness and care, peeling away layers of long-lived memory, to create resonance and expansion of and within our own selves.

## **Interrogating collapse: Valuing process in the time of AI**

**Madelaine Wood**

University of Luxembourg

In our current moment of rapid AI proliferation and incorporation, we seem to be in the midst of an epistemological shift, where generative AI is collapsing our processes of inquiry and creation from journeys of travel into instantaneous arrival of results. Ingold (2007) offers a metaphor for conceptualizing different types of journey-processes: the line that “goes out for a walk,” which indexes a process of “wayfaring,” and the line that goes from A to B, which indexes a process of “transport.” In this paper, I argue that generative AI tools in fact represent a collapse of process, further condensing a journey of inquiry into two points that overlap nearly instantaneously: input/result. This transformation prompts a number of troubling questions: Are we moving from a paradigm of transport to one of arrival? What happens if we are constantly arriving, without the journey behind? What becomes of temporal processes like learning, writing, research, and creation in an era of incessant, consecutive arrival?

I argue that if we frame this collapse as productive— “saving time,” “working smarter not harder”— we run the profound risk of negating temporality altogether and repeatedly devaluing the process of creation until making itself becomes unfamiliar. Drawing on an intersemiotic translation project conducted with a group of artists, teachers, and students in Luxembourg, I explore the notion of process as journey, time, and material endeavor that offers another way of thinking/being/making in our current moment of AI efficiency, productivity, and innovation obsession.

## **ORAL SESSION\_33: Methodologies, methods**

### **Experiencing a city differently: comparing a Grounded Theory with a Qualitative Content Analysis tour guide**

**Peter Stevens, Hermine Van Coppenolle, Jasper Praet**

Ghent University, Belgium

This paper compares the process of data coding as carried out by Qualitative Content Analysis and Grounded Theory. It uses the metaphor of a city tour guide to describe how different philosophical assumptions and research objectives between and within these approaches/methods to qualitative data analysis lead to very different tours in your city of interest. In comparing these tours, this paper focuses on the relative importance of deduction and induction and the use of literature, the meaning of theoretical saturation and the process of sampling and the relative importance of reliability in coding and how ‘quality’ is understood more generally in these approaches/ methods to qualitative data analysis. While these different tour guides will offer you a different experience in terms of ‘what you see’ and ‘how you will see it’, they enrich each others’ approach to knowledge development. The paper offers specific suggestions in terms of how these approaches / methods to QDA can learn from each other and can be used in more integrated ways to offer different kinds of experiences and outcomes of knowledge production.

### **A Relational and Collaborative approach to writing with Lived Experience in Criminal Justice Research and Practice**

**Lucy Campbell<sup>1</sup>, Dwayne Antojado<sup>2</sup>**

<sup>1</sup>The University of Edinburgh; <sup>2</sup>The University of South Australia

In this presentation, we will speak about our new book being published with Routledge, where we explore what it means to have lived experience in practice. Written by academics and activists working with and in the field of criminological lived experience, we explore the concepts and ideas that form this movement.

Sharing autoethnographic insights and experiences of both being imprisoned and working with the previously imprisoned, this is a groundbreaking book that gets to the heart of what it means to have lived experience. We offer an innovative exploration of the transformative potential of lived experience expertise in criminology and criminal justice. This book employs a series of compelling case studies and praxis examples to examine how lived experiences can challenge established paradigms and enrich

education, research, practice and activism. Authored and edited collaboratively by academics and practitioners, including those with lived experiences of incarceration, this work bridges the gap between theory and practice. Our authorship and editing process was one where we ensured transparency and collaborative writing were held in the highest regard. We used a circular writing and editing process, where we each wrote a chapter and then shared and edited each other's work. With monthly meetings and an open editing process, this book speaks to the values that we wish to uphold with our lived experience advocacy. Collaboration, transparency and ensuring that everyone gets a seat at the table.

Ultimately, we hope our book inspires transformative systemic change through authentic lived voices, expertise and insights in both the fields of lived experience and collaborative writing and publishing.

## **Evolving methodologies: how data reshaped a study of interpersonal trauma-related blame**

**Shani Pitcho**

Ben-Gurion University, Israel

What happens when data begin to outgrow the analytic frame we bring to them? This presentation traces the methodological evolution that transformed an intended thematic analysis into the development of a grounded theory.

The study began as a small-scale thematic analysis of around ten interviews exploring self- and other-blame among survivors of interpersonal trauma. Yet, as the first transcripts were analyzed, participants' narratives resisted containment within the anticipated thematic frame. What initially appeared to be individual expressions of blame, gradually revealed an underlying grammar of moral negotiation—moments in which participants weighed emotional, relational, and social costs before assigning or accepting trauma-related blame. These recurrent patterns of moral positioning, exchange, and regulation indicated that something more complex was unfolding: not merely *what* or *who* survivors blamed for their traumas, but *how* and *why* blame was distributed across interpersonal and cultural contexts. It became increasingly evident that the data were not only describing experiences but also *theorizing* them.

In response, the study's design was reconceptualized through Constructivist Grounded Theory. Data collection and analysis became iterative and comparative, guided by theoretical sampling until saturation was reached. This shift enabled the emergence of the *Perpetrator–Other–Self (POS) economic model of blame*, which conceptualizes blame as a moral economy shaped by psychological and socio-cultural forces. According to this model, blame attribution follows an “affordable blame heuristic,” whereby survivors evaluate the emotional and relational costs of each blame trajectory—toward the perpetrator, others, or the self—and assign blame selectively, in ways that feel both bearable and functional.

Methodologically, this project demonstrates how data can reorient the researcher's analytic path and epistemological stance. It highlights the generative potential of flexibility, reflexivity, and theoretical sensitivity in qualitative inquiry—particularly when the data themselves demand that we expand our conceptual and methodological imagination.

## **Centring lived experience expertise: doing research differently**

**Donna Arrondelle**

University of Southampton, United Kingdom

Centring lived experience has gained traction in qualitative research and beyond in recent years. ‘Lived experience’, sometimes referred to as ‘expertise by experience’ or ‘lived experience expertise’ is understood here as the unique expertise held by those who have experienced first hand the socio-political issues which researchers work to understand and policymakers commit to address. In the face of global crises the value of such expertise cannot be overstated. Whilst the ethical imperative to meaningfully involve lived experience expertise is crystal clear the praxis is less so. Drawing on research with experts by experience impacted by the criminal legal system in the UK, the paper engages readers with a number of emergent tensions in these research experiences. In response, arguing for a critical reflexive inquiry approach to collaboration. Those considering or already involved in research which seeks to meaningfully position individuals with lived experience expertise in research are encouraged to deeply engage with the tensions identified to enact equity and the emancipatory potential of centring lived experience.

## **Momentary reflective data: reimagining real-time qualitative methodologies**

**Breanna Lawrence<sup>1</sup>, Rebecca Hudson Breen<sup>2</sup>, Lisa Wood<sup>3</sup>, Rachel Herron<sup>3</sup>, Bibiana Munoz Bocanegra<sup>1</sup>**

<sup>1</sup>University of Victoria, Canada; <sup>2</sup>University of Alberta, Canada; <sup>3</sup>Brandon University, Canada

This presentation introduces Momentary Reflective Data Collection (MRDC), an innovative methodological approach designed to capture the intersections of precarious work, family life, and mental health. Emerging from our study of Canadian families navigating precarious employment, MRDC adapts and extends ecological momentary assessment into a qualitative and arts-based paradigm.

Drawing on over 600 responses generated during this study, MRDC was developed to capture intensive, contextual accounts of lived experience. Across a 14-day period, participants documented their realities of precarity and family life through audio

clips, photographs, and written reflections in response to daily prompts. These multimodal responses provided not only descriptive content but also insight into the rhythms, textures, and temporal negotiations of everyday life under conditions of precarity.

As we engaged with this “real-time” data, patterns emerged not only in the content of responses but also in their rhythm, timing, and tone. These patterns invited a critical re-examination of what counts as “real time.” Rather than interpreting time-stamped responses as neutral temporal markers, we considered how individuals actively shape their temporal experiences. Participants exercised temporal agency—delaying, reframing, or returning to prompts—when emotional readiness, relational demands, or contextual conditions aligned. Thus, what might appear as a “late” or “belated” response instead represented the right moment for meaning-making.

Reframed through the concept of Momentary Reflective Data, each response becomes less a spontaneous real-time record and more a situated, reflexive engagement—an entangled moment shaped by attention, affect, and presence. This approach not only generates intensive and contextual descriptive data but also foregrounds the relational and affective dimensions of temporality within qualitative inquiry.

Our presentation will demonstrate the methodological contributions of MRDC, illustrating how recognizing participants’ temporal agency transforms real-time qualitative data collection into a practice attuned to the “textures of time” and the lived complexities of precarious work and mental health.

## ORAL SESSION\_34: Older adults, anti-ableist research culture

### Co-research as a mirror of agency for older adults: revealing paradoxes in doing co-research

Kirsi Ilola, Eeva Aromaa, Sanna Laulainen, Päivi Eriksson

University of Eastern Finland, Finland

Public debate on science and society involving citizens in scientific research, has led to an increasing collaboration with older adults in research projects. This shift has opened new possibilities for engaging older adults as co-researchers, meaning research conducted ‘with’ or ‘by’ older adults, rather than ‘to’, ‘about’ or ‘for’ them. Co-research provides both a methodological and experiential framework for collaboration with professional researchers. It also creates a space for older adults to reflect on their life course, experiences of aging, and roles as societal actors.

Our study explores how co-research shapes older adults’ perceptions of themselves as active agents. The research is based on an 18-month co-research project in which four older adults collaborated with professional researcher throughout all phases of the study—from planning to reporting. The data consist of a retrospective group interview, analysed using thematic analysis. The themes of the interview were informed by 15 hours of video material collected during ten workshop meetings held throughout the research process.

The findings illustrate how participation in co-research can become a turning point, prompting older adults to reinterpret events from their lived life. It activated anticipated changes in agency that were personally meaningful, not merely methodological. While previous studies have mostly emphasized the empowering aspects of co-research, our study reveals that it can paradoxically both enhance and restrict older adults’ perceptions and expectations of themselves as agentic actors. The analysis demonstrates how engaging in co-research can lead to reflections and decisions with significant impacts on everyday life, such as giving up bicycling or ending a long-term friendship. Becoming aware of one’s own life course through co-research may strengthen a sense of responsibility and safety, while simultaneously narrowing one’s social sphere and constraining future opportunities for participation.

### “Well, I am now looking after this bloody rabbit!”: reflections on the relational re-storying of care as an anti-ableist practice of social justice in the lives of people with learning disabilities

Martina Smith<sup>1</sup>, Katherine Runswick-Cole<sup>1</sup>, Sara Ryan<sup>2</sup>, Francesca Ribenfors<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>University of Sheffield, United Kingdom; <sup>2</sup>Manchester Metropolitan University, United Kingdom

In this paper we reflect on the depths of ableism that persist in UK social care research, theory and method. In this context, care is constructed in ways that exclude people with learning disabilities from being recognised as care-givers, positioning them almost exclusively as passive recipients of care in binarised caring relationships of carer and cared-for. We share how, as part of a larger co produced UK based project [NIHR135080 Tired of Spinning Plates] that explored the mental health experiences of family carers of adults with learning disabilities, we found our own research planning to be unwittingly reproducing ableist logics of care.

We always understood the importance of including people with learning disabilities in our research and did so in our public involvement group, however not in other phases of research. Only as the project progressed to co producing digital stories about care with family carers, did we realise the extent of our failure to include the stories of people with learning disabilities. We share

our response to this failure as a process of relational learning; we revised our research protocol and ethics to include digital stories co produced with people with learning disabilities. Drawing on insights from the Wellcome Anti-ableist Research Cultures study, we reflect on this mistake as a site of critical anti-ableist academia emerging through collaborative research.

We call for an attentiveness to the ableism and resulting social injustices that persist in dominant logics about care and the consequences of reproducing injustice through social care research that fails to pay attention to unwittingly reproducing complicity in marginalisations of people in challenging times.

## **‘Being me’: a collaborative qualitative enquiry into the everyday experiences of autistic children and young people in England**

**Jo Billington**

University of Reading, United Kingdom

A substantial literature indicates that autistic children and young people are much more likely than their non-autistic peers to have difficult childhood experiences, poor educational outcomes and increased levels of mental ill health. While a great deal is known about the particular difficulties autistic children face, how they experience and make sense of these challenges has historically received less attention. Much extant research has been conducted with ostensibly non-autistic parents, teachers and allied professionals. While offering valuable insights into stakeholder perceptions, prioritising informant accounts over autistic voices has arguably contributed to their marginalisation in research, making them a largely “muted group”.

In an effort to promote more equitable knowledge production and to address epistemic injustice, the present study adopted a participatory research approach. Seven autistic young people, aged 8 to 17 years and representing a wide range of support needs, were invited to take part in a project designed to explore what they most wanted others to understand about “being me.”

Each participant began by identifying their own priorities - what they wished others to know about them - and then worked one-to-one with a researcher to design their interview. Together, we developed a bespoke topic guide for each child, after which a professional film crew recorded the interviews. Themes constructed from the participants’ accounts included feeling misunderstood, the joy and challenges of sensory experiences, and what others can do to provide effective support during times of distress.

The resulting videos are now being used within the [redacted in case of anonymous review] as a key resource for work with families, professionals, and students, helping to centre autistic voices in education, training, and practice.

## **Neurodiversity and Inclusion in Archaeological Research**

**Amit Dagan, Ayelet Oreg**

Bar-Ilan University, Israel

In times of uncertainty, when global crises expose our shared vulnerability, creating inclusive spaces of knowledge production becomes an urgent task. This paper tells the story of a collaborative project at the Tell Qana Archaeological Laboratory that invited adults with high-support-needs autism to take part in archaeological research. The project asked a simple but profound question: what happens when people who are usually excluded from academic spaces become active partners in the making of knowledge?

The participants—six autistic adults—joined the laboratory’s daily work of restoring pottery fragments, scanning artifacts in 3D, and organizing digital records. Their work was carefully structured and supported, but their contributions were genuine and recognized. In the act of repairing broken vessels, they not only advanced the research but also brought their own ways of seeing and attending to detail.

The project became a space of dialogue: between archaeologists and autistic participants, between scientific procedures and creative adaptations, between the fragility of human experience and the resilience that emerges through collaboration. It also revealed challenges—mentor turnover, the complexity of restoration, and challenges faced by neurotypical students in the laboratory in accepting those who are different.

This case study shows how archaeology can move beyond being a discipline that studies fragments of the past, and become a practice of mending connections in the present. It demonstrates how neurodiversity enriches research, how inclusive practices generate new forms of knowledge, and how citizen science can open pathways for more just and interconnected futures.

## **DREAM TEAM\_17**

### **Demonstrating the Futures Wheel Approach as a Co-Creative Method to Collectively Evaluate the Consequences of Microchip Implants as a Form of Human Enhancement**

**Charlotte Parion, Karin Hannes**

KU Leuven, Belgium

What sort of society would there be if all humans were implanted with a microchip? What sort of humans would we become? Would we even have a choice? As investment in microtechnologies increases and medical implants become widely accepted, the question arises of whether all humans might one day be implanted with such microchips. As a form of human enhancement, such technology could provide us with new abilities such as sensing where the North is, feeling earthquakes, exchanging information with a single touch, paying or opening doors with a swipe of the hand, ... But what would it mean for society? What new social expectations would arise? Would we all be equal in the face of this microchip?

In this workshop, we will arrange for an 'encounter' with this possible future – or, rather, these potential futures – by first identifying different scenarios about the place that this technology could take in society. Then, we will engage you as a participant in the futures wheel approach to analyze the multi-layered opportunities and risks linked to the widespread use of microchip implants to reflect on the social, economic, political, religious, environmental, legal, and other... implications of insertables, whilst at the same time remaining sensitive to the social inequalities this may introduce. As a participant, you will be invited to reflect with us on the potential of futures wheels as a method for analyzing far-edged implications of social innovation initiatives. We trust you will have acquired a skills base that allows you to practice and apply the approach to the future scenarios that come out of your own research.

## DREAM TEAM\_18

### **Men can love too: Exploring 'masculinist' approaches to love as science and pedagogy**

**Glen Cousquer, Ramsey Affifi**

University of Edinburgh, United Kingdom

There is a prevailing feminist critique that the reductionistic and mechanistic approaches currently dominating science are the result of patriarchal tendencies to divide, abstract, hierarchise and control (e.g. Plumwood 1993). Part of this critique is that many women, owing to their positionality in patriarchal societies, are for a variety of complex reasons, more attuned with caring approaches to relationships (Gilligan 1982), and therefore better able to offer a different way of encountering and knowing the world. What is offered is a more participatory view, where the knower interacts with the world she seeks to know and is therefore responsible for/with it (Haraway 1988); or perhaps one where caring is replaced as the fundamental mode of interaction, with knowing a mere dimension of it. In either case, knowing is repositioned as inseparable from being, or from ethics (Barad 2007). In making this move, such critiques both call out and seek to repair pernicious dualisms that reinforce specific kinds of antagonistic power configurations.

We do not question the significance of feminist care ethics, or that the positioning of women within patriarchy affords certain kinds of attunement with caring and relational ways of being. What we want to challenge is another implicit dualism we have felt resides in some ways of positioning the problem. We want to claim that despite patriarchy's role in normalising reductionistic and abstractive modes of engagement, and despite the dark marriage such engagement has had with scientific methods, men can and have also brought relational approaches into their encounter with people and the world. We know such relational approaches are possible for (cis, white) men in patriarchal society because we are ourselves two males filled with love for their topics, their students and the world.

However, we are also acutely aware of the threats to such dimensions of male experience. First, there is the potential problem that many feminist critics themselves recognise: that positioning abstraction, reductionism and so on under the male archetype might inadvertently re-enforce those very characteristics in men. The second is that men bringing love into encountering the world and students can be viewed as having suspicious motivations not necessarily presumed for women attempting the same. The result is a kind of double-bind that pinches away at the possibilities for a renewed and different mode of relation.

That said, while such circumstances present challenges, we are adamant that a 'masculinist' exploration of love, in curriculum and pedagogy, but also in theory and practice, is not only possible, but necessary. We are proposing a Dream Team session to open discussions into what this might be. The aim would be to share stories of male experiences engaging with love as part of a scientific or pedagogical practice, to discuss challenges, and to find ways of forming communities of practice to support the development of love in these fields. We would take the lead by sharing some of our own stories and struggles before facilitating a discussion and writing-exploration of these core aims.

The session encourages people identifying with any sex and gender, to come to recover a masculinist love or to ally in the recovery, or both; and the session will be set up to facilitate such collaborations. To be clear, however, it is not our intention to argue for specifics about how or what patriarchy does to enable the possibility of male love despite its well-known problems, nor to argue for any essential distinctions it has owing to its arising from the 'male experience' within patriarchy. 'Masculinist' is not taken to presume a specific quality other than its being oriented on the intrinsic relational possibilities in men's experience. How men can learn from and share in feminist politics and theory is therefore also a core question. Finally, though this should be obvious by now, 'masculinist' is not an attempt to recover male power-over under some alleged zero-sum threat from feminists.

It is however, an attempt to recover new kinds of power-with (Follett 1942) de-emphasised by contemporary framings.

Come explore with us.

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## GAME CHANGERS\_2

### Reimagining schools: creating generative geographies of change for youth-led educational transformation

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In 2025, we, the “Reimagining Schools Collaborative” led the Game Changer “Re-Imagining Schools: A Journey of Playfulness and Hope” at ECQI Edinburgh. These sessions were a mix of semi-structured and free-flowing experiences of playful inquiry into co-dreaming new futures in education. Building from this, our 2026 Game Changer uses our emerging perspectives on education and reimagining schools to practice connections, collaboration and engage in global flows. In our 2025 ECQI session, the activities gave us reflective and creative insight into these questions and what they mean for different communities around the globe from which we have constructed a new series of questions/activities designed to push more critically into the essential questions posed by the Reimagining Schools Collaborative: what is, what if and what's next?, exploring imagination and investigating possibilities to reshape experiences and spaces of schooling and education for a more equitable and sustainable future. Focusing on the goals of qualitative inquiry and the theme of the 2026 conference, we explore artful and critical methodologies to witness, to learn from, and to be in dialogue with practices that stretch the boundaries of education. It is an offering of paths that connect theory and practice, dreaming and doing, local wisdom and global urgencies—always asking: how can we learn differently, so that we can live differently?

In our Game Changer for 2026, we deepen our questioning to include: What does learning/education look like when it serves everyone: peoples, communities, and the planet? How can we shift from being told what our future will be to actively creating it ourselves? Re-worlding. Our sessions aim to make visible how imagination moves from “what if” to “what we do.” The solutions for the problems we face globally cannot be answered by a select few within academic contexts. We must engage with a poly-vocal approach that includes a variety of modes of expression and understanding. As such our Game Changers embody the conference purpose to, “actively and collaboratively engaged with history and with the futures we all shape” (ECQI 2026, CfP).

The Game Changer activities weave together modes of inquiry from arts, sciences, and Indigenous wisdoms, and offer experiences where education steps beyond its conventional walls to redesign how we learn, how we relate and how we care for the world, honor our shared vulnerabilities, and celebrate our interdependencies. Exploring post-human and post-qualitative paradigms in education and society, we see this historical moment as ripe for transformative change, challenging static relationships between theory, practice, research, and pedagogy.

The story we are creating in our Game Changer Sessions is not about a formula. Our Reimagining Schools Collaborative focuses on imagining prototype futures where learning is relational, regenerative and deeply grounded in the reality and dreams of each place. The Game Changer sessions emphasize the realization that young people exist as their own vast and complex systems of knowledge and that the knowledge they intuitively hold is powerful, brilliant, and wonderful. Recognizing the significance of youth perspectives, this Game Changer highlights their agency, visions and leadership as central to meaningful dialogues on the transformative power of imagination within education. One goal is to use art and imagination to impact wider global education policies by inviting young people, some of whom are already leading their own actions and propositions, to articulate, visualize or embody the issues.

Our three Game Changer sessions will include session leaders, remote organizers by Zoom, youth participants and the ses-

sion attendees. The purpose of the in-person/zoom hybrid is to include youth participants from around the globe as part of the working sessions. Each of the three days can be attended as the sole session, or participants may attend all three. We consider each session as a point of perception in our world-building experiences, holding traces of how we can transform learning spaces into spaces of belonging, agency, and collective repair.

Day 1: What is (embodiment)? Co-creating the frame for existing systems of global education.

Day 2: What if (flow/collaboration)? How do we move through entanglements of colonial realities and post-colonial futures? Exploring new ways of “world-making”

Day 3: What's next (point)? We locate generative geographies of change. Day 3 is about the living tensions and the beauty that emerges when diverse communities of educators, artists and young people come together. Structured to inspire intergenerational experimentation with raw artistic materials and to explore the challenges confronting global education

policies, this Game Changer will culminate in a report/policy brief which embodies a call to action for researchers, educators, students and communities alike.

## DREAM TEAM\_19

### **An immersive, arts-based journey into listening, embodiment and dialogue with the more-than-human world. Where researchers become rivers, stones, insect and breezes — and discover what qualitative research can learn from them**

**Styn Grieten<sup>1</sup>, Marc Craps<sup>1</sup>, Griet Bouwen<sup>2,3</sup>**

<sup>1</sup>KU Leuven, Belgium; <sup>2</sup>Zinspeling, Belgium; <sup>3</sup>Gaiashift, Belgium

Recent developments in qualitative research invite us to move beyond anthropocentric inquiry toward practices of listening and responding to the more-than-human world. Building on phenomenology (Merleau-Ponty), dialogical philosophy (Buber), systems thinking (Capra), appreciative inquiry (Cooperrider), humble inquiry (Schein), the recognition of sensing, feeling, thinking and intuition as equally valid and complementary ways of knowing (Goethe, Harding, Jung) and deep ecology methodologies (Macy, Seed), this workshop offers an experiential approach to qualitative research with non-human agencies.

Participants will explore a sequenced process that combines immersion, embodiment and dialogue. The participants will attune to a natural element (plant, stone, insect, breeze...) and practice “imaginative inhabitation” with that element for a time. They will then engage in appreciative ecosystemic dialogues, listening to what emerges when humans give voice to the more-than-human perspectives.

The workshop culminates in co-created artworks or performances weaving together these voices, followed by a joint reflection on the ethical, epistemological and methodological implications for qualitative research.

Rather than merely discussing on the more-than-human perspective, this session enacts a form of “radical listening” and “dialogical phenomenology,” expanding the methodological repertoire of qualitative inquiry. Participants will leave with concrete practices for incorporating arts-based, phenomenological and ecological sensibilities into their research design, fieldwork and analysis.

Limited to 16 participants; outdoors (if possible with local circumstances).

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**Returning “home”: Methodological approaches and ethnographic insights from Greek diasporas**Vassiliki Chryssanthopoulou

National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, Greece

My presentation is inspired by the focus of this year's ECQI Congress: Global Flows, Connections, Dialogues and Collaborative Practices in Challenging Times. Such a focus captures my own research on Greek diasporas and allows me to reflect on it as a life-long project. More specifically, I address the topic of “returning home” for a Greek diaspora community in Australia, both in groups and as individuals, over a period stretching from the early decades of the 20th century to the present, in my attempt to explore these diverse “journeys” and the different relationships with home which various members of this diaspora have manifested over the years. What constitutes “home” for diaspora individuals? In what ways do they “return home”, if they do? How have these returns been transformed in today's globalizing conditions and challenging times? And how can we, as researchers, address these transformations, study and attempt to interpret them?

Among the various qualitative methods I have employed in conducting research on this topic, multi-sited and longitudinal fieldwork and collaborative ethnography have proved to be of paramount value. In my talk I will consider the stories of Greek migrants and their descendants who return home physically, or mentally and emotionally, according to their circumstances and worldviews. Some of these returns are linked to active involvement with the ancestral land and its society, inspired by a sense of intergenerational debt to their forebears. Other returns are purely imaginary, revolving round symbols and myths associated with the ancestral homeland. Yet other return journeys involve representations of the homeland in writing, on websites, or in other artistic creations. In all of these stories, I have employed collaborative methods during my research, to reach, I feel, a deeper understanding of “home” as the family- and community-orientated past that diaspora individuals carry and deal with over the course of their lives. In an auto-ethnographic sense, these stories also form my own attempt to ‘return home’.

**ORAL SESSION\_35: Qualitative Inquiry****Lived knowledge under erasure: Understanding Scholasticide and Educide through Palestinian Voices**Fadoua Govaerts, Noor Ali

University of Bath, United Kingdom

This presentation explores how people in Gaza and the West Bank experience the loss, disruption, and resilience of learning during sustained crises, introducing two conceptual tools—scholasticide and educide—to articulate these realities through the participants' lived experiences. Developed collaboratively with educators, students, and families in Palestine, this work positions their narratives as knowledge in themselves, foregrounding how education and learning persist, adapt, and resist under conditions of erasure. Scholasticide refers to the systematic destruction of spaces, resources, and conditions that sustain scholarship—schools, universities, libraries, and intellectual communities—while educide encompasses the broader dismantling of educational life, including informal, intergenerational, and cultural learning. Together, these terms invite a reframing of how we understand learning as both a human right and a relational practice of being, belonging, and becoming. Through narrative qualitative inquiry, the paper draws on dialogic interviews, reflective storytelling, and community-led documentation to reveal the human texture of learning amid devastation. This work adopted a methodology of co-creation in care and waiting, developed through sustained, affective communication with collaborators living under siege. It foregrounds relational ethics, emotional labour, and the act of waiting as integral to knowledge-making, positioning research as a shared practice of witnessing, presence, and survival. It situates these lived accounts within global dialogues about resilience, epistemic justice, and collective survival, extending beyond a Western analytical lens. Rather than theorizing about Palestine, this research listens with Palestinians—recognizing their stories as vital contributions to our shared understanding of education as a life practice. By centring collaborative and experiential knowing, this paper contributes to the ECIQ 2026 theme of Global Flows, Connections, Dialogues and Collaborative Practices in Challenging Times. It calls for an expanded vocabulary and methodology in qualitative research—one that honours lived knowledge, challenges epistemic hierarchies, and opens pathways for global solidarity in the face of educational erasure.

**The natural law of free-speech: psychological and historical evidence and censorship's costs**Antonis Chatzipanagiotou

Independent Researcher

Governments often defend restrictions on expression as necessary for stability, yet a growing body of political science and

psychology suggests the opposite: censorship can be strategically self-defeating. Sudden or expanded restrictions frequently trigger circumvention and politicization (e.g., VPN adoption and migration to blocked networks), heighten anger and “reactance,” push dissent into harder-to-monitor spaces, and thereby raise operational risk (e.g., intelligence blind spots) and, at times, violence. This paper develops a Montesquieu-style, natural-law argument: because speech flows like water, blocking it redirects, not dissipates, social pressure. Evidence from psychology and history are given while also reconciling evidence against free speech. It is concluded that; free-speech is a public dissidence tool and pressure-release infrastructure, counter-speech instead of censorship and transparency over bans. Network shutdowns lead to underground coalitions; if intervention is necessary, confine it to narrow, due-process-bound incitement with sunset clauses and auditability. The paper consolidates experimentally grounded mechanisms such as psychological reactance, group polarization, identity fusion, and the anger–fear balance, and situates them in legal-policy questions concerning speech regulation, incitement standards, information controls, and public-safety strategy. The historical analyses serve to external-validate these mechanisms and to clarify conditions under which legal speech interventions are more or less likely to be counterproductive. The recommendations, favoring counterspeech and transparency over blunt bans, reserving narrowly tailored, due-process-bound measures for direct and imminent incitement, and avoiding visibility-reducing network shutdowns, translate psychological regularities into legally relevant design principles

## **‘Living, working and sacrificing together’; SNCC experiences of allyship**

**Libby Hamling**

University of East Anglia, United Kingdom

Amid the emergence of new global challenges, the persistence of racial inequalities across different contexts, histories and spaces reminds us of the enduring urgency to address our increasingly polarised societies. Scholarship and interest in allyship – as a collaborative, relational concept and transformative practice to bring people together – has surged.

This presentation actively engages with history, transcending geographical and temporal (historical) reach by turning to a previous critical juncture, the historical period of the 1960s USA, to understand the complexities of urgent interracial organising and the insights it can offer us. In drawing in specifically on the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC, or ‘Snick’), a prominent youth organisation within this movement, its initial ‘integrated’ approach, though intense and challenging, remains a valuable site for contemporary analysis. The organisation’s evolution and later focus on Black Power, meanwhile, offers room to reflect on the nature and requirements of coalitions themselves. This aims to harness the resiliencies and commitment from the past, specifically previous activists and allies, to seek hope and possibilities for practice for the contemporary landscape.

This archival analysis, drawing on materials housed in the Library of Congress, aimed to move away from archives presenting key leaders’ stories and instead finds sources where ‘everyday’ activists published their own stories in fiction, through diaries, reflections, and in interviews (at the time or retrospectively). Such lessons derived from SNCC’s evolutionary history may be directly valuable to contemporary antiracist movements/institutions, or alternatively, individuals interested in further developing their allyship within their community and localised collectives. This presentation is centred on the inkling that across temporalities, the texture of what makes us human remains. Perhaps the past will hold lessons for how we may find solutions and come together in the future.

## **Coloniality, dispossession, and healing: Tolupán contributions to decolonial psychology**

**Belén Jiménez-Carrasco, Marco Gemignani**

Universidad Loyola Andalucía, Spain

This project proposal concerns the psychological, sociocultural, and communal trajectories of the territorial conflicts experienced by the indigenous community of the Tolupán people, located in Montaña de la Flor (Honduras). Working through a decolonial lens, we plan to analyze processes and strategies of structural violence, land dispossession, state neglect, and resistance. We will work ethnographically and collaboratively with the participants’ community narratives and practices, privileging a decolonizing orientation. Central to the project’s methodology are *territorial narrated walks* (*caminatas territoriales narradas*), in which collective memory and lived experience emerge in relation to *being with-in* the very land that is now in danger. By walking and narrating their territory, Tolupán participants may articulate the interconnections between historical trauma, cultural resilience, and ecological belonging. The aim is to understand how “historical trauma” is seen, lived, remembered, and healed through Tolupán cultural logics, hoping to break away from Western pathologizing frameworks and advancing a community-based decolonial psychology that is grounded in territory, memory, and resistance.

## **Blurred focus: navigating the gaze in the gym**

**Ziyue Yang, Yan Huang**

Peking University, China, People’s Republic of

In an era of intense social visibility, modern spaces like the gym function as sites of disciplinary power, creating challenging

environments for relational connection. This study investigates how the “gaze” operates as a paradoxical power mechanism within the gym, a microcosm of contemporary society. Drawing on Foucault’s theory of discipline and Lacanian-inspired analysis of the gaze, this paper examines the visual strategies individuals employ to navigate constant observation.

This research utilizes a qualitative methodology combining autoethnography, semi-structured interviews with college students, and participatory observation. The study originated from the researcher’s own autoethnographic reflections on the “unsettled gaze”, bridging personal experience with sociological theory. Analysis reveals that the gym’s interwoven gazes function dually as a form of hierarchical surveillance that produces “docile bodies” and, conversely, as a sought-after source of support and recognition.

To manage the social risks inherent in this contradictory visual field, individuals adopt “blurred focus”—a deliberate disengagement from eye contact by focusing on phones or equipment—as a primary self-protective strategy. This act of being physically present but visually absent is a crucial practice for survival. By examining these micro-level negotiations, this paper argues that understanding such collaborative, albeit subtle, practices of self-protection is key to fostering healthier relational connections. The findings suggest this framework can be transferred to other challenging spaces like the classroom to transform the judgmental gaze into a more supportive one.

## ORAL SESSION\_36: Humanities-Literature

### **Resonance to nonsense: Counter-conduct of disciplinary power through ‘mad literature’ in contemporary Chinese youth culture**

**Ben Chen, Lei Zheng**

Peking University, China, People’s Republic of

“Mad Literature” represents a digital subculture that has emerged among educated young Chinese. It is characterized by the creation and reiteration of “nonsensical” memes and cultural artifacts that mimic mad actions. Such artifacts include illogical emojis, insider jokes, bizarre music, and short videos, all of which are widely disseminated across Chinese social media platforms like TikTok, Weibo, and Zhihu. We introduce the term “resonance to nonsense” to conceptualize the process where contemporary Chinese youth seek connections to each other and the world not through shared meaning, but rather through “non-sense.” We ask: How do young Chinese create and experience resonance through the making and circulation of “Mad Literature”? What is the nature of this resonance?

To address these questions, the research employs a combination of digital ethnography and discourse analysis, focusing on the most popular examples of “Mad Literature”. Findings indicate that young Chinese initially resonate unconsciously with certain memes, a process facilitated and amplified by algorithmic recommendation systems. Over time, this resonance evolves into a more conscious and strategic practice, as individuals collectively reiterate these memes in their everyday lives. The shared experience at the heart of this resonance is a sense of alienation, described following Hartmut Rosa as acting voluntarily against one’s true desires. For instance, young people may participate in relentless academic competition while simultaneously recognizing that such competition serves to discipline them.

The study argues that the “resonance to nonsense” cultivated through “Mad Literature” operates as a form of cultural counter-conduct against the disciplinary power that alienates youth. By intuitively adopting a mad guise, which ensures that their critique remains largely invisible to governmental censorship mechanisms, young Chinese are able to satirize and subtly subvert a world they perceive as politically delirious but also depoliticize their critique to allow for survival.

### **Psychological Humanities as Völkerpsychologie: The case of first-person literature**

**Konstantinos Kontis**

University of Ioannina, Greece

It is well known that psychological inquiry largely follows naturalistic methods, while, on the opposite camp, some critical researchers argue that greater attention be given to qualitative inquiry and to the psychological humanities (art, history, STS studies, etc.). That debate has been around since the beginning of psychological science, with Wundt (and others like Harvey Carr) maintaining that Völkerpsychologie should be used to research the higher psychological functions that cannot be studied by experimentation. In this presentation, I follow this tradition and argue that the psychological humanities can act as a hermeneutical way of understanding higher psychological functions, lived experience and human behavior. This understanding (Dilthey’s Verstehen) should not be taken to be a representationalist and foundationalist knowledge, a final epistemological ground that has a static knowable object. Instead, the psychological humanities facilitate a dynamic form of knowing that focuses on an intersubjective and intrasubjective understanding (as opposed to a naturalistic third-person abstraction) and views “knowledge” as a discourse among others (that of the painter, next to the philosopher, next to the historian, next to the positivist scientist). I examine the example of first-person literature and especially the works of Faulkner and Bret Easton Ellis. These works focus on

human subjectivity as is expressed by the narrator's first-person narrative and give us insights that cannot be attained by a quantitative methodology or third-person abstractions. It is argued that literature (and psychological humanities in general) should not be viewed as simply an alternative to mainstream psychological inquiry, but, instead, naturalistic inquiry should be viewed as just another form of discourse next to the psychological humanities, with no claim to epistemological primacy. In short, causal naturalistic explanation should be seen as part of a larger form of understanding, understanding that can be also achieved by qualitative methods and reading great literature.

## **Echo of the flood: gothic elements in the novel *Magnificat* by Sonia Aggio**

**Erica Hagström**

Luleå University of Technology, Sweden

The novel *Magnificat* by Sonia Aggio takes place against a backdrop of a fertile land emerged from the waters, framed by the complex relationship between humans and nature. A relationship that in the historical context of the Polesine flood in 1951 contains weak flood prevention from the institutions. Ecofeminism and ecological criticism of literature, subversive rewriting and female Gothic serve for the analysis to demonstrate that the novel is a subversive rewriting of the Polesine flood that makes voices heard that have not yet been heard. In this way it helps to fill the archive of women and non-human perspectives of the catastrophe. First, the Gothic elements present in *Magnificat* are ecological anxiety, monstrosity in the non-human element of the "Lady of the River", and the focus on the bodies of women. Second, by focusing on the archetypes of the missing woman and the entrapped woman, it discusses the ways in which these Gothic elements constitute a rewriting of the relationships between women, and of non-human and non-androcentric perspectives. Third, it discusses how *Magnificat* reflects on the ecological crisis in the way that the novel is non-anthropocentric and non-androcentric, and that is shown through ecological anxiety, monstrosity, and the bodies of women. Further, it discusses environmental risk as a contemporary version of the ancient literary theme of the apocalypse. The analysis shows the ways in which *Magnificat* offers an alternative to anthropocentric and androcentric narratives since it narrates the flood from the point of view of women and nature. The flood was caused by a series of linked events whose significance cannot be understood only by hydrological explanations but is also to be traced in human responsibilities and actions, since nature is not only a "natural" matter.

## **Psychologization and stigma in classical literature: a qualitative analysis of crime and punishment through interpretative phenomenological and lexical approaches**

**Vasiliki Dasoula**

Panteion University of Social and Political Sciences, Greece

The present study explores the socio-psychological mechanisms through which social subjects interpret deviant behavior and construct psychological stigma, as represented in classical literature. Focusing on Fyodor Dostoevsky's *Crime and Punishment*, the research investigates how psychologization, internal attributions, and the fundamental attribution error shape perceptions of criminality and mental illness. Using a qualitative content analysis framework, the study combines Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) with lexical correspondence analysis via the software IRaMuTeQ. The text was coded and analyzed to identify dominant thematic axes and recurring semantic patterns that reflect the psychological and social representations embedded in the novel. The analysis revealed four major thematic clusters concerning: (a) the socio-psychological reality of the characters, (b) interpersonal relationships and social environment, (c) the phenomenology of mental suffering, and (d) the symbolic and moral dimensions of guilt and isolation. The findings suggest that deviant behavior in literature is often psychologized—interpreted as stemming from inner pathology rather than contextual conditions—thus reinforcing essentialist stereotypes that stigmatize mental illness. Moreover, social exclusion and lack of psychiatric care appear as central metaphors for the deterioration of mental health and agency. The study highlights the potential of literary texts as qualitative data for examining social representations of mental illness, stigma, and moral responsibility. By integrating phenomenological interpretation with computational lexical analysis, it bridges humanistic and psychological inquiry, illustrating how classical literature mirrors, reproduces, and sometimes challenges dominant narratives of deviance and normality.

## **Research on the development of qualitative research in the humanities and social sciences: A bibliometric analysis**

**Vassilis Zakopoulos<sup>1</sup>, Panagiota Xanthopoulou<sup>2</sup>**

<sup>1</sup>National and Kapodistrian University of Athens; <sup>2</sup>University of West Attica

The present study investigates the evolution of qualitative research within the Social Sciences and the Arts & Humanities through a large-scale bibliometric analysis, drawing on a dataset of 79,672 documents retrieved from Scopus between the years 2015–2026. The research systematically maps the scope, methodologies, and impact of qualitative and mixed-method approaches, while contrasting them with quantitative traditions. Findings reveal that qualitative research has steadily increased over

the last ten years, with a particularly notable rise in Arts & Humanities fields, where narrative inquiry, discourse analysis, and ethnography are dominant. In contrast, Social Sciences present a more balanced interplay between qualitative, quantitative, and mixed-methods approaches, with case studies and interview-based research being most common. Document type analysis confirms the prevalence of journal articles (over 85% of the corpus), while language distribution shows a clear dominance of English, followed by Spanish and Portuguese. Country-level patterns indicate leadership from the United States and United Kingdom, but also a strong presence from Australia, Canada, and increasingly from emerging research hubs in Latin America (Brazil, Spain) and Asia (Indonesia, Malaysia, China). The comparative dimension highlights that qualitative research in the Arts & Humanities is more deeply embedded in interpretive and constructivist paradigms, whereas in the Social Sciences, its application often complements or challenges quantitative models. Citation analysis demonstrates that qualitative and mixed-method publications attract significant scholarly attention, particularly when addressing complex educational, cultural, or policy-related issues. Overall, the study underscores the critical role of qualitative inquiry in advancing nuanced understanding of human experience and knowledge production. It further contributes by mapping disciplinary and regional landscapes, offering evidence of both convergence and divergence across Social Sciences and Humanities, and outlining future opportunities for integrative methodological frameworks.

## GAME CHANGERS\_3

### **Menempathy: Qualitative Inquiry and the Challenge of Staying in Dialogue with Men**

**Alexander G Romanitan**

University of Edinburgh, UK

In an era of online polarisation and ideological fragmentation, dialogue with men has become increasingly fraught. The cultural terrain around masculinity is dominated by competing narratives of grievance, shame, and defensiveness, often amplified through digital ecosystems such as the manosphere. Within these spaces, men's longing for contact and recognition is both revealed and distorted. Qualitative inquiry, with its emphasis on lived experience, relational knowing, and reflexivity, is well placed to re-open spaces of dialogue. Yet our methods and vocabularies for listening to men remain underdeveloped or shaped by suspicion.

This Game Changer proposes a three-day interdisciplinary think tank to develop a collective framework for menempathy: the capacity to stay in feeling-with men, even when expressions of pain, anger, or confusion challenge our values or identities. Menempathy is not a plea for sympathy or agreement; it is a qualitative stance of curiosity, contact, and complexity. It asks how researchers, educators, and therapists can listen to men without collapsing into either justification or rejection, how we might hold dialogue open when cultural discourse urges closure.

Drawing from psychotherapy, education, gender studies, and the arts, this initiative invites participants to explore:

- How can qualitative research respond to the emotional and epistemological estrangement of men in contemporary culture?
- What forms of writing, storytelling, and methodology can foster genuine contact with male experience?
- How might we listen to male bodies, to sensation, vulnerability, and pleasure, beyond traditional frames of pathology, dominance, or crisis?
- What does it mean for me, as a woman, as a queer researcher, as a non-male participant — to stay in dialogue with men?
- What does it mean to write or research with men rather than about them?

Participants will examine how qualitative inquiry can engage men's lived realities through embodied, narrative, and performative approaches. The aim is to articulate methodological tools for staying in dialogue: practices of presence, language, and relational attunement that can operate across disciplines and settings.

While the inquiry centres on dialogue with men, this Game Changer welcomes participants of all genders. Menempathy is not a call to recentre men, but to re-examine the relational field in which genders meet. For women and non-male participants, these sessions offer space to explore positions in relation to masculinity, the tensions of listening, witnessing, or holding space when histories of exclusion or harm are present. The think tank thus becomes a shared workshop in reciprocal empathy, where staying in dialogue is an act of mutual recognition rather than gendered concession.

The three sessions unfold in dialogical stages:

Day One: Listening Across Silence

We map how men's voices appear or disappear in research and classrooms. Participants share experiences of breakdown — moments when dialogue with male participants, students, or clients faltered. Through reflective discussion and performative exercises, we identify affective dynamics (shame, defensiveness, fear) that shape these silences.

Day Two: Methodologies of Contact

We turn to methodological experimentation. How can performative writing, autoethnography, and arts-based inquiry open new stories of masculinity? How can the researcher's body and gendered history become part of the inquiry? Small groups sketch

methodological vignettes — fragments of possible research grounded in menempathy.

#### Day Three: Articulating Menempathy

The final session focuses on synthesis. Drawing from the insights and tensions of previous days, participants co-author a short position paper, “Principles for Staying in Dialogue with Men,” to be shared in the conference plenary. This document articulates core principles and provocations — not a policy, but a living invitation to ongoing dialogue.

The Game Changer seeks to reimagine masculinity as a field of qualitative attention, not an object of ideological dispute. It does not attempt to redeem or critique “men” as a category but to create methodological space for men’s becoming, for stories, sensations, and uncertainties that remain unspoken. Menempathy names both the challenge and the possibility of this work: to feel-with men while maintaining reflexive awareness of power, privilege, and social context. It calls for research practices that move beyond binaries of fragile versus toxic, ally versus adversary, listener versus speaker, toward a more entangled understanding of how gendered lives are co-constituted through relation.

At a time when public conversations about men oscillate between outrage and apathy, qualitative inquiry can offer something different: an attentive, dialogical, and creative space of research-as-relation. Through this Game Changer, we invite scholars and practitioners of all genders to experiment with how empathy itself might be rewritten — to see in menempathy not a defence of masculinity, but a shared, qualitative commitment to stay in conversation with what feels most difficult to hear.

## ORAL SESSION\_37: Therapy and Career topics

### Therapists go unplugged: Perceptions of Therapist’s Self Disclosure within the Psychotherapeutic Relationship

Anastasia Donta

Independent Individual Submission Affiliated with the University of Edinburgh Scotland

This phenomenological research creatively describes the experience based insights of six practitioners around the use of self disclosure in their practice. Complimentary to those are my own reflexive accounts, specifically how I perceived the relational interviewer - interviewee dynamics. Investigated were differences in disclosure definitions, the diverse effect of the person centred and psychoanalytic modalities in the formation of biases, quantity and quality of use, changes attributed to experience, their ethical decision making process and the disclosures effect on the relationship. The results build a profile of the therapist who accepts the broadness of the term’s definition, bends the rigid boundaries of either therapeutic approach within reason, has become more comfortable with experience using self disclosure infrequently mainly to universalise a shameful experience but in the benefit of the client. These claims, although in line with literature, should be generalised with caution as the available sample was culturally homogenous and female overpowered.

### Experiences and perspectives of systemic therapists with clients dealing with eating disorder issues.

Nefeli Nikolopoulou, Maria Kourtoglou

Metropolitan College, Greece

This qualitative dissertation explores the lived experiences of systemic therapists working with clients who face eating disorders, focusing on how these professionals describe their therapeutic work, what systemic strategies they use, and which challenges they encounter. Seven systemic therapists in Greece participated in semi-structured interviews, and the data were analyzed through thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Ίσαρη & Πουρκός, 2015).

Findings indicate that therapists describe their experience as deeply shaped by the **therapeutic relationship**, which they perceive as the foundation of progress. Trust, stability, and corrective relational experiences were emphasized as crucial, often taking on symbolic roles (e.g., paternal figures) for clients with histories of insecure attachment. Regarding strategies, therapists highlighted the importance of **systemic interventions** that involve families, address dysfunctional communication patterns, and externalize the symptom. Interventions focusing on family dynamics, triangulation, and the re-negotiation of roles were considered effective, particularly when they encouraged differentiation and healthier patterns of closeness and distance.

As for challenges, therapists reported emotional strain, fear of relapse, and difficulties in balancing empathy with professional boundaries. They also described the influence of **sociocultural pressures**, such as body ideals and stigma, which reinforced symptoms and required sensitive therapeutic navigation. Professionally, participants acknowledged the necessity of supervision, self-reflection, and flexibility to manage the intense emotions and complex systemic patterns that arise.

In conclusion, the study shows that the therapeutic relationship, systemic family engagement, and sociocultural context jointly shape the therapeutic process with eating disorders. The research underscores the need for culturally sensitive, systemic training and ongoing professional support to strengthen therapeutic effectiveness.

## **Phenomenology of psychosis and identity formation**

**Emmanouela Kardasi**

UNIVERSITY OF CRETE, Greece

This paper represents a qualitative phenomenological study that explores the dynamic process of identity formed in individuals with serious mental illness. The case of British musician Ren Erin Gill is the example we choose in order to investigate how the expression through music can serve as a vehicle for self-understanding, emotional integration and reconstruction of personal identity in the context of psychological and emotional suffering. The material we used has been published by Ren himself. Drawing upon basically phenomenological and hermeneutic frameworks, we emphasize on lived experience as a source of knowledge about creativity, embodiment and selfhood.

The first part of the study examines phenomenological theoretical perspectives focusing on psychosis (as a form of serious mental illness), intersubjectivity and the nature of identity formation. Phenomenology turns the light on the experiences of people with serious mental illness. Our analytic framework interpretative phenomenological analysis is also drawn on phenomenology. Identity is conceptualized not as a fixed entity but as an evolving process formed through social interaction narrative self-reflection. The second part focuses on Ren's autobiographical music work, analyzing the ways in which he externalizes inner conflicts and facilitates the process of meaning in his lyrics and performances. Transforming pain, suffering and disappointment into lyrics, Ren constructs a coherent sense of self that transcends the traumatic experiences in the mental health system. To understand Ren's personal experience deeper, we conducted interpretative phenomenological analysis on some of his songs.

The findings underscore the therapeutic potential of artistic creativity as a form of phenomenological self-exploration and emotional regulation. This work contributes to the phenomenological understanding of identity formation within the lived experience of mental illness and highlights the necessity for mental health professionals to integrate expressive meaning-centered approaches in supporting clients' identity reconstruction.

## **Women psychotherapists' experiences of constructing the therapeutic relationship: An interpretative phenomenological analysis**

**Evangelos Chatziandreou**

Private practice, Greece

The therapeutic relationship is widely regarded as a cornerstone of effective psychotherapy. This qualitative study explored how psychotherapists themselves experience the process of constructing this relationship. Six women psychotherapists from different theoretical orientations in Greece participated in semi-structured interviews, and the data were analyzed using Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA), with a focus on participants' lived experiences and the meanings they ascribed to them.

Three Group Experiential Themes (GETs) were identified. The first, Adapting to the client, comprised four Personal Experiential Themes (PETs): collecting information, acknowledging differences in therapeutic approaches, empathy as understanding, and interaction over time. The second, Trust, encompassed two PETs: confidentiality and professional consistency, and the absence of judgment as foundations for a safe therapeutic environment. The third, Education and experience, included two PETs: the psychotherapist as guide and travel companion, and therapeutic approaches as alternatives.

The findings highlight the multidimensional and dynamic nature of the therapeutic relationship, illustrating how psychotherapists integrate self-awareness, empathy, reflexivity, and professional flexibility into their practice. By illuminating therapists' experiential claims, concerns, and meanings, this study contributes to a more nuanced understanding of the therapeutic relationship and suggests implications for psychotherapy training, supervision, and the professional development of mental health.

This research was conducted as part of my undergraduate dissertation at Metropolitan College, Greece, in collaboration with the University of East London.

## **Narratives from Career Issues: Career decisions and what clients' stories teach us**

**Dione Mifsud**

University of Malta, Malta

This presentation will attempt to illustrate how real-life events have a bearing on career choice and how clients may later revisit their original decision and re-direct their career trajectory towards career goals that may have been present but were obfuscated because of traumas, beliefs and fears. The author does this using real stories which illustrate how people may choose careers as a direct result of situations and events in their lives rather than through a cognitive choice. However, working through their personal issues may help them to tweak their choices. The author uses a narrative approach and draws on 35 years of experiences with clients to address the subject

### **A tale of a burnout generation: Understanding the influence of socio-cultural processes in the perceptions and experiences of the millennial generation regarding the professional life and the fear of failure**

Karen Valdiviezo<sup>1</sup>, Maxime Morsa<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>University of Liege, Belgium; <sup>2</sup>University of Liege, Belgium

Millennials, those born between 1981 and 1996, face distinct work-life challenges shaped by recent cultural, economic, and social shifts, leading to high levels of work-related syndromes. Some authors have described them as a ‘burnout generation,’ while multiple opinion pieces have been written about stress and burnout in this generation in recent years. Millennials account for the largest cohort in the workforce; thus, they are a key demographic cohort to pay attention to. Our project’s main objectives are to theorise and critically examine the generational mechanisms and the psychosocial and socio-cultural processes involved in work-related syndromes among them, mainly burnout. This project aligns with a socio-cultural approach in psychology and proposes to approach generational phenomenon from the perspective of the subject adopting a developmental perspective to explore how Millennials build specific relations and representations of the socio-historical context related to work-life and explore their experiences and narrative. A scoping review was conducted in a first step to provide a comprehensive overview of occupational stress and professional burnout within the millennial generation. The next step is a qualitative study phase where we will conduct storytelling groups focusing on the collective experience of millennials and work-related syndromes with a focus on burnout and fear of failure. We will mobilise recent alternative theories proposed to study generations, largely ignored within generational research such as the lifespan and the socio-constructionist perspective. Storytelling will be deployed as narrative groups can make it possible to capture the generational perspective on a phenomenon (burnout). We will do so under a psychological perspective of collective memory, thus in relation to the person who remembers (millennials) as they move through life and society, to better understand their accounts of what happened to them.

### **Commonalities and differences among burned-out athletes through a Multiple-Case Analysis. The theoretical axis of “komvos” (hub).**

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Many professional high-level athletes perceive their involvement in their athlete role as a priority, a “hunt” for success, an attempt to accomplish their personal “dream”. However, this excessive effort can lead to a dysfunctional involvement in sports and turn the “dream” into a “nightmare,” leading athletes to chronically experience burnout. The present study aims to highlight similarities and differences between athletes who experienced the same initial signs of burnout but different “paths” of the syndrome, as proposed in previous research (Markati et al., 2022). Eleven burned-out athletes from a variety of individual sports were initially examined as unique case studies, revealing a variety of negative thoughts, feelings, and behaviors (chronologically evolved across a 3-year time). An Embedded Multiple Case Study Design, relying on theoretical propositions (Yin, 2009), was employed, revealing four “axes” of a proposed theoretical model. According to the results, a (hub) “Komvos” axis was revealed as a remarkable finding, signaling a period of changes through the athlete’s unique “burnout path” across time. “Komvos” identifies three phases in sequence, with their corresponding reactions: (a) “*starting point*” (difficulties from demanding situations or unforeseen/unexpected development of them), (b) “*main feature*” (response to the ‘starting point’ through critical negative events, or the “peak” of negative feelings-thoughts-behaviors, or the dead ends from a vicious cycle of negative emotions-thoughts-behaviors) and (c) “*critical reaction*” (e.g. compliance, adaptation to difficulties, interruption of a negative situation, consolidation of negative situations, persistence in a desire or effort and refusal of dysfunctional conditions). “Komvos” position in understanding the progression of the syndrome is crucial, and it is the first time a critical stage has been identified for understanding burnout progression. Identifying and recognizing the “komvos” turning point for a burned-out athlete enables sport practitioners and specialists to prevent irreversible consequences of burnout and reverse this negative experience.

### **Aesthetic crisis and resilience: exploring body image in Chinese traditional dancers**

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Currently, Chinese traditional dance is shaped by the mixed influence of contemporary Western ideals of health and traditional Chinese philosophies such as Daoism and Confucianism (Mao, 2022). In this transition from culturally specific to globalized aesthetics, it is essential to inform dance training, education, and policy by promoting healthier body standards, preventing harmful practices, and fostering resilience through peer support. This qualitative study explores how Chinese tra-

ditional dancers construct body image, how this construction informs their behaviors to reach the ideal body, and how they navigate conversations about the body among peers. Twelve professional Chinese traditional dancers aged 17 to 29 participated in semi-structured interviews. Methodological rigor was enhanced through attention to dancers' institutional contexts, iterative coding, and peer debriefing. Through this process, intertextual and intratextual analysis (Wolcott, 1994) revealed the dual role of aesthetic standards as both a conduit for cultural transmission and a source of crisis.

Four key themes emerged in the findings. First, dancers experience tension between conflicting aesthetic standards that value both powerful movement and soft, graceful lines. Second, their simultaneous focus on functionality and appearance heightens vulnerability to body-related anxiety. Third, these tensions manifest through internal conflict and peer competition, visible in weight-control strategies and daily conversations. Finally, imported Western fitness ideals that emphasize discipline, combined with limited institutional health education and the normalization of extreme training routines, make it difficult for dancers to recognize unhealthy coping behaviors amid their efforts toward career success. The study contributes to cross-cultural embodiment theory by illuminating how globalization reshapes self-perception and traditional aesthetic norms in performative bodies. Implications for educators and practitioners include recognizing early signs of unhealthy body-related thoughts, emotions, and behaviors and responding with culturally sensitive interventions.

## **Action research to explore the emotional load of doing EDI work in HE**

**Gillian Proctor**

University of Leeds, United Kingdom

This paper describes the outcomes of a one-year funded project to explore the emotional impact of working in equity diversity and inclusion (EDI) in a higher education (HE) setting. Four action research groups or workshops were facilitated by the researcher and a research assistant, following the format of presenting topics and asking participants to discuss. Nineteen participants took part in these groups in total.

The topics presented were: types of stress, overwhelm, fear and despair. Participants were also asked to recommend what resources or support they would find helpful for the emotional impact of EDI work. The groups were analysed and themes identified and presented. Three themes were identified: the emotional and moral complexity of EDI work, struggling to make change in rigid systems and finding strength through connection and care. The implications of these themes will be discussed and recommendations for useful resources and responses by universities will be presented.

## **ORAL SESSION 39: Ethnic minority perspectives, structural and cultural risks**

### **Perceptions of the role of the mentoring relationship of racially and ethnically minoritized occupational therapy practitioners**

**Christyn Mitchell**

Thomas Jefferson University, United States of America

Mentoring has proven to be an effective strategy for helping healthcare students manage the stress of academic demands and the transition into clinical practice. However, there remains a gap in understanding how gender and cultural factors impact mentoring relationships. Specifically, the role of the mentoring relationship among racially and ethnically minoritized (REM) occupational therapy practitioners has been insufficiently studied. This qualitative, descriptive study explored how racially and ethnically minoritized occupational therapy practitioners perceived the role of the mentoring relationship during their academic training. Thirty-one participants were recruited through purposive sampling. Participants who identified as REM individuals and who completed occupational therapy (OT) or occupational therapy assistant (OTA) training within the United States were interviewed. Through semi-structured interviews, analysis of the data reflected five key categories: (1) authenticity of interpersonal relationships, (2) understanding of psychosocial needs, (3) the toil of emotional labor and identity work, (4) importance of community and authentic support, and (5) representation and diversity of shared experiences. The findings provided specific recommendations from REM practitioners regarding valued components of mentoring relationships, desired topics for discussion, and supports needed for success. These insights offer considerations for developing mentoring programs for students in occupational therapy programs. These considerations uplift the voices of REM occupational therapy and occupational therapy assistant students and provide insight into their mentoring needs as they transition from the academic setting into professional practice.

### **Understanding perspectives of ethnic minority community leaders on positive deviance lifestyle behaviours**

**Charity Aienobe-Asekhare, Rachael Farayola, Hibbah Osei-Kwasi**

Loughborough University, United Kingdom

**Introduction**

Ethnic minority groups in the UK, particularly African and Caribbean communities, experience persistent health inequalities, including higher rates of early-onset obesity and non-communicable diseases (NCDs) such as type 2 diabetes and cardiovascular disease. These disparities contribute to reduced life expectancy and quality of life. Positive deviance offers an asset-based approach to health promotion by identifying individuals who achieve better health outcomes despite facing similar challenges.

This research explored how leaders from African and Caribbean communities conceptualise positive deviants (individuals who maintain healthy lifestyle behaviours despite facing common challenges) to inform a community-defined criteria for recruitment.

### Methods

This qualitative study was conducted in Greater Manchester and Leicestershire. Fifteen community leaders from African and Caribbean backgrounds across various sectors were purposively sampled for their insight into community dynamics. To address historical mistrust and low research participation, a community-based referral approach was used alongside recruitment call on social media. Semi-structured interviews explored perceptions of diet and physical activity. Data was analysed thematically using inductive and deductive approaches.

### Results

Food was found to hold deep cultural significance, serving as a means of expressing joy, care, and connection. This social relationship with food, while positive, can hinder the adoption of healthier behaviours. Two key dimensions emerged in identifying positive deviants (PDs) with respect to diet and physical activity: challenges and motivations. Despite facing barriers such as demanding work schedules, financial pressures, migration-related stress, and chronic health conditions, PDs will tend to adopt healthier lifestyles. Their motivations included managing medical diagnoses, improving physical appearance and wellbeing, achieving longevity to enjoy family life, and maintaining independence in later years. This community defined criteria will inform recruitment of PDs for this community.

### Discussion

Community leader engagement uncovered key cultural factors vital for recruiting PDs. Future research will use photovoice to explore how PDs sustain healthy lifestyles.

## Creative methods in practice: A study of children's attitudes toward mathematics

Rosaria Lumino, Ciro Cangiano, Giulio Di Cicco

University of Naples Federico II, Italy

Since the early 2000s, creative methods have seen widespread adoption in the social sciences on a global scale. This development has been driven by the need to design research strategies capable of engaging marginalized or hard-to-reach social groups – such as children, migrants, prisoners, people experiencing homelessness, members of cultural minorities, and persons with disabilities – who are often inaccessible through traditional methods. At the same time, these new approaches reflect a broader shift toward research practices that are more participatory, inclusive, and dialogue oriented. Creative methods not only expand the methodological repertoire of social research but also contribute to redefining power relations between researchers and participants, prompting a critical reflection on the processes through which scientific knowledge is produced and legitimized.

In this contribution, based on a national research project on primary school funded by the Italian Ministry of University and Research, we present a study conducted using creative methods aimed at exploring the attitudes of children aged 7 to 9 toward mathematics. The research activities, which involved a total of 148 pupils, explored a variety of dimensions, such as returning to school after the summer holidays, attitudes toward numbers, homework, and the use of digital devices. The activities were carried out in the school context and employed a variety of playful tools and materials: a poster to explain the rules of the game; a mascot to manage turn-taking during discussions; animated post its, laminated figures, and visual materials designed to encourage participation and dialogue.

The study's findings articulate a nuanced and multifaceted conceptualization of children's relationship with schooling and with mathematics, underscoring the pivotal role of socio-cultural background and the pedagogical models experienced at school.

## GAME CHANGERS\_4

### Connection without collaboration: rethinking relational ethics in qualitative inquiry

Ria Arora

McMaster University, Canada

Can connection and collaboration really co-exist together? Institutions such as academia and the Canadian voluntary sector are increasingly encouraging collaboration. Research has shown that the increase in collaboration is rooted in the larger socio-political-economic project of neoliberalism that promotes “doing more with less,” that is, cost-effective mechanisms for larger productivity and outputs. Similarly, collaboration has become a band-aid on both sides of a macro-dynamic in which institutions

leverage collaboration as a cost-effective means to increase productivity while academics and/or medium-scale nonprofit organizations use collaboration to resist institutional pressures and optimize their successes. However, from a humanist perspective, can connection and collaboration really co-exist together in the neoliberal, capitalist, heteronormative context that we live in?

This game changer interrogates the paradox between connection and collaboration in qualitative research. Within academic and community-based inquiry, relationships are often celebrated as ethical and participatory; yet, connection is frequently tethered to the timeline of a collaboration, dissolving once a project ends. What does it mean to build genuine relationships that are not contingent on productivity, deliverables, or shared outputs? This gamechanger explores how relational ethics might be reimagined beyond the logics of collaboration toward a practice of connection that honors temporality, care, and autonomy.

Reimagining relational ethics invites us to explore the constitution of relational ethics. While relational ethics is often conceived as a shared moral framework grounded in reciprocity and mutual understanding, relationality is inherently contingent upon individual values, histories, and affective orientations. As such, relationality cannot be fully mutual, it is singular, partial, and lived differently by each participant. This tension exposes a fundamental paradox: ethics assumes collectivity, while relationality resists it.

Hence, can we ever achieve truly ethical relationality that is mutually understood? In theory, yes—codes of ethics, institutional/community guidelines, and laws create frameworks that assume shared moral ground. Yet, in practice, relational ethics are shaped by individual factors such as one's relationship to shame. The more deeply shame is buried, the more it constrains one's capacity to be relational. As a result, relationality remains asymmetrical, often reinforcing a systemic cycle in which collaboration becomes a proxy for connection, a structural bandage covering affective disconnection.

The outcome of this project takes the form of a Museum of Failed or Finished Collaborations: a research-creation installation that curates fragments of relational collapse in qualitative inquiry. This living archive gathers traces of projects, correspondences, and emotional residues that mark the afterlife of collaboration: emails never sent, ideas left unfinished, moments of silence that followed care. Each artifact stands as evidence of the paradoxes that shape our scholarly relationships: connection tethered to collaboration, ethics presuming mutuality, and the buried shame that determines our capacity to relate. By materializing what academia routinely conceals: the endings, asymmetries, and quiet failures that structure relational work, the museum invites participants and viewers to reflect on how knowledge is co-constituted through rupture as much as through reciprocity. In doing so, it reframes failure not as absence but as a methodological site of feeling, accountability, and ethical re-imagination.

#### Session 1: The Paradoxes of Relational Ethics

The session begins with a conceptual presentation of three paradoxes that frame the project: (1) the paradox of connection and collaboration, where relationality is sustained only through productivity; (2) the paradox of ethics and relationality, in which ethics assumes mutuality while relational experience remains asymmetrical; and (3) the paradox of shame and ethical capacity, where unacknowledged shame shapes how and whether we can be relational at all. This opening situates participants within the emotional, ethical, and methodological tensions that give rise to the museum.

#### Session 2: Building the Museum

Participants are invited to co-create the Museum of Failed or Finished Collaborations. Through guided prompts, they contribute fragments of unfinished projects, collapsed relationships, or unspoken endings: emails, reflections, screenshots, sketches, or anonymous notes. These contributions become "artifacts," displayed digitally or physically, forming an emergent archive of relational rupture. This process transforms personal experience into shared inquiry, allowing participants to witness the systemic conditions that make failure a structural inevitability rather than an individual fault.

#### Session 3: Completing the Installation

The final session returns to reflection. Together, participants re-enter the museum to interpret what has been assembled, tracing patterns of connection, disconnection, and repair. Discussion focuses on how these paradoxes might reorient qualitative research toward a more honest ethics: one that values endings, asymmetries, and emotional residue as knowledge. The installation remains a living archive, a collective gesture toward accountability and creative closure.

## Poster Session\_3

### **P31\_ Experiences accessing sexual and reproductive healthcare as an autistic person in Ireland: a qualitative exploration**

**Adriana Guppy**

Trinity College Dublin, Ireland

Background: Autistic individuals face unique barriers when accessing sexual and reproductive health (SRH) services, including communication difficulties, sensory overload, and provider biases due to a lack of autism knowledge. Currently the majority of the literature focuses on general healthcare, autistic children, and/or perinatal services. Understanding these aspects is crucial for promoting equitable and positive healthcare access for Autistic individuals here in Ireland.

Method: This study follows a qualitative format, focusing on the lived experiences of participants and how they perceive

access to SRH care. Semi-structured interviews were conducted in person and online with six Autistic people from Ireland who were recruited through purposive sampling. Data was analysed using thematic analysis and care is given to transparency as the researcher is just as much a part of the study as the participants.

**Findings:** The data analysis identified several themes, including systemic barriers due to a lack of autism-informed training for practitioners and insufficient SRH services for autistic individuals. Practitioners' individual personalities was highlighted as a factor that impacts service experience, as well as challenges with autistic traits. Autistic patients often faced additional responsibilities because of barriers.

**Conclusions:** The findings underscore the need for autism-informed training among SRH providers and accommodations that can reduce the burden on Autistic individuals to self-advocate. This research extends beyond the existing literature's scope, revealing a broader spectrum of SRH care experienced by Autistic people. Future research should continue to address gaps, aiming to develop more equitable SRH practices for Autistic people.

### **P32\_ Experiences of adjustment among international students in Greece**

**Alessia Lulaj<sup>1,2</sup>, Antonia Svensson Dianellou<sup>1</sup>, Aliko Kekia<sup>1</sup>, Ntaniella Roumpini Pylarinou<sup>1</sup>**

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Studying abroad is a valuable alternative to staying at home for higher education, enhancing personal growth and employment opportunities whilst attaining multicultural competence. Previous research indicates many undergraduate students face challenges coping with the demands of university and social support has been found to help reduce acculturation stress. International students, however, have additional stressors due to studying in a foreign language, in a new culture, away from their usual support network of family and friends. This research aimed to explore overall experiences, social, academic, psychological challenges, support systems, and coping mechanisms of international students attending university in Greece. A qualitative approach was selected to provide an in-depth understanding of the psychosocial and cultural dimensions of international students' adjustment experiences. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 7 international students, recruited using maximum variation sampling. The interviews were audio-recorded, transcribed and analyzed using Thematic Analysis. The themes derived from Thematic Analysis included: (1) new life and adjustment in Greece, (2) academic life, (3) personal development and well-being, (4) support systems, (5) social life, (6) cultural adjustment, and (7) home/family, friends. The findings underscore the need for universities, in Greece and beyond, to adopt a structured and culturally sensitive framework to effectively support international students throughout their adjustment journey. Universities should prioritize fostering a positive intercultural environment, while future research should aim to further investigate first year bachelor's degree and Postgraduate international student experiences in Greece.

### **P33\_ Exploring mental health after breast cancer: Experiences, views on interventions, and the potential role of oxytocin**

**Lotte Theunissen<sup>1</sup>, Sabine Deprez<sup>2</sup>, Ann Smeets<sup>3,4</sup>, Kaat Alaerts<sup>1</sup>**

<sup>1</sup>Department of Rehabilitation Sciences, KU Leuven, Leuven, Belgium.; <sup>2</sup>Department of Imaging and Pathology, KU Leuven, Leuven, Belgium.; <sup>3</sup>Department of Oncology, KU Leuven, Leuven, Belgium.; <sup>4</sup>Multidisciplinary Breast Center (MBC), UZ Leuven, Leuven, Belgium.

**Background.** After completing breast cancer treatment, many survivors experience psychological challenges – such as high stress, depressive feelings, and fears. However, few seek professional help, suggesting that barriers to mental health care may persist.

To explore this issue, we will conduct qualitative, semi-structured interviews to understand how breast cancer survivors experience their psychological wellbeing after completing cancer treatment. The study focuses on the psychological and existential challenges they may encounter, their views on the need for psychosocial aftercare, and the forms of support or treatment they have used, considered, or would be open to, including potential oxytocin-based interventions. Furthermore, we aim to identify perceived barriers to seeking or receiving psychological support.

**Participants.** Breast cancer survivors aged 18–65 years who completed their treatment between six months and five years ago will be recruited through flyers, online advertisements, and the multidisciplinary breast center at University Hospitals Leuven. Interviews will continue until data saturation is reached.

**Methods.** Interviews will be audio-recorded, transcribed verbatim, and analyzed using thematic analysis following Braun and Clarke's (2006) approach. The Qualitative Analysis Guide of Leuven will guide the iterative and detailed coding process. To reduce potential bias, coding and analysis will be conducted independently by different members of the research team.

**Conclusion.** This study will contribute to a better understanding of breast cancer survivors' post-treatment psychological needs and potential barriers to care, providing insights to inform tailored aftercare and future interventions.

## **P34\_Exploring Resilience and Mindfulness in the workplace: A Qualitative Study**

**Christina Tsavari<sup>1,2</sup>, Ntaniella Roumpini Pylarinou<sup>2</sup>**

<sup>1</sup>University of Greater Manchester; <sup>2</sup>New York College, Athens Greece

Mindfulness and resilience play a crucial role on the emotional well-being of the employees. Previous literature had explored the impact of mindfulness and resilience in the employees who had participated in intervention programs. However, it was unclear how these concepts were perceived by employees who did not have mindfulness and resilience interventions in their workplace. The purpose of the presented study was to explore mindfulness and resilience in the workplace and how employees were perceiving these concepts based on their experiences. It was a qualitative study that included six interviews with employees from different fields. Thematic analysis revealed three main themes. The first theme was related to the development of resilience in the workplace; the second theme was regarding mindfulness in action and the last theme was related to the impact of mindfulness and resilience in wellbeing and work performance. The findings highlighted the importance of introducing mindfulness techniques in the workplace while also fostering resilience for the employees. In addition, implications of the current research, future dimensions that need to be explored were discussed alongside the limitations that were identified.

## **P35\_Exploring strategy, logistical processes, and access to medicines in Malta's public sector pharmaceutical distribution: a grounded theory study**

**Bernardette Scerri Rossi**

Malta College of Arts, Science and Technology, Malta

Access to medicines is a foundation of the right to health, yet small island states face unique challenges in ensuring equitable and sustainable pharmaceutical delivery. In Malta, a small island nation highly dependent on imports, the pharmaceutical supply chain is shaped by logistical limitations, regulatory frameworks, and procurement policies. While larger countries' systems have been studied extensively, little research has examined how small states manage medicine access. This study addresses this gap by using a constructivist grounded theory approach to examine Malta's public sector pharmaceutical supply chain, aiming to develop a substantive theoretical framework that captures the complex interplay between policy, procurement, pricing, and access.

In the initial study phase, data was collected through eight in-depth semi-structured interviews with procurement and policy stakeholders, coded and analysed using MAXQDA, and supported by documentary analysis and constant comparative analysis. Over 1,700 data segments were organized into conceptual categories reflecting context, actions/reactions, and consequences. Six higher-order concepts emerged: governance of formulary inclusion, pharmaceutical pricing and budget allocation, medicine procurement systems, patient treatment availability, regulatory and legal frameworks, and cross-organisational collaboration.

Initial findings highlight persistent inefficiencies in formulary governance, where delays in health technology assessments and outdated processes undermine timely access to medicines. Pricing policies were perceived as outdated and misaligned with post-pandemic realities, creating procurement barriers and financial strain. The procurement system itself is characterized by rigidity and vulnerability, including dependence on UK-sourced medicines, raising urgent concerns as Brexit derogations near expiry. Consequences include inequities in treatment availability, reliance on exceptional pathways, and systemic strains that compromise both budgetary sustainability and patient outcomes.

This ongoing research presents a grounded model explaining how governance, pricing, procurement, and collaboration interact to shape medicine access in small-island contexts, providing preliminary insights that may inform integrated reforms that strengthen resilience, equity, and sustainability.

## **P36\_Exploring the implications of culture in integrated primary care: Perspectives of behavioral health consultants**

**Shane' Gill<sup>1</sup>, Carine Kambou<sup>1</sup>, Brooke Mauriello<sup>2</sup>**

<sup>1</sup>Thomas Jefferson University, United States of America; <sup>2</sup>Atlantic Prevention Resources, United States of America

Cultural adaptations to Integrated Primary Care (IPC) models have impacted behavioral health outcomes in Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC), with varying results. However, researchers have yet to determine which culturally sensitive approaches in IPC have the greatest impact. Furthermore, no study has explored culture in the context of IPC or how cultural context shapes behavioral health processes for BIPOC patients, who are overrepresented in behavioral health diagnoses and underrepresented in services in the United States. This phenomenological study used semi-structured interviews to explore Behavioral Health Consultants (BHCs) definition of culture and how culture shaped screening, assessment, and treatment of behavioral health conditions in BIPOC patients in IPC settings. Thematic analysis revealed endorsement of White male cisgender heteronormative and use of White authoritarianism in medicine, both of which reportedly contributed to poor conceptualization of BIPOC patients' symptoms. Use of culturally sensitive and responsive frameworks in IPC, tailored to contextual factors that shape behavioral health outcomes in BIPOC patients were encouraged. Themes support an ongoing need to identify how culturally-sensitive and responsive frameworks are defined in IPC settings and the efficacy of these frameworks in reducing structural barriers across all levels of health systems. In doing so, cultural adaptations to existing models and interventions can be made to improve behavioral health outcomes for BIPOC patients.

## **P37\_From emptiness to Sunyata: Flowing through fragmentation in an embodied and psychodramatic inquiry**

**Yingjie Ouyang**

University of Edinburgh, United Kingdom

This poster explores a movement from Western notions of emptiness—as absence, fragmentation, and rupture—towards the Buddhist understanding of sunyata, a generative and interdependent ontology of becoming. Rooted in heuristic inquiry, the research engages psychodrama, embodied writing, and visual symbolism to revisit moments of temporal acceleration and emotional dislocation shaped by early academic achievement. Through re-entering scenes of silence and dissociation, the inquiry seeks to reconfigure emptiness not as lack, but as a living field of resonance.

In alignment with the conference theme of Global Flows, Connections, Dialogues, and Collaborative Practices in Challenging Times, this work situates personal experience within a broader ecology of shared vulnerability and relational becoming. The passage from the fragmented self to the flowing self mirrors a collective movement from separation to interconnectedness—between East and West, human and more-than-human, self and world.

The poster is designed as a contemplative visual space where textual fragments, embodied traces, and reflective silence invite polyphonic dialogue. Rather than offering closure, it proposes an encounter: to dwell within the flowing emptiness of sunyata, where knowing arises not through mastery, but through resonance, humility, and inter-being.

## **P38\_Knitting reflection into being: Exploring collaborative, material knowledge-making through a hands-on invitation to knit along**

**Filippa Kier Droob**

Aarhus University, Denmark

In connection with my proposed paper, I experiment with the format of a poster, prompting active engagement and material output. As such, this poster is an invitation to interact physically with the practice of knitting, offering participants a chance to create a collaborative, material, living archive of the conference. The poster itself presents prompts and speculative scripts that encourage participants to knit in response to thoughts, feelings, or other sensations arising from the conference. With yarn and needles available, people can choose to continue knitting on the patches already knitted, adding their own rows of knitting to the collective piece, or they can start a new one from scratch, adding to the collection of knitted patches for the next participant to choose from. In addition, the poster offers a blank space for participants to contribute with a small, anonymous memo of their experience while knitting, attaching reflections to accompany the knitted pieces at the end of the conference.

Aligning with the conference's focus on creative and participatory modes of qualitative inquiry, this poster explores an innovative, hands-on approach to producing and sharing knowledge. It offers a reflective space between the inspiring sessions of the conference, where participants can pause and root their thoughts through material engagement. Through its interactive format and focus on collaborative knowledge-making, the poster explores how material outputs can serve as academic data, inviting reflection on how alternative methods might reshape both the process and the product of research.

## **P39\_Learning Through Friction: A post-qualitative inquiry into performative art education**

**Bente Fossvold-Jørum**

NTNU, Norway

In a time marked by uncertainty and transformation, this post-qualitative inquiry explores how friction emerges and intra-acts within performative art history workshops in teacher education, and what these frictions make possible for learning and professional becoming. Drawing on Karen Barad's (2007) agential realism and diffractive methodology, as well as relational and performative theory (Østern et al., 2021; Gergen & Gergen, 2018), the study reimagines education as an entangled, affective, and ethical practice of becoming-with. The inquiry draws on multimodal research materials—student logs, artistic expressions, photos, video recordings, and researcher reflections—from six performative workshops where traditional, lecture-based approaches met embodied, aesthetic, and collaborative experimentation.

Through diffractive analysis, reading theory and empirical fragments through one another, three analytical vignettes unfold: bodily resistance and vulnerability swaying between comfort and discomfort; the agency of materiality; and an epistemological longing for the familiar. Rather than treating friction as failure or opposition, the study conceptualises it as a generative and transformative ethical-pedagogical force. Friction becomes a mode of learning-with, the very texture of transformation where students, teachers, materials, and affects co-compose knowledge.

In dialogue with the ECQI 2026 theme, this work contributes to global qualitative conversations on transformative, embodied, and performative practices that respond to the challenges of our time. It invites educational researchers to stay with discomfort (Haraway, 2016) and to recognise friction as an ethical, epistemological, and relational practice of hope, one that connects local classrooms to wider movements of renewal through vulnerability, creativity, and collaborative becoming.

## P40\_Mapping stress trajectories in return migration: a qualitative conceptual model from Latvia

Iveta Ozola-Cirule

University of Latvia, Latvia

Return migration is a complex and dynamic process that involves psychological, social, and structural challenges. While existing literature has often emphasised post-return difficulties, less attention has been paid to the pre-return phase and how stress unfolds across time. This study presents a qualitative conceptual model of stress and psychological resources in return migration, grounded in the lived experiences of Latvian nationals who have returned after extended stays abroad.

The research was conducted through 21 in-depth interviews with return migrants, complemented by a focus group discussion to explore and validate emerging themes further. Following a Grounded Theory approach, data were coded and analysed iteratively to capture trajectories of stress and the activation of psychological resources as narrated by participants.

The model reveals that uncertainty, doubts, and fear of the unknown often create more intense stress before return than during the actual re-adjustment process. Once back in Latvia, migrants encounter both disruptive and facilitating factors that shape their re-adjustment; yet, those who had engaged in extensive preparation described the transition as a step-by-step process that felt more manageable. Notably, the model highlights internal psychological resources – such as flexible thinking and emotional resilience – as central mechanisms that helped participants navigate stress and sustain well-being.

By mapping stress trajectories across phases of return migration, the study offers a process-oriented understanding that connects individual narratives with broader societal relevance. It contributes to migration research by integrating the often-overlooked pre-return dimension and by emphasising the role of internal psychological resources. The findings also hold practical significance for policymakers and institutions in Latvia, where return migration has become a topic of national importance.

This poster will visually present the conceptual model, illustrating the stress trajectories, psychological resources, and their temporal dynamics, thereby inviting dialogue on how qualitative inquiry can illuminate complex transitions in migration.

## P41\_Challenging and needs of family caregivers of people with Dementia in Salamina

Despoina Aroni<sup>1,2</sup>, Ntaniella Roumpini Pylarinou<sup>2</sup>

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One of the most pressing public health challenges of the 21st century is dementia and the care of these individuals particularly in advanced stages is placed on their family members—mainly women—who are often required to assume caregiving responsibilities without the necessary support from the state. This phenomenon has multidimensional implications—causing significant strain not only on those diagnosed but also on their families. The aim of this study is to explore the experiences, perspectives, and challenges faced by six family caregivers (five women and one man) of individuals with advanced-stage dementia, with a focus on the long-term care they provide.

A qualitative research methodology was employed, using reflective thematic analysis through semi-structured online interviews. Participants were adult caregivers of individuals with dementia residing in the Municipality of Salamina, Greece, to ensure equal access to local community services and support structures. The interviews were structured around specific thematic axes including: the caregivers' personal, professional, financial, and social lives; their mental and physical health; how their lived experience can contribute to the training of new caregivers; and their proposals for improving social policy.

Despite the emergence of some positive experiences of personal growth and empowerment, the main findings highlight a significant burden on family caregivers at economic, physical, social, and emotional levels. In Greece, and particularly in small communities such as Salamina, dementia care remains a family responsibility, typically unpaid, due to the lack of adequate public care structures and support services. The results of the study underscore the urgent need for financial support for caregivers, along with systematic assistance from formal community care services, health and social care professionals. Such support is essential for enabling caregivers to fulfill their demanding roles, while also improving the quality of life for care recipients and strengthening social cohesion.

## P42\_Changing education in and to a collaborative, artful practice

Charlotte Prang Svensson

Aalborg University, Denmark

The field of education has developed over the 20th century and changed more radically over the last three decades. It gives rise to evidence-based education and places the problematic 'what-works'-question in the centre. It entails teachers losing or being deprived of their professional judgement in education and being reduced to technicians who follow *what works*.

Based on action research, I have since March 2025 worked with my co-researchers to change our teaching practice toward a collaborative, artful approach. A practice that is still becoming, fragile and aims to enable making judgements in practice, practising 'becoming' agents making world-relations in our educational life. To change, we need to be disturbed, and art is a perfect interrupter, a potent change agent.

The artistic approach, the artfulness in our work, helps us experience micromovements slowly change our thoughts, feelings and actions. Challenges in the organisation appear in a new light, now seen as inherent to the organisation and its history, rather than as expressions of individual incompetence or inadequacy. We are not just changing our teaching. We have become participants in each other's emancipation from unhealthy emotions.

The paper reflects on methodological and theoretical approaches to elaborate wayfinding to develop a responsible, collaborative, artful praxeology in educational practice.

### **P43\_Creating Relational Ripples through the use of autoethnographic stories in psychotherapy**

**Marilena Karamatsouki**

Stegi Psychotherapeias (private practice), Greece

In an era of global changes and mental health challenges, qualitative researchers strive to reflect the emerging realities in their areas of inquiry. As a practitioner researcher, what I find largely defining the process, and potentially the outcome of psychotherapy, is: a) the relational space between me and my client, b) the relational space within my different selves, and c) the interconnectedness of these relational spaces. In my doctoral research, I used the concept of relational space, which includes human and non-human elements, verbal and non-verbal interactions, emotions, embodied responses... and more. The exploration of relational space also takes into consideration the environment and systems in which we live and function. In order to study the complex encounter of relational spaces in the therapy room, in my doctoral research I used stories about an event that occurred during a therapy session or about something I reflected on about a particular client or a particular session. In these autoethnographic stories, the focus is not on the therapy techniques, nor on the client's difficulties. Instead, the focus is on the relational conversation between my client and myself, as well as my inner dialogue and thoughts and feelings. In a way, what I am trying to do is create a professionally employable space for the personal. The collaborative dialogue between these relational spaces as shown in autoethnographic stories creates relational ripples, which in turn open up possibilities and generate transformative practices in the psychotherapy process. Writing autoethnographic stories and their use in my inquiry is a methodological tool, applicable and useful to other practitioners, who need to respond to current mental health challenges.

### **P44\_Leaders' views on interaction mechanisms in a global health research network**

**Kirsi Kuuru**

University of Eastern Finland, Finland

<p>Despite the advances in IT technology, large-scale research networks pursuing solutions to &ldquo;grand challenges&rdquo; face increasing complexity in coordinating distributed collaboration across time zones and cultures as well as geographical and organizational boundaries. Drawing on the Network of Practice (NoP) framework, this study explores how the leaders of a large, informal global health research network understand and utilize interaction mechanisms to support collaboration, knowledge sharing, learning, and the improvement of shared practice binding the network members together.</p>

<p>The study builds on longitudinal semi-structured online interviews (n=13) with leaders working for the coordinating unit of the health research network comprising over 90 research teams worldwide. In addition, network-generated documents (e.g., publications, websites) and observation in online network meetings provide supporting background information. The data is analysed qualitatively using reflexive thematic analysis and ATLAS.ti software.</p>

<p>Findings highlight the importance of hybrid interaction mechanisms&mdash;such as network-wide meetings organized both in-person and online, help desk functions, asynchronous document sharing, and International Working Groups &mdash;in fostering engagement and collective learning. Furthermore, informal interaction between members is irreplaceable for building trust, which in turn enhances collaboration.</p>

<p>The study contributes to qualitative research on leadership in distributed networks by offering insights into how interaction mechanisms are strategically developed and adapted in digitally transformed, multicultural contexts such as global research networks. Findings suggest that while digital tools facilitate participation and collaboration, informal social dynamics and shared purpose are critical for sustaining engagement and learning based on knowledge sharing. The study offers practical insights for designing inclusive and effective interaction mechanisms for large informal research networks.</p>

### **P46\_Therapists' perspectives and experiences of Multicultural Counseling**

**Nikolaos Papadopoulos**

University of Athens, Greece

This poster presents a focused part of a broader qualitative study that explored therapists' perspectives and experiences of multicultural counseling. More specifically, it looks into therapists' meaning making understanding of diversity, systemic inequalities and positions of privilege in their professional practice. Fifteen therapists with a minimum of two years of professional

experience participated in the study. Data were generated through semi-structured interviews and therapists's reflective journals; they were analyzed using reflexive thematic analysis. Overall, the findings suggest that therapists' understandings of multicultural counseling involve an ongoing process of self-awareness and relational sensitivity, where the social and the personal intertwine. The therapists seem to adopt a reflexive stance, positioning themselves with humility and openness in their engagement with culturally diverse clients and are aware of the broader social context—how cultural differences, systemic inequalities, and positions of privilege or marginalization influence the therapeutic encounter.

## ORAL SESSION\_40: Students in higher education

### From sympathy to empathy: a duo-ethnography of cross-cultural mentorship between international students

Vandana Singh, Nai Lang

Bath Spa University, Bath, UK, United Kingdom

RQ: How can sympathy be transformed into deep empathy within cross-cultural PhD mentor–mentee relationships?

How can sympathy be transformed into deep empathy within cross-cultural PhD mentor–mentee relationships? International doctoral students often encounter formidable hurdles, from adapting to unfamiliar academic practices and cultural expectations to managing personal pressures. Traditional supervision, although foundational for academic guidance, frequently leaves many needs unmet, resulting in a critical support gap. Mentoring emerges here as an indispensable resource that addresses these underlying challenges.

This paper tackles the issue by employing duo-ethnography, as enacted by two international postgraduate researchers a mentor from India now embedded in UK higher education, and a mentee from China progressing through her PhD. Their extended relationship, grounded in authentic support and mutual understanding, moves beyond superficial sympathy to deeper, reciprocal empathy.

Over the course of eighteen months, the mentor and mentee initiated monthly conversations, recorded their meetings, and maintained reflection journals, fostering ongoing dialogue and self-awareness. These interactions, systematically shared and analysed, embody the dual ethnographic method and reflect the dynamic interplay of their personal and academic identities (Valdez et al., 2022; Burleigh and Burm, 2022). Our findings highlight how the cultivation of empathy—not mere sympathy—contributes meaningfully to both academic achievement and emotional wellbeing in doctoral studies.

We propose a transformative model for evolving sympathy into empathy within cross-cultural mentorship, demonstrating its practical value in relieving the isolation and tension experienced by international doctoral scholars. This approach not only bridges gaps left by conventional supervision but also enhances academic environments through more holistic support. Our research offers actionable insights for institutions aiming to design more effective mentoring systems for diverse doctoral communities.

### Workshopping as collective thinking and doing - tracing students' academic writing in higher education

Sofia Jusslin<sup>1,2</sup>, Charlotta Hilli<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>University of Helsinki, Finland; <sup>2</sup>Åbo Akademi University

This paper presents and discusses methodological considerations on workshopping as collective thinking and doing when tracing students' academic writing in higher education. It is contextualized in the research project CO-WRITE (2025–2027), which explores students' collaborative academic writing in hybrid learning spaces in higher education. The subproject that this paper more particularly builds on explores what students use in their academic writing, how they use it, and why, understanding academic writing as created in relations between humans and non-humans through thinking with posthuman and sociomaterial theories (e.g., Barad, 2007; Latour, 2005). Rather than performing the data generation as a process of eliciting student responses about what they use, how they use it, and why, four workshops were enacted with the purpose that the research participation could become valuable for the students (cf. Kara, 2015). The intention was that something of value might emerge not only for the research but also for the students themselves. Altogether, 30 students in educational, political, and caring sciences participated in the workshops (2,5 h/workshop) and were tasked with mapping and discussing their academic writing processes, based on questions from the researchers. The workshops were designed not merely as a means of generating data, but also to provide the students with opportunities engage in reflective dialogues about their writing together with peers, which previous research has suggested to be valuable in developing as and becoming an academic writer (Jusslin & Widlund, 2024). Data includes audio-recorded conversations and text/maps on paper from the workshops. In this paper presentation, we discuss methodological considerations, potentials, and challenges with the workshop design, focusing particularly on the collective mapping as a material and embodied research-creation process.

## **How Marginalized Students and their Organizations Navigate Belonging in the Wake of Anti-DEI Legislation**

Jessica Schachle-Gordon

Stephen F. Austin State University, United States of America

Prior research has found that Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) centers are central to the development and maintenance of student of color and LGBTQ+ groups at colleges and universities. DEI centers provide funding for diverse student organizations, organize DEI-centered trainings, and provide spaces for students of color and LGBTQ+ students to meet. Despite their importance, nine states have passed legislation that dismantles DEI centers and diverts funding away from DEI initiatives. How has this recent legislation impacted activism and feelings of belonging among marginalized students? This study utilizes a multi-method approach to examine how students at a regional state university are responding to the passing of a bill that led to the closing of the campus DEI center. First, archival data is examined to holistically understand the historical significance of the DEI office on this regional campus. Second, student interviews (N=10) and observational data help illuminate how marginalized students and their organizations navigate institutional challenges while centering resilience and community.

## **Evaluation of a Peer Mentoring project involving undergraduate psychology students in Greece**

Antonia Svensson Dianellou, Christina Tsaliki, Aliko Kekia, Ntaniella Roumpini Pylarinou

Department of Psychology, New York College, Athens, Greece

The mental health needs of university students have increased since COVID-19 and more needs to be done to promote well-being. When in distress, students turn to each other for support. There is evidence that peer mentoring can facilitate new students' adjustment to higher education and is associated with wellbeing and student satisfaction. In Greece only two pilot peer mentoring programmes appear to have taken place. There is a lack of research on peer mentoring with university students in Greece, indicating that this study provides a significant contribution to knowledge.

Fourteen students undertook 30 hours of training in the principles and techniques of peer mentoring, in the NYC Department of Psychology in 2024-25. Afterwards, 19 students received mentoring sessions, whilst the Peer Mentors attended a weekly support group. All participants were invited to take part in a semi-structured interview to explore experiences of mentoring at the end. The interviews were recorded, transcribed and analysed using Thematic Analysis. The research was approved by the NYC Department of Psychology Research Ethics Committee.

This qualitative investigation provides valuable in-depth information about the lived experience of mentoring in higher education. In line with previous research findings, both the mentors and mentees reported enhanced professional identity, an increased sense of belonging, increased campus connectedness, and improved interpersonal skills and personal strengths. Mentees emphasized how mentoring relationship was supportive in itself, but how it also led to greater campus connectedness. Mentors emphasized the opportunity to practice their counselling skills. Peer Mentoring services can be organized in a relatively easy and effective way (complementing existing student counselling services), as a low stigma pre-counselling supportive experience that helps reduce distress and promotes help-seeking attitudes. Further research should incorporate quantitative methods and a longitudinal design.

## **ORAL SESSION\_41: Masculinity**

### **Demonstrating positive masculinity in post-conflict Belfast: supportive figures and structures for young men**

Amanda Dylina Morse

Queen's University of Belfast, United Kingdom

This paper presents the findings from the framework analysis of a broader mixed-methods study exploring social connection as a protective factor to support the behavioural health of young men in Belfast, Northern Ireland. It included interviews with 30 young men aged 16-19 from working-class communities, evenly representing the region's two predominant communities: Catholics and Protestants.

The study used a gender lens to examine how the pressures to perform particular types of masculine identity shaped the ways relationships formed and operated in young men's lives. Although they are disproportionately vulnerable to poor mental health, injuries related to interface violence and substance use, and exploitation by paramilitary organisations, this demographic is often excluded or marginalised in research. Study recruitment was conducted through partnerships with community-based youth work and restorative justice organisations, allowing for the application of a strengths-based analysis.

I will present the experiences of these young men, highlighting the people and structures they found most impactful in the delivery of both individual-level behavioural health supports and community-level violence interruption. The most emergent theme was the role of their youth workers, who were often themselves men from the community in early adulthood. These figures

acted as “masculine exemplars” and presented a powerful—and positive—counter to online influencers like Andrew Tate who was, at the time of the study, “the most googled man on the planet.”

I will further reflect on the study’s secondary outcome, the testing of the new Andrizo Integrated Conceptual Framework, which combines theoretical bodies on gender, adolescent development, and suicidology to articulate the ways that these factors interact to generate suicide risk in adolescent males. The framework is currently being explored by youth work organisations as a mechanism to enhance the development of interventions to support the health and wellbeing of young men in Belfast.

## **Phenomenological entry to the masculine grief-body: toward a healthy masculinity**

**Ryan Santens**

Washburn University, United States of America

Patriarchal masculine conditioning of boys and men is a pervasive social entrainment, a peremptory circumscribing of the multitude of male bodies: corporeal, cognitive, emotional, spiritual, until the (patriarchal) mask of incommensurable humanity has fixed itself insensate over the fault lines of an authentic life. This paper applies cultural neuroscience and neuroanthropological conceptualizations of liminality to theorize the importance of inner experience and the transmutive potencies of ritual to produce neuroplastic ecologies capable of becoming, metabolizing and integrating elements of the wound body leading to new gestalts of being. An autoethnographic sharing of one man’s descent into the patriarchal wound body, into ecstatic grief ritual, dissolving into a sympoietic liminality is threaded throughout the paper. Discussion of healthy masculinities includes feminist and indigenous masculinities.

## **Pathways to gender justice: Engaging Muslim men in violence against women prevention in Turkey**

**Aamir Jamal<sup>1</sup>, Oğuzhan Zengin<sup>2</sup>, Sarah Abouali<sup>1</sup>, Şevval Gök<sup>2</sup>**

<sup>1</sup>University of Calgary, Canada; <sup>2</sup>Karabük University, Turkey

Violence against women (VAW) remains a global issue, with unique challenges in some Muslim-majority nations due to complex socio-economic, cultural, and historical factors. While much is known about the causes of VAW, less is documented about Muslim men actively engaged in preventing it. This article presents findings from the Turkey portion of our “Transforming Muslim Masculinities” study, in which we interviewed Turkish men about their life trajectories and motivations for engaging in VAW prevention. The findings highlight key influences shaping men’s views on gender justice, such as important milestones and life trajectories, involvement in academics, and Islamic perspectives on equity. Subsequently, the findings reveal barriers faced by men in their journeys, such as cultural norms, complex socio-political factors, and pushback from local communities. Moreover, these models offer culturally sensitive strategies for engaging Turkish men in gender-equity efforts and practical approaches for promoting gender justice in similar cultural contexts within Muslim-majority societies and beyond.

## **Can I ask you about your penis? Staying in dialogue with the male body in therapy and research**

**Alexander G Romanitan**

University of Edinburgh

What happens when we ask a man about his penis — not to pathologise, objectify, or sexualise, but to listen? To listen to the stories that live in the body, the sensations that are rarely spoken, and the meanings that men have never been asked to give voice to?

This paper explores the penis as a site of lived experience and relational knowledge. Drawing from performative writing and long-term therapeutic work with men, I trace the ways in which masculinity has been disciplined into silence — the soft, sensing, relational penis eclipsed by cultural scripts of hardness, dominance, and control.

To ask about the penis is to stay in dialogue with what we often avoid: male fragility, desire, shame, and tenderness. In the current climate, where online communities like the manosphere fill the void of male conversation, this act of asking becomes radical. It reclaims curiosity, restores complexity, and invites men into genuine contact rather than ideological performance.

Framed as both qualitative inquiry and performative gesture, this presentation brings fragments of male embodiment into the room — not to resolve or defend them, but to listen with care. Through these dialogues, I suggest that the therapist, researcher, and audience alike are called to reimagine the penis not as a symbol of power, but as a site of relation, sensation, and story.

### **Walks through flourishing decay: A collective walking ethnography of an urban wasteland**

**Sonja Linnea Lampinen, Lehtokunnas Taru, Lepistö Ella, Pyyhtinen Olli, Uusitalo Niina**

Tampere University, Finland

The presentation discusses a collective walking ethnography, or garbography, of a lakeside wasteland in Tampere, Finland. The area, Nekalanranta, once served as a landfill and today is unzoned and unused land, deemed unsuitable for residential housing due to contamination. We explored the site on several visits on foot, attending particularly to the entanglement of decay and flourishing in the wasteland as a damaged landscape, as well as to the multispecies world-making projects encountered there. In addition to fieldnotes and the photographs and videos that we took, our analysis draws from documents, such as city council statements and plans for the area, together with memories of walking through the wasteland and living in its vicinity. In our presentation, we focus especially on collective walks – or ‘walking-with’ – as a method of knowing waste(lands) through movement and sensory entanglement. During our walks, we were struck by the abundance of both organic and inorganic debris, some of recent origin, others long buried in the soil and now resurfacing. We also suggest that the wasteland presents a ‘heterotopia’, a counter-space to the smooth, regulated and strictly planned urban space harnessed to utility. Situated in the margins or on the periphery, between official and acknowledged places, the wasteland may not attract much attention, yet it allows informal human uses and supports the flourishing of rich plant and animal life.

### **Pedagogically becoming-with the pileated woodpecker: Relational and ecological attunements in practitioner research**

**Lisa May Moulton Goddard**

University of Modena and Reggio Emilia, Italy

This presentation reflects on practitioner research and how one moment—sparked by a child’s fascination with a pileated woodpecker—reconfigured my pedagogical orientation and deepened my capacity to listen differently: beyond human voice, into the ecologies that shape and are shaped by our common worlds (Taylor & Giugni, 2012; Pacini-Ketchabaw et al., 2016). This encounter opened me to the presence of the woodpecker, a species I had previously overlooked, and shifted how I attune to the minor gestures (Manning, 2016) in children’s play—those often fleeting, easily dismissed moments that can reveal profound relational connections with the more-than-human world.

In the context of the conference theme, this reflection situates such moments within broader global flows of environmental change and pedagogical practice, suggesting that even small, local encounters can hold significance in challenging times. Through the child’s sustained attention to the woodpecker, I came to recognize play as a collaborative practice of world-making (Tsing, 2015; Haraway, 2016), one that entangles humans, species, and places in shared acts of care and curiosity.

Attending seriously to these everyday encounters has reshaped how I understand and respond to children’s inquiries as invitations into collaborative, multispecies worlding. In attuning to how children become-with (Haraway, 2008) beloved species, I found a pedagogical opening for myself to become-with children’s nature worlds, to be moved by them, and to consider how these relationships might reorient what matters in education.

In reflecting on this single moment, the presentation invites a broader conversation about how qualitative, practice-based research can trace relational connections across scales—from local encounters to global ecological concerns—reminding us that new pedagogical possibilities often begin in the subtle, shared gestures of everyday life.

### **Wandering with~in~among assemblages: new materialist pedagogical encounters in environmental education through Deleuze and Guattari**

**Matrona Pappa, Maria Daskolia**

Department of Educational Studies/ School of Philosophy/ NKUA, Greece

We present a qualitative educational study conducted with Greek elementary school children, situated within the tradition of relational assemblages of people and places (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987). The study was enacted through pedagogical encounters in which children, the researcher (first author), and the place formed temporary hybrid assemblages, generating experiences, relationships, and events that opened new possibilities for thinking and learning. Through a series of creative pedagogical and research experiments, the study explores what emerges within these assemblages as they unfold in space and time.

Our study adopts a post-humanist and new-materialist perspective, drawing on the philosophical toolbox of Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, with the concept of *assemblage* at its core. Applying the research-assemblage model of Fox & Alldred (2015), we conducted a qualitative cartography, positioning the assemblage—not the human—as the unit of analysis and attending to multi-level material-semantic relationships. The narration and analysis of these encounters drew on Diana Masny’s vignette model for rhizoanalysis (2013, 2014), enabling non-linear, richly textured representations of the research process.

This research contributes to qualitative research practice by combining philosophical concepts with creative pedagogical methods, emphasizing the environmental affordances of existence and learning. It proposes ways of thinking and researching that recognize the co-production of human and non-human/more-than-human actors, *for the realities-yet-to-come*, as Gilles Deleuze would reflect.

## **Creating equal learning opportunities in the mathematics classroom: A qualitative analysis of a collaborative problem solving approach.**

**Christina Misailidou**

National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, Greece

Traditionally, mathematics is considered a difficult subject for the majority of pupils of all ages. As a result, a lot of them underperform in it and as a consequence only a few of them appear to succeed. Surprisingly, this unequal achievement is considered normal by implicitly accepting a hegemonic ideology of ‘aptitudes’ i.e. that only selected people can be able in mathematics.

The purpose of the study presented here was to design and implement a teaching practice which ensures that all the pupils in a classroom have the opportunity to engage productively with mathematics. This was achieved by the adoption of a collaborative problem solving approach: pupils of different “abilities” formed small groups and were set the task to discuss on equal terms carefully selected mathematical tasks.

A qualitative analysis approach was adopted which focused on the development of arguments by each member of the group recognizing that such a development is the essential indicator of mathematics knowledge-building. “Mathematics learning” is conceived as a “change” from primitive arguments to more sophisticated ones. Thus, each pupil’s discourse was recorded and analysed drawing primarily on discourse analysis and sociocultural theories of learning.

Results from the analysis of the arguments generated by the three members of one typical group are presented in this paper. The results indicate that, despite their different abilities, the pupils seem to have advanced significantly their discourse during their involvement in the collaborative work. In other words, the adopted teaching approach appears to have created equal opportunities for all the group members.

## **WORKSHOP\_7: 'The 'Adversity Grid' framework in applied qualitative research**

### **'The 'Adversity Grid' framework in applied qualitative research**

**Renos K Papadopoulos<sup>1</sup>, Tihomir Sabchev<sup>2</sup>, Nikos Gionakis<sup>3</sup>**

<sup>1</sup>University of Essex, UK; <sup>2</sup>Tilburg University, the Netherlands; <sup>3</sup>Babel Day Centre

Papadopoulos will first provide a general outline of the ‘Adversity Grid’, which is a framework for grasping the range of consequences when one is exposed to any severe form of adversity. In addition to the negative effects, it also enables the identification of retained strengths (resilience) as well as new strengths that have been activated by the very exposure too adversity (Adversity-Activated Development).

Sabchev will present his research in the experiences of refugees on the Greek islands, using the ‘Adversity Grid’ framework, and Gionakis will present the application of the ‘Adversity Grid’ framework in clinical research.

## **DREAM TEAM 21**

### **Spinning Digital Yarns: exploring a critical disability studies approach to participatory multimodal analysis**

**Katherine Runswick-Cole<sup>1</sup>, Sara Ryan<sup>2</sup>, Martina Smith<sup>1</sup>, Francesca Ribenfors<sup>2</sup>, Patty Douglas<sup>3</sup>**

<sup>1</sup>The University of Sheffield, United Kingdom; <sup>2</sup>Manchester Metropolitan University, United Kingdom; <sup>3</sup>Queen’s University, Canada

In this session we want to work together to engage in multimodal analysis of digital stories created by people with learning disabilities, and family carers. The stories were told as part of a research “Tired of spinning plates”: an exploration of mental health experiences of adult/older carers of adults with learning disabilities [NIHR ID 135080]. The overarching aim of the project was to generate new knowledge and understanding of the mental health experiences of carers of adults with learning disabilities (September, 2023-November, 2025). Drawing on participatory approaches, we worked with 17 parent carers, sibling carers and people with learning disabilities who created digital stories about their experiences of care and of mental health.

Thinking with disability

Digital storytelling is a multimedia approach to telling stories which is typically used to generate 3-to-5-minute short films (Oppel, 2025). These films bring together a mixture of images, video, voice recording, music, sound, and text to narrate the

storytellers' experiences of their everyday lives (Gubrium et al., 2014). Multimodality is typically valued as a way of enhancing meaning, increasing clarity and enriching storytelling (Walters, 2018).

And yet, digital storytelling approaches and multimodal analysis have not always embraced the diverse ways in which people experience the world (Pink, 2011; Douglas et al., 2021; Walters 2018). The literacy theorist Gunther Kress describes 'multimodality' as "the normal state of human communication" and this appeal to "normal" has invited critique (Kress, 2010:1 cited in Walters, 2018). Writing from an anthropological perspective, Pink (2018) has criticised Kress's failure to recognise the dominance of Western thinking in the development of multimodal analysis, and argues for an approach to multimodality which embraces culture, meaning and experience, and Walters (2018) has questioned both the accessibility of digital storytelling to disabled people, and a wider failure to consider diverse storytellers and audiences (Walters, 2015).

#### Spinning analysis

In this session, we plan to screen 3 short films created as part of the Spinning Plates project. We invite audience members to engage with us in a multimodal analysis from a critical disability studies perspective (Walters, 2018). First, this means that we want to explore the moments in which the stories disrupt dominant ableist narratives which (re)produce beliefs and practices which are based on the unquestioned assumption that the 'able' body-mind is the ideal type (Woolbring, 2008). Second, we want to pay attention to the moments in which stories frustrate dominant (Western) narrative forms and generate new ways of thinking about "coherence" in storytelling (Walters, 2015:5).

#### Session Plan

In this session we will invite the audience to engage with three digital stories created by three storytellers (a person with a learning disability; a parent carer and a sibling carer).

In the session, we will:

1. Introductions and overview of the session
2. Contextualise the stories: introduce the project and explain where the digital stories come from.
3. Invite audience members to analyse the digital stories using the multimodal analysis framework grounded in a critical disability studies perspective.
4. We will show 3 x 5 minute films and ask audience members to use the framework to analyse at least one film of their choice. .
5. Discussion: we will reflect on the responses to the films and the approach to analysis during the session.

Following the session we will:

1. Contact audience members who sign up to be co-authors on the paper to ask them to sense check our thematic analysis of the collated responses to the films using the framework analysis.
2. We will share the final author copy of the co-authored paper for comment before submission.
3. We will submit the multiple co-authored paper to Societies journal.

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## DREAM TEAM 20

### Therapeutic Storyflows: Collective Story-Making as a Pathway to Connection and Transformation

**Stavroula Sanida**

Private Practice & GR CY ACBS Chapter, Greece

In times of uncertainty and rapid global change, stories remain one of the most enduring human practices for creating meaning, fostering connection, and envisioning new possibilities. This Dream Team proposes an experiential exploration of therapeutic storytelling as a collaborative practice that bridges individual self-reflection with collective dialogue. Drawing on two decades of psychotherapeutic experience within cognitive-behavioral and third-wave approaches, I have developed a body of over one

hundred short stories designed to support clients' self-awareness, awakening, and motivation for change. These stories, accompanied by illustrated postcards, act as tangible anchors of insight within the therapeutic encounter. Although rooted in clinical practice, their resonance extends far beyond the therapy room: they offer a powerful vehicle for dialogue, mutual recognition, and collaborative creativity in diverse communities.

The concept of Storyflows positions stories not as fixed texts but as dynamic movements across personal and cultural boundaries. They flow between therapist and client, individual and group, inner world and outer reality. In this sense, therapeutic stories reflect the very theme of this congress: global flows, connections, dialogues, and collaborative practices in challenging times. Stories invite us into shared spaces of imagination, compassion, and transformation, making them uniquely suited for a Dream Team session.

This 90-minute session will unfold as an open, participatory journey in five stages. First, the session will begin with the reading of a short therapeutic story, offering a common experiential ground from which reflection can emerge (10 minutes). Second, delegates will be invited into guided reflection through carefully crafted questions, encouraging them to consider how the story resonates with their own lives, practices, and current global challenges (15 minutes). Third, participants will move into small groups for a creative exercise of story co-construction (30 minutes). Supported by thematic prompts and visual stimuli such as postcards, each group will be invited to create a brief story that captures their collective reflections. Fourth, these stories will be shared in plenary, where the process of listening, recognition, and dialogue will highlight the multiplicity of perspectives and experiences present in the group (20 minutes). Finally, the session will close with a short guided meditation and reflective writing exercise, anchoring insights and inviting delegates to connect their experience with their own professional or personal contexts (15 minutes).

The Dream Team model is particularly appropriate for this work, as it emphasizes interaction, dialogue, and co-creation. Rather than a traditional presentation, this session will be a living laboratory of collaborative practice, demonstrating how stories function as vessels of shared meaning. The process of collective story-making embodies the congress' concern with global flows and connections: participants from different countries, professions, and cultural backgrounds will bring their voices together in the creation of new narratives. These narratives will not only reflect individual experiences but also gesture toward shared human concerns in times of disruption and transformation.

Participants will gain experiential understanding of therapeutic storytelling as a practice that fosters both individual self-awareness and collective dialogue. Third, participants will leave with practical tools - reflective prompts, experiential techniques, and creative approaches - that can be adapted to their own professional practices, whether in therapy, education, community work, or leadership.

## GAME CHANGERS\_5

### **Against Positivism: From Pusillanimity to Magnanimity and the Promise of Interdisciplinary Collaboration**

Glen Cousquer

University of Edinburgh, United Kingdom

This Game Changer will explore barriers to collaboration and opportunities to facilitate paradigmatic shifts towards more equitable co-existence and co-flourishing. It will consider how we can ensure that justice and, in particular, multispecies, social and environmental justice have a seat at the table and are taken seriously. This may involve a shift from pusillanimity to magnanimity and the necessary integration of spiritual health and growth into learning and teaching.

This Game Changer explores how bringing slow-pedagogies into Higher Education can help us rediscover our place in the universe. It recognises that a reflexive turn is needed if we are to transcend dualistic thinking and explore co-presencing and genuine meeting with the more-than-human. If the practice of ecological pilgrimage as a methodology for re-imagining our fraught relations with the world is to realise its transformative potential, however, it needs to engage with and contribute to the biomedical sciences, especially where they seek to explore inter and transdisciplinary approaches to complex planetary health challenges. One Health and the related fields of Ecohealth and Planetary Health offer opportunities for such transformative work. There are many obstacles, however to such collaborations. A particular obstacle to such transformations lies in the analytical traditions and habits of those working in STEM disciplines and their historical siloing away from the SHAPE disciplines, where process-philosophy and methodological pluralism and diversity may have already contributed to a Great Turning (Macy and Brown, 2014) into re-imagining and re-creating the world. It will challenge One Health to build on its recognition of equity as a guiding principle (OHHLEP, 2022), to address its anthropocentrism and historical animal, plant and fungi blindness.

In this Game Changer, we draw on walking practices to consider how qualitative researchers can engage with quantitative researchers whose disciplines may still be invested in and wedded to objectivism, rationalism and materialism, anthropocentrism and androcentrism. This can challenge us to make sense of our grapplings and struggles when facing into the realisation that the Cartesian model is still running our institutions and that God is an engineer or mathematician. Descartes maintained that

truth is found only in clear and distinct ideas. For Thomas Aquinas, however, truth is a passion of the heart for “the objects of the heart are truth and justice” (Sheldrake and Fox, 1996, p.73). A concern for justice is therefore a game-changer, providing it is recognised as central and foundational to the inquiries we engage in and lives we lead. But what if our collaborators have not bought into this brave new world and are content working on technofixes to preserve the old order? What if our collaborators do not recognise the rights of more-than-human animals, rivers and the life-sustaining systems we depend on? These represent very real tensions and challenges within the academy.

Walking affords unique opportunities to slow down and come into relational ecological presence. The significance of this shift in mode of being has been recognised by philosophers, writers and researchers from Kierkegaard, Nietzsche and Gros to Solnit, Kahn and Ingold. It is perhaps best summed up by Thich Nhat Hanh’s invitation to find peace in every step. Stepping off the busyness of life to gain perspective is therefore a serious activity and one that has been recommended as a search for presence, grace and right-relation. It represents a shift from ego to eco and as such can be viewed as ecological pilgrimage: a journey on foot through which we learn to live our questions. This shift embraces the wholeness of experience and the many epistemic practices through which we become more ecological. The pedagogical potential of pilgrimage allows us to explore fourth person knowing (both at the level of the individual and the collective) and to encounter and resolve conflictual tensions in our relationships with ourselves, others and the more-than-human.

This Game Changer will be of interest to pedagogues, psychotherapists and other professionals working in reflexive interdisciplinary ways to promote health and flourishing and interested in exploring how education can guide and heal the soul. It is hoped that this will allow us to take our path making more seriously to better realise transformative learning and fourth-person knowing.

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## ORAL SESSION\_43: Collaborative, creative methods, Humility

### Breaking the isolating silence: Collaborative Audio Narrative

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This project explores Collaborative Audio Narrative as a radical, affective, and interdisciplinary method for feminist inquiry. Drawing from Narrative Productions Methodology, the project positions narrative not just as a storytelling tool, but as a body—a site of encounter where researcher and participant engage in body-to-body dialogue that transcends language. This method invites listeners to feel, resonate, and be moved.

The project emphasizes the relational and affective dimensions of sound, treating sound as resonance and knowledge, and noise as a productive, transformative force. The results are not traditional transcripts or case studies, but curated audio stories—podcast-like episodes blending voice, ambient sound, and abstract textures. These soundscapes provoke affective engagement, capturing tensions, contradictions, and resistances voiced by intergenerational women in academia as they reflect on their conditions, challenges, and the reproduction of academic systems.

We ask: which bodies matter in academia? From an affective perspective, a body is not limited to flesh and bone—it can be a building, a policy, or a piece of technology. In neoliberal academic systems, non-human bodies are often prioritized, while patriarchal structures devalue human bodies—especially those of women, mothers, racialized scholars, and gender-diverse individuals.

This method honors collaborative knowledge production, where participants are co-creators. The presentation includes audio excerpts and reflections on the ethical, technical, and affective dimensions of producing them. Listening becomes a political act—tuning into feminist resistance, institutional violence, and collective hope.

We argue for more studies that center collective, emotional, and embodied voices—moving beyond the frameworks of organizational and clinical psychology. In challenging times, Collaborative Audio Narrative offers a transformative lens for inquiry.

### “Do you understand?”: seeking dialogue with lived experience through visual interpretation

Ziyue Yang, Yan Huang

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In a world marked by division, this study addresses the challenge of fostering peace by re-establishing dialogue between “reason” and “unreason,” a rupture diagnosed by Michel Foucault. We argue that understanding the pain of others is a micro-practice

of peace-building. This research asks: Can we move beyond textual interviews by using participant-provided images of suffering as a bridge for dialogue?

This qualitative study explores how a rigorous interpretation of visual narratives can become a form of peace education. We conducted in-depth interviews with three young adults who have experienced profound emotional suffering, treating their personal photographs as primary data. Adopting Ralf Bohnsack's "documentary method," rooted in Panofsky's iconology, our analysis prioritized the images' formal structures (composition, staging, perspective) over their narrative content. This approach "brackets" preconceived knowledge to reconstruct the shared, tacit "habitus" or "documentary meaning" behind the images.

Findings reveal that the photographs' formal compositions eloquently "document" a shared habitus of conflict and isolation. Images of a grasping hand near glass shards or a fallen tree blocking a path visually articulate a tension between agency and self-harm, and a state of being "cut off" from peers.

This method transforms the ethics of viewing pain. By focusing on how images construct meaning, the researcher is forced into a slower, more respectful engagement. This shifts empathy from a fleeting "I feel sorry for you" to a structural understanding: "I see the predicament you are in." This rigorous visual interpretation, therefore, offers a path for qualitative inquiry to foster relational connection and build peace in challenging times.

## **Beyond hope and despair – systemic humility**

**Mark Huhnen**

Systemark, United Kingdom

In the world as it presents itself today a lot of people like myself give in to doom and despair. Hope is sometimes seen as naive, despair as its opposite then seems to come across as sophisticated. But in precarious times when we do not know what is going to happen - and in what order - neither stands on solid ground. Contrary to either possibly leading to inaction, I argue for a position beyond hope and despair - a position of humility, that allows for continued "trying" our best.

## **Mapping Temporalities: A visual exploration of intersectional research**

**Olesya Kochkina, Sara Dorow, Pushpanjali Dashora, Reisa Klein**

University of Alberta, Canada

Whether understood more as a theory, a lens, and/or a methodology (Cho et al. 2013), intersectionality is a generative approach to research interested in critical issues of inequity. Within qualitative inquiry, intersectionality has been deployed in various ways in collaborative community-based research (CBR) projects, often with an emphasis on intersectional *praxis* (Fine et al. 2021).

As we have found in our three-year Intersectionality in Action Partnership project, putting intersectionality into practice across all stages of qualitative community collaboration is full of challenges. Is this a "good problem" to have? Understanding how relationships and practices in CBR unfold across time is crucial to answering this question.

Drawing on a range of methods (interviews, mini focus groups, short questionnaires, mapping exercises, and activity notes) deployed with the members of two housing research teams in Alberta, Canada, our research explores the joys and pitfalls of learning and doing intersectionality over the life cycle of community-partnered research. We are thus interested in an unfolding process over time. In this paper, we share our preliminary attempts to develop a temporal mapping approach to situational analysis (Clarke et al. 2016)—a method that "supports the analysis of multiple temporalities and processes" within the "wider configurations of elements that shape process" (Knopp 2021). In doing so, we consider the importance of temporality itself as a vector of power within intersectional research relations (cc Freeman 2022).

## **ORAL SESSION\_44: Qualitative Challenges**

### **Avenues toward authenticity in qualitative research: Exploring the personal-social-political nature of boundary-pushing methodological decision-making**

**Tricia Kress<sup>1</sup>, Ryan Coughlan<sup>2</sup>, Kelly Bare<sup>3</sup>, Eric Karahalas<sup>8</sup>, Emily Clark<sup>4</sup>, Perpetual Hayfron<sup>5</sup>, Chris Hall<sup>5</sup>, Kathleen Murray<sup>7</sup>, Maria Vineyard<sup>6</sup>**

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Through the stories of seven doctoral students and two professors who supported their dissertation journeys, this session will explore how biography and individual as well as shared context(s) shape researchers' methodological choices. Particular attention will be paid to data collection and analysis techniques that departed from or pushed the boundaries of canonical qualitative

methods, such as hip-hop lyrical elicitation, artifact elicitation, walking interviews, experiential dialogues, arts-based methods (e.g., stippling, drawing) and mosaic line drawing analysis. Authors will highlight how their own ways of knowing, participants' ways of knowing, and/or the geo-political-economic context in which their work took place compelled their choices and led them to a place where they felt authentically present in their research. By examining how these scholars arrived at research methods authentic to themselves and sensitive to their participants, the authors will illuminate common themes that reveal the deeply personal and even social nature of methodological decision-making. Our analysis of these narratives reveals three distinct, yet occasionally overlapping, pathways to methodological innovation. First, some researchers harness their natural creativity, finding freedom from conventional constraints to develop novel approaches. Second, others leverage their commitment to structure, using systematic frameworks as containers that paradoxically enable innovation. Third, scholars who have experienced marginalization often develop methodological breakthroughs that unlock knowledge about previously underexplored experiences and communities. Across all three pathways, a central truth emerges: while pursuing authentic and personally meaningful research can be a demanding journey, it offers profound rewards. Such approaches not only expand the boundaries of human knowledge in meaningful ways but also support scholars' own healing and growth while building community and relationships that transcend traditional academic boundaries. Researchers who embrace authentic methodologies create spaces for vulnerability and new awareness—both for themselves and the world they study.

## Many selves in one conversation: doing justice to multiplicity in qualitative interviewing

Malhar Deshmukh

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Qualitative interviews with marginalized participants risk flattening complexity by focusing on a single, dominant identity, which can reproduce epistemic injustice. Addressing this in the context of India's rural-to-urban youth migration, we use a single interview as an exemplar of co-constructed conversation. Our aim is to demonstrate how a researcher, practicing epistemic humility, can attend to the dynamic surfacing and receding of multiple identities throughout the interview. By applying principles from Conversation Analysis (CA) and Coordinated Management of Meaning (CMM). This micro-analytic approach tracks how conversational turns and shifting contextual frames enable or quiet certain topics.

The analysis organizes around three interlinked concerns grounded in the exemplar. First, **securing conditions for voice:** participant-defined boundaries around dress, mobility, and setting, together with learned micro-etiquettes, shape what can be said; the conversational flow shows an early chapter of caution and a later chapter of competence, both of which need to remain audible in the record. Second, **negotiating knowledge and authority in everyday navigation:** the participant evaluates local remedies versus exploitative claims and moves into rights-talk with institutions and markets; pairing event-with-feeling and fact-with-meaning questions, and reenacting brief scenes, helps surface practical decision rules and "power-in-action" as the talk unfolds. Third, **replotting identities and futures:** counter-stigma caste talk coexists with roles as student, friend, hosteller, worker, engineer-in-training, and daughter/sibling; talk about returning to serve one's home region reorders priorities across moments, echoing recent calls to treat positionality as dynamic and situational rather than fixed. Finally, we offer strategies for making co-construction explicit and putting epistemic humility to work. By treating the interview as jointly authored and carefully attending to conversational dynamics, researchers can hold multiple identities in play. This produces a plural, thick, and accountable representation of participants' knowledge.

## Writing, feeling and embodying stuckness in qualitative research

Suvi Pihkala<sup>1</sup>, Satu Venäläinen<sup>2</sup>, Sarra Boukhari<sup>3</sup>, Angelo Benozzo<sup>4</sup>

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This presentation is a call to imagine, celebrate, work with and revalue stuckness – a feeling/idea often evoked when speaking and reflecting on qualitative research, but one that has not been sufficiently thematized and studied. We engage with stuckness and think with another concept – stickiness – to consider the affects and ideas that may hold us back and sustain the normativity of stuffy academic (writing) practices. Even within the uncertainty we experience, staying stuck can be an embodied resistance to normative expectations of productivity, of being fast and effective. In our presentation, we play with the idea of stuckness as a movement that can help detach from these sticky expectations. We aim to show some of the multiplicities of stuckness and 're-member' (Barad, 2017) our own experiments with academic writing on the move. We use this as a prompt to dwell in moments of stuckness as a constraint but/and, most importantly, a possibility, pleasure, and hopefulness. Stuckness can be a prompt to take action, lure to seek new companions and to change the assemblage. It can be an invitation to inhabit incoherence and indeterminacy as a reorientation and recalibration of normative academic pace and rhythm in the movement of writing bodies. It is a generative space, a place-space to dwell in. Towards these aims, this presentation is an invitation to think about 1) How do we experience stuckness and its trouble(s)? 2) How does stuckness feel, taste, look, sound like? 3) What can stuckness become/ what can become out of stuckness? Feeling stuck in academic writing and research can feel daunting; however, this sensation

could be equally productive and generative. Stuckness, we propose, unsettles certainties and potentially can compel us to think, write and act otherwise.

## Mapping the peripheries of consent: the complexities of becoming a participant

Jenni Helakorpi, Marja Peltola, Satu Venäläinen

University of Helsinki, Finland

How to properly acquire informed consent is among key questions in ethical research practice. Rather than a one-off event, existing methodological literature has helped us to understand giving an informed consent as a process of negotiation, which is imbued with complex and shifting power relations. In our own research we have found, however, that it is often difficult to grasp or articulate these complex, embodied and affective processes in research participation. In this presentation, we approach these negotiations with Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick's (2003) concept of periperformatives, to see whether it helps us to put our finger on some of these elusive elements of research encounters. Building on J.L. Austin's classical work on performative utterances, with periperformatives, Sedgwick draws attention to interactional moves that cluster around and about performatives, commenting on or conditioning them. While giving an informed consent in a traditional sense may be understood as a performative speech act, periperformatives happen around and "in the neighborhood" of performatives: the potential participants' often subtle expressions of doubts and interests, the researcher's worries and wishes, and how these circulate and become apparent through various forms of interaction. We argue that periperformatives in research encounters are fuzzy and difficult to grasp, yet they hold affective and performative power and are important in terms of both the unfolding of participation and research ethics. By using the methodology of memory work, we tapped into our own research processes to explore how periperformatives as a conceptual tool may transform our thinking about research consent. In our presentation, we pull our reflections together and discuss how attending to periperformatives may sensitise us to recognising complexity and processuality of participation.

## ORAL SESSION\_45: Health qualitative research

### Just Try It: Visualizing shades of influence with young people for tobacco use prevention in Nigeria

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**Background:** Social influences are key drivers of youth smoking in Nigeria, yet health communication campaigns rarely visualize these dynamics from the perspective of young people. This study used a co-design approach to engage young people in identifying and illustrating the root causes of smoking in their community.

**Methods:** Eighty-nine students from two senior secondary schools in southern Nigeria participated in a series of co-design workshops. Seven mixed-department groups (sciences, social sciences, arts) used problem-tree mapping to identify smoking-related root causes. Thematic analysis was conducted on their visual and written outputs.

**Results:** Participants consistently identified peer influence as a major driver of smoking initiation, describing it as a gradual process beginning with casual invitations ("just try it") and progressing to habitual smoking (addiction). Family members were also seen as both risk and protective factors. While mothers were described as strong deterrents; fathers, uncles, and older brothers were often cited as modeling smoking behaviour. Although negative influence was usually ascribed to male relatives, they were also the reason why some participants witnessed the serious health consequences of smoking and believed smoking to be dangerous, thereby serving as a deterrent.

**Conclusion:** Co-design empowered participants to articulate complex social influences on smoking and translate them into an engaging animation for tobacco use prevention. This participatory, visual approach may strengthen youth-focused health communication campaigns in African contexts and improve their cultural relevance. The co-designed animation will be showcased during the conference presentation.

### International working groups as interaction mechanisms in a global health research network: member perspectives

Kirsi Kuuru

University of Eastern Finland, Finland

Within large research collaborations especially in health domain, International Working Groups (IWGs) serve as platforms facilitating joint expert work on specific topic areas. Using the Network of Practice (NoP) lens, this study investigates how geographically and culturally diverse members from different background contexts and competence levels navigate participation in a loosely structured, informal group based on voluntary participation. Specifically, the study explores how members of one International Working Group in a global health research network understand their group as a mechanism for collaboration, knowl-

edge sharing, learning and improving the shared practice, and their role and participation in it. The empirical material consists of semi-structured online interviews (n≥20) with members of one IWG focusing on one specific aspect of the shared research practice of the network. Interview data will be complemented with supporting material such as documents produced within the IWG as well as observation of the IWG meetings held online. Data will be analysed qualitatively using the Gioia methodology. The study reveals how members construct meaning around their roles, responsibilities, and contributions within the group. It also uncovers the activities (e.g., meetings, joint production of scientific articles) and tools (e.g., surveys, online platforms) that the group coordinators apply to facilitate synchronous, but also asynchronous scientific collaboration across time zones worldwide. This research advances understanding of how distributed scientists-practitioners co-create shared practice through International Working Groups dedicated to specific topic areas.

## **Navigating challenging times: collaborative approaches to integrating 'living with long term conditions' (LwLTCs) scale for under-served groups in primary care**

**Laila Khawaja, Mari Carmen Portillo**

University of Southampton

**Background:** Integrating the Living with Long Term Conditions (LwLTCs) scale into routine primary care is challenging, especially for under-served populations facing health inequalities. This study addresses these issues within “challenging times” in healthcare, focusing on fostering “relational connections and collaborative practices” to enhance patient care.

**Aims & Objectives:** Our project aims to identify enablers and barriers for introducing and operationalising the LwLTCs scale in primary care, particularly for under-served groups. Objectives include exploring patient and healthcare professional (HCP) perspectives and collaborating with implementation champions to facilitate scale adoption and integration.

**Methodology:** Utilising a qualitative design, semi-structured interviews were conducted with 20 LTCs patients (purposely sampled across ethnicity, socio-economic status, remote living) and 15 LTCs-related HCPs (purposely sampled by working area/professional background). Recruitment was from two diverse primary care practices within Hampshire, England (urban/semi-rural) via professional networks and social media. Data collection is complete, and thematic analysis is underway, with Patient and Public Involvement and Engagement (PPIE) validation and dissemination. By the time of the conference, preliminary findings from this analysis will be available for sharing and discussion.

**Contribution:** This research directly informs collaborative practices by identifying practical strategies for implementing the LwLTCs scale. By highlighting diverse patient and HCP perspectives and local factors, it strengthens relational connections within healthcare. Findings will support a responsive implementation plan, address health inequalities, and foster effective primary care models relevant to global flows of complex health needs.

## **Constructing alcohol-related problems: a qualitative analysis of attitudes toward alcohol screening and counselling in social work**

**Elina Renko**

Tampere University, Finland

Research focusing on attitudes has long been at the core of social psychology. Studies have typically defined attitudes as relatively stable internal dispositions that guide behaviour. This study, however, takes a different approach to attitudes towards alcohol screening and counselling. Rather than viewing attitudes as internal dispositions, this study considers them to be argumentative and socially embedded phenomena – that is, attitudes which are constructed and can be recognised in social interaction. The study provides a qualitative analysis of how alcohol-related problems are constructed within the context of social work. A qualitative attitude approach (QAA) is employed to explore the construction of attitudes in argumentative talk. Specifically, it explores how social workers (n = 14) and their clients (n = 14) constructed alcohol-related problems as attitude objects. Both groups mainly constructed alcohol-related problems as social issues. The interviewees associated this social issue closely with social statuses, as well as with clients' fulfilment of their responsibilities and their ability to function well. The alcohol-related problem was attributed not only to the individual, but also to the people around them. While the medicalised view of alcohol-related problems, which highlights the negative impact they can have on people's health and well-being, was present in the argumentative talk, it was less common than the social view. The interviewees saw identifying and managing alcohol-related problems as an essential part of a social worker's job. This social view may contrast with individualistic models of substance abuse treatment. The results demonstrate that a qualitative approach to attitudes is required to understand different constructions of attitude objects.

## **The lived experience of heroin use in the context of a supervised consumption site: an interpretative phenomenological analysis**

**Maria Argyrou**

none, Greece

Supervised Consumption Sites (SCS) operate within the framework of harm reduction practices, providing individuals who use psychoactive substances with a safe and controlled environment to engage in such use. To date, there is a paucity of research emanating from Greece on heroin users' experiences in the SCS context. The goal of this study is to provide a platform for the voice of users of psychoactive substances, specifically heroin and to update harm reduction policies and the relevant services, so that they are able to respond to the needs of the population in the best possible way. This thesis aims to explore the lived experience of heroin use within the SCS. Nine semi-structured interviews were conducted with individuals who used the SCS for heroin use. The method of analysis employed is Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA), which allows for the study of participants' interpretations of their experiences while simultaneously acknowledging the inevitable influence of the researcher's interpretations. The findings that emerged are captured through the following sections: a) The "structure" of survival, b) On the threshold: between marginalization and acceptance, c) Building alternative relationships: support and obstacles, d) Cracks towards the light: the possibility of moral reconstruction and rehabilitation. The SCS emerged as a multi-faceted and multi-dimensional space, an important function of which seemed to be the coverage of heroin users' basic needs. Participants seemed to give it meaning as a space between the "inside" and the "outside", with their experience within it being largely determined by the social relations that develop in its context. The SCS emerged as a potential station between heroin use and rehabilitation, emphasizing the importance of its integration into a network of therapeutic options and services in order to be a hub of support for people who use heroin.

## ORAL SESSION\_46: Self, contemplative practice

### Reworlding ontologies through transdisciplinary contemplative practice

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As the intersectional complexities of the challenges we are facing in society today proliferate across social-ecological levels, radical change is tracking along the fault lines of power and oppression accelerating inequities across all aspects of human and more-than-human life. Collective imaginaries are needed to reworld endogenous participatory ontologies capable of disentangling from hierarchal introjections, liberating the unique beauty and genius within each of us to become manifest in a new social order. Prolonged activation of the stress-response systems in our minds and bodies, however, are suppressing the imaginal capacities necessary for a salutary response from disadvantaged populations. What then are we to do? Mindfulness-based interventions (MBIs) are proven to support development of effective coping and appraisal skills, yet their focus has largely been calibrated to decrease negative functioning. Could this sociopolitical environment produce the conditions that serve as the catalyst for the development of an innovative transformational contemplative practice?

A transdisciplinary developmental framework guided by the mindfulness to meaning theory was applied to create a new 8-week MBI: Mindfulness-Based Eudaimonic Wellbeing (MBEW). Salutogenic activities operationalizing elements of eudaimonic well-being grounded in Aristotelian philosophies of eudaimonia and the hero/ heroine archetype of comparative mythology were integrated into mindfulness meditation practices to produce liminal cognoaffectiveinteroceptive ecologies animating endogenous paradigms of personal and collective selfhood as an approach to upend systemic barriers (e.g., social, psychological, material) to self-determined flourishing.

A mixed-methods feasibility and pilot testing of MBEW was conducted in a community-based setting with disadvantaged adults. Results demonstrate significant changes in stress (decrease) and mindfulness (increase). Additionally, to my knowledge, this is the first MBI study to demonstrate significant changes in the 'total score' of Ryff's scales of psychological wellbeing (eudaimonic wellbeing). Participants completed qualitative interviews articulating in their own words the positive impact MBEW has had on their lives.

### From the group to the self: Transformative identity construction in young adult professionals - a Systemic-Dialectical Approach

Anna Anastasopoulou, Angie Biba, Dimitra Kottorou

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Early adulthood is a period of profound transitions, where young adults establish independence, build differentiated relationships, and consolidate their professional paths.

This study explores how young adults, focused on professional development, actively construct their identities through participation in a personal development group, highlighting the interplay between social interaction and individual transformation. Group participation served as a transformative experience, enabling self-reflection and the dialectical construction of identity through interaction and mirroring among members.

Adopting a systemic-dialectical and narrative approach, this qualitative study emphasizes lived experience, relational dynamics, and co-construction of meaning. Data were collected from eight personal and professional development sessions involving

eight participants, members of this group, meeting weekly for two-hour sessions over one to three years. These sessions were coordinated by three systemic psychotherapists. The data analysis focused on the transcripts of session discussions.

Identity is understood as a cyclical, social process, through which participants come to know themselves, claim their positions, and seek recognition within relational and group contexts.

Participants' journeys revealed a dynamic process of self-discovery: clarifying values and beliefs, navigating uncertainty, confronting responsibility and fear, and negotiating personal pathways. Revisiting personal narratives with openness to vulnerability highlighted the transformative nature of the process, while reconciling with the inner critic fostered acceptance of self and significant others. Participants developed resilience amidst relational turbulence, shaped meaningful aspirations, and balanced desire and fear to pursue their goals iteratively, without nostalgia, while attending to survival and self-care.

These findings demonstrate how systemic–dialectical and narrative practices enhance qualitative research by revealing how social interaction fosters agency, reflection, and transformative development in early adulthood, offering practical insights for counseling, education, and organizational practice.

## **A qualitative phenomenological study on self-actualisation**

**Dimitris Kiortsis<sup>1</sup>, Antonia Svensson Dianellou<sup>2</sup>**

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Despite self-actualisation (SA) being an influential concept, as testified by numerous academic publications, most research on the subject is quantitative. Even though there are some phenomenological qualitative research projects on SA, they all focus on very specific target populations. This qualitative study, therefore, attempted to make a contribution toward filling this gap in current literature. The aim was to examine the subjective view of SA of participants living in Greece. A maximum variation sample was employed, consisting of seven participants. Data was collected through semi-structured interviews. The epistemological standpoint was phenomenological. A data-driven, inductive analysis was implemented, following the six stages of reflexive thematic analysis designed by Braun and Clarke (2022). For many participants SA meant realising professional goals related to their natural inclinations, establishing harmonious relationships and achieving desired mental states such as equanimity, happiness, creativity and contentment. Despite a degree of homogeneity there were also important differences. Some participants valued autonomy while others sought fulfilment by being part of something bigger than themselves. Material wealth was essential for only a few of the participants. Other participants emphasised the importance of being of service to others and making a positive contribution to the world. Implications, applications, limitations and future research were also discussed.

## **The use and value of Synallactic Collective Image Technique (SCIT) in group psychotherapy: An uncommon intertwining.**

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The study of group process in psychotherapy has been the subject of extensive scientific research over the past decades, highlighting the importance of its investigation. Based on systemic–dialectical epistemology, and in particular on the theory of the dialogical self, the Synallactic Collective Image Technique (SCIT) developed by Vassiliou & Vassiliou has been applied in various psychotherapeutic and psychoeducational contexts. The core of the technique lies in the co-creation of relationships among group members through the stimulation of verbal and nonverbal modes of communication while simultaneously revealing deeper, unconscious functions. A central element of the process is the shared drawing, which emerges collectively in real time and space, functioning as an analog representation of the group's cohesion and dynamics while also opening channels of connection among the members. This presentation describes the application of the SCIT technique with an emphasis on the role of the shared drawing, as well as its benefits for group cohesion and communication. The presentation links group functioning with the principles of systems theory, neuroplasticity, and interpersonal neurobiology, emphasizing the importance of analog communication and participatory creation for the group's psycho-emotional development and cohesion. Finally, it underscores the profound significance of the group process as a counterbalance to the pervasive individualism and existential isolation of contemporary society, illuminating the enduring value of coexistence, mutual interdependence, and communal connectedness.

## **GAME CHANGERS\_6**

### **Postfoundational methodological thought in posthumanist and Black studies: convergences and divergences**

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Posthumanist methodological theory and contemporary Black Studies literature have arrived at similar philosophical posi-

tions in the early parts of the 21st century. Significant numbers of leading scholars in both fields of study have concluded that inquiry should be something other than an effort to represent an exogenous “reality” in a final and uniquely authoritative manner. Instead scholars are exploring the possibility that social inquiry is not primarily about refining epistemic representations, nor even about deconstructing pretensions to certainty, but are more fundamentally about generating new ontological relations and new political possibilities.

The posthumanist literature being referred to here includes, but is not limited to: feminist new materialism, Barad’s agential realism, Latour’s actor network theory, Deleuze’s assemblage theory, St. Pierre’s postqualitative inquiry, affect theory, Alaimo’s transcorporeal analysis, Tuana’s viscous porosity, Kohn’s material semiotics, and more. The Black Studies literature being referred to here includes, but is not limited to: fugitivity theory, Wynterian sociogenics and counterhumanisms, Moten’s improvisatory foundations, theories and practices of refusal, Hartman’s critical fabulations, Afro-futurism, Black speculative fiction, and more.

Posthumanist and Black studies scholars have arrived at this postfoundational conception of social inquiry by relatively different paths and have done so in pursuit of somewhat different purposes. Consequently, there are both resonances and tensions between these literatures. The posthumanist literature tends to treat an emphasis on the impossibility of closure and epistemic fluidity as a positive political achievement. It also frequently operates with an aversion to essentialism and a preference for making broad identity categories the object, rather than the subject position, for analysis. The Black studies literature, on the other hand, tends to treat an emphasis on the impossibility of closure and epistemic fluidity as a neutral political achievement which under some circumstances can serve constructive political purposes, but under others can serve reactionary purposes. It also is organized around the idea that social analysis can and should center Blackness as a subject position for the foreseeable future and does not regard essentialism as the most significant risk facing our social worlds. Despite these tensions, many scholars are increasingly working with and in both literatures in pursuit of social amelioration.

These game changer session presume that any 21st century framework for social analysis must have something to offer the contemporary struggle against white supremacy, patriarchy, and systemic racism to be relevant to contemporary world historical events. It also presumes no theoretical stone should go unturned in this effort. The session’s purpose is to gather scholars and graduate students interested in bringing these theoretical frameworks together in their research and scholarship in a manner that builds upon their resonances while also respecting their differences.

#### Structure of the Game Changer.

This Game Changer session will focus on examining the relationship between the relevant bodies of literature. It will provide an overview of their areas of overlap, including shared features, commitments, and purposes, while also addressing points of tension, conflict, and potential incommensurability. The session will conclude with a facilitated discussion that reflects on these insights and explores ways of strengthening connections between the literatures in the near future, for example through collaborative literature reviews or special journal issues. The session will be open to all conference attendees.

As this literature is vibrantly intersectional, adjacent literatures will be engaged as well, such as: Indigenous theories on non-human agency, Chicana feminist literature, queer theory, disability studies, animal studies, etc.

#### Deliverables

The session will provide a QR code link to a bibliography of relevant books, book chapters, and articles sorted into thematic sections. These will include works of posthumanist methodological theory and philosophy of science by scholars such as Annmarie Mol (2021), Anna Tsing (2024), Karen Barad (2015, 2020), Isabel Stengers (2023), Deboleena Roy (2018), Stacey Alaimo (2018), Elizabeth St. Pierre (2021), Lisa Mazzei (2021), and others. It will also include book chapters and articles focused primarily on contemporary Black studies and Black feminist theories of inquiry, such as Sylvia Wynter (2003, 2015), Zakiyah Iman Jackson (2022), Saidiya Hartman (2018, 2019), Alexander Weheliye (); Fred Moten (2017), Tina Campt (2017), Kara Keeling (2019), Leslie Gross-Wyrtzen & Alex A. Moulton (2023), and others. Finally it will include book chapters and articles that explicitly bringing these literatures together in the service of anti-oppressive scholarship, such as Jasbir Puar (2024), Claire Colebrook (2022), Ezekiel Dixon-Roman, Alecia Jackson (2013), Fikile Nxumalo (2021), Zakiyyah Iman Jackson (2022), Sarah Truman (2019), Awad Ibrahim (2023), Tiffany Lethabo King (2017), Jerry Rosiek (2019), and others.





