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# SUZY O'HARA

RESEARCH FELLOW

## Introduction

In December 2018, the University of Sunderland launched CoLab Sunderland, an aspirational commissioning programme designed to provide greater visibility and more diverse impact for academic research undertaken across all faculties.

At its heart, CoLab Sunderland has two core aims: research excellence and interdisciplinary collaboration. By brokering a supported space for cross-faculty dialogue between art, design and creative academics and practitioners within Faculty of Arts and Creative Industries and academic researchers within Faculty of Health, Science and Wellbeing, we hoped to spark opportunities to develop new and experimental research collaborations for mutual benefit, learning and impact.

Our first open call aspired to foster new ways to support creative interpretations and responses to live research happening across the university and explore new ways to seed cross-faculty collaboration between researchers working across disciplines. The response to our call both demonstrates and celebrates the breadth of high quality practice and research activity happening across both faculties.

Participants were encouraged to; critically engage with cross disciplinary perspectives, explore their own creative processes, take risks, innovate new ways of working together and challenge the ways in which their field is understood and experienced through practice.

I am proud to present the results of our endeavour.

# Jenny Wotherspoon

PROGRAMME LEADER SOCIAL MEDIA

## Digital Nourishment: Building Health Communities

Online communities have existed as long as online spaces have existed, but over the past decade digital communities have become increasingly formalised and structured. Online community management has become a growing profession across a range of sectors, as they begin to recognise the various benefits of connecting and managing individuals in digital spaces.

In the medical and public health sector, there has been some adoption of digital communities, with websites like Diabetes.co.uk and IBDRelief championing the potential of digital community building for driving changes in public health and education. For decades, offline communities such as Alcoholics Anonymous and Weight Watchers have developed tools to improve health and promote behaviour change by harnessing the power of peer-to-peer networks. Many of these communities have not yet made the transition to an online space.



This project set out to explore the extent to which English-speaking digital communities are currently being used in the medical and public health sectors, beginning with the creation of a live directory of existing communities. Calling on contributions from the public, staff in the University's Health Sciences and Well-being Science faculty, and my own research, the project aims to explore the existing spaces occupied by digital communities. The information gathered will be used to explore, identify and define the characteristics and purposes of those existing online health communities. Ultimately, the aim of this project is to identify a potential space where a digital community could be built and tested in the future, in order to further explore the impact of online community building in the sector.



Principal Lecturer (Learning & Teaching) School of Psychology

Professor of Visual Art

Participatory Artist

Student BA (Hons) in Photography, Video and Digital Imaging

## Exploring Experience in the Edgelands



In this project we were interested in whether interventions designed to promote 'being-with' place could induce positive experiences associated with well-being. Sixteen of us - staff and students from Art and Psychology - participated in a guided walk led by an environmental educator. Learning about the place enabled a 'knowledge-rich' immersion in the landscape, and we engaged creatively with place through mindful doodling and mindful photography.

We were interested in whether these interventions could induce mindfulness, flow and connectedness to nature and whether questionnaires could capture those experiences. We set out from the National Glass Centre at 04:30, walking along the north bank of the River Wear and returning along the south bank for breakfast four hours later. At three locations our movement changed from other-directed guided walking to self-directed psychogeographic drifting as we moved toward whatever attracted our attention and engaged creatively with place through mindful doodling and mindful photography.

We then rated our experiences of mindfulness, flow and connectedness to nature before resuming the guided walk. Positive experiences associated with situation-specific interventions are often transient. During the next few days we each developed a small story aiming to connect our experience of 'being-with' place during the walk with our larger life story. In this intervention, we were interested in whether meaning-making through storytelling could make positive effects more enduring. Our collective reflections on the walk a week later, suggested the need to modify some aspects of the interventions and to replace the questionnaire measures as they did not resonate with the felt experiences. Narrative methods were felt to offer more potential for capturing experience in place, and the value of developing these as larger stories in a workshop was also recognised. These are ideas that we will take forward as we develop our project further.

# PROJECT GUIDE

A Cook Book - The Journey Beyond Bariatric Surgery

Digital Nourishment: Building Health Communities

Exploring Experience in the Edgelands

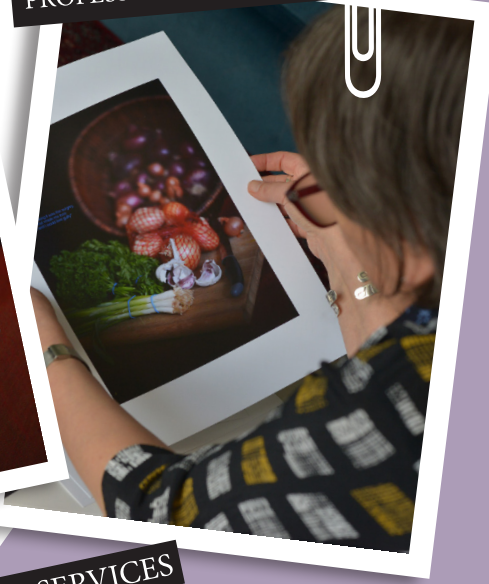
Insulin at Teatime

# SUNDERLAND

The Bariatric Surgery Project has involved members of a bariatric surgery patient group working with Dr Yitka Graham, Associate Professor in Health Services Research and joined by Professor Arabella Plouviez, who is a photographer.

## Arabella Plouviez

PROFESSOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY



## Yitka Graham

SENIOR LECTURER IN HEALTH SERVICES



Part of Yitka's research involves understanding the journey after a patient has undergone bariatric surgery and examines at what kinds of support, interventions and education can be put in place for these individuals as they adjust to life after bariatric surgery. As a photographer, Arabella's practice considers ways to give voice to communities that struggle to be heard in society.

The bariatric surgery patients group very generously provided a wealth of information and examples of the shared everyday challenges and judgements that they had experienced since undergoing surgery. Working together, we are looking at the opportunity for a longer-term project, developing a cook book that draws on the experiences and challenges at different stages of the post bariatric surgery journey. This is not about the physical journey so much as the social and mental challenges that are shared within this group.

As a starting point, these two image text pieces begin to explore the complex challenges, social pressures and self-doubt that the societal judgements towards bariatric surgery can trigger.

A Cook Book - The Journey Beyond Bariatric Surgery

## John Kefala - Kerr

SENIOR LECTURER IN MUSIC



The topic of NHS care is not normally something people sing about. More commonly the subject of news reports and TV documentaries, *Insulin at Teatime* brings the annoyance of having to remember to eat food at certain times - the fear of complications, negotiating the attitudes of peers, the seemingly impersonal behaviour of medical professionals, and the ever-present desire to 'be like everyone else' - into song. It has trumped romantic love as a subject worthy of musical attention.

*Insulin at Teatime* is a vocal setting of the verbatim testimony of adolescents living with Type 1 Diabetes. This collection of nine short vocal pieces responds to Dr. Kathryn King's co-authored paper "Perceptions of Adolescent Patients of the 'Lived Experience' of Type 1 Diabetes", and uses the transcribed words of the young respondents cited in the study. The composition engages with the study's findings, seeking to convey the difficulties and 'gives voice' to the experiences of these young people.

The accounts in the "perceptions" study present compositional challenges in terms of arriving at musical solutions that pay due regard to this raw, unadorned and unpremeditated first-person testimony. Paradoxically, the trained 'operatic' voice, with its heightened form of utterance, seemed to Kefala-Kerr, the best way of achieving this.

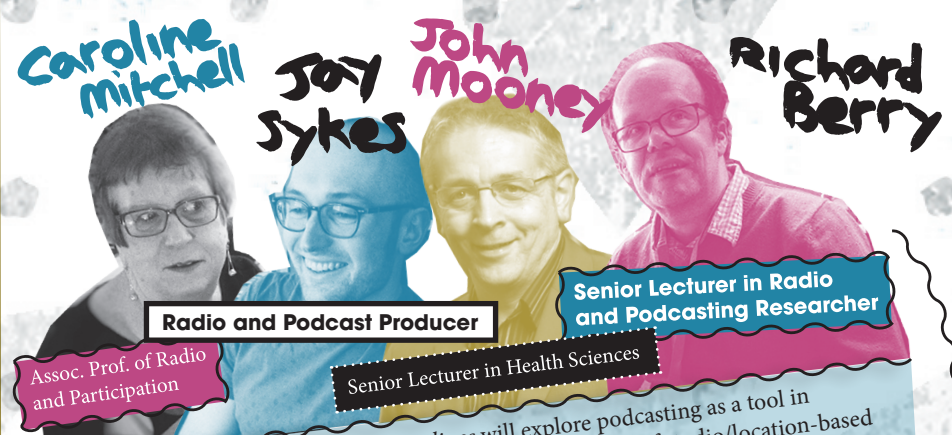
The concerns expressed in the songs are part of the mishmash of everyday life, the drama of the local and the specific, the mundane, artless 'stuff' of dealing with Diabetes on a daily (and nightly) basis, which King's study so effectively highlights. An eclectic range of stylistic allusions is evident in the piece, ranging from "art song" and "musical theatre" to the antique mannerisms of baroque music. *Insulin at Teatime* is, nonetheless, a simple and direct work that attempts to privilege the words of the adolescent interviewees over fancy musical embellishment.

Ashleigh Kate Charlton (soprano) and David Murray (pianist) rehearsed the songs on 18th June 2019 and the process was captured on video and edited by Joshua M Kerr.



PRINCIPAL LECTURER IN PEDAGOGY

Insulin at Teatime



Assoc. Prof of Radio and Participation

Radio and Podcast Producer

Senior Lecturer in Radio and Podcasting Researcher

Senior Lecturer in Health Sciences

Pod-Co-Lab: Podcasting Across Disciplines will explore podcasting as a tool in creating and disseminating academic work. Through a series of studio/location-based podcasting 'live labs' the pilot will explore how podcasting and audio might be used by researchers to communicate, discuss, convey and ultimately extend their research.

Senior lecturer in Radio and Podcasting researcher, Richard Berry, Assoc. Prof of Radio and Participation, Dr. Caroline Mitchell and radio and Podcast producer Jay Sykes and will devise and test novel ways to produce a podcast that supports wider dissemination of the YDAP (Youth Drugs and Alcohol Project) research project currently being delivered by Senior lecturer in Health Sciences John Mooney. The project will explore different podcast /radio formats to examine how traditional public service health message can be reconfigured via podcasting. The pilot will focus upon issues and themes highlighted by Mooney's live research project YDAP and utilise his unique approach of using stand-up comedy as a technique to tackle stigma and help change perception through the use of humour.

By testing novel strategies to engage podcasting as a tool in creating and disseminating academic work, Pod-Co-Lab highlights the various ways that university podcasters and independent audio/radio producers can work together with university-based audio.

Pod-Co-Lab: Podcasting Across Disciplines



COLAB SUNDERLAND

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Project guide designed by designbooth  
www.thedesignbooth.co.uk  
Poster designed by Chris Williams

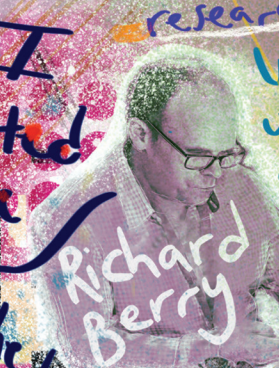


**POD-CO-LAB**  
Can we disseminate research from academics to a wider audience?



paying attention to the value of podcasts as producers and listeners is increasingly important for practitioners and researchers

I wanted to use my published research into pod-casting



We have used improvisational comedy and delivering messages around public health



**SHACKLETON HOUSE**

The first thing I wanted to find out was to what extent digital community building and community platforms are currently being used to improve health



**DAVID PUTNAM MEDIA CENTRE**



**INSULIN AT THE GLASS CENTRE**  
I came gathering... and the... I jumped out... I recognised... Health-care practitioners we need to be doing more



**THE JOURNEY**  
I think there is something quite powerful about the images around the Bariatric surgery and obesity, but we don't want to perpetuate the stigma  
I went to the conclusion... like to reference... **COOKBOOK**



31st Jan 2019  
Collab open call



I thought it was really interesting some of the stuff coming out of psychology.

**THE SCIENCE COMPLEX**

**TWITTER**  
@colabsunderland  
#ColabSunderland



9th Jan...  
The 2 Johns...  
12th Dec 2018  
Doodling is good for you



There is a lot of evidence that mindfulness is associated with being well-being. What was nice was Dione was approaching things that other people just go on intuitively. **EXPLORING EXPERIENCE**



If it matters to you make an image



10th April 2019  
I do not like being photographed.

email: colab.sunderland@gmail.com

20th March 2019  
The magic that happens when we meet

