

## Narrative Interactions: Stories, Identities and Voices

Intensive graduate seminar co-sponsored  
by the Estonian Graduate School of Culture Studies and Arts (GSCSA)  
and Nordic Network of Narrative Studies (NNNS)



**October 1-3, 2010, Estonia**

People use stories as a tool for thinking, orienting themselves in the world and coping with the tremendous increase of information in modern culture. New situations and new forms of communication often involve new challenges and strains: in response, people tend to develop new narrative and behavioral strategies to adapt themselves to constraints the situation puts on them or to test new opportunities it offers. The present seminar seeks to explore these strategies, particularly management of subjectivity (identity, voice) in fictional storytelling, online communication and the situation of illness.

### *Instructors:*

*Ruth Page (University of Leicester, UK).* Voices and Identities on the Web (Online Communities, Personal Blogs and Discussion Forums)

Emergent forms of social media (such as blogs, wikis, social networking sites) have enabled people to self-publish their life experiences and to connect with online audiences with unprecedented measure. We will be looking at the ways in which the autobiographical story fragments found in these online contexts challenge canonical definitions of 'narrative', are shaped by their participatory discourse context and perform crucial identity and interpersonal work for their authors.

*Marina Grishakova (University of Tartu, Estonia).* Basic Concepts: Stories, Identities and Voices

This workshop introduces basic narratological concepts (story, voice, identity) used in the study of written and oral narratives and provides background knowledge for other modules. Students are expected to read and analyse excerpts from classical works on these concepts (Bakhtin, Genette, Aczel, Lanser and others).

*Jan Alber (University of Freiburg, Germany).* Unnatural Voices and Impossible Identities

This module seeks to familiarize students with the wide range of physically or logically impossible narrators and characters in fictional narratives. More specifically, we will look at speaking animals, 'omniscient' first-person narrators, and impossible characters, and, in a second step, explore their potential functions.

*Lars-Christer Hydén (University of Linköping, Sweden).* Voices of Illness and Disability

This lecture will give an overview of the research on illness and narrative, with a special emphasis on research about storytelling by persons having some kind of communicative disability. Quite often illness narratives are thought of as stories about illness. A more difficult and maybe less studied area has to do with the ways diseases affect the ability to tell stories, as for instance in patients with brain injuries or Alzheimer's disease. In these cases the disease affects both cognitive and linguistic abilities making it difficult to tell stories that adhere to the conventional narrative norms.

The seminar invites Ph.D. and M.A. students in various fields of cultural research to participate in an interdisciplinary study group of 20-30 students. The seminar offers 4 workshops by invited lecturers. Students are expected to do preparatory reading in order to participate in the workshops. Upon full participation in the study programme and completion of a 3500-word essay (deadline November 5, 2010) students will be awarded 2 ECTS points. The language of the seminar is English.

Please send:

- the motivation letter explaining why you wish to participate in this seminar (200-300 words)
- short CV (not needed for GSCSA students)

by **June 14**, 2010, to [ktkdk@ut.ee](mailto:ktkdk@ut.ee). You will be notified of the acceptance of your contribution by June 25, 2010.

A course fee is not required; the accommodation and travel costs of the students of GSCSA and NNNS will be reimbursed. Accommodation will be arranged by the organizers, travel details will be provided for the participants. The seminar is planned to be held as an outing to a scenic location.

Additional information: Monika Tasa, [ktkdk@ut.ee](mailto:ktkdk@ut.ee)

GSCSA homepage (more on becoming a member): <http://www.ema.edu.ee/ktkdk>