

A decorative grid pattern composed of black lines forming a grid of various-sized rectangles. Some rectangles are filled with solid colors: red, blue, yellow, and black, while others are white. The grid is centered on the page.

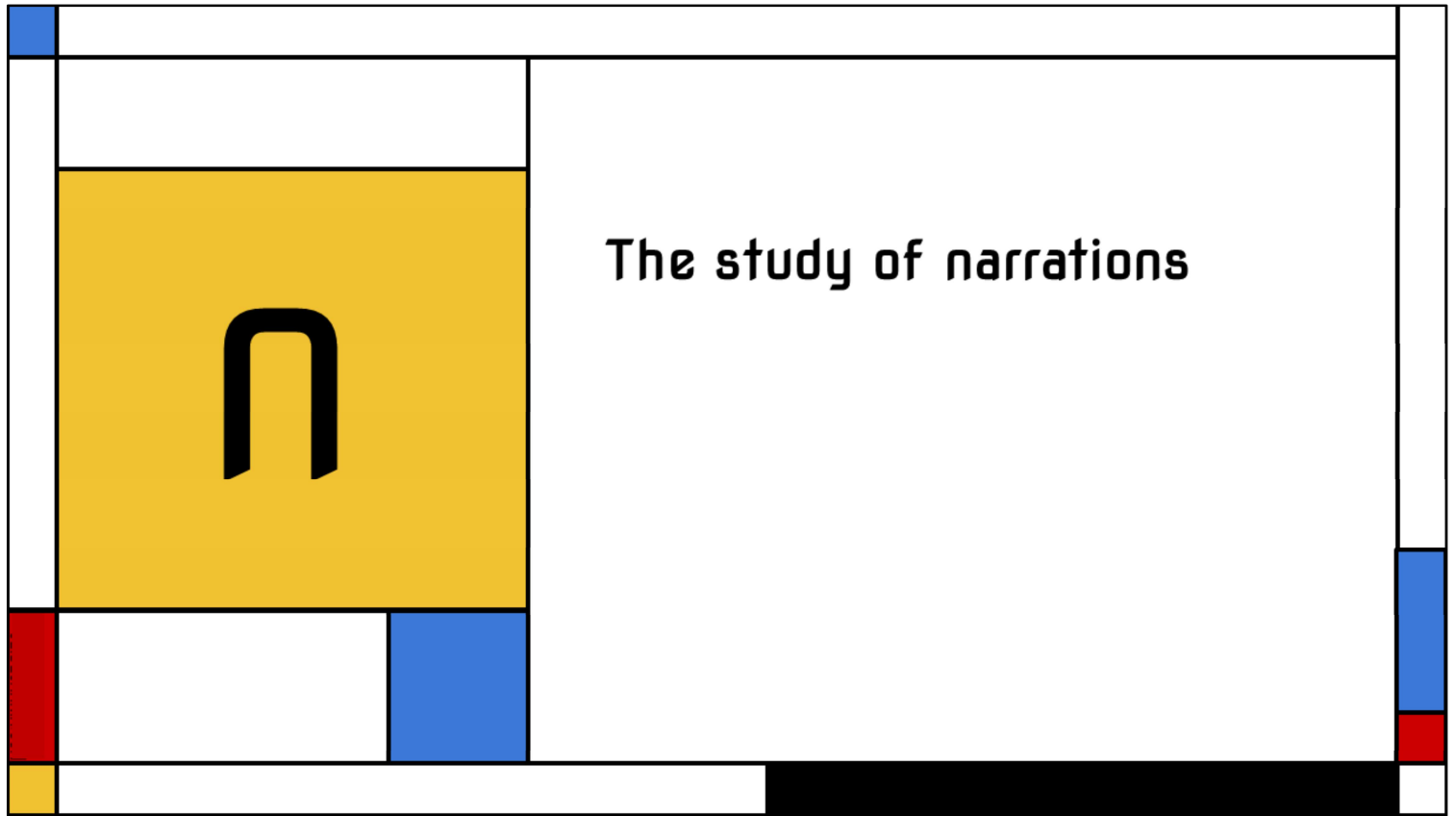
**Prof Federico Farini,
introduction to
current research**

University of Northampton,

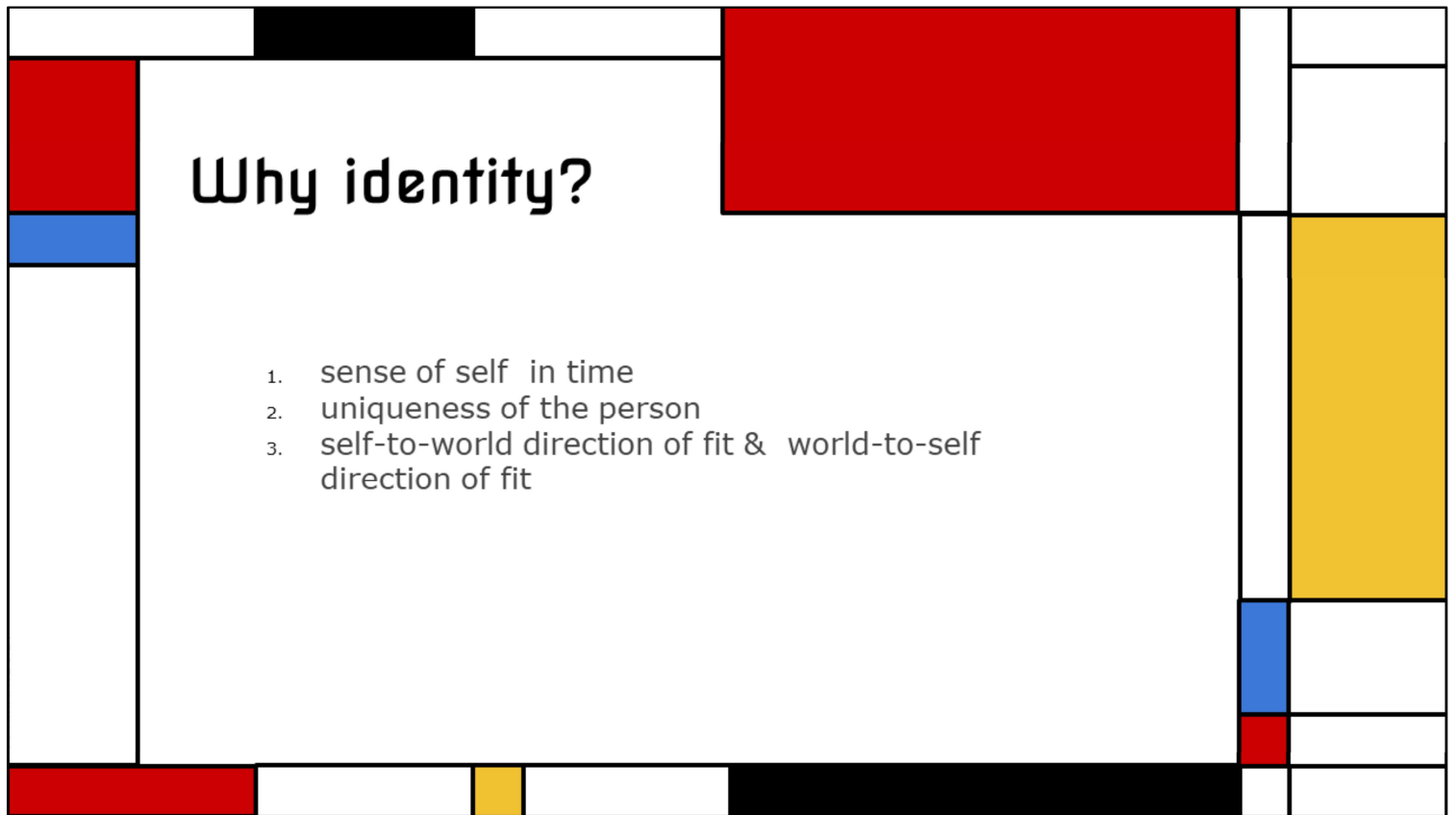
Pure Diamond Awards 2023

Telling stories

- Narrations: Culture & Personality
- A Small Stories approach
- Examples and Implications



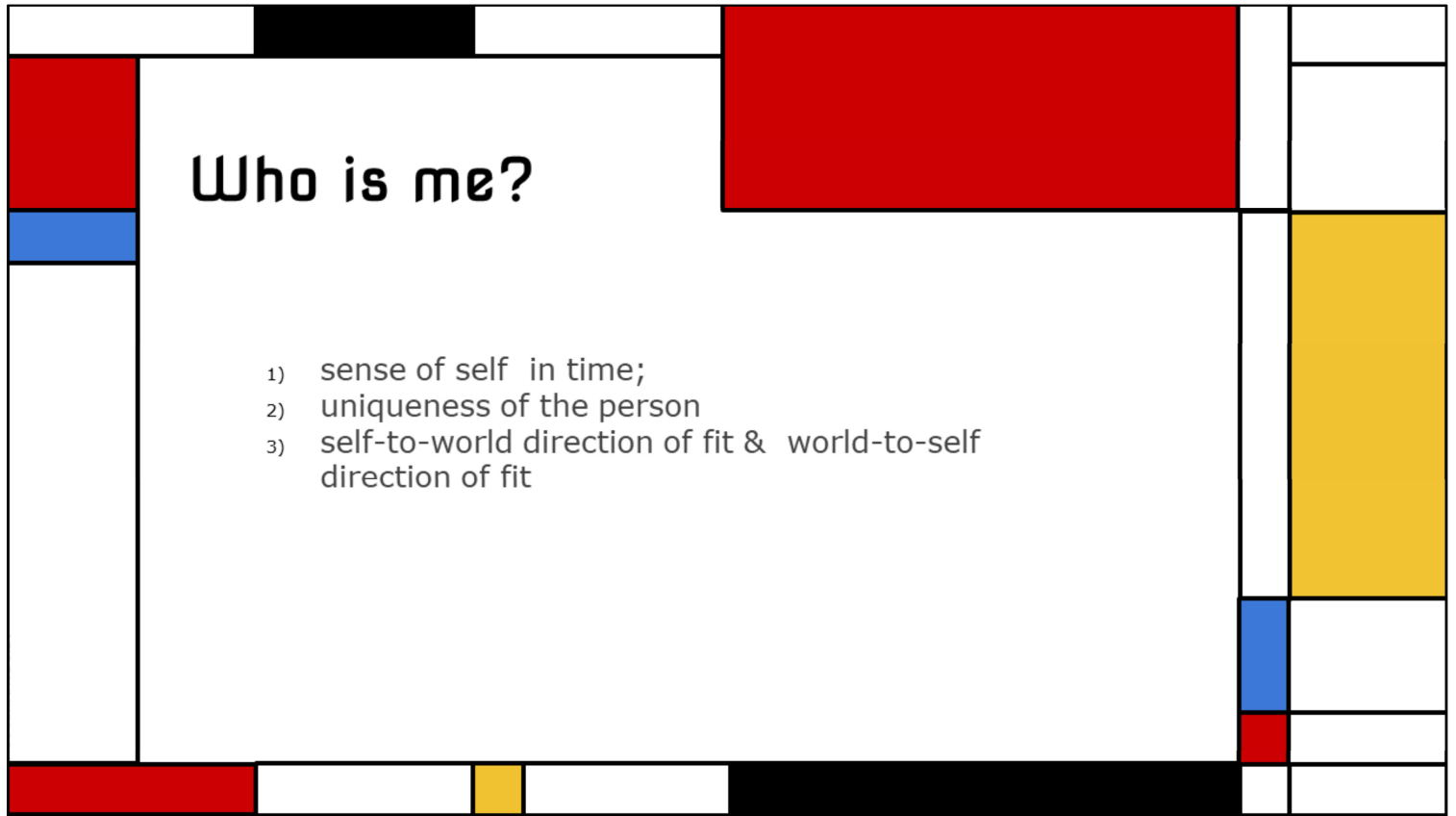
One of the main strands of my research: the study of narrations. I approach the study of narrations as a sociologist I who is interested in identity construction and sees narrations as spaces of identities 'in-the-making'.



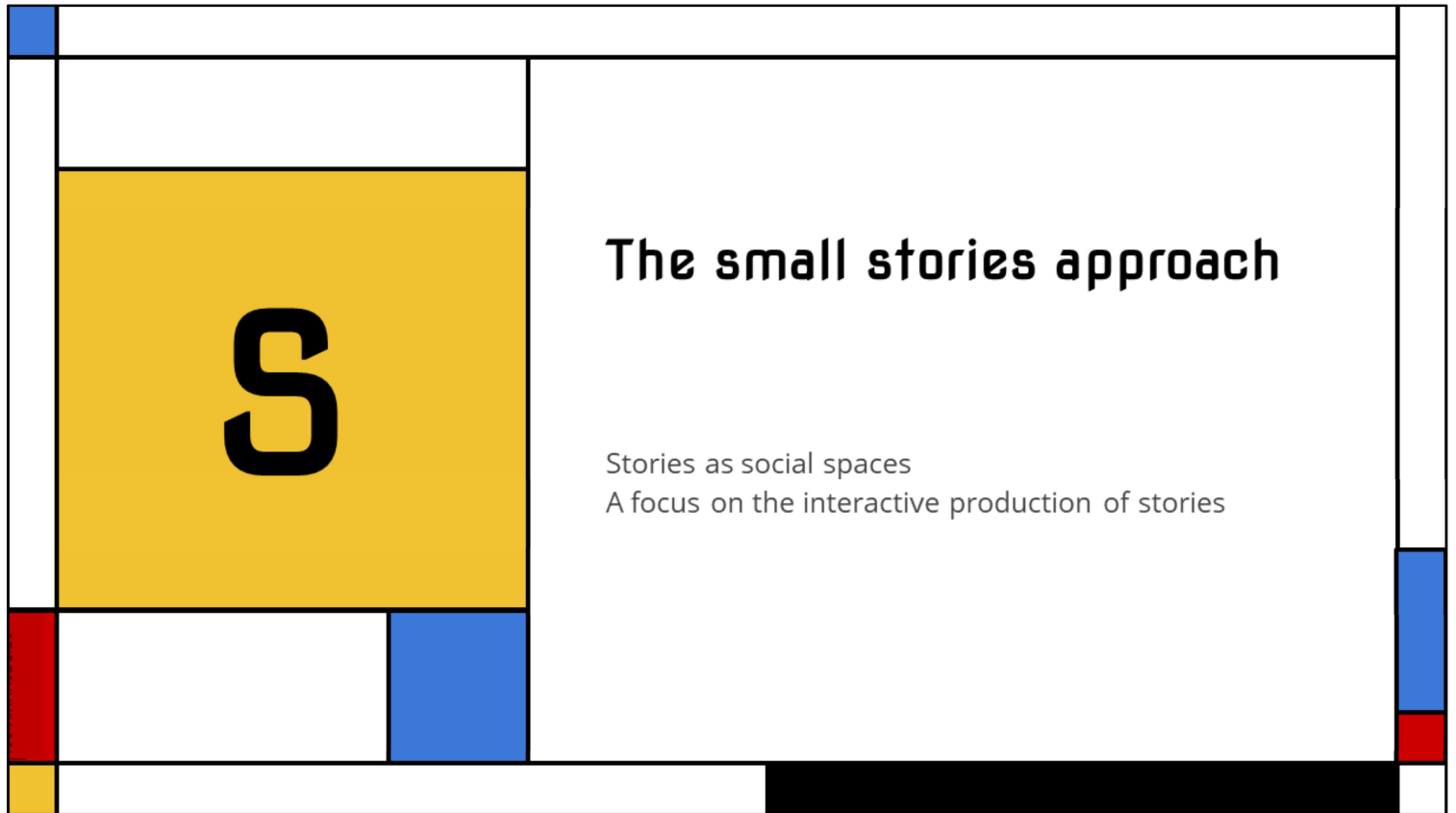
Why identity?

1. sense of self in time
2. uniqueness of the person
3. self-to-world direction of fit & world-to-self direction of fit

In traditional sociological terms do narrations fulfil a function, i.e. solve a problem for identity? To me, they tackle 3 problems: 1) preserve sameness of a sense of self across time in the face of constant change (Hegel: a man cannot live outside of history); 2) uniqueness of the person vis-à-vis others in the face of being the same as everyone else; 3) the construction of agency as the relationship between self and world. With a self-to-world direction of fit & a world-to-self direction of fit.



Altogether, the three dilemmas conjure to generate the 'who-am-I question', or 'who is me', where the 'me' is the reflective reconstruction of the 'I' that entails remembering and forgetting.



The small stories approach

Stories as social spaces
A focus on the interactive production of stories

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I have an interest in how stories surface in everyday conversation. This is the 'Small Stories' approach. Small stories are the loci where identities are continuously practiced and tested out in everyday interactions, where tellers *index* their sense of self in specific social situations.



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Examples & implications

www.sharmed.eu

www.child-up.eu

Young Migrants and Political activism in Schools

As examples, I would like to mention two large research projects: SHARMED (www.sharmed.eu) and the ongoing Child-UP (www.child-up.eu). These projects work with children's narratives. In line with the 'Small Stories' both projects have a keen interest in how narratives that have an implication for the construction of identities are constructed and negotiated during interactions in the classroom.



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Examples & implications

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[Young Migrants and Political activism in Schools](#)

In SHARMED and CHILD-UP, narratives of children's personal life may concern important events, meaningful places, important objects etc.; the narrated events, places, objects affect children's life experience and the formation of their personal identities. These stories show emotional aspects of children's memories, often connected with important personal relationships or social roles.



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Examples & implications

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Young Migrants and Political activism in Schools

the 'I' of children construct the 'me' that they want others to recognise in local context of classroom interactions. Both projects suggest that through their narratives, children construct their identities. So, narrations: 1) support the construction of an apparently stable self in time; 2) position the teller in networks of interpersonal relationships or group membership; 3) as authorship of knowledge are an example of agency-in-context, therefore self-to-world direction of fit & a world-to-self direction of fit.



Examples & implications

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Young Migrants and Political activism in Schools

SHARMED and CHILD-UP see stories as windows with a view on the cultural presuppositions of the narrators' social experiences. I see implications for social intervention: narratives represent the social worlds that intervention will interact with. Of course, as it is the case for the SHARMED and CHILD-UP projects, the study of narratives can be corroborated by other research methods. Nevertheless, the study of narratives is the study of the voices of individuals within the context of their social experiences.



Thank you!

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