

George Ewart Evans Centre for Storytelling
Symposium 2015

Storytelling and Activism

Delegate Pack



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Welcome

The George Ewart Evans Centre for Storytelling is delighted to welcome you to our ninth annual symposium, which includes two days of provocations and presentations on the theme of storytelling and activism. The first day focuses on storytelling in the digital realm and the second day looks at storytelling in context. We aim to inspire, encourage and showcase exciting projects across a wide spectrum of storytelling practice and are thrilled to bring such an exciting range of speakers to the Centre to present lectures, provocations, performances, q and a sessions, film screenings and much more. Activism is a timely theme given the increasing focus on political, social, environmental and economic change and the forthcoming UK elections and storytelling has a vital role to play. Through thinking about the stories we want to tell about ourselves and the world we live in we can focus on what kind of place we aspire to inhabit and hopefully make some steps towards it. Through the Storytelling and Activism symposium, our largest and most ambitious event to date, we aim to create a space to debate this and much more.

We hope you'll find everything you need in this pack including:

- [An itinerary](#)
- [Abstracts and speaker biographies](#)
- [Details of parallel sessions](#)
- [Directions to Atrium](#)
- [Where to stay](#)

If you need any more information or there is anything else we can help with please do get in touch. You can call us on 01443 668547 or email storytelling@southwales.ac.uk.

The George Ewart Evans Centre for Storytelling is the only UK academic research centre devoted to the study of storytelling and its applications. We believe storytelling creates better understanding between individuals and communities across society. Our expertise includes digital storytelling, applied and community arts, folkloric studies, performance, oral history and storytelling in health and social care. Students, academics and anyone who wants to include storytelling as part of their professional practice will find a wealth of resources at the centre. If you'd like to find out more about the work of the George Ewart Evans Centre for Storytelling visit our website at <http://storytelling.research.southwales.ac.uk>.

Finally, we would like to express our thanks to the Folklore Society who have generously sponsored this event.

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Itinerary

All events take place at the Atrium, Faculty of Creative Industries, Adam Street, Cardiff, CF24 2XF

Friday 24th April, 9.30am – 4.00pm

All events take place in The Atrium Theatre unless otherwise stated.

From 10.00 onwards – The Installation *Italians_2001* by Irene Liverani will be running all day in the Zen Room Corridor

- 9.30am Registration (coffee will be served in the ‘Atrium Street’)
- 10.00am Welcome, Karen Lewis and Emily Underwood-Lee
- 10.15am Natasha Freidus
- 11.15am Break (tea and coffee will be served in the ‘Atrium Street’)
- 11.30am [Parallel sessions 1](#) (theatre, CA 204, cinema)
- 12.30pm Lunch (buffet lunch will be served in the ‘Atrium Street’)
- 1.30pm Mark Dunford
- 2.30pm Break (tea and coffee will be served in the ‘Atrium Street’)
- 2.45pm [Parallel sessions 2](#) (theatre, CA 204, cinema)
- 3.45pm Closing comments
- 4.00pm Break
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Friday 24th April, 5.30pm – 9.30pm

- 5.30pm Otherstory Puppetry Collective(Theatre)
‘Escape was on Everyone’s Mind: The Tale of Jack Sheppard’
- 6.45pm Break
- 7.05pm ‘Still the Enemy Within’ *PLUS Q AND A* (cinema)

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Chair: Prof Chris Morris

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Saturday 25th April, 9.30am – 5.00pm

All events take place in The Zen Room, Fourth Floor, Atrium.

- 9.30am Registration (tea and coffee will be served in the ‘Mingle Cafe’)
- 9.45am Welcome: Karen Lewis and Emily Underwood-Lee
- 10.00am Keynote: Roger Hill
Chair: Prof Hamish Fyfe
- 11.00am Break (tea and coffee will be served in the Zen Room)
- 11.15am Provocation One: Dr Geoff Fox
Chair: Dr Pat Ryan
- 12.15am Provocation Two: Jack Lynch
Chair: Karen Lewis
- 1.15pm Lunch (buffet lunch will be served in the ‘Mingle Cafe’)
- 2.00pm Provocation Three: The Institute for the Practice of Art and
Dissent at Home
Chair: Emily Underwood-Lee
- 3.00pm Provocation Four: Philip Ralph and Fern Smith ‘Doing Dirt
Time’
- 4.00pm Break (tea and coffee will be served in the Zen Room)
- 4.15pm Provocation Five: David Solnit
Chair: Dr Hilary Ramsden
- 4.45pm Closing Comments: Karen Lewis
- 5.00pm Close

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Speaker Biographies and Abstracts

[Natasha Freidus](#)

Creative Narrations

In this presentation, Natasha will present a retrospective of [Creative Narrations](#)' projects utilizing digital storytelling as a tool for a wide range of social change initiatives across the United States. Her presentation will explore the relationship between storytelling, power, and technology. Highlights will include samples and discussion from the fields of community organizing, adult education, youth engagement, public health, and place-based mapping initiatives. This presentation will centre around lessons learned in building digital storytelling capacity within marginalized communities and reflections on the future of the field.

In June of 2000, **Natasha Freidus** created her first digital story. In July of 2000, she taught her first workshop! Shortly after, Natasha founded the media collective Creative Narrations and has been training, writing, and speaking about digital storytelling ever since. Natasha's interest in the role of storytelling as a tool for social change emerged from her experience as a community organizer. She has studied and worked in a range of communities including the U.S./Mexican border, the Dominican Republic, and spent 2006-7 on a Fulbright Fellowship in Tarragona, Catalonia.

Natasha earned her Masters degree in Urban Studies at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. She currently lives in Southwest France where she trains and consults in digital storytelling both virtually and locally.

[Mark Dunford](#)

Finding a Thread: Digital Storytelling and older people with nine partners across six countries over three projects

Silver Stories began in 2009 with a small development meeting in Helsinki and then worked through 'Extending Creative Practice' (2010- 2012) before securing funds for the current programme which runs from 2013-2015. Mark will reflect on the different strands across the six years and explore some of the difficulties and tensions involved between maintaining a credible direction and building a sustainable research programme. This session looks at how what

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began with an ambition to use digital storytelling as a tool to gather stories from older people and community groups grew to embrace a range of different policy drivers, research goals and pedagogic ambitions. It explores how a desire to understand why people chose to tell particular stories and the significance provided by an opportunity to speak, be seen and heard took different turns in different places as the research programme developed its own particular momentum.

Mark Dunford leads the [Silver Stories](#) research partnership, from the University of Brighton. As well as undertaking research into Digital Storytelling, Mark is the Academic Quality and Partnership Director in the College of Arts and Humanities. Mark was previously based at Goldsmiths where he led research projects through DigiTales, including the UK components of 'Digem' (2009-2012) and the British Council supported 'Living Together' (2008-9). From 2004-2008, he was Executive Director of Hi8us Projects where he ran 'Inclusion Through Media', a partnership based action research programme using media as a means to investigate ways to empower people in their communities. The partnership ran from 2004-2008 and involved academics, practitioners and different marginalised communities across the UK and Europe. He has worked at the BBC, British Film Institute and Arts Council England, and is a Fellow of the Royal Society for the Arts, Fellow of the Higher Education Academy and a Trustee of London Bubble Theatre.

[Otherstory Puppetry Collective](#)

'Escape was on Everyone's Mind: The Tale of Jack Sheppard'

See how an ordinary apprentice carpenter from East London became the legendary jail breaker and hero of the people, whose fame spread across oceans. Witness his daring and miraculous escapes! Watch him outwit judges, jailers and the Thieftaker General – until the hangman's noose beckons and it's now or never, neck or nothing...

18th Century London, its raucous mobs, rapacious merchants and well-fed judges, are brought to vivid life on a table. The use of simple cut-out puppets and zigzagging set lead the audience through unexpected turns among the characters, institutions, and dodgy deals of a time of upheaval. Jumps in scale, audience participation and the textured use of sound and song add drama and depth to the story. A playful, political, visually stunning tale of daring and resistance.

Otherstory is a coming together of puppeteers, musicians, activists and artists – storytellers of all kinds, in the recognition that we are all storytellers. They tell stories that feed and sustain movements, that connect us to each other across

place and time. Stories that run counter to the narratives of the powerful and their project of erasing other histories – other ways of thinking, living and being. Their work reflects a tradition of storytelling which belongs to everyone, that is a continuing conversation between us about our imaginings and realities. Otherstory are based in Bristol and have been working together since February 2010.

[Bad Bonobo](#)

Still the Enemy Within

Still the Enemy Within is a unique insight into one of history's most dramatic events: the 1984-85 British Miners' Strike. No experts. No politicians. Thirty years on, this is the raw first-hand experience of those who lived through Britain's longest strike. Follow the highs and lows of that life-changing year. Still the Enemy Within is ultimately a universal tale of ordinary people standing up for what they believe in. It challenges us to look again at our past so that in the words of one miner, "we can still seek to do something about the future". The screening will be followed by a Q and A with members of the production team.

Bad Bonobo Ltd is the name of the company started by Mark Lacey, Owen Gower and Sinead Kirwan to make *Still The Enemy Within*. This is their first feature film as a company but they already have two other ideas in development for next year so watch this space!

[Roger Hill](#)

The Activist's Tale

This keynote will address issues of Storytelling and Activism in the current political climate, with particular emphasis on the roles of story-teller and received narratives in an era of individualism.

Roger Hill is a freelance director, performer, arts and education consultant, writer, lecturer and broadcaster. He currently leads a Story-telling group in Liverpool based at the Bluecoat arts centre.

He played a prominent and active part in the development of Youth Theatre in the U.K. and worldwide and through his arts advisory work has been effectual in many localities in the UK and other European countries through the Council Of Europe in the 1990's. His education work includes a series of contracted projects managed for Creative Partnerships involving research and schools

development, as well as regular creative project work in schools. He lectured in Community Arts at the Liverpool Institute for Performing Arts (LIPA). He undertakes his Live Art performance work as transgender artist Mandy Romero and has carried out commissions for the Liverpool Bluecoat as Associate Live Artist, on an Arts Council Fellowship in Live Art based in Helsinki, with Tate Liverpool, and has lectured in Live Art at Liverpool Hope University. In 2007 he spent two months in China carrying out Live Art performance research in the Pearl River Delta and Shanghai. He presents the longest-running alternative music show on UK local radio. His short film “Punk Snow” will be premiered this Spring.

[Dr Geoff Fox](#)

“What happened to Grey Wolf?” Working through role-play and story within a school’s curriculum.

Geoff will draw on his current work with children and their teachers in his local school, which encourages children to question what’s going on in the world. Planning alongside staff, he and a partner regularly introduce material feeding into the regular curriculum with all ages in the school. Their contribution might lead to a range of work, from talk and writing activities to long-term projects culminating in performances of original pieces of theatre in the town square. Geoff’s examples might range from The Firebird, Guernica & Picasso and the 1914 Christmas Truce to Florence Nightingale, Sir Gawain or the elderly teacher of etiquette who was the first person to go over Niagara Falls in a barrel. Geoff has been especially interested in the consequences of working in this way with teachers and children within existing programmes of work.

Geoff Fox has worked with children, student-teachers and teachers in schools and universities in the UK and abroad. He has written extensively about teaching literature and drama and edited *Children’s Literature in Education* for some 35 years. In retirement, he continues to review and write about books for young readers and to work as a role-player and storyteller in local schools. He also helps to run a small but ambitious Arts Centre in the market town of Crediton in Devon.

[Jack Lynch](#)

The Sanctuary Project

The aspiration of the Sanctuary Project is to give the general public an arresting insight into the everyday experience of asylum seekers, with a view to fostering understanding between a mainstream audience and people who have been marginalised as a direct result of the Irish asylum process. To air the stories of asylum seekers in this way is an important artistic weapon to tackle incipient racism and prejudice against asylum seekers. The project resulted in a series of short films featuring 26 well known Irish performers which have been presented throughout Ireland and internationally.

Dublin-born **Jack Lynch** is rooted in the *scéalai* tradition as explored by Eamon Kelly and John Campbell, having shared a stage with both. He has experience in schools, libraries and prisons. He works regularly in the National Museum of Ireland and in psychiatric hospitals and has appeared at local arts and storytelling festivals throughout Ireland. Internationally, Jack has performed at the Smithsonian Folklife Festival in Washington DC; The Illinois Storytelling and Education Programme; Festival At The Edge in England; Edinburgh Storytelling Festival; Alden Biesen in Belgium; Beni-Mallal in Morocco; Zimt & Zinder German/Irish Festival in Potsdam; The Grimm's Library in Berlin; as well as festivals in Newfoundland, Estonia, Paris, and Warsaw. Folk festivals at which Jack has performed include; Sidmouth, Whitby, Girvan, Orkney and Newcastle. Jack has been the featured Irish storyteller on three occasions at the Cape Clear International Storytelling Festival and twice at Gimistory in the Cayman Islands and at The Hakaya Festival in Amman, Jordan. He is a founder member of the Dublin Yarnspellers and of Storytellers of Ireland/Aos Scéal Éireann, of which he is the current chairman.

[The Institute for the Practice of Art and Dissent at Home](#)

Activism and Family

For this presentation the Institute will chart its own personal history of participation at various political demonstrations with children, from May Day 2001 through to the National Demonstration for Gaza in the summer of 2014. This is a chance for us to reflect on the shifting political landscapes we've been enmeshed in in the UK from our becoming parents in 2000. Crucially, Lena and Gary (parents) will be deploying storytelling techniques to tell their children appropriate narratives of their first ever demonstrations. This will include reference to the anti-globalization May Day Monopoly in London 2001 (Neal); Stop the War Coalition protest against Iraq war in February 2003 (Gabriel); Financial Fools' Day G20 summit protest and Climate Camp on Bishopsgate, London in April 2009 (Sid) and The National Demonstration for Gaza in August 2014 (James).

The Institute for the Art and Practice of Dissent at Home is an art activist initiative, part of a family home, which is concerned to bring up the children: Neal (14), Gabriel (12), Sid (7) and James (1) critically and lovingly. This happens on various levels: through activities in our own home, at the Institute, which is our spare room, so performances, artist's residencies, meetings, reading groups and also through our participation as a family of performers at different art events, festivals and academic conferences. The Institute's activities are also about taking the children to demonstrations and learning together how to be critical citizens rather than passive consumers. The Institute is funded by 10% of the family's income: lecturers' salaries, child benefit and any other fees the family receives from performances

[Philip Ralph and Fern Smith](#)

Doin' Dirt Time

Doin' Dirt Time is a provocative performance questioning the role of arts in society. Written by Suzi Gablik this piece asks the question 'what role does art have in a time of great change?' as two sculptors reject the art world in favour of learning how to live life as a prayer, developing new skills for life on earth. *Doin' Dirt Time* is an Emergence collaborative project performed by Philip Ralph, Fern Smith and a Guest Artist. It is based on a transcript of an astonishing interview by internationally renowned arts commentator Suzi Gablik in her book 'Conversations Before the End Of Time'. In 'Doin' Dirt Time' Gablik speaks to Rachel Dutton and Rob Olds, two celebrated American artists who have made the decision to give away all their artworks and possessions. Following the interview they disappeared into the American wilderness, after an intensive study of tracking and survival skills. This powerful piece questions the role of the arts in society as the two protagonists explain their reasons for not only stepping out of the art world but also stepping out of society itself. They fundamentally question the traditional role of the artist in society, articulating their desire to live life as a sacred act rather than to simply document it. Fern Smith & Philip Ralph play Dutton and Olds.

Fern Smith is founder member of [Volcano Theatre](#) and co-initiator and collaborator on [Emergence](#). **Philip Ralph** trained as an actor before turning to writing. His first play [Deep Cut](#) won the Amnesty Freedom of Expression Award in 2009. Smith and Ralph are real life partners finding their way and deeply inspired by Dutton and Olds themselves.

[David Solnit](#)

Stories Can Save or Destroy The World

David will join us by video link to discuss the power and importance of storytelling to change the world for the better and to save the earth. As an organizer, artist and puppeteer in grassroots social change movements in the US David has experienced that the conflicts waged between social change movements and elites are battles of competing stories. Our actions and demonstration are spectacular, the public telling of our stories. In the book David co-wrote with US army veteran Aimee Allison, [*Army of None: Strategies to Counter Military Recruitment, End War, and Build a Better World*](#), he wrote, "What do Marlboro cigarettes, the German Nazi Party, U.S military-recruiters, and Kellogg's Frosted Flakes cereal have in common? They all employ the same public-relations story telling techniques to persuade people to think in a certain way and to want a certain thing." Public relations, big business and propaganda tell stories about the world, as do those of us who aim to change it. Stories aimed at social change are often told based on people's lives. For those of us who want to change the world, we can become powerful storytellers, we can involve the communities we come from in telling their own stories and we can understand and counter the stories of the rich and powerful. David will explore how an army of strong-hearted, fierce storytellers might save and change the world.

David Solnit is an artist, activist and author. His books include *The Battle of the Story of the Battle of Seattle* (2010, AK Press), *Army of None: Strategies to Counter Military Recruitment, End War, and Build a Better World* (2007, Seven Stories Press) and *Globalize Liberation: How to Uproot the System and Build a Better World* (2004, City Lights Books).

The Conference Team

[Karen Lewis](#)

Karen Lewis is Director of the George Ewart Evans Centre for Storytelling at the University of South Wales, where she leads on research and public engagement projects, with a particular focus on storytelling in health, social care and environmental change. She is an active researcher and has a particular interest in the field of first person narrative and storytelling. She founded the StoryWorks unit at the University of South Wales : a training and consultancy unit specialising in storytelling in the field of health and social care. Karen led the unit successfully for its first four years, before it was developed into an independent private enterprise(www.storyworksuk.com). Karen has a background as both an educator and senior BBC producer. Working with Dr. Daniel Meadows of Cardiff University, she founded and led the BBC's multi award-winning Digital Storytelling project Capture Wales (www.bbc.co.uk/capturewales) and her final post at the BBC before joining the University was as Partnerships Manager for Wales. Her current research interests are in first person narratives and the possibilities offered by creative interventions and emerging media forms to offer access to platforms for hitherto “unheard” voices.

[Dr Pat Ryan](#)

Pat Ryan is Research Fellow at the George Ewart Evans Centre for Storytelling. He works as a storyteller, doing performances, workshops, training others in the uses of storytelling (teachers, classroom assistants, library staff, parents and grandparents, footballers, coaches, etc.). He has published widely on areas including Storytelling; Folklore; Children's Literature; Literacy; Cognitive Studies in relation to Oral Narrative, Storytelling and Story Listening.

[Dr Hilary Ramsden](#)

Hilary Ramsden is a performer, researcher and teacher. She has taught performance for over 20 years with people in universities, colleges, schools, theatre companies and community groups in the US, UK, Europe and South Africa. Trained in clowning and physical theatre she became a member of the acclaimed lesbian-feminist Siren Theatre Company. She moved to Detroit in 1992 to become co-artistic director of Walk & Squawk Performance Project, renovating an old furniture manufacturing building in 1999 to create the Furniture Factory, a small performance venue and gallery space for experimental and innovative performance. Her passion for exploring desire lines in the city of Detroit led to *the Walking Project*, a 3-year interdisciplinary performance, [mapping and cultural-exchange project](#) with U.S. and South Africa-based artists and community participants in Detroit and KwaZulu-Natal. In the UK in 2005 with other activists and experimenters she co-founded the [Clandestine Insurgent Rebel Clown Army \(CIRCA\)](#), training

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people in the ancient art of subversive clowning for social change. Rebel clown brigades have since sprung up all over the world.

She completed a practice-led PhD at University of the West of England investigating the potential of walking to encourage dialogue and transformation. Her current practice is a particular (and possibly peculiar) assemblage of physical and visual theatre, street interventions, rebel clowning, walking, soundscape creation and writing. She is Senior Lecturer in Theatre and Drama at the University of South Wales in Cardiff.

[Emily Underwood-Lee](#)

Emily Underwood-Lee is a performance artist and researcher based at the George Ewart Evans Centre for Storytelling and Creative Industries Research Institute at the University of South Wales. Emily creates autobiographical work and is principally concerned with the construction of gender and how the female body can be presented and represented in performance. Her areas of interest include performance and the body, feminist performance art, narratives of illness, autobiographical performance, and performance and disability. Her recent performances use her radically changed and continuously changing body, which bears the marks of breast cancer treatment, double mastectomy, salpingo-oophorectomy, motherhood and menopause, to consider her relationship to femininity. She is a founder member of the Factory Floor creative network for women solo performance practitioners. Emily is also currently studying for a PhD at the University of South Wales titled "The Body Exposed: Strategies for confronting objectification in women's autobiographical performance" with an anticipated completion date of autumn 2015.

[Prof Hamish Fyfe](#)

Hamish Fyfe Co-Founder of the George Ewart Evans Centre for Storytelling, CEWN Project Director, and Director, Digital Economy Projects at the University of South Wales. He has worked as a teacher, actor, and researcher in a variety of contexts and worked for twenty years in Belfast, Northern Ireland before taking up his post as Chair of Arts in the Community in September 2004. Hamish has a long track record in collaborative, applied research and knowledge exchange activities.

Parallel Sessions

Friday 24 th April 11.30am – 12.30pm		
<p>CA204 Laura Hayden ‘Black Flag Over Belfast’</p> <p>Carlotta Allum ‘Imaginative Mobility’</p> <p>Chair: Barry Atkins</p>	<p>Theatre Natasha James ‘Mythbusters’</p> <p>Garrabost Jayalakshmi ‘I was trafficked: But how do I tell my story?’</p> <p>Chair: Ruth McElroy</p>	<p>Cinema Sarah Copeland ‘Digital Storytelling as Community Informatics Approach: Informal learning and activism in rural communities of place’</p> <p>Tony Sumner ‘Inverting the pyramid of voice: digital storytellers creating activist memes of care experience’</p> <p>Chair: Roiyah Saltus</p>
Friday 24 th April 2.45pm – 3.45pm		
<p>CA204 David Frohlich, Jocelyn Spence, Marialena Nikolopoulou, Tom Barrett ‘Storytelling for Development: Shaping Localism in London’</p> <p>Mel Rohse, David Llewellyn ‘Everyday Lives: Storytelling as an approach to co-creating relationships with energy past, present, and future in communities in South Wales’</p> <p>Chair: Jodie Allinson</p>	<p>Theatre Irene Liverani ‘Italians_2001’</p> <p>N.B. please visit the sound installation in the Zen Room Corridor before attending this session.</p> <p>Colin Thomas ‘The Migrants’ Story’</p> <p>Chair: Alice Entwistle</p>	<p>Cinema Michael Chronopoulos ‘The New Greek Magical Realism: Negotiated Perspectives in the Lyrical Documentary Film I.M. (2016)’</p> <p>Chair: Chris Morris</p>

Parallel Session Abstracts

Laura Hayden

Black Flag Over Belfast

At the height of the Troubles in the 1970s, as bombs and bullets rained down on Belfast, a group of anarchists got together to set up an alternative bookshop. Just Books sat between the republican Falls and the loyalist Shankill, at the intersection of the sectarian battle lines. Young Catholics and Protestants disillusioned with tribal politics wanted to connect with their contemporaries across the water, spearheading green, feminist, LGBT and anarcho-syndicalist movements. Just Books became a rallying point for ethnic Catholics and Protestants seeking revolutionary outlets free from the reactionary taint of nationalism. The bookshop was the departure point for the very first Gay Pride march through Belfast and nurtured an emerging green and anti-nuclear movement. My documentary, *Black Flag Over Belfast*, produced in 2010, weaves together the memories of the founders of Just Books and the activists they united. The aim of the programme was to challenge prevailing public narratives about Northern Ireland, formed around the polarising force of the Troubles. This paper will unfold the story of the programme and of the activists at its centre.

Carlotta Allum

Imaginative Mobility

Digital storytelling and my practice has been chosen as one of the research methods for a project lead by Swansea University. Research questions include:

- How might imaginative mobility/immobility help us understand disconnection, division and social exclusion?
- Can arts practice as a process engage individuals' and collective imaginative mobilities in a way that can (re)connect people to communities

AIMS

- To capture individuals' imaginative mobility through creativity and the production of an art form
- To evaluate the impact of the artistic activity on the individual (including an assessment of changes in connectedness/decreases in loneliness/self esteem/wellbeing)

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- To connect society via the concept of imaginative mobility
- To capture the impact of the activity on the wider community (society, researchers, artists)

What we are attempting to do is about solidarity – not doing something to someone, we acknowledge that we are all in various ways in ‘positions of privilege’, but we may also be disconnected from others – this is not about ‘doing good’, but a movement toward greater connection for all. I will talk about stories of place, showing a collection of digital stories that have been made by ‘disconnected’ people who are imagining a better or other place, made by prisoners and some made by migrants or asylum seekers.

Natasha James

Mythbusters

A discussion group including a showing of stories from the Mythbusters project in order to discuss whether arts projects can successfully intervene and if so how?

During the Summer of 2012, artists Matt White and Katrina Kirkwood were commissioned to create a project which explored Welsh Valley stereotypes. The project became known as Mythbusters. They travelled to Cardiff and recorded vox pops of people’s attitudes towards ‘valleys’ people, then scoured the streets and the hills of the Ebbw Fach Valley from Brynmawr to Sofrydd in a Mythbuster branded van in search of the real voices of the valleys. Each participant interview was placed with a mixture of their own photographs and newly created images to make a series of compelling digital stories. Both strands of the Mythbuster's project were concerned with negative stereotypes given to people living in the Valleys by those living outside. The culmination of which brands a large geographical area with negativity and hopelessness.

Matt White went on to create an installation called Vanishing Point - a different screen was allocated for each of the thirty-six storytellers and brought their 72 stories together in one space for the first time. Their individual voices spoke of wider reaching social difficulties; about politics and belonging. The placement of the audio-visual community within the space of St. Michael's Church raised questions about the role of institutions as they continue to shift and adapt to the post-industrial climate within the South Wales regions.

Activism is about motivating change, Breaking Barriers Community Arts use digital storytelling as a method to motivate change. In this project digital

stories captured the voices of the real valley's people. However we often find their voices are obfuscated by those in positions of power and influence.

Garrabost Jayalakshmi

I was Trafficked: Street Theatre, Documentary Film and Activism

Mumtaz Begum (not her real name) was a young 16 year old when she was trafficked from Bangladesh to Malaysia – she had no Malay, no Tamil and no English; yet, she managed to escape. People like her rarely come back to talk of their experiences. Saathi is a Bangladeshi NGO, which works with the urban poor. One way in which they raise social awareness is through street theatre. Mukhtar, a street theatre director from the slums of Dhakka put together a play, which raises awareness of trafficking amongst the slum-dwellers. I made a short film, which intercut the two stories together. In this paper, I will explore the extent to which my film uses the medium of visual story-telling in order to further activist causes. How much of an activist do I become by telling their story in the way that I do? And is this type of activism different from the activism that Mukhtar and his fellow dramaturges are involved with?

Sarah Copeland

Digital Storytelling as Community Informatics Approach: Informal learning and activism in rural communities of place

The process of creating Digital Stories has been well replicated across the globe in a multitude of contexts, as described in texts such as 'Story Circle' (Hartley & McWilliam 2009). Case studies often reveal groups sharing the storytelling experience through communities of interest or practice, or comprising participants who have chosen to attend workshops.

The Community Informatics (CI) field of research and practice is concerned with representing individuals and places outside of a 'techno-economic agenda', where ICTs are applied in such ways to empower community groups to aim for social justice, political empowerment, and economic development (Day 2005; Day & Schuler 2004; Gurstein 2007). Within this CI framework, a research project was implemented to review how Digital Storytelling could empower community groups to facilitate activism in considering social justice and political empowerment.

This paper explores how DST acts as an effective agent within the CI project to enable activism in an informal learning environment across two rural places in northern England. It builds on several well-documented projects, such as Capture Wales and Tees Valley Community Media, as well as more recent CI investigations, including the work of Amalia Sabiescu in the ICT for Development (ICT4D) context of inclusive educational models giving voice to minority groups, through self-representation. Conclusions around the sustainability of the 'classic' DST model (Lundby 2008) in the CI context reveal a fixed process is not necessarily the most effective and considers partner frameworks as a more effective matrix approach in engendering activism in communities of place.

Tony Sumner

Inverting the pyramid of voice: digital storytellers creating activist memes of care experience

'Narrative is radical, creating us at the very moment it is being created.'
(Morrison, 1994)

Background

Organisational and cultural characteristics of health/social care systems (hierarchies, professional silos, personal emotional shields) serve, like graphite rods in a nuclear reactor, to slow interactions and restrain energy generation. When the development (even sustainability) of health and social care systems is of concern, debate and expense, it is morally equitable and financially prudent for systems to engage with service users and carers, leveraging their implicit expertise, and evidence of experience to improve the quality and delivery of health/social care.

Methods

The overarching narrative flows within healthcare are top down, didactic disseminations of information, or gathering data sets defined by the system, not service users. So, how can a service user create themselves in their own narrative? The Patient Voices Programme has, for over a decade, sought to provide a safe, powerful methodology for reflection and creation of service user narratives, unbound by system-prescribed surveys or data gathering instruments.

Results

Classical digital storytelling processes adapted for health/social care have empowered the creation of hundreds of service users' own voices. Freely-viewable story distribution models invert the 'pyramid of voice', facilitating those stories/memes acts of 'guerrilla advocacy' when used within healthcare

training, university education. These results are borne out by website statistics for the reach of the ‘activist memes’ created, and feedback from storytellers after workshops.

Conclusions

Carefully facilitated reflective digital storytelling processes provide spaces where storytellers can reflect deeply on past experiences, current states, future goals. The digital stories created can exist and act as ‘activist memes’ carrying the storytellers’ experiences into influential juxtaposition with engaged viewers.

References

Morrison, T. 1994. The Nobel Lecture in Literature. 1993. New York: Knopf (p22)

David Frohlich, Jocelyn Spence, Marialena Nikolopoulou, Tom Barrett

Storytelling for Development: Shaping Localism in London

Government initiatives like the Localism Act of 2011 have made it easier in principle for residents to influence the decision-making process for local redevelopment projects to suit the wishes of the local community. In practice, this process has been criticised for not representing the needs and aspirations of local residents, or respecting the history and cultural heritage of the area. Some have suggested taking a more holistic view of places and their identities, to achieve a new level of pro-active public engagement in planning, and drawing on knowledge of the past in planning for the future. We see this situation as a perfect opportunity for exploring the use of digital storytelling as a tool for community-led activism in participatory urban planning.

This paper will discuss our early stage work in developing a plan for facilitating and making use of digital stories that reflect the past, present, and future hopes of the community regarding their local area. We are working with the residents of a designated Co-operative Local Investment Plans (CLIPS) area of Lambeth, south London, to produce a collection of digital stories that talk about their local area in terms of local history (‘heritage stories’), their everyday struggles (‘problem stories’), their experiences of living through changes in their neighbourhood (‘redevelopment stories’) and their dreams for the future (‘aspiration stories’). In turn, our partner architects, Farrells, will reflect on these stories and create ‘design stories’ of their own that represent the changes they imagine for the area in the future. We hope that by giving local residents the tools and the prompts to express their views about changes to their local areas, we will enable a far more participatory, equitable, and positive process for urban redevelopment.

storytelling.research.southwales.ac.uk/

Mel Rohse, David Llewellyn

Everyday Lives: Storytelling as an approach to co-creating relationships with energy past, present, and future in communities in South Wales

The AHRC-funded *Stories of Change* project seeks to re-energise stalled public and political conversations around decarbonisation embedded in the renewed cross-party commitment in the UK Government's Climate Change Act 2008. The Everyday Lives strand of the project aims to reveal the dynamism and diversity in the relationship between communities and energy in the past, present and future.

It uses the motif of the journey from fossil-based fuel towards renewables in south Wales to co-create stories with a diverse mix of communities, all of whom have been affected and will be impacted upon by this shift. We are exploring how a range of creative approaches from digital storytelling through to poetry and oral histories can enable us, as researchers, to work with community groups to generate stories of how energy has shaped and is shaping their everyday lives and the possible impact of future energy transitions.

Here, we concentrate specifically on storytelling, considering how it might be used to discover more about energy relationships past and present, but also to imagine future scenarios that will emanate from transitions in energy generation and consumption. In particular, we report on the initial stages of an intergenerational oral history project between young people and older people on the topic of energy, set in Ynysybwl in the Welsh valleys. Like many communities in the area, it owes its existence to coal mining, suffering socio-economically since its demise, although opportunities for renewable energy generation are emerging.

We reflect on how storytelling through oral history can give a voice to seldom heard people and involve them in conversations about global issues played out in their everyday lives.

Irene Liverani

Italians_2001: A participatory story on 2001 Genova G8, activism, and utopia Sound-based installation + seminar

In 2001, thousands of people gather in Genova to demonstrate against the G8 summit. What happens in those days between the 20th and the 22nd of July

was described by Amnesty International as ‘the most serious suspension of democratic rights in a Western country since WWII’.

Participatory sound-based installation *Italians_2001* brings together a poly-vocal account on the Genova G8, as it was encountered by a group of adolescents at the time. Participants to the installation were all born in the 1984-1987 triennium and raised in Italy. The aim of the installation is to examine if, and how, the Genova G8 event, which my participants encountered at the delicate age of fourteen to seventeen, has left a mark on the way they see activism and its potential of achieving change today.

No two of my participants narrated the 2001 G8 in the same way; however, they all identified that event as a benchmark in their political education.

My methodology involved two levels of participation. Firstly, I invited my participants to provide me with material, using a blog as a platform. Then, I interviewed them with four questions on their experience of 2001G8 and the way they make sense of the event today. The sound material is spatialised and played in the installation by speakers placed behind a locked door. On moving her ear on the door’s surface, the listener activates some sounds, while leaving others in the background; a bigger picture is not given.

Colin Thomas

The Migrants’ Story

The story of Welsh migrants in America connects directly to the need for a positive and active response to new migrants in Wales and the U.K.

“The Dragon and the Eagle/Y Ddraig a’r Eryr” tells the story of Wales and America through an app or ‘enhanced ebook’ – text, video (narrated by Cerys Matthews) and interactive graphics www.thudmedia.com/dragon_and_eagle. But it also connects that story to the dilemma faced by all migrants everywhere – how to become good citizens of your new country whilst also holding on to your language, your culture and your values.

This is exemplified by specific stories, by the story of Cadwalader Morgan for example. A Quaker farmer from Merionydd, he emigrates to Merion in Pennsylvania in the 1690s and finds that he doesn’t have enough members of his family to bring in his crop. So he asks his American Quaker neighbours for guidance – “Buy a slave” they say. “Buy a slave!” Cadwalader is horrified and writes a troubled letter to the local Society of Friends “I am in perplexity concerning it...”

Digital publishing makes it possible not only to quote that letter but also to show it on screen and hear it read. Then to go on and point out the way in which concerns like that of Cadwallder Morgan gradually led to Quaker activism against the slave trade and eventually to them becoming the driving force behind the ending of slavery in the United States.

Stories like this – and that of Evan Jones, speaking out against the treatment of Native Americans, and Martha Hughes Cannon, calling for the right of women to vote – help to spell out the point that migrants, like every other member of society, have the right to be actively engaged in the society they have moved to.

Michael Chronopoulos

This study of Greek culture and film focuses on the auto-ethnographic film work of myself, Michael Chronopoulos. I am seeking to situate the artistic content of this practice-based doctoral thesis in both a historical and critical analysis, so as to demonstrate how my documentary film contributes to the larger artistic and political discourse of modern Greece and to various notions of Greekness.

Themes of identity, the trauma and impact of exile and migration, reverse migration, language, and the diaspora community are privileged in this study. Consequently, this study is situated within a critical analysis, applying current theories of Film History, National Cinema Analysis, Gender Studies, Queer Theory, Postcolonial Theory, and Theories of Subjectivity. As such, we will discover how the analysis as well as the documentary film, contributes to new knowledge, while revealing the political relevance about notions of Greekness, most often defined within a recurring protest milieu.

Parallel Session Chairs

[Prof Christopher Morris](#)

Christopher Morris is a documentary filmmaker. He has won three BAFTA awards, a Royal Television Society award, the Premios Ondas and prizes at the Berlin, Chicago and Celtic film festivals. In 2009 he won a gold award at the Association for International Broadcasters, for “Children of God”, a BBC World Service radio documentary about child evangelism. In 2003 he joined Newport Film School, to run the BA (Hons) Documentary Film & Television course. He is currently Professor of Practice, Documentary Film at the University of South Wales.

[Prof Barry Atkins](#)

With a background in narrative and critical theory and previously teaching digital games design at Liverpool John Moores University. He is author of *More than a game: The computer game as narrative form* (Manchester: MUP, 2003), co-editor (with Tanya Krzywinska) of *Videogame, Player, Text* (Manchester: MUP, 2007), and has published a number of articles on games narrative and aesthetics.

[Dr Ruth McElroy](#)

Ruth McElroy is Reader in Media and Cultural Studies. She is Director of the Creative Industries Research Institute and co-director of the Centre for the Study of Media and Culture in Small Nations.

[Dr Roiyah Saltus](#)

I am a Sociologist and my research incorporates critical race theory, feminism, community development theory, and critical perspectives in health, social policy and practice. My abiding research interest is rooted in intersectionality, in particular, the interplay and impact of, gender, age and social class as experienced by racialised and minority ethnic population groups. More recently, I have begun to examine the ethics of researching ‘race’, and ethnicity, and to explore intersectionality as linked to poverty, social exclusion and location in Wales

[Dr Jodie Allinson](#)

Dr. Jodie Allinson is a lecturer in Drama in the Faculty of Creative Industries, University of South Wales, where she teaches both practical and theoretical classes in twentieth and twenty-first century performance at undergraduate and masters level. In 2011 Jodie completed a PhD entitled *Approaches to Multimedia Theatre: Theory, Practice, Pedagogy*, in which she wrote about the creative and training processes of practitioners working across the disciplines of theatre, dance and video, as well as the pedagogy of interdisciplinary

performance practice. Since completing her PhD her research themes have been interdisciplinary working practices, the nature and process of artistic collaboration, multimedia theatre practice, theatre and ecology, and performance and landscape.

[Dr Alice Entwistle](#)

Broadly, my research interests lie in the field of Anglo-American poetry, especially 20th century (mainly postwar) poetics, and women's writing. I am particularly interested in the construction of voice and identity, and in the relationship between poetry and place, as represented in the work of the later twentieth century woman poet, especially in Wales, but also in Scotland and Ireland. I am also interested in letters and letter-writing, and in the nature of literary influence.

How to find us

All events take place at the Atrium, Cardiff School of Creative and Cultural Industries, Adam Street, Cardiff, CF24 2XF.

By train

Our ATRiuM building is right at the heart of the city. ATRiuM is a short walk from Cardiff Queen Street station or Cardiff Central station. [Arriva Trains](#)

By coach

Cardiff is served by regular [National Express Coaches](#) from London, West Wales, the North, Midlands and South West England. There is also a direct service from Heathrow, Gatwick and Bristol Airports. The coach station is a short walk from ATRiuM.

By air

Cardiff International Airport is 11 miles from the city centre and is serviced by regular bus and rail links. London's Heathrow airport is about two-and-a-half hour drive away and there is also an airport at Bristol.

By car

Travelling by car, it can be reached from junctions 29, 32 or 33 of the M4. There is a large car park opposite the Atrium Building on Adam Street, alternative parking can be found at Knox Road. You need to turn left off Fitzalan Place to reach Knox Road Car Park if you are coming from the Atrium building. The **postcode is CF24 2FN.**

Where to stay

You can search and book accommodation online at <http://www.visitcardiff.com/accommodation>. The Atrium is located in central Cardiff and is within walking distance of most city centre hotels.

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