MIND READING:
THE ROLE OF NARRATIVE IN PHYSICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH AND THE EXPERIENCE OF ILLNESS
18th-19th June 2018
University of Birmingham

Do clinicians and patients speak the same language? How might we bridge the evident gaps in communication? How can we use narrative to foster clinical relationships? Or to care for the carers? How does illness impact upon our sense of self?

This two-day programme of talks and workshops is a collaboration between the University of Birmingham, UCD Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, and the Diseases of Modern Life and Constructing Scientific Communities Projects at St Anne’s College, Oxford. Together we seek to explore productive interactions between narrative and mental health both historically and in the present day. Bringing together psychologists, psychiatrists, GPs, service users, and historians of literature and medicine, we will investigate the patient experience through the prism of literature and personal narrative to inform patient-centred care and practice, and focus on ways in which literature might be beneficial in cases of burnout and sympathy fatigue.

Conference Organisers: Associate Professor Elizabeth Barrett (UCD), Professor Femi Oyebode (Birmingham), Dr Melissa Dickson (Birmingham)
MONDAY 18\textsuperscript{TH} JUNE, 2018

9.30 Arrival and Registration

10.00 Welcome and Introductions

10.15 Keynote Address: Professor Brendan Drumm (UCD)

‘Using narrative to promote the responsibility and privilege to care’.

Brendan Drumm undertook his undergraduate medical studies at The National University of Ireland Galway. His postgraduate training in Paediatrics took place at the Hospital for Sick Children in Toronto, where he was subsequently a Paediatric Gastroenterologist and Assistant Professor at the University of Toronto. In 1990 he was appointed Head of the Department of Paediatrics at University College Dublin. He is a Fellow of the Royal Colleges of Physicians in Canada, Ireland and the UK, and of the American Gastroenterology Association. In 2005 he was appointed the first Chief Executive Officer of the Health Service Executive, and initiated the largest public service transformation programme ever undertaken in Ireland. In 2011 having completed his term of office at the HSE Brendan Drumm returned to his academic position at University College Dublin where his work focuses on two related areas, promoting caring as the most important component of clinical practice and the need for clinicians to be the leaders of transformational change in healthcare delivery. He also works on establishing innovative approaches to delivering health care in developing countries.

11.00 COFFEE BREAK

11.30 Workshops A and B (Parallel Sessions)

WORKSHOP A From Greek Tragedy to Twitter: Understanding Doctors’ Vulnerability

Dr Katherine Furman (UCC) and Dr Elizabeth Barrett (UCD)

This workshop will explore whether clinicians are uniquely vulnerable, from both a clinical and an academic perspective, and what this means for practice. From a philosophical perspective, Dr Furman will explore the concepts of Eudemonia (flourishing) and Vulnerability. Dr Barrett will look at how medical practitioners use language, the topical theme of Burnout, and concepts of narrative interventions – such as Schwartz rounds and Balint groups – and explore both systematic and individual approaches to this.

Katherine Furman is a Lecturer in Philosophy at University College Cork, where she directs the MA in Health and Society. She holds Research Associate positions at the ‘Knowledge for Use’ project (Durham University), the ‘Essex Autonomy Project’ (University of Essex), and the Centre for Philosophy of Natural and Social Sciences (London School of Economics and Political Science). She works predominantly on issues of ‘causation’, ‘objectivity’ and ‘public trust in science’ in the context of health.
Elizabeth Barrett is a Consultant in Child and Adolescent Liaison Psychiatry in Dublin, Ireland and an Associate Professor at UCD. Clinically she works at Children's University Hospital Temple St where she is especially interested in the interface between mental and physical health, neuropsychiatry, eating disorders and psychosomatic medicine. She is the Clinical Lead for the National Paediatric Hospital Project Liaison Psychiatry group. Elizabeth is particularly interested in Narrative medicine and is the Clinical Lead for Schwartz rounds in the paediatric hospital. She also leads local Balint groups. She was one of the co-founders of the Mind Reading collaboration.

**WORKSHOP B**  
**Alternative Endings: Narrating Closure Without Cure**

**Dr Hosanna Krienke (University of Oxford)**

This session will invite participants to analyse how common cultural metaphors for illness (such as calling it a ‘journey’ or ‘battle’) create narrative expectations about the kinds of resolution or closure available to a patient. Workshop participants will have the opportunity to both analyse common metaphors for illness and offer their own alternative images for successful intervention.

**Hosanna Krienke** is a Postdoctoral Researcher at St. Anne's College, Oxford, working on the ERC-funded project *Diseases of Modern Life: Nineteenth-Century Perspectives*. Her work examines how nineteenth-century practices of convalescent caregiving shaped the narrative form of the Victorian novel.

1.00 **LUNCH**

2.00 **Keynote Address: Professor Femi Oyebode (University of Birmingham)**

‘Madness at the Theatre: Plays and Inner Life’

**Femi Oyebode** is a Professor of Psychiatry at the University of Birmingham. He is the current author of *Sim’s Symptoms in the Mind* (4th edition). His other books include *Mindreadings: Literature and Psychiatry* and *Madness at the Theatre*. He has published 6 volumes of poetry: *Naked to your softness and other dreams; Wednesday is a colour; Adagio for oblong mirrors; Forest of transformations; Master of the leopard hunt; and Indigo, camwood and mahogany red. Also, Selected Poems*. His research interests include clinical psychopathology, medical humanities, the application of ethics to psychiatric practice, and neuropsychological and neural correlates of abnormal phenomena.
WORKSHOPS C and D (Parallel Sessions)

WORKSHOP C

Writing Yourself Healthy

Action on Postpartum Psychosis (APP) – Dr Jessica Heron, Sue McKendrick, Jenny Pagdin, and Fiona Putnam

Can words heal? A panel of speakers from APP, the national charity for women and families affected by Postpartum Psychosis, will speak about their experiences of losing their mind to the illness, coping with a newborn baby, and the therapeutic value of writing.

Jessica Heron is Senior Research Fellow in Perinatal Psychiatry and Director of the National charity, Action on Postpartum Psychosis (APP). APP works with academic researchers and expert health professionals. APP run an award winning peer support service; develop specialist information; raise awareness of PP, increasing understanding in health professionals and the general public; facilitate research; and campaign for improved services. Jess believes that it is only by using story, art, poetry, and music, alongside science and research, that we can truly address the silence and stigma surrounding PP.

Sue McKendrick works as a medical statistician. Sue's world was turned upside-down when she had Postpartum Psychosis (PP), a severe episode of mental illness which began suddenly in the days following the birth of her son Alex in 2000. As part of her 50th birthday celebrations in 2016, Sue self-published a book of her poems, “Method in my Madness” – the title of which came to her during her episode of PP 18 years ago; some of her poems are reflections on this period in her life.

Jenny Pagdin studied BA English at Oxford University and MA Creative Writing at the University of East Anglia. A few months after giving birth, she developed Postpartum Psychosis Psychosis, which informs her first pamphlet Caldbeck, shortlisted for the Mslexia pamphlet competition (2017) and a Poetry Book Society selection (2018). She was also the winner of the Café Writers Norfolk prize 2018. Pagdin lives with her husband and son in Norfolk where she works as a fundraiser for Beat, the Eating Disorders Association.

Fiona Putnam is an actor and producer who suffered from postpartum psychosis, out of the blue, following the birth of her daughter in 2015. After being cared for in a psychiatric hospital and at a Mother and Baby Unit, her road to recovery was rocky, with an episode of severe postnatal depression hot on the heels of her PP and a year of suffering from anxiety. She has now returned to work as an actor and has also written a number of articles about her experience, as well as a rap about Motherhood that is being produced by Mind's Eye Media. She is currently co-writing a drama for television about mental health, called The Keeping Well Group. Her message is clear: that not only can you recover from an episode of mental illness; you can be strengthened by it.
WORKSHOP D  

**Analysing Medical Narratives**

**Dr Melissa Dickson (University of Birmingham)**

Are the literary critic’s skills in close-reading and analysing narrative of any use to the medical profession? This workshop addresses the roles that literature might play in the history of medicine, as well as in contemporary medical training and practice. Examples from nineteenth-century fiction will be considered alongside medical writings of the same period in terms of the conditions they represent, their roles as metaphors and literary symbols, and the potential insights they provide into the patient experience and perspective.

**Melissa Dickson** is a Lecturer in Victorian Literature at the University of Birmingham. Her research focuses on the relationships between Victorian literature, science, and medicine, and she is particularly interested in the study and depiction of the senses and the workings of memory in the nineteenth century. Before taking up her current role, Melissa worked for nearly 4 years as a Postdoctoral Researcher on ‘The Diseases of Modern Life’, an ERC funded project based at St Anne’s College, Oxford, investigating nineteenth-century cultural, literary, and medical understandings of stress, overwork, and other disorders associated in the period with the problems of modernity. She has a PhD in English from King’s College, London, and an MPhil, BA, and University Medal from the University of Queensland, Australia.

4.15  

**COFFEE BREAK**

4.45  

**Poetry Reading and Q & A with Matt Windle, Birmingham Poet Laureate (2016-2018)**

**Matt Windle** is the twentieth Poet Laureate of Birmingham, and has performed spoken word/slam poetry since 2007. As a poet and professional boxer, Matt delivers workshops, performances and poetry-boxercise to schools, libraries, foster homes, young offenders, residential care homes and various other establishments, whilst fighting at a national level as a super flyweight boxer.

5.15  

**Closing**
TUESDAY 19TH JUNE, 2018

9.30  Arrival and Registration

10.00  Welcome and Introductions

10.15  Keynote Address: Professor Chris Fitzpatrick (UCD)

'What I learned from Sylvia Plath, Ingmar Bergman and Kieran O'Driscoll'

Chris Fitzpatrick is a Consultant Obstetrician & Gynaecologist, and former Master/CEO, Coombe Women & Infants University Hospital and Clinical Professor, School of Medicine, University College Dublin (UCD). As a student, he was profoundly affected by being asked to read a paper on behalf of Christy Brown, author of My Left Foot, who due to cerebral palsy was unable to do so – and by subsequently meeting Sir Alec Guinness who advised him how doctors need to learn more from actors about empathy, sincerity and resilience.

He is the lead clinician for the Royal College of Physicians of Ireland’s Bereavement in the Maternity Services: An Approach to Caring and Coping - Parents and Clinicians - developed in association with patient advocacy groups and Ireland’s national theatre (The Abbey). He was inspired to become an obstetrician by the mothers whom he met as a UCD medical student in the National Maternity Hospital, Dublin and by the teaching of Professor Kieran O'Driscoll.

11.00  COFFEE BREAK

11.30  Workshops E and F (Parallel Sessions)

WORKSHOP E  The Pariah Syndrome: Why Do So Many People Desert the Ill?

Dr Neil Vickers (KCL)

A session on what a variety of scientific disciplines have to tell us about the isolation of the ill and their loved ones. Among the disciplines to be covered will be neuroscience, infant research and attachment studies.

Neil Vickers is Reader in English Literature and the Medical Humanities at King's College London. Before teaching Literature he worked for 10 years in cancer epidemiology. He founded the world’s first Master's Programme in Literature and Medicine. He is currently writing a book with Derek Bolton entitled Shared Life and the Experience of Illness.
WORKSHOP F  
Teaching the Arts in Psychiatry  
Dr Gordon Bates, Dr Emma Barrow, Dr William Calthorpe  
Academics and Psychiatrists at the University of Birmingham Medical School and Birmingham and Solihull Mental Health NHS Foundation Trust share their experiences incorporating film and fiction into the teaching of psychiatry.

1.00  
LUNCH

2.00  
Keynote Address: Professor Dame Sue Bailey  
‘Words and Pictures’

Sue Bailey is Professor of Mental Health Policy in North West of England, and Non-Executive Director for University Hospitals South Manchester. As a past President of the Royal College of Psychiatrists, she worked with health and social care professionals, patients and carers to help bring about Parity of Esteem between mental and physical health which is now enshrined in Primary Legislation in England. Made an OBE in 2002 for services to Mental Health and young offenders and in 2013 made a DBE for services to Psychiatry and for voluntary service to People with Mental Health Conditions.  
She is currently Senior Clinical Advisor for Mental Health and Learning Disability for Health Education England, and Chair of the Children and Young People’s Mental Health Coalition. Her research interests include development of needs and risk assessment measures for use with young offenders with mental illness and development of community and secure inpatient treatment for young offenders both nationally and internationally.

2.45  
WORKSHOPS G AND H (Parallel Sessions)

WORKSHOP G  
Lived Experiences  
REFOCUS – Dr Anne Jeffers, Ms Julie Healy, Ms Christine McCabe, Brian McNulty, and Rick Rossiter  
REFOCUS (Recovery Experience Forum of Carers and Users of Services) is made up of people with experience of the mental health services – patients/service users, family members/carers, and psychiatrists. The Committee’s role is to inform and influence all aspects of the College of Psychiatrists of Ireland business objectives particularly the training experience of young future psychiatrists and identifying ways to improve the mental health services with psychiatrist members. In this session, chaired by Psychiatrist Dr Anne Jeffers, members will read from their own and others literature and explore how literature and the writing of memoirs has supported their Recovery in living with mental illness.  
As one member puts it: ‘For me memoir writing has been a cathartic and an emotional experience. It helped me to reflect on my learning and identify important stages in my recovery process. Reflecting on my experiences has also helped to consolidate my recovery’.
WORKSHOP H  Narrative, Culture, and Public Health

Professor Christopher Fitzpatrick (UCD), Professor Gerardine Meaney (UCD), Dr Cormac O’Brien (UCD), Dr Clare Hayes-Brady (UCD)

In this panel discussion, chaired by Clare Hayes-Brady, Chris Fitzpatrick will discuss the use of Poetry and Applied Drama in Clinical Practice. Gerardine Meaney will talk about her project Contagion, Biopolitics, and Migration in European Cultural Memory and Cormac O’Brien will discuss his work on communities of care in Irish culture in the HIV/AIDS crisis.

4.15  COFFEE BREAK

4.45  Keynote Address: Professor Sally Shuttleworth (University of Oxford)

‘Fractured Lives’

Sally Shuttleworth is a Professor of English Literature at the University of Oxford, Professorial Fellow of at St Anne’s College, Oxford and a Fellow of the British Academy. Her most recent book, The Mind of the Child: Child Development in Literature, Science, and Medicine, 1840-1900 (2010) looked at a range of literary texts, including works by Dickens, the Brontës, Eliot, and Hardy in the light of the emerging sciences of child psychology and psychiatry, and the impact of evolutionary theory. She is currently extending her work on the interface of literature, science, and culture as the Principal Investigator of the ERC-funded Diseases of Modern Life Project, and the AHRC-funded Constructing Science Communities Project.

5.30  Closing Address and Reception