

Responsibility to the Story: Testimony and Ethics in Human Rights Research and Narratives

Centre for Applied Human Rights, University of York (UK) 9-11 September 2009

This international conference will launch an important new journal: the *Journal of Human Rights Practice*. It is hosted by the Centre for Applied Human Rights (CAHR), University of York (UK), and Oxford University Press, in collaboration with Amnesty International, the Medical Foundation for the Care of Victims of Torture, and Panos London.

The conference will bring together academics, practitioners and artists to explore ethical concerns and practical challenges surrounding the use of testimony. Human rights research has expanded significantly in the academy over the past decade in a range of disciplines (law, politics, anthropology, literature). Cultural output, ranging from child soldier autobiographies to documentary films about transitional justice, is similarly prominent. Practitioner research has had to adapt to its own forms of expansion (growing interest in social, economic and cultural rights; the use of new media). The use and study of testimony have been driving forces behind these developments. But the ethical and practical implications of the rise of testimonial work, particularly in the global media age, remain under-explored.

The aim of this event is to investigate what responsibility researchers, practitioners and artists have to the stories they use, and to disseminate best ethical practice.

Conference fee: £70 waged; £30 unwaged/student
Film event: £5

For further details please see <http://www.york.ac.uk/inst/cahr/Events/Index.htm> - or contact Judith Pink, at jkp2@york.ac.uk

9 September, film event at City Screen Cinema, York (5.45-8.45pm)

The following films are scheduled to feature; all films will be followed by discussion:

Statement 710399, director Refik Hodzic.

This film follows a father trying to retrace the last days of his teenage son who disappeared during their attempt to escape the genocide at Srebrenica.

Unheard Voices, director Cahal McLaughlin.
6x5 minute stories from survivors of the Troubles.

Sam Gregory, the Programme Director at WITNESS, will show and discuss examples of video advocacy.

10 September, conference programme

9-10am: registration

10-10.15am: Paul Gready (CAHR, University of York; co-editor of the *Journal of Human Rights Practice*), introduction and welcome

10.15- 11.30 am: Panel 1: Contested Lives: Child Soldier Narratives

- Chair: Paul Gready (CAHR, University of York)
- Johanna Mac Veigh (Save the Children)
- Krijn Peters (Development Studies, University of Swansea)

11.30-11.45: coffee/tea

11.45-1.15pm: Panel 2: Managing Complex Identities

- Chair: Lars Waldorf (CAHR, University of York)
- Ron Dudai (CAHR, University of York), Rescuers and Informers
- Eileen Pittaway (Centre for Refugee Studies, University of NSW, Australia), Victim-Survivors
- Carina Tertsakian (human rights researcher and author of 'Le Chateau: the Lives of Prisoners in Rwanda'), Perpetrator-Victims

1.15-2pm: lunch

2-3.30pm: Panel 3: Transition and Testimony

- Chair: Brian Phillips (human rights consultant; co-editor of the *Journal of Human Rights Practice*)
- Amy Hill (Center for Digital Storytelling), Tracing Legacies of Violence through Participatory Media in South Africa
- Refik Hodzic (International Liaison Office, International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia, Sarajevo, and Co-Founder, XY Films), Visual Ethics and Documentary Filmmaking in Post-Conflict Societies

3.30-4pm: coffee/tea

4-5.30pm: Discussion Groups

- **Discussion group 1:** Informed Consent

Chair: Aliya Mughal (Medical Foundation)

Discussion leaders: Danna Ingleton (Amnesty International)

Olivier Dubois (Deputy Head, Central Tracing Agency and Protection Division, International Committee of the Red Cross)

- **Discussion group 2:** Processing the Story (selection, editing etc.)

Chair: Ron Dudai (CAHR, University of York)

Discussion leader: Siobhan Warrington (Panos London)

6-7.30pm: launch of the *Journal of Human Rights Practice* and reception, hosted by Brian Phillips, co-editor of the journal, and Harsh Mander, a member of the journal's board

11 September, conference programme

9.00-11am: Panel 4: Testimony and Advocacy

- Chair: Martin Jones (CAHR, University of York)
- Rose McCausland (Living Lens), Unlikely Partnerships: Trafficked Women and the Metropolitan Police in the UK
- Carlos Reyes-Manzo (photojournalist and former Amnesty International prisoner of conscience), Representation and Human Rights

- Wendy Rickard (Folk.us, University of Exeter/Peninsula Medical School), Oral History as a Tool for Change: Messy Issues on Advocacy, Involvement and Activism
- Alison Wallace (Director, International Fundraising Program, Amnesty International) Going Public: How Can Fundraisers and Marketers Make Best Use Of the Stories We Are Told to Communicate our Work?
- Shlomy Zachary (Yesh Din, and Michael Sfard Law Office, Israel) Shaping Testimonies, Balancing Rights: Responsibilities of Human Rights Organizations in Human Rights Litigation and Advocacy towards Individuals

11-11.30am: coffee/tea

11.30-1pm: Panel 5: Sites of Storytelling

- Chair: Ron Dudai (CAHR, University of York)
- Film: Cahal McLaughlin (documentary film maker, University of Ulster)
- Landscapes, Memorials and Museums: Paul Basu (Institute of Archaeology, University College London)

1-1.45pm: lunch

1.45-3.15: Discussion Groups

- **Discussion Group 1:** Organisational Ethical Policies

Chair: Emily Nevins (Deputy Director, Campaigns, Amnesty International)

Discussion leaders: Ian Gorvin (Senior Program Officer, Human Rights Watch)

Jane Martin (Programme Manager, PhotoVoice)

- **Discussion Group 2:** Video Advocacy

Chair: Brian Phillips (human rights consultant; co-editor of the *Journal of Human Rights Practice*)

Discussion leader: Sam Gregory (WITNESS)

- **Discussion Group 3:** Multimedia

Chair: Lena Barrett (CAHR, University of York)

Discussion leaders: Stef Scagliola (Netherlands Institute for Veterans) and

Franciska de Jong (University of Twente), discussing (i) oral history collections online, and (ii) indexing technology for interviews.

3.15-3.30pm: coffee/tea

3.30-4.30pm: Panel 7: Roundtable - Reflections and Future Directions

- Paul Gready (CAHR, University of York; co-editor of the *Journal of Human Rights Practice*)
- Harsh Mander (Centre for Equity Studies, Delhi)
- Brian Phillips (human rights consultant; co-editor of the *Journal of Human Rights Practice*)
- Eileen Pittaway (Centre for Refugee Studies, University of NSW, Australia)