

# *Women's History Scotland*

July 2009

Please send items, which might include recent publications, conferences, calls for papers, seminars, workshops, dayschools, courses, exhibitions and announcements, to be publicised in the e-newsletter to:  
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## **Women's History Scotland: Postgraduate & Early Career Researcher Workshop: The Past is Myself: Women's Life Narratives and Women's History**

Date: Saturday 26 September 2009

Venue: Napier University, Edinburgh

Abstract deadline: 10 August - Please submit proposals of c.300 words for 20 minute papers, accompanied by a brief research bio and institutional affiliation, if any, to: y.mcfadden.1@research.gla.ac.uk

For further details see our website: [www.womenshistoryscotland.org](http://www.womenshistoryscotland.org)

Characteristically, women's history has been innovative in applying a wide range of methodological techniques and theoretical positions to the uncovering of the past. In particular, the recovery or collection of women's narratives has been a way in which women's history has self-consciously created historical data for the future. This workshop will engage with work that has or is being done in the field of life narratives.

We invite papers from postgraduates and early career researchers working in this area. While the overall focus of WHS is historical, we welcome submissions from across the disciplines. Topics may include, but are not limited to:

- Women's life writing, such as autobiography, letters, memoirs and diaries
- Oral history and the uncovering of women's narratives. How does oral history as a practice lend itself to women's history? Positives and pitfalls?
- Issues of source availability in the uncovering of women's narratives. This might include issues of access, 'legitimacy', the creation and archiving of sources etc.
- Contextualising life narratives within dominant and marginal cultural discourses.
- What role can individual life narratives play in uncovering women's history more generally? Can one voice speak for a collective?
- How have women employed non-written means of narration; art work, tapestries, images, material culture etc?

Please note that although the Workshop is being organised by Women's History Scotland, proposals are not limited to those with a Scottish focus. Furthermore, we welcome proposals from across the disciplines.

**The 7th Biennial International Auto/Biography Association Conference:  
'Life Writing and Intimate Publics'**

Venue: University of Sussex

Date: 28 June-2 July 2010

Abstract deadline: 1 September 300 words to [laba2010@sussex.ac.uk](mailto:laba2010@sussex.ac.uk)

The Centre for Life History and Life Writing Research and the International Auto/Biography Association invite scholars and life writers to attend the 7th IABA conference, at the University of Sussex, Brighton. Keynote speakers include Nancy K. Miller, Sidonie Smith, Jenny Diski, Liz Stanley and Alessandro Portelli.

Late modernity has spot-lit intimate relations. Families, feelings and love lives have been opened to public politics through pressures of globalisation, digitisation, the mass media and social movements such as feminism. At the same time, traditional citizenships of public rights and responsibilities find new definition through trauma, consumption, identity and care. As boundaries between 'public' and 'private' multiply, new constituencies of belonging and claim are convened, from Fathers for Justice to flood survivors to Facebook. This conference begins from Lauren Berlant's term 'intimate public' to explore these new constituencies in relation to life writing and life storying across media, discipline and profession. Life writing and life story construct intimate publics in autobiographies, biographies, diaries, oral histories, blogs, reality television, photography, letters, life histories, documentaries, graphic memoirs, quilts, exhibitions, mobile phone texts. They have also been crucial agents in constructing counter-publics.

We welcome papers dealing with the following questions, and others which may be related to the conference theme:

How do life writings construct citizenship, civic relations and/or counter-publics?  
How is life history used in non-governmental public actions and activisms? And how have governmental organisations used life history and life writing?

What intimacies are facilitated by life writings and life stories?

How does life writing relate to life story, life history and oral history?

How has life writing and life story participated in care contexts such as parenting, social work, health, education? What discourses of risk, claim, vulnerability, rights and responsibilities are revealed in life writings and their uses?

What engagements do/should life writing and life history have with therapeutic cultures?

How does the economy of life story production and consumption relate to the construction of intimate publics and who are its consumers and producers?

In what ways can we compare ethical codes for life writing, oral history and life history? How do these manage the nature of intimate publics?

How do life writing and life history contribute to public and private archives and to public history/heritage?

How does life writing construct or obstruct cross-cultural or cross-linguistic relationships?

As we understand more about the work of life writing, how is life writing making us work?

What relationships persist between life writing as aesthetic and as social act?

Because our primary concern will be stimulating and sustaining conversation between conference participants, papers should be limited to fifteen minutes in length. This will ensure time in all sessions for questions and discussion. Panels on a single topic and submitted together are welcome. (Panels and sessions will have three presenters.) Panels and individual papers may be conducted or delivered in the language of the participant's choice - let us know well in advance so we may make all necessary arrangements. All participants should inform the organizers about media requirements -DVD, internet, visual projection, audio, and so on.

### **News from the Women Make History Network Make Your Own Herstory**

Check out the Glasgow Women's Library Blog on a new project called Make Your Own Herstory: <http://blog.womenslibrary.org.uk/2009/07/15/make-your-own-herstory/>

### **Gude Cause: Autumn Planning**

There are discussions with the Workers Educational Association about running various workshops in the GWL Autumn 2009 Programme in preparation for the re-enactment march in October that celebrates the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Scottish Suffragette march in Edinburgh 1909. These workshops should include: Song workshops, Banner making / rosette / suffragette sash/ workshop and sessions on the history of women's involvement in politics over the last 100 years.

Check the events section of the website for updates:  
<http://www.womenslibrary.org.uk/news/calendar/>

### **Gude Cause: publication**

On behalf of the WHS, Lesley Orr, Fiona Skillen and Esther Breitenbach are putting together a publication to coincide with the Gude Cause procession in

October. The idea of the publication is that it should have short sections on a range of topics and will outline key developments between 1909 and 2009, give relevant data where possible, and key dates for a timeline. It is to be aimed at a general audience (women's groups, schools etc) and will not be academic in style. They aim to have material collated together by October, while probably continuing to work on the publication in the longer term. They are hoping to have sections on the following topics: families; politics; civil society and community activism; education; work; health; arts, culture and sport; welfare and social care; and violence against women. They have begun to approach people to contribute, but we would be very grateful for any offers of help, or for particular bits of information that you think would be good to include.