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Themed Series of Events facilitated by Dr Tracy Hayes, hosted jointly by LED and CRiHS: Playing with words.... connecting through story

Words hold things. They bear meanings.... Holding things in a particular, powerful relation to one another and to us. (Le Guin, 1989, p.169)

This themed series of events will focus on story - not the traditional action-packed, heroic tales, but the smaller stories from our lives. As Le Guin (2016, p.81) acknowledges, it is hard to tell a really gripping tale of the minutiae of living, of caring for self and others, the '...whole amazing, complicated business of staying alive and being a member of a society'. And yet this is vital to enable us to better understand ourselves, our communities, and the worlds in which we live. We will consider what makes a story *tellable*, who the *teller* is (or may be) and how *storytelling* can be utilised to bring about change.

For more information on these events, please email tracy.hayes@cumbria.ac.uk

Wednesday 16 December 2020 at 1.00pm: Lightning Talk: Shared-story approaches: you tell me yours, and I'll tell you mine...

In this interactive session we will look at the use of stories in research and teaching. This is relevant whatever your discipline. As we are reminded by Gordon MacLellan (2007, p.165):

All our explanations can be seen as stories. Whether we call them myths, legends, fables or hard fact, they are all stories. Our most precious scientific processes are still stories: patterns spun to explain observations, rhythms of words that change and grow as our understanding changes and patterns that might help to explain what is going on around us ...

We will take it in turns to share stories from our research and discuss the challenges and joys of using this type of approach. Please come prepared with either a short story from your research or a story you use in teaching.

Wednesday 10 February 2021: Workshop (1.5 hours): Story crafting methods: exploring magic and mundane moments and capturing elusive elements

We may choose to tell a tale, but it takes skill to '... craft something with power, something with emotion, something that lives and breathes within the hearts and minds of audiences for years to come' (Hull, 2011). In this workshop, we will view our lives as continuous fieldwork that provides a repository of experiences we can explore to '...understand the subtleties and complexities of human reality' (Tuan, 2001, p.41). We will reflect on some of our experiences, drawing on 'magic' (Hayes, 2017), mundane and everyday moments and adopting a 'carrier-bag' method (Taylor, Blaise and Giugni, 2013; Haraway, 2004; Le Guin, 1989) to capture them within a creative non-fiction storied form.

Wednesday 21 April 2021: Symposium (half-day): Telling small stories from the everyday to bring about change

This transdisciplinary symposium will bring together storytellers from across the University of Cumbria's Institutes - *and beyond* - to offer diverse perspectives from a range of disciplinary backgrounds. The stories will be grounded in ordinary life and focused on bringing about change - in policy, practice, pedagogy and/or research. If you would like to contribute to this session, please email tracy.hayes@cumbria.ac.uk by Monday 30 November 2020.

References

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- Hull, J. (2011). *To tell a tale, to craft a story*. Available at: <https://narrativefirst.com/articles/to-tell-a-tale-to-craft-a-story/> (Accessed: 28/08/2020)
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- Le Guin, U.K. (1989). "The Carrier Bag Theory of Fiction." In *Dancing at the Edge of the World: Thoughts on Words, Women, Place*. New York: Harper and Row: 165-70
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- Taylor, A.; Blaise, M. and Giugni, M. (2013). Haraway's 'bag lady storytelling': relocating childhood and learning within a 'post-human landscape', *Discourse: Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education*, 34(1) pp.48-62
- Tuan, Y.F. (2001). Life as a field trip. *Geographical Review*, 91(1-2), pp.41-45.