



INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR REMINISCENCE AND LIFE REVIEW

The Center For Continuing Education - University of Wisconsin-Superior

Spring 2017

<http://reminiscenceandlifereview.org>

Message from the President

Juliette Shellman

<p>Dear members:</p> <p>Welcome to the spring edition of our newsletter. I am grateful for all the work that Dr. Cappeliez, Donna Siso, and all our contributors have exerted in developing this issue. Since I last communicated to you through this newsletter, we have been considering our future structure and growth. We continue to discuss our concerns regarding membership size, our fiscal status, and increasing the visibility of the Institute. Much has been done through the development of the newsletters, the journal, the website,</p>	<p>and our biennial conferences. And for that, we are grateful for the work other Presidents and the UWS staff have done in the past to bring us to this point.</p> <p>Keeping this in mind, the central issue is that our future is linked in many ways to the size of our membership. On this issue, I am asking everyone to participate in increasing our membership. We all need to foster the growth of the Institute through word of mouth, e-mail, and social media. I am interested to hear from you about</p>	<p>any creative ideas you may have to achieve the goal of increasing our membership. Please feel free to contact me at: juliette.shellman@uconn.edu.</p> <p>As can be seen in the body of the newsletter, we will be participating in exciting programs through and summer that further our interests and public image. We are looking forward to participating in the IAGG conference in July and we welcome all our new members and old friends to the July symposium, the Reminiscence Interest Group meeting, and</p>
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Institute Journal Publishes New Issue

Thomas Pierce

The Institute's peer-reviewed online journal The International Journal of Reminiscence and Life Review has just published a new issue, which features a Special Section titled "The Value of Personal Memories." The section was edited by Philippe Cappeliez and includes articles by Philippe (*The Worth of Personal Memories: Reviewing, Letting Go, or ... Obliterating?*), Susan Bluck (*Remember and Review or Forget and Let Go? Views from a Functional Approach to Autobiographical Memory*), and Gerben Westerhof (*Technologies to Remember or Forget? A Perspective from Reminiscence and Life Review*). The issue also includes research articles first-authored by Lauren Ermann (*The Intersection of Narrative Therapy and AA Through the Eyes of Older Women*) and Myra Sabir (*Personalized Generativity in the Work Pursuits of African Americans of the Great Migration*). Finally, the issue includes two articles containing shared reminiscence: Atlanta Summer – 1943 by David Cooley, and Brazil Nuts by Randy Conway.

The journal publishes contributions to research, practice, and theory as well as original reminiscences in written or audio format. The web address for the journal is: <http://www.ijrlr.org/ojs/index.php/IJRLR/index>. Inquiries about submissions are welcome and can be addressed to the Editor, Dr. Tom Pierce (tpierce@radford.edu).

Message from the President

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an informal gathering to be planned soon. I look forward to seeing you at these events and we will continue our hard work to sustain and grow the field of reminiscence and life review. Have a great summer!

Juliette

Next International Reminiscence and Life Review Conference in Boston in 2018

Reminder - Since the GSA is not holding their annual conference in fall of 2017, the next International Conference on Reminiscence and Life Review is being planned for November 12-13, 2018 – immediately before the GSA conference in Boston, MA, November 14-18, 2018.

Reminiscence and Life Review at the IAGG World Congress of Gerontology and Geriatrics, July 23-27, 2017, in San Francisco

Gerben Westerhof will lead a symposium entitled “Innovations in Interventions for Reminiscence and Life Review”. Save the date and time for this symposium. It is scheduled on July 25th, from 8:00 a.m. – 9:30 a.m in Room 3003 of the Moscone West.

The four parts of the symposium include:

- The Use of Life Story Books for People with Dementia: A Systematic Review, by Teuntje Elfrink;
- Development of a Culturally Tailored Reminiscence Intervention for Minority Elders, authored by Juliette Shellman;
- New Technologies to Improve Mood by Eliciting Autobiographical Memories in Older Adults, authored by Juan Pedro Serrano Selva
- A Quantitative and Qualitative Evaluation of an Online Life-Review Intervention for Depression, authored by Ernst Bohlmeijer.

Also during the IAGG conference, the GSA Interest Group: Reminiscence, Life Story, and Narrative - Research and Practice will meet. This meeting will take place on July 25th, from 7:45 pm - 9:15 pm, in Salon 1-2 (the Marriott Marquis). Contact is Lori Yancura (loriena@hawaii.edu)

We are in the process of planning a get-together for the members of the International Institute for Reminiscence and Life Review (IIRLR) and others interested in reminiscence and life review after the Interest Group at another time to be determined. If you plan on attending, drop Donna a line (dsislo@uwsuper.edu) and she will make sure it gets to the committee.

Important: Note that members of the IIRLR in 2017 and 2018 receive a significant discount on conference fees for the 2018 IIRLR conference. [Click to join or renew your membership.](#)

IIRLR

International Institute For Reminiscence
and Life Review

MISSION

To further define and develop the interdisciplinary field of reminiscence and life review through discussion and collaboration in practice, research, education, volunteer and individual applications across the lifespan.

GOALS

- Promote increased awareness, knowledge, and skill development in direct practice of reminiscence and life review.
- Further reminiscence and life review research activity, providing a venue for discussion of results as well as guidance for future research.
- Establish a working definition of reminiscence and life review.
- Further integrate research and practice.
- Educate others about reminiscence and life review practice, research, and ways to integrate the material in formal education, staff training, and volunteer organizations.

HISTORY

The International Institute for Reminiscence and Life Review is a program in the Center for Continuing Education at the University of Wisconsin-Superior. The Center sponsored the premiere National Reminiscence and Life Review Conference in 1995.

Major leaders in the field formed the International Reminiscence and Life Review as a follow up to that conference. The Board of Directors and interested participants have met at the 1997, 1999, 2001, 2003, 2005, 2007, 2009, 2011, 2013 and 2015 International Reminiscence and Life Review conferences sponsored by UW-Superior.

Become a member today

- Identify yourself as a leader in the field
- List yourself and your special areas of expertise in the Registry on the IIRLR website
- Promote the services you offer under Member Services on the IIRLR website
- Become eligible for leadership roles in the Institute's advisory board, conference planning committee, awards nomination process and more
- Receive advance notice of publication of on-line newsletter and Journal
- Support the Mission of the IIRLR – advance knowledge and practice of Reminiscence and Life Review

Annual fee: \$48 US dollars
\$24 US dollars for full time students

Contact:

Donna Sislo (dsislo@uwsuper.edu) 715-394-8170 or
Esther Gieschen (egiesche@uwsuper.edu)
715-394-8529.

<http://reminiscenceandlifereview.org>

IIRLR Membership Dues

This is a reminder that the IIRLR membership dues expire every year at the end of August. We are currently collecting dues for the 2017-2018 year. If you have not renewed your dues, please visit our [Membership site](#).

If you are not sure if these were paid or not, contact Donna at dsislo@uwsuper.edu or you can call her at 715.394.8170.

Update on the Certificate in Reminiscence and Life Story Work (RLSW)

The Certificate in Reminiscence and Life Story Work was launched by the University of Wisconsin - Superior Center for Continuing Education in 2015. Since then, two groups of students have completed their course work and a third group started in March 2017. Students come from across the USA, the UK, Canada and this year Austria. They range in age from under 30 to over 60. They have backgrounds in journalism, teaching, social work, counseling, videography, administration, and more. They form a diverse learning group and they all share a desire to help people tell the stories of their lives for their own improved well-being and/or to share with others.

The Certificate program was developed by staff in the Center for Continuing Education at UW-Superior with significant input from members of the IIRLR and the Association of Personal Historians (APH). To earn the Certificate, students complete three on-line courses, each 8-weeks long. The first two courses -- Fundamentals of Reminiscence and Life Review (R&LR): Theory, Research and History and Reminiscence and Life Review: Practice and Application are taught respectively by Juliette Shellman, PhD, current President of the IIRLR Advisory Board and Lori Yancura, PhD, member of the IIRLR Advisory Board. The third course -- Developing a Reminiscence/Life Story Work Professional Practice -- is taught by Sarah White, BA, long-time personal historian and past president of the Association of Personal Historians.

Each course requires that students engage in weekly discussions and submit papers related to the reading assignments. One student commented in her reflections about the course "This is the first on-line course I have taken and was not sure what to expect but I really enjoyed it. I enjoyed reading the weekly posts from everyone and I think sometimes people may be more vocal posting rather than when they are actually in a classroom."

After completing the three on-line courses satisfactorily, students begin a Capstone Practicum in which they plan and carryout an in-person life story work project with a client or clients. To help them plan their projects, they are paired with a mentor working professionally in the area of reminiscence and life story work the fits the student's interest. Mentors provide feedback on the preliminary and final project plans. They are available to consult with the student by phone or email throughout the project process.

Once the Capstone project is completed, students write a project report assessing their process, their interview, and the response of their client(s); they relate how they integrated what they learned in their course work throughout their project; and they offer final reflections on their projects and sometimes the certificate program over-all.

The student reflections have been very affirming of the content and the instructors. Below are just a few examples of these reflections:

"I felt a sense of accomplishment in that there was increased mutual understanding by the residents and family members, particularly for Jim who can no longer verbalize and for Maria and Bianca who have very different backgrounds than the others. There had never been a group activity like Show and Tell conducted at the facility. ... I feel this project provided welcome experience in group reminiscence. It allowed me to think through and apply many elements of what was learned during the Reminiscence and Life Story Work course -- taxonomy of reminiscence, methods and processes, the effects of aging and dementia, active listening and effective communication, types of reviewers, and styles of reminiscence."

"Through the coursework and this capstone project, I feel more confident as I move forward. I now have a better understanding and knowledge of the many components of reminiscing and life story work. I have a sample and soon will have more, just in time for a presentation next week and an upcoming life story workshop next month. I have been waiting to finish this course to approach retirement facilities. Now, I feel that I can walk in with confidence, that I have something of value to offer them. Thank you to all the instructors and my mentor ... "

Update on the Certificate in Reminiscence and Life Story Work (RLSW)

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"This has been a very productive and satisfying effort for me. As I have now reflected on the learning by writing this paper, I can see that as the program progressed, it unfolded, but also provided credibility and new ways to contribute, based on theory and research. I would have never known about the Birren Institute without the course. It is not currently being done in my community, as far as I can tell. It was important for me to keep the information from the course in front of me each step of the way. While doing the [GAB] workshop, and as workshops continue, the aspect we learned in module 2 about the process of relating, reflecting, restating, and respecting, is a very important value/rule to follow.

Many of the certificate students are members of the Association of Personal Historians (APH). A few months ago the benefits of completing the Certificate in R&LSW was a topic of discussion on the member list serve. Here are a couple examples of comments shared by graduates with other members:

"I made a decision during the course that dealing with the elderly who were dying was NOT on my list of things I wanted to do. Well, didn't work out that way, as I ended up interviewing my first client's mother over the course of five days while she was literally on her death bed. (In fact, through that project, I encountered just about every issue discussed during that course for the certificate.) It was a wonderful experience, and one that I blogged about (<http://www.bylyons.com/final-conversations/>)

"I discovered many things I didn't know (that) I didn't know. I have years of experience in journalism. I have been a member of APH since 2012 and a full time personal historian since the spring of 2014. True confession: I thought the [certificate] course would be a breeze - an easy credential. Wrong! The course opened my very narrow view of this field and I was exposed to the theories and history behind it. This included explanations about the many forms reminiscence can take in a variety of settings. Yes - I chafed (more than a little) because the first module used an academic approach and I've been out of that scene for a long, long, long time. To say I was "rusty" as a student would be an understatement, yet it was a real eye opener. In the end, I decided that the APH philosophy/approach was the best "fit" for me, but now I'm aware of other options. That's valuable."

The third cohort is now in the 2nd half of the first course. A new cohort will begin in 2018. By then, UW-Superior intends to offer an additional course for health and human services professionals to help them effectively integrate reminiscence and life review into their work with people experiencing memory loss and/or living in care facilities.

If you would like more information about the on-line Certificate in Reminiscence and Life Story Work, please go to www.uwsuper.edu/rlsw or contact Esther Gieschen at egiesche@uwsuper.edu or 715-394-8529.

The Importance of the IIRLR Registry

People interested in reminiscence and life review find the IIRLR website through their searches. Having your current information in the Registry can lead to important connections in the field and/or just opportunities to steer someone looking for information to an appropriate expert in their area of interest.

If you are a member and haven't included your profile information we suggest you do that as soon as you can. All you need to do is to go to the IIRLR site (www.ReminiscenceAndLifeReview.org), and click on the Registry tab. You will see a "Join-Registry-fill-in-form". This is the form you use to create your profile. Once you have filled out the form and saved it, email it back to us so we can include it to the Registry.

If you already have a profile, please review it. If an update is necessary, click on your name and at the bottom of your profile page is a link titled "Update-Profile-Form". Click on this link and update accordingly. In the past month, we have had two inquiries from web searches that we were able to direct to members through Registry profiles.

For anyone reading this who has not become a member, please join and create your Registry profile! To become a member, visit us at: www.ReminiscenceAndLifeReview.org or click on our [Registration Page](#).