

The "I" in Fibromyalgia:

How does Fibromyalgia Shape Academic Identity?

What is fibromyalgia?

Fibromyalgia is a complex, invisible illness of unknown cause that is characterised by chronic, wide-spread pain, fatigue, sleep disturbances, cognitive dysfunctions, increased sensitivity and psychological disorders (White and Harth, 2001).

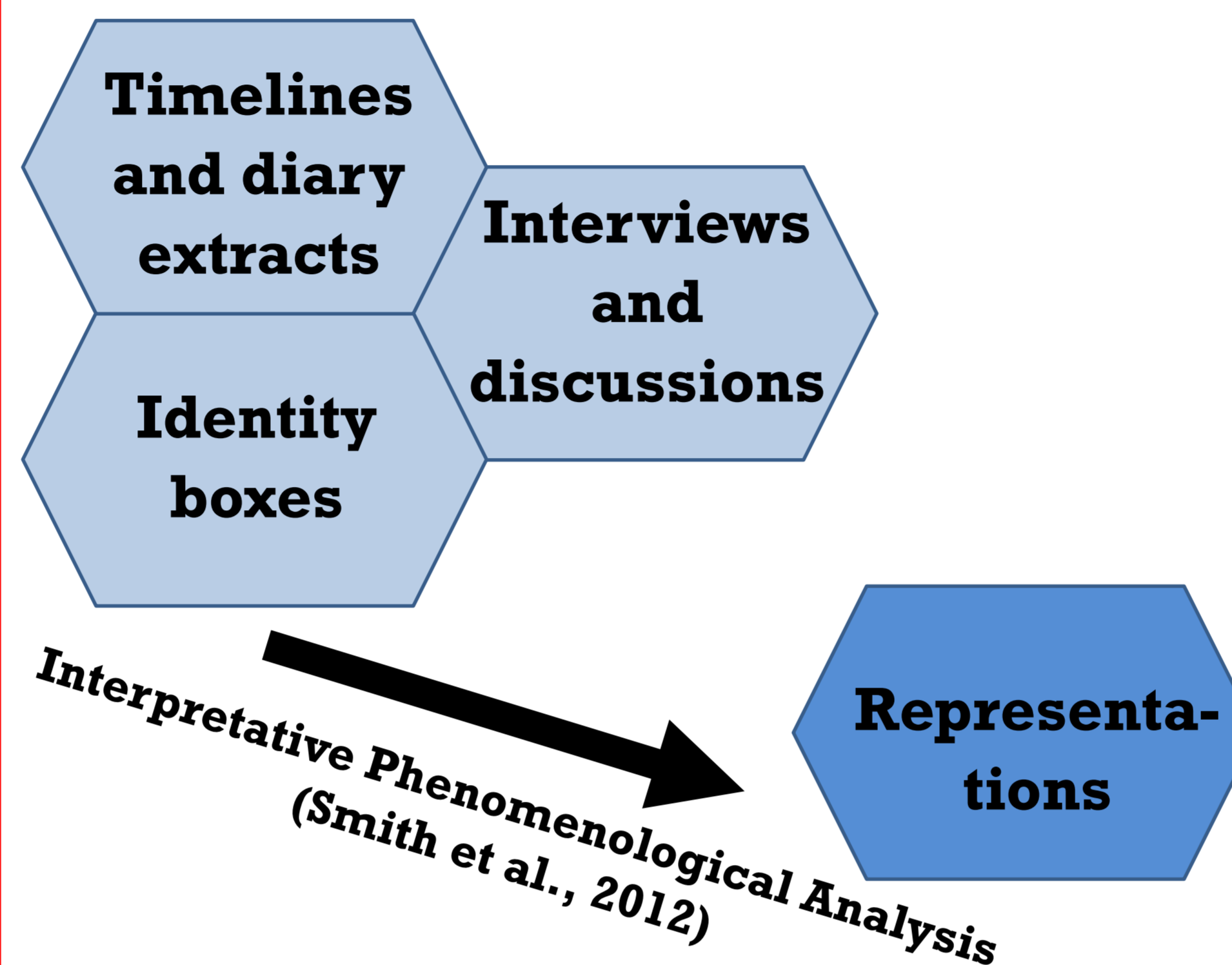
The research context

Most fibromyalgia research considers pain rather than fibromyalgia in all its facets. There is no research focussing on academic fibromyalgia patients although high representation of related illnesses found among students, teachers, medical staff and doctors. (Wessely, 1994)

What are the research aims?

- ...to explore how academics make sense of their identities and of living with fibromyalgia
- ...to investigate which coping strategies academics employ
- ...to uncover how fibromyalgia with all its symptoms impacts academics' identities

How do I collect my data?



Indicative findings

Comfort and spirituality: prayer book/giraffe scarf
"the sun shinning [sic] through the stain [sic] glass, the traditional service."

Uniqueness of items:
"All of this might not be what you had in mind...It is what it is."

Questions you may want to ask:

- What is the idea behind the identity boxes?
- How will your research be different from other fibromyalgia studies?
- What are your next steps?
- How can I take part?

Lindsay's box – retired, USA



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Scan for more info about the research and to watch simulations.

