



## How to Counter a Counterstory (and Keep Those People in Their Place)

Hilde Lindemann  
*Michigan State University*

On October 27, 2014, Hilde Lindemann presented the John McKendy Memorial Lecture on Narrative at St. Thomas University. The annual lecture, sponsored by the Centre for Interdisciplinary Research on Narrative (CIRN), is named for John McKendy, PhD, a member of the Sociology Department at St. Thomas University and one of the founding members of CIRN, who died tragically in 2008.

Dr. Lindemann's lecture focused on narrative strategies that people in dominant social positions use to counter a counterstory and keep an oppressive social order in place. A counterstory is "a story that is told for the purpose of resisting a socially shared narrative that purports to justify the oppression of a social group ... The socially shared story—master narrative—enters the tissue of stories that constitute the group's identity, damaging that identity and so constricting group members' access to the goods on offer in their society." In her lecture, she explored some of the difficulties that arise when a counterstory sets out to repair that identity, and why the master narratives are so difficult to uproot.

Dr. Lindemann has kindly agreed to have the video of her lecture published in *Narrative Works*.

[How to Counter a Counterstory \(and Keep Those People in Their Place\) -- Hilde Lindemann \(via YouTube\)](#)

**Hilde Lindeman, PhD**, is Professor of Philosophy at Michigan State University. Her books include *An Invitation to Feminist Ethics* (McGraw-Hill, 2005) and, as Hilde Lindemann Nelson, *Damaged Identities, Narrative Repair* (Cornell University Press, 2001). With James Lindemann Nelson she coauthored *Alzheimer's: Answers to Hard Questions for Families* (Doubleday, 1996) and *The Patient in the Family* (Routledge, 1995), and she has also edited three collections: *Feminism and Families*; *Stories and Their Limits: Narrative*

*Approaches to Bioethics* (both Routledge 1997); and (with Marian Verkerk and Margaret Urban Walker) *Naturalized Bioethics* (Cambridge, 2008). The former editor of *Hypatia: A Journal of Feminist Philosophy*, she was also co-editor (with Sara Ruddick and Margaret Urban Walker) of Rowman & Littlefield's Feminist Constructions series and the general co-editor (with James Lindemann Nelson) of the Reflective Bioethics series at Routledge. A Fellow of the Hastings Center, her ongoing research interests are in feminist bioethics, feminist ethics, the ethics of families, and the social construction of persons and their identities.