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## **Sharing your students' stories: Using narrative research in your work as an art educator**

### **History of Narrative Studies**

- Early to mid 20th century – Sociologists and anthropologists begin writing life histories
- Mid 1940s – Stronger interest in study of individuals
- 1970's – Increase in Feminist narratives: Feminists begin to challenge the conventional assumptions about research relationships and methods (Chase, 2005)
- Postmodern Influence – Questions about voice, authenticity, authority and representation (Chase, 2005)

### **Designers and Leaders in the Tradition & Additional Literature**

- F. Michael Connelly – Canadian Education Researcher
- D. Jean Clandinin – Canadian Education Researcher (4 books with Connelly)
- Norman Denzin – American Professor of Communications
- Lincoln – American Education Researcher (edited Sage Handbook with Denzin)

### **What is Narrative Study?**

“Contemporary narrative inquiry can be characterized as an amalgam of interdisciplinary analytic lenses, diverse disciplinary approaches, and both traditional and innovative methods – all revolving around an interest in biographical particulars as narrated by the one who lives them.” (Chase, 2005, p. 651)

### **Characteristics, Purposes and Contexts**

#### **Characteristics**

- Study of how humans *experience* the world – puzzle and wonder
- Personal accounts
- Reveals popular attitudes, experiences, perspectives

#### **Purposes**

- Describe
- Explain (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000)
- Force for social change - Testimonios (Chase, 2005)

#### **Contexts**

- Sociology
- Anthropology
- Education

- Psychology

### **Other Terms**

- Narrative analysis
- Narrative inquiry
- Narrative research
- Narrative compositions
- Narratology

### **Directing Narrative Inquiry** (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000)

- Inward: Feelings, hopes, dispositions
- Outward: Environment
- Backward: Temporality: past, present, future
- Forward: Temporality: past, present, future

### **Viewing Narrative Research Questions** (Chase, 2005)

#### **Discourse**

- Events and actions as unique to each individual
- Narrative as retrospective meaning-making

#### **Context**

- Narrative construct is situated within a context:
  - Personal
  - Social
  - Cultural
  - Historical

#### **Verbal Action**

- Narrative serves a purpose
- Narrative shapes self, experiences and reality

#### **Interactive Performances**

- The narrative as specific to particular audiences

#### **Self as Narrator**

- Emphasis on narrative action through first person narration

### **Types of Research Questions** (Chase, 2005)

- What: Plot, characters
- Who: Identity work, ethnography, autoethnography
- How: How people communicate and understand

### **Relevant Research Settings**

- Educational Settings: K-12
- Community Settings: After-school programs, community centers

### **Employing Narrative Research**

#### **Data Collection**

- Field Texts (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000)

- Teacher stories
- Autobiographical writing
- Journal writing
- Field notes
- Letters
- Conversation
- Research interview
- Family stories and stories of families
- Documents
- Photographs, memory boxes, and other personal family-social artifacts
- Life experience as a source

### **Analysis & Findings**

- The art of “back and forth” takes place (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000)
- Interconnected relationships between writing, feedback and revision occur to create a cohesive whole (Coulter & Smith, 2009)

### **Voice as a Strategy**

- Three Voices of Narrative Strategies (Chase, 2005): Authoritative, supportive, interactive

### **Top Five Tips for Implementing Narrative Research in Your Classroom**

- Do No Harm (Coulter, 2009)
- Open endings invite meaning-making
- Rely on field texts for richness, nuance and complexity (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000)
- Avoid the miseducative experience (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000)
- Ethical concern in researcher-participant discourse (Coulter, 2009)

### **Narrative Research in Art Education (Zander, 2007)**

#### **Classroom Communication & Community**

- Provides new opportunities for creative ways of thinking
- Creates dialogical classrooms
- Encourages students to explore personal meanings and issues of social ethics

#### **Narrative Art History**

- Historical interpretation
- Postmodern influences on interpretation
- Introduction of ideas through narrative

#### **Narratives of the Art Room**

- Students’ stories: Confront and reexamine life and social events
- Teacher’s stories: Help students find meaning/ make connections

#### **Stories Embedded in Artworks**

- Contexts under which art is created
  - When
  - How
  - Who

- Why

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