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RaPAL

Health Literacies,
Partnerships and Workplaces

See
Inside for
details of our
October
Conference!



The Research and Practice in Adult Literacy Network

Who we are

RaPAL is an independent national network of learners, teachers, managers and researchers engaged in adult literacies and numeracy. Our support is generated by membership subscription only, and we are therefore completely independent in our views. RaPAL is the only national organisation focusing on the role of literacies in adult life.

What we do

- Campaign for the rights of adults to have access to the full range of literacies in their lives
- Critique current policy and practice where it is based on simplistic notions of literacy as skill
- Emphasise the importance of social context in literacy
- Encourage collaborative and reflective research
- Believe in democratic practices in adult literacy
- Create networks by organising events (including an annual conference) to contribute to national debate
- Publish a journal three times a year

RaPAL Officers 2014 / 2015

| | |
|-----------------------------|-------------------|
| Chair | Sallie Condy |
| Secretary | Claire Collins |
| Treasurer | Alison Wedgbury |
| Journal Co-ordinator | Naomi Horrocks |
| Production Editor | Kieran Harrington |
| Reviews Editor | Sarah Freeman |
| Membership Secretary | Yvonne Spare |
| Website Manager | Tara Furlong |

Editorial Information

The editorial group for 2013/14 includes the following researchers, practitioners and practitioner-researchers: Sam Duncan, Julie Furnivall, Sarah Freeman, Tara Furlong, Kieran Harrington, Naomi Horrocks, Linda Pearce, Anne Reardon-James, Irene Schwab, Yvonne Spare, Peggy Warren and Alison Wedgbury.

RaPAL members are involved in the compilation of the journal as editors, reviewers and referees.

We are a friendly group – open to new members and new ideas. Please contact us with any contributions (views, comments, reports and articles) and do not be put off if you are new to the field or if you have not written for a publication before. The journal is written by and for all learners, tutors/teachers and researchers who want to ask questions about this field of work. It does not matter if the questions have been asked before. We want to reflect the many voices within adult literacy and numeracy work and to encourage debate.

Why not join us?

Further information can be found at our website: www.rapal.org.uk

The RaPAL journal is also available from EBSCO Information Services.

The RaPAL journal expresses a variety of views which do not necessarily reflect those of the editorial group.

The RaPAL journal has been designed by Image Printing Company, Lumsdale, Matlock, Derbyshire

RaPAL Membership form

Help us to double RaPAL's membership in 2014-15!

We are always keen to attract new individual and institutional members. Please join us and consider passing this to friends, colleagues and libraries / resource centres and encouraging them to join RaPAL now!

Members' benefits

Membership brings:

- three RaPAL journals per year
- discounted attendance at RaPAL conferences
- participation in the RaPAL JISList

We are happy for our members to participate in the journals and conferences and the organisation and administration of RaPAL.

How to join

To join, please complete this form and email to membership@rapal.org.uk or post to:

RaPAL Membership, c/o Yvonne Spare, Sysondale, Anslow Lane, Rolleston on Dove, DE13 9DS, UK.

By joining, you confirm you sympathise with RaPAL's aims as stated in the Constitution.

Your details

Full name: _____

Email: _____

Please tick if you do NOT wish your email to be used in the RaPAL network

Address: _____

County: _____ Postcode: _____

Country: _____

Mobile / work / home telephone numbers: _____

To set up a Standing Order, please provide the name and address of bank or building society:

Sort code: _____ Account number: _____

Alternatively, you may post a cheque for £ (see below for the appropriate fee)

Fees 2014/15

Our membership year runs August to August. Please tick the appropriate subscription rate:

Digital editions

Individual membership

£40 Full-time £25 Low waged, unwaged or student

Institutional Membership

£90 this includes multiple electronic access to the journal and discounted attendance for one employee at the conference

Please tick here if you require an invoice

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Editorial

Claire Collins, Peggy Warren and Sarah Freeman

The Conference 2014 edition of the Journal revolves around the themes of *Health, Well-being, Partnerships and Workplaces*. The event took place at City Hospital, Birmingham and boasts a number of firsts: it was the first time in RaPAL's history that we have held a conference in a hospital setting, and for the first time RaPALers interacted live with literacy colleagues in Australia. We were also treated to a video keynote by Professor Sondra Cuban from West Washington University, USA - another new event for RaPAL. Steph Taylor's "Rapporteur's Report" reveals the essence of the day from the delegates' point of view. Workshop facilitators and keynote speakers have contributed material to read and watch and there is an innovative new space called "Windows to the Conference".

The first article by Jonathan Berry from the Community Health and Learning Foundation, guides the reader straight to the connection between promoting well-being and partnerships. He draws attention to the need for more joined-up thinking between literacy programme leaders, practitioners and personnel involved in public health programmes.

The theme of situated literacies is drawn on strongly throughout the Journal, focussing attention on the need to weave in curriculum approaches that resonate with the lives and practices of those in learning. Victoria Wright and Rob Smith focus on learners who are "not in education, employment or training" (NEET). They outline first-hand research they have undertaken with student literacy teachers.

Bob Read's presentation from the conference (shown in "Windows to the Conference" section) provides an example of how embedded learning can also support health-care professionals in their training and development.

Central to RaPAL is its wide agenda for inclusiveness in curricula and in literacy policy. We are proud of our history of creating space for students' voices in our publications and conferences. Peggy Warren provides us with a powerful account of how non-traditional students can enhance and make literacies used in higher education settings more accessible. Along with Jenica Richards (a student), Peggy provides us with an illuminating perspective on the "widening participation" agenda. In this, the first of our multimedia articles, the reader can relive aspects of the workshop delivered by Peggy and Jenica, which included poetry, music and a first person narrative.

You can view the second of our Keynote presentations by Professor Linda Lang through our "Window to the Conference". Professor Lang spoke about the concept of Lifelong Learning in the health sector, focussing on a recent development in a University Technical College (UTC) in the Midlands. Building on the idea of partnerships between health and literacy practitioners, you can watch the illuminating Australian video article from Ros Bauer and Isabel Osuna-Gatty, especially made for the RaPAL event. This describes successful education schemes that embrace health and literacies in outlying, widespread communities and shows that strong partnerships are critical to implementing literacy programmes across Australia. Their literacy projects and training programmes, underpinned by a combination of social practice and skills-based approaches, not only develop people's personal and workplace literacies, but also enhance their general well-being.

The NHS and wider health contexts (work places) have historically been sites of educational disparities and injustices, particularly for migrant groups. Sondra Cuban's visual presentation and the review of her book by Peggy Warren, highlight some of the literacy challenges adult learners navigate whilst undertaking work-based and other forms of learning.

Shelley Tracey reviews Vicky Duckworth's book, *Learning Trajectories, Violence and Empowerment amongst Adult Basic Skills Learners*, a detailed insight into the lives of sixteen adult literacy learners in Lancashire, which draws attention to how their situations hampered their progress in education but didn't deter them from being able to learn how to express their predicaments and those of their local communities.

It was at this conference that we agreed to transition the 'L' in RaPAL from *Literacy* to *Literacies*. We outlined the path that took us to this decision in Claire's (1985) presentation and this gem is embedded in "Window to the Conference". Following the same theme – that of seeking the literacies that are in sync with participants' life experiences - Genevieve Clarke's article, "Reading changes lives" and Vicky Duckworth's review of Sam Duncan's new book, *Reading for Pleasure and Reading Circles for Adult Emergent Readers*, both remind us of the life-transforming nature of reading. Genevieve illustrates how working on reading in partnership with unions and NHS trusts is creating positive social opportunities, as well as contributing to mental wellbeing. Further to this, Sue Grief's article highlights aspects of "taken for granted" writing practices undertaken in small businesses – the literacies which we barely notice, but which are key to everyday local life.

What a privilege it has been to work on such important and topical areas. As RaPAL aspires to keep abreast of the digital age, we have also been reminded of the impact of what practitioners do and strive to do. As a professional body we promote the engagement of learners where they feel comfortable, and minimisation of the barriers they encounter as they engage in learning. Likewise, we are committed in our support of practitioners who endeavour to make learning meaningful in the field of adult literacy.

**Details of our
October
Conference!**

Motivated or mandated:

engaging adults in learning and supporting them to succeed

**Joint annual conference with NIACE, NRDC,
RaPAL and UCU to support adults with maths and English**

Date: 20th October 2014 **Venue:** London
UCU Office, Old Bakery, Carlow Street, London NW1 7LH

Ref: C3253/1014 **Fee:** Non-members fee - **£140**
Members of UCU, NIACE, NRDC and RaPAL - **£65**
Part-time Tutors - **£54**
(Includes lunch, tea/coffee)

Contact

Events Team (events@niace.org.uk) Tel: 0116 2044205