



SPECIAL SERIES CALL FOR PAPERS

Narrative Competence, History & Responsibility

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For publication from mid-2026

Expressions of interest due: 31 August 2025

Due date for paper submission: 27 February 2026

We live in a multi-storied world in which young people are presented with competing narratives about pasts/presents/futures (Steinhauer, 2021). We live, also, in a runaway world (Giddens, 2011) and in a context of unprecedented change (Simon, 2020). This situation poses dramatic challenges for the stories we tell ourselves. New demands are made on the types of narrative competence that we must develop.

Although there are strong traditions of theorizing narrative competence – for example, German didactical models of ‘construction’ and ‘deconstruction’ (Körber, 2011), Rüsen’s work (2005, 2017) and the work of Lévesque and Croteau (Lévesque & Croteau, 2020) – history didactics/education has tended, in many contexts, to focus more on history as story to be learned or, more frequently at least since the 1970s, on history as epistemology – a school subject concerned with working with ‘sources’ and ‘evidence’ to understand how we can make sense of the past (van Boxtel & van Drie, 2018; Wilschut, 2010; Wineburg, 2001; Wineburg, 2018).

This series seeks to explore aspects of historical narrative and will aim to contribute to a refiguring (Ricoeur, 1984) of how history education might contribute to building narrative competencies in relation to issues such as the following:

- What kinds of engagement with the past can help to foster an open democratic political culture, address enduring injustices, and / or counter ultra nationalist, neo-fascist and other extremist political tendencies?
- What kinds of historical narrations or other types of historical representation can be considered responsible and irresponsible in epistemological, ethical, ontological and other respects.
- How history education can contribute to refiguring historical agency, and its representation in temporal and other narrative respects?
- How history education can contribute to the refiguration and use of historical narratives, as practical resources in the everyday life of our democracies?
- How narratives are appropriated and used in various socio-cultural and political contexts and how new media of narrative generation and dissemination (including AI) may be impacting our societies, cultures and polities?
- What can cognitive and sociocultural research in History Education tell us about the learning processes – and barriers to learning – impacting critical narrative

sense-making, and the processes of meaning construction, deconstruction and reconstruction that it involves.

- The uses and limitations of critical historical knowledge and understanding as tools for informing civic and other forms of action in the present.

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Expressions of interest in the form of an abstract of 300-500 words, up to six references, and a 50-word biographical statement for each author should be sent by email to the handling editors: Arthur Chapman (arthur.chapman@ucl.ac.uk), Marília Gago (mgago@ie.uminho.pt), Stéphane Lévesque (stephane.levesque@uottawa.ca), Kenneth Nordgren (kenneth.nordgren@kau.se) and Flávia Varella (flavia.varella@ufsc.br)

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