



FACULTY OF PSYCHOLOGY AND EDUCATIONAL SCIENCES

Intertwining Hope, Strengths, and Resistance as Transformative: Women's Verbal and Visual Narratives

Public defense to obtain the degree of
DOCTOR OF PSYCHOLOGY
by

Ms. Katherine McKinnon

which will take place on
October 3, 2016 at 6:00pm
At Promotiezaal, D2.10
Campus Etterbeek

How to reach the vub : <http://www.vub.be/infover/campussen/index.html>
Pleinlaan 2 – 1050 Brussel

Please confirm your attendance before : September 26, 2016 at
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Jury:

INTERNAL:

Prof. dr. Karen François/Director of the Doctoral School of Human Sciences/ Department of Philosophy Vrije Universiteit Brussel
Prof. dr. Gerrit Loots/Faculty of Psychology and Educational Sciences Vrije Universiteit Brussel
Prof. dr. Katrien De Koster/Department of Criminology Vrije Universiteit Brussel

EXTERNAL:

Prof. dr. Sheila McNamee/Department of Communications University of New Hampshire/ Vice President Taos Institute
Prof. dr. Ken Gergen/Senior Research Professor Faculty of Psychology Swarthmore/ Affiliate Professor of Psychology University of Tilburg/President Taos Institute
Prof dr. Jon Rijsman/Faculty of Social and Behavioral Sciences Tilburg University/Taos Institute

Promotors:

Prof. dr. Gerrit Loots
Prof. dr. Sheila McNamee





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Summary

Social construction invites us to engage in meaningful conversations, to be curious about new possibilities, and to co-create alternative ways of being-with one another in the world. It counters notions of individualism and nurtures dialogical engagement. It challenges our knowing and certainty, and asks us to embrace un-knowing and un-certainty to co-construct emergent ideas, meaning making, and transformative possibilities in our re-search and future practice. The stance of relational construction, being-in the discourse of 'we,' moved this research into new terrain and un-mapped territory. Relational inquiry cultivated our curiosity about the confluence of hope, strengths, and resistance, and the fluidity of the transformative dynamic portrayed through our verbal and visual narratives. The re-search presented in this dissertation focused on the stories and art created by nine co-inquirers and how their invited conversations, rich in meaning and deeply experiential, illuminated the importance of story and art in therapeutic practice. Rhizomatic thought flourished. This narrative of re-search and practice is based not on 'I the researcher' but on 'we the co-inquirers,' collaboratively co-constructing counter-stories of relational practice for discursive therapeutic space. The everyday-ness of our conversations encourages multiplicity of voice and deconstructs the power differentials of researcher/researched and of therapist/client. This re-search opens new ways of relationally being-with in therapeutic space. This project originated as *Curious conversations: Verbal and visual narratives, relationally co-creating the meaning of strengths, resistance and hope with women in discursive therapeutic space. What is this intertwined, transformative dynamic? ...* and became so much more for all nine co-inquirers.

Curriculum Vitae

Kathie McKinnon holds a Masters Degree in Social Work, specialized in Advanced Clinical Practice in Narrative Therapy from Memorial University in St. John's, Newfoundland, Canada. Her research and clinical work in this MSW related to Aboriginal children, youth, and families' trauma, mental health and addictions and the use of Aboriginal Theory, anti-colonial practice, holistic and traditional healing approaches in collaboration with expressive therapies. Prior to this Kathie completed a Graduate Study in Child and Youth Mental Health from Thompson Rivers University in Kamloops, British Columbia, Canada. Her research and specialization was in concurrent issues specific to children and youth with mental health and addictions concerns.

Kathie's passion for stories and art began when she was a child; her relational dialogical approach brings the conversational context of verbal and visual narratives naturally in her practice. She is a Narrative Therapist who utilizes art as a therapeutic modality, EMDR, and mindfulness practice in her practices. She is trained in multiple other conventional therapeutic modalities as well. Kathie is a relational practitioner whose work specializes in trauma, mental health, and addictions. Since 2008, Kathie holds the position of Clinical Supervisor and Primary Therapist of a Wellness Team in a fully delegated Aboriginal child protection agency in Kamloops, British Columbia. Her team provides promotion, prevention, and intervention services (trauma, intergenerational trauma, developmental, social, emotional, and cognitive delays/disorders, mental health, addictions, and other forms of adversity) for Aboriginal infants, children, youth, families, and communities within the Secwepemc Nation and urban Aboriginal population of Kamloops, British Columbia. She is a sessional faculty instructor in the School of Social Work and Human Service, Bachelor of Social Work Program at Thompson Rivers University in Kamloops, British Columbia teaching Addictions and Social Work Practice (SOCW 4660) and Social Work Field Practice and Field Seminar (SOCW 4020 and SOCW 3040). Kathie has an active private practice in Kamloops since 2010.

