

2071 Consciousness and Portraiture
11:00-12:20 163 Noyes

Chair: *David R. Goodwin, Missouri State University*

Inter-subjectivity is Part of Subjectivity, *Klaus G Witz, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign*

Meeting a Participant Many Years Later, *David R. Goodwin, Missouri State University*

Technological Expression of Being: Online and Offline Self Intertwined in the Portraits of Taiwanese Children, *Wanju Huang, Eastern Kentucky University*

Portrait of a Participant's Inner Changes with Mind Practice, *Youngcook Jun, Sunchon National University*

Panel Abstract: Consciousness and Portraiture

Chair: David Goodwin (Missouri State University)

Portraiture develops a picture of the consciousness of a person at the time of the interviews, presenting in-depth understanding and characterizations of human subjective experience. This panel is focused on research which takes the consciousness of a person as an object of study in its own right. Witz presents the thesis that being the same “single consciousness-and-‘I’ from childhood to old age” is part of every individual and is fundamental to inter-subjectivity. Goodwin discusses a longitudinal study that shows a unity of “consciousness and ‘I’” in the person. Huang examines the subjective experience of 11 year-old Taiwanese children using instant messaging. Jun explores individual participant consciousness in using Mind Practice to gain fuller awareness and understanding of one’s deeper motivations for improving one’s life in society. Jegatheesan looks into “consciousness and ‘I’” in other cultures. Witz is the discussant.

Paper 1: Inter-subjectivity is Part of Subjectivity by Klaus Witz (University of Illinois)

Witz and Goodwin (2012) suggest that every individual illustrates the “phenomenon/ reality” of being “a single-consciousness-and-‘I’ from childhood to old age”. This includes three aspects that are experienced together in an inseparable unity: (1) the fact that a sense of I is constantly in innumerable ways part of one’s subjective experience; (2) feeling (presupposing, tacitly taking for granted, believing) one is the same “continuous consciousness-and-‘I’” all the time from childhood on up to old age; and (3) feeling (presupposing etc.) one is always the same person. This paper argues that to these aspects should be added (4) the fact that the individual feels that in her interactions with others during the day she is to some extent subjectively understanding them.

Paper 2: Meeting a Participant Many Years Later by David Goodwin (Missouri State University)

This paper examines meeting and interviewing a portraiture participant who was part of an earlier study on teacher growth many years later to understand how she has developed and unfolded since. A central feature of essentialist portraiture is to evoke the consciousness and unity of self in the participant, in this case, over fourteen years. Lawrence-Lightfoot highlights this issue when she writes that a painted portrait of her completed 25 years ago still represents important aspects of who she is now (Lawrence-Lightfoot & Davis, 1997). The interview analysis illustrates the participant’s unfoldment which is in tune with the deeper understanding developed in the original portrait. Even though there have been many changes in her life, her “consciousness and ‘I’” (self) are inseparable and show oneness in who she is as a person.

Paper 3: Technological Expression of Being: Online and Offline Self Intertwined in the Portraits of Taiwanese Children by Wanju Huang (Eastern Kentucky University)

This study explored the nature of five 11-year-old Taiwanese children’s instant messaging (IMing) experience; and how it was related to other aspects in the larger images of these children. The author adopted the “participant as ally—essentialist portraiture approach” research methodology, which argues that a researcher’s task is not just to understand the investigated phenomenon but also to explore how the investigated phenomenon ties into the other aspects of the participant’s life. The primary research data are in-depth interviews with the five children, their parents, and homeroom and computer teachers. The research findings suggest that each child’s own strong and distinct identity was apparent in the ways they each used IMing. Who the child was in the real world was never left behind when he or she IMed. Further, the images of the child’s family, parents, and peer groups were also reflected in the essence and nature of the child.

Paper 4: Portrait of a Participant's Inner Changes with Mind Practice by Youngcook Jun
(Sunchon National University, Korea)

In this presentation, I discuss a participant's subjective experience when participating in the Mind Practice discipline based on Korean Won Buddhism. Mind Practice allows the participant to reflect on one's own state of mind and observe how it triggers other emotions, feelings, or effects in human relationships and in relation to facing troubles in everyday life. The purpose of this study is to understand deeper motivation for and inner changes in becoming a better person, which includes having a vision for society. During the fall of 2011, in-depth interviews were conducted with six participants. Essentialist portraiture is used to explore consciousness in the human being in relation to deeper motivation and change in awakening to higher aspects of self and society.

Paper 5: Consciousness, Self, and Culture by Brinda Jegatheesan (University of Washington)

This presentation will explore the thesis that a "single consciousness and 'I'" is a phenomenon present in adults from other cultures. Understanding consciousness of a person is discussed as more or less independent of specific cultural notions of meaning, change, and social connection.