



The Life Story Interview (Qualitative Research Methods)

By Robert G. Atkinson

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First-person narratives are a fundamental tool of the qualitative researcher. This volume provides specific suggestions and guidelines for preparing and executing a life story interview. Robert Atkinson places the life story interview into a wider research context before elaborating on planning and then conducting the interview. Finally, the book deals with the issues of transcribing and interpreting the interview. The author provides a sample life story interview in the appendix.

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Editorial Review

About the Author

Robert Atkinson (Ph.D., Interdisciplinary Studies in Human Development, University of Pennsylvania) has been on the faculty of the College of Education and Human Development at the University of Southern Maine since 1987. His primary areas of teaching and scholarship are cross-cultural human development, multiple identities, culture, diversity, and consciousness, adolescent development, adulthood and psychospiritual development, and life stories, personal mythmaking, and storytelling. He is the director of the Center for the Study of Lives at USM, which has a growing archive of over 400 life stories, and recently served a two-year appointment (2002-2004) as the first Diversity Scholar for CEHD. In fall 2002, he was a faculty member in the Semester at Sea program of the University of Pittsburgh. He is the author, co-author, or editor of six books, including: *The Beat of My Drum: An Autobiography*, with Babatunde Olatunji (Temple University Press, 2005); *The Life Story Interview* (Sage, 1998); *The Gift of Stories: Practical and Spiritual Applications of Autobiography, Life Stories, and Personal Mythmaking* (Greenwood, 1995); and, *The Teenage World: Adolescent Self-Image in Ten Countries* (Plenum, 1988). He has written over two dozen articles and essays for various magazines, journals, and reference works.

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