

Storytelling, Illness and Medicine  
11th Global Meeting of the Health project

Call for Presentations 2016

Monday 14th March – Wednesday 16th March 2016  
Budapest, Hungary

Telling stories help us wrestle with and make sense of the things which happen in our lives. When illness or disease emerge and disrupt our everyday lives, stories play a key role by which we attempt to create meaning in relation to what is happening to us. They also invite others to share and engage in the way we see ourselves during such times, create spaces for sympathy, empathy and compassion and encourage people to share in the process of making sense of health, illness and disease with us. When it comes to medicine and clinical practice, the stories people tell become the first point of contact between sufferer and doctor and beyond that, between patient, doctor, consultant and even surgeon.

This inclusive interdisciplinary research stream aims to explore the processes by which we attempt to use stories and narratives to create meaning in health, illness and disease. The project will also examine the myths, the models, the metaphors we use to understand our experiences of health and illness and to evaluate the diversity of ways in which we creatively struggle to make sense of such experiences and express ourselves across a range of media. In the process it will map and evaluate the storied experience of illness between persons, patients, care-givers, practitioners and medical professionals, the impact of stories on care and the delivery of care, medical literacy, and stories shared at the level of health care professionals, the pharmaceutical industry and education.

Presentations, informal talks, performances, workshops, directed discussions, screenings and other types of interactive engagement might address themes such as:

- stories and the ‘significance’ of health, illness and disease for individuals and communities; the factors which influence our perceptions of health and illness experiences
- the concept of the ‘well’ person and the preoccupation with health; the attitudes of the ‘well’ to the ‘ill’; perceptions of ‘impairment’ and disability and the challenges posed when confronted by illness and disease; the notion of being ‘cured’; chronic illness; terminal illness; and, attitudes to death
- story-telling as an individual and community experience; stories that we weave to make meaning of our condition; how we perceive, present and conduct our self through experiences of health and illness; effects on our sense of identity; our relationship with our own body; and, how others – family, friends, partners, strangers, doctors, nurses, and care givers – see us
- stories, persons and bodies; the body in health or pain; the body on display; disabled bodies; damaged bodies; amputated bodies; the body as machine and the role of technology; the rise of genetics; manipulation of the body – transplantation, surgery; the body as resource; ‘artificial’ bodies; and the potential influences of gender, ethnicity, and class

- competing stories; biological and medical narratives of illness; ‘alternative’ medicine and therapies; the doctor–patient relationship; the ‘clinical gaze’; the impact of health, illness and disease on public narratives of biology, economics, government, medicine, politics, social sciences; the changing stories in the relationship between society and medical development; health care, service providers, and public policy
- the nature and role of ‘metaphors’ in expressing the experiences of health, illness and disease – for example, illness as ‘another country’; the role of narrative and narrative interpretation in making sense of the ‘journey’ from health through illness, diagnosis, and treatment; the importance of story telling; dealing with chronic and terminal illness; the ‘myths’ surrounding health, illness and disease
- the relationship between creative work, illness and disease; the work of artists, musicians, poets, writers. Illness and the literary imagination – studies of writers and literature which take health, disability, illness and disease as a central theme
- tales from the inside; stories and the patient; the therapeutic relational, meaningful encounters, assessments, and interventions; the institution, the service and the individual
- professional stories and reflective practice; co–constructing meaning developing practice
- working with stories; how to listen, to hear and to respond
- life beyond illness; acknowledging stories that transform; sacred and heroic journeys; quests and survivor missions

Further details and information can be found at the conference website:  
<http://www.inter-disciplinary.net/probing-the-boundaries/health/research-streams/storytelling-illness-and-medicine/call-for-presentations/>

#### Call for Cross–Over Presentations

The Storytelling, Illness and Medicine project will be meeting at the same time as a project on Fairy Tales and another project on Happiness. We welcome submissions which cross the divide between both project areas. If you would like to be considered for a cross project session, please mark your submission “Crossover Submission”.

#### What to Send

300 word abstracts, proposals and other forms of contribution should be submitted by Friday 4th December 2015.

All submissions be minimally double reviewed, under anonymous (blind) conditions, by a global panel drawn from members of the Project Team and the Advisory Board. In practice our procedures usually entail that by the time a proposal is accepted, it will have been triple and quadruple reviewed.

You will be notified of the panel’s decision by Wednesday 16th December 2015. If your submission is accepted for the conference, a full draft of your contribution should be submitted by Friday 12th February 2016.

Abstracts may be in Word, RTF or Notepad formats with the following information and in this order:

- a) author(s), b) affiliation as you would like it to appear in programme, c) email address, d) title of proposal, e) body of proposal, f) up to 10 keywords.  
E-mails should be entitled: Storytelling, Illness and Medicine Abstract Submission

Where to Send

Abstracts should be submitted simultaneously to both Organising Chairs:

Organising Chairs:

[p.bray@auckland.ac.nz](mailto:p.bray@auckland.ac.nz) Peter Bray:  
[illhealth@inter-disciplinary.net](mailto:illhealth@inter-disciplinary.net) Rob Fisher:

This event is an inclusive interdisciplinary research and publishing project. It aims to bring together people from different areas and interests to share ideas and explore various discussions which are innovative and exciting.

All papers accepted for and presented at the conference must be in English and will be eligible for publication in an ISBN eBook. Selected papers may be developed for publication in a themed hard copy volume(s). All publications from the conference will require editors, to be chosen from interested delegates from the conference.

Ethos

Inter-Disciplinary,Net believes it is a mark of personal courtesy and professional respect to your colleagues that all delegates should attend for the full duration of the meeting. If you are unable to make this commitment, please do not submit an abstract for presentation.

Please note: Inter-Disciplinary,Net is a not-for-profit network and we are not in a position to be able to assist with conference travel or subsistence.