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Storylines: Craftartists' Narratives of Identity

By Elliot G. Mishler



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What do we mean when we refer to our "identity," and how do we represent it in the stories we tell about our lives? Is "identity" a sustained private core, or does it change as circumstances and relationships shift? Mishler explores these questions through analyses of in-depth interviews with five craftartists, who reflect on their lives and their efforts to sustain their form of work as committed artists in a world of mass production and standardization.



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Editorial Review

Review

Storylines is as much a narrative of Elliot Mishler's love affair with the crafts and his own craft as a researcher in narratives of identity, as it is a richly textured account of the creative forces in the lives of the five craft artists he interviewed. On the basis of these interviews...[he] concludes that life narratives are not factual histories of the past but rather constructions that can only emerge in the dialogic process of talking about one's life trajectory and personal identity to a participant listener...Mishler's celebration of the craft artist and non-alienated labor is eloquently moral and well worth the effort....Expect to be alternately enchanted, challenged, bewildered, sometimes even disoriented and finally enlightened. (Louise J. Kaplan *American Craft*)

In the last two decades, there has been a significant shift in the study of persons and social life, away from counted-data methods to a focus on the life-story or narrative. Much of this shift has been a result of Elliot Mishler's pioneering contributions. In this newest book, Mishler explores the meaning of the 'hand-made' for artisans devoting their lives to crafts, and in the process, enlarges both theory and method of human science study. This is truly a fascinating, sophisticated, and important study and one unique in showing the significance of taking seriously a reflexive and dialogic perspective in the study of identity. (Bertram J. Cohler, University of Chicago)

In this case, the researcher's affinity with the artists' lives is clear and, to my mind, makes the work on theory more readable and more credible because it emerges from Mishler's own story...ultimately, readers can learn more about difference from a researcher like Mishler, who has carved from more than a decade's research an unusual book that is both personal and professional in scope, philosophy, and evidence. (Claire Badaracco *Journal of Communication*)

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From the Inside Flap

What do we mean when we refer to our "identity", and how do we represent it in the stories we tell about our lives? Do we choose and maintain identity, like a job, or do we constantly change and rework it, like a potter's clay? Is "identity" a sustained private core, or does it change as circumstances and relationships change? In this thoughtful and learned book, a founder of narrative studies in the human sciences and a recognized master of research interviewing explores these questions through analyses of in-depth interviews with five craftartists, who reflect on their lives and their efforts to sustain their form of work as committed artists in a world of mass production and standardization.

The artists describe their families of origin and the families they have created, and the conscious decisions, chance events, and life experiences that entered into the ways they achieved their adult artistic identities. Exploring these continuities, discontinuities, and unresolvable tensions in an analysis that brings new

sophistication to a much-used term, Elliot Mishler suggests that "identity" is always dialogic and relational, a complex of partial subidentities rather than a unitary monad. More a verb than a noun, it reflects an individual's modes of adaptation, appropriation, and resistance to sociocultural plots and roles.

With its critical review of narrative research methods, model of analysis for the systematic study of life stories and identity, and vision of how narrative studies may contribute to theory and research in the social sciences, *Storylines* is an eloquent and important book for narrative psychology and lifespan development.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Curtis Tyson:

Do you one of people who can't read enjoyable if the sentence chained inside the straightway, hold on guys that aren't like that. This *Storylines: Craftartists' Narratives of Identity* book is readable by means of you who hate the straight word style. You will find the information here are arrange for enjoyable studying experience without leaving also decrease the knowledge that want to deliver to you. The writer associated with *Storylines: Craftartists' Narratives of Identity* content conveys thinking easily to understand by most people. The printed and e-book are not different in the information but it just different available as it. So , do you continue to thinking *Storylines: Craftartists' Narratives of Identity* is not loveable to be your top record reading book?

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Kelsey Jimenez:

A lot of people always spent their own free time to vacation or even go to the outside with them family or their friend. Do you know? Many a lot of people spent they free time just watching TV, or maybe playing video games all day long. If you need to try to find a new activity here is look different you can read some sort of book. It is really fun for you personally. If you enjoy the book you read you can spent all day long to reading a guide. The book *Storylines: Craftartists' Narratives of Identity* it doesn't matter what good to read. There are a lot of folks that recommended this book. They were enjoying reading this book. If you did not have enough space to bring this book you can buy the particular e-book. You can m0ore easily to read this book through your smart phone. The price is not too costly but this book has high quality.

Cory Thomas:

Reading can be called mind hangout, why? Because if you find yourself reading a book mainly book entitled Storylines: Craftartists' Narratives of Identity the mind will drift away through every dimension, wandering in each aspect that maybe unfamiliar for but surely can be your mind friends. Imaging every single word written in a guide then become one application form conclusion and explanation that will maybe you never get previous to. The Storylines: Craftartists' Narratives of Identity giving you another experience more than blown away your mind but also giving you useful facts for your better life with this era. So now let us teach you the relaxing pattern this is your body and mind is going to be pleased when you are finished looking at it, like winning an activity. Do you want to try this extraordinary paying spare time activity?

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