

MA IN LIFE-WRITING

Autumn 2008

Tutor: Professor Kathryn Hughes

LITEM029 LIFE WRITING: THEORY INTO PRACTICE

This module, which is available only to students on the MA in Life Writing, provides a practical training in researching and writing biography. Taught by specialists drawn from within LIT as well as by visiting professional biographers, we will be covering the following subject areas (this is not an exhaustive list).

1. Identifying a subject, preliminary research.
2. Using Archives: tracking down sources, using online facilities, visiting archives, note-taking.
3. Story-telling and narrative. Building character, point of view.
4. Copyright and Fair Usage.
5. Ethics and Family History.
6. Comparative Biography.
7. Current trends in publishing.
8. Writing a proposal, making a pitch.
9. Preparing your manuscript.

In addition there will be a workshop component to the seminars in which students will be asked to present their own work-in-progress and critique that of fellow-members.

Preliminary Reading List

Peter France and William St Clair (eds.), *Mapping Lives: The Uses of Biography* (Oxford University Press)

Hermione Lee, *Body Parts: Essays on Life-Writing*, (Chatto & Windus)

Mark Bostridge (ed.), *Lives for Sale* (Continuum)

Richard Holmes, *Footsteps: Adventures of a Romantic Biographer* (Harper Collins)

Ann Hoffmann, *Research for Writers*, (A & C Black) 2003 edition