

Forms and Practices of Narrating

International Conference | John F. Kennedy Institute | June 5-7, 2014



Photo by Dustin Breitenwischer

CONFERENCE THEME

Social scientists have recently 'discovered' the narrativity claiming that life itself is storied, that narrative is not representative and thus secondary to life but a quintessential condition of it. These ideas give occasion to reassess the manifold forms and practices of narrating, not least since their ontological reconception has hardly been received in literary and cultural studies so far—possibly because of concerns with their own conceptual bearings. From about 1980 onward, literary studies were largely redefined as cultural studies. This led to an expansion of conventional notions of narrative and brought about

a range of developments, including the emerging rivalry between media-specific forms and practices of narrating on the one hand and lasting aspirations to formulate a general theory of narrativity on the other, the migration of narrative concepts across disciplinary borders, and the questioning of plot-centered notions of narrativity through the study of affect.

The conference sets out to assess the ramifications of these recent reconceptions for the study of narrative forms and practices. What are the institutional effects of the transdisciplinary success of narrating for the practice

of literary and cultural studies, now that they can no longer claim exclusivity for one of their core competencies? How do the recent reconceptions challenge key concepts of our work such as 'identity,' 'interpellation,' 'representation' and 'liminality'? How do they alter our understanding of the history and historicity of narrative forms and practices, particularly when approached from the perspective of struggling with and against the limits of what is 'narratable' within particular conventions? And finally, how do these reconceptions challenge our understanding of social formation and social action?

Thursday, June 5

18:00 - 20:00

Opening Lecture

ADRIANA CAVARERO (Università di Verona)
"Narration versus Destruction"

Afterwards: Reception

Friday, June 6

10:00 - 12:30

Workshop 1: Premises of Narrating

WINFRIED FLUCK (Freie Universität Berlin)
"Anthropological Narratives"

ALBRECHT KOSCHORKE (Universität Konstanz)
"Stories and Decisions"

12:30 - 13:30

Lunch Break

13:30 - 16:00

Workshop 2: Functions of Narrating

PETER BROOKS (Princeton University)
"The Constitutive Nature of Narrative in the Law"

ANSGAR NÜNNING (Universität Gießen)
"Forms and Functions of Narrative
Worldmaking as a Paradigm for an Inter-
and Transdisciplinary Approach to the Study of
Culture"

16:00 - 16:30

Coffee Break

16:30 - 19:00

Workshop 3: Needs and Limits of Narrative

LAURA BIEGER (Universität Freiburg)
"No Place Like Home – Belonging and
Narrative"

ANDREAS MAHLER (Freie Universität Berlin)
"Tellabilities – Diatopic/Diachronic"

Saturday, June 7

10:00 - 12:30

Workshop 4: Narrative Rituals and Ruptures

ULLA HASELSTEIN (Freie Universität Berlin)
"Narratives of Habit"

GABRIELE M. SCHWAB (UC Irvine)
"The Paradox of Absence: Narratives of the
Disappeared"

12:30 - 13:30

Lunch Break

13:30 - 16:00

Workshop 5: The Conditions of Narrating Lives

NICOLA KING (Independent Scholar, formerly
UWE Bristol)
"Constructing Identity: Narrative Strategies in
Recent British Autobiography"

FLORIAN SEDLMEIER (Freie Universität Berlin)
"Paratexts and the Contingencies of
Narrating"

16:00 - 16:30

Coffee Break

16:30 - 19:00

Workshop 6: Narrative Unbound

HILLARY CHUTE (University of Chicago)
"What is Graphic Narrative?"

FRANK KELLETER (Freie Universität Berlin)
"Dis/Appointment Television: Commercial
Storytelling and the Problem of Serial Closure"

19:00 - 19:15

Closing Remarks

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John F. Kennedy-Institut
für Nordamerikastudien

Freie Universität Berlin



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