

ESREA

European Society for Research on the Education of Adults

First announcement and call for papers
ESREA – European Society for Research on the Education of Adults

Life History and Biographical Research Network
Linnaeus University
Växjö and Kalmar 4-7 March 2010

Representing Lives and Learning **The science and poetics of our work**

The next ESREA Life History and Biography Network, is organised by the Linnaeus University in Sweden (Växjö and Kalmar) (www.lnu.se) in cooperation with the Emigrant Museum in Växjö (www.utvandrnashus.se).

The conference will be held in the House of Emigrants and in the University buildings in Växjö as well as in Kalmar and take place from the evening of Thursday the 4th to Sunday the 7th of March 2010. Accommodation will mainly be in Växjö, and we will arrange a special evening meal at a glass foundry in the “Kingdom of Crystal” between Växjö and Kalmar.

Representing Lives and learning *The science and poetics of our work*

The theme of this conference can be regarded as an answer to several ongoing discussions in the field and we welcome papers that draw on life history, biographical and auto/biographical research in the themes listed below, but we also welcome papers on other topics!

Lynn Froggett, in Milano suggested that we had a prime aesthetic responsibility to represent lives fully, in all their rich complexity, and in creative, compelling ways. And that this represented more than constructing our work as a science.

Pär Lagerkvist - the Nobel Prize winner, born in Växjö - provides us with some potential links here: poetry as well as science can be a form of obsession, he insisted. They both seek to lift personkind out of itself and to seek to answer some eternal questions. Pär Lagerkvist was a visionary who sought to throw light on the problems of humanity in our time, threatened as it by barbarity and barrenness. The human mind - maybe in certain scientific guises - can be like

a car, black and empty, roaring along in the dark through unknown towns to an unknown goal. But Lagerkvist chronicled the delicate flute of tenderness, love and trust in lives that can make a real, transformative difference. There are relational and spiritual qualities in the human struggle that point us towards what he saw to be eternal verities.

Within his writing is a strong sense of the poetic, the transcendental and the humanistic. And we want to play with these themes in our conference:

- What is our purpose in representing lives? Is it for some instrumental or greater good? How is this to be done and on what and whose terms?
- Is there, or should there be, a poetry in our work and writing, alongside the science? Is there an aesthetic/poetic as well as moral responsibility to represent the spirit by which lives may have been lived, in all their complexity, and a need we to beware of reductionism?
- What is the nature of our science?

Abstracts (and proposals for workshops and/or poster sessions) are called for to be submitted before December 4th - electronically on no more than one side of A4 - with names, affiliations and contact details on a separate sheet. For the abstracts English is obligatory.

Please mail to: esrea2010@vxu.se

This will give us the possibility to get back to you before Christmas!

Working languages: English and French.

*** ESREA will be offering 2 bursaries (250 Euro each) for doctoral students.**

Further information about the conference will come in October, but for questions and expressions of interest in the meantime, please contact us:

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