



MAKING THE INVISIBLE VISIBLE

LIFE OF BREATH, DURHAM LAUNCH EVENT

Wednesday 23 September 2015
Joachim Room, College of St Hild & St Bede
Durham University



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3.30pm **Welcome and Introduction**
Havi Carel, Jane Macnaughton, Corinne Saunders, Andrew Russell

4.05pm **The Clinical Perspective**
Professor Miriam Johnson

Breathing Space

4.25pm **The Artistic Perspective**
Jayne Wilton

Breathing Space

4.45pm **The Archaeology Perspective**
Professor Charlotte Roberts

Breathing Space

5.05pm **The Literature Perspective**
Dr Peter Garratt

Breathing Space

5.25pm **The Patients' Perspective**
James Edwards & Gaynor Williams

Breathing Space

6.00pm **Drinks Reception**

WELCOME

Introduction

Thank you for joining us to celebrate the launch of Life of Breath at Durham University. Life of Breath is a five-year senior investigator award, funded by the Wellcome Trust and delivered by Durham University and the University of Bristol. It is a bold interdisciplinary project exploring historical, philosophical, cultural and anthropological aspects of breathing and breathlessness with the aim of informing and improving clinical practice.

Why ‘Making the Invisible Visible’?

We all know what breath *feels* like. We can perceive the rise and fall of the chest, the air moving in and out of our lungs, but unless it’s a frosty morning, we can’t see it. As well as being unseen, most of the time our breath is also taken for granted, invisible to our consciousness. In addition, invisibility is a powerful metaphor for those with respiratory illness – their hidden symptoms, the gaps in our understanding, the lack of effective treatments, the stigma associated with breathlessness, the invisible suffering.

Tackling this literal and metaphorical ‘invisibility’ is one of the main aims of the Life of Breath project. By exploring breathing and breathlessness from a number of different perspectives the Life of Breath project is tasked with ‘making the invisible visible’

This event brings together five different perspectives on making breath, breathing and breathlessness more visible. These talks will be framed by moments of breath made visible through sound, speech and music. Our hope is that by encountering the different perspectives and the reflective interludes you will leave with an overall broader, multidimensional perspective on breath, breathing and breathlessness.

SENIOR INVESTIGATORS

Professor Jane Macnaughton (Durham)

Jane is Professor of Medical Humanities at Durham University and co-director of the University's Centre for Medical Humanities. Jane has published in the fields of medical education, medical humanities, literature and medicine, history of medicine and health care environments, and was a founder member of the Association for Medical Humanities. Jane's current clinical work is in gynaecology at the University Hospital of North Durham and she also contributes to Durham's Phase 1 Medical Programme.



Professor Havi Carel (Bristol)



Havi is Professor of Philosophy at the University of Bristol, where she also teaches medical students. Her research examines the experience of illness and of receiving healthcare. Havi has a particular interest in augmenting the naturalistic approach to illness with a phenomenological perspective to improve our understanding of the experience of illness, enhance communication between healthcare practitioners and patients and identify focused interventions.

DURHAM LIFE OF BREATH CORE TEAM

Professor Corinne Saunders (Co-Investigator)

Corinne is Professor in the Department of English Studies and Co-Director of the Centre for Medical Humanities. She specialises in medieval literature and the history of ideas, and has particular interests in romance writing, gender studies and the history of medicine. She and Jane have co-edited works on the cultural history of the body and illness.



Dr Andrew Russell (Co-Investigator)



Andrew is a Reader in the Department of Anthropology. His research focuses on tobacco, its use and control. He is particularly interested in understanding smoking as an embodied physical and emotional experience, the history of tobacco use and smokers' rituals and sense of identity, and then exploring how this might contribute to policy and therapeutic interventions not only in tobacco but other areas of public health.

Dr Rebecca Oxley (Researcher)

Rebecca is a Postdoctoral Research Fellow in Anthropology. Rebecca's interests include phenomenology, embodiment and feminist explorations of the body. Rebecca's research will focus on aware breathers and breathing techniques. For her PhD she studied fathers with postnatal depression and recently worked as a Policy Advisor for the Department of Health.



Dr Arthur Rose (Researcher)



Arthur is a Postdoctoral Research Fellow in the Department of English Studies. His work for the project focuses on the respiratory conditions caused by the mining, and industrial and household use, of coal and asbestos, and how these conditions are represented in different literary and audio-visual media.

Mary Robson (Creative Facilitator)

Mary is Associate for Arts in Health and Education at the Centre for Medical Humanities and her role is to build the community of the researchers, with a particular emphasis on interdisciplinarity and transferable methodology. Mary trained as a theatre designer and now works as a creative facilitator and social pedagogue – she works with people to make things.



Dr Sarah McLusky (Project Manager)



Sarah coordinates the Durham team's activities and will increasingly engage the wider world with Life of Breath. She has developed and managed events, education and public engagement programmes for a number of different organisations, as well as turning her hand to teaching and writing. Sarah's academic background is in plant biochemistry.

THE CLINICAL PERSPECTIVE

Professor Miriam Johnson
Hull York Medical School

Breathlessness can be a satisfying experience of the body responding to demands made or, signal fear and serious disease. Breathlessness is the ticket that alerts the doctor, triggering the clinical hunt for disease. Knowledge of the body, how it works and what might go wrong intertwined with a compassionate understanding of the devastating impact on that person are crucial clinical skills to diagnose and treat disease. When breathlessness persists despite disease treatment, expert clinical skills are needed to address the symptom in its own right, recognising the holistic approach required to help the individual to maximise their breathing space.

Miriam is Professor of Palliative Medicine at the Hull York Medical School and is co-director of the Supportive care, Early Diagnosis, Advanced disease (SEDA) research group at the University of Hull. Her research interests include the palliation of refractory breathlessness, palliative care for people with non-malignant disease, especially advanced heart disease and venous thromboembolism in advanced disease.



Breathing Space

POEMS

Read By Professor David Fuller

From Charles Olson, *Projective Verse*, 1950.

Verse now, 1950, if it is to go ahead, if it is to be of essential use, must, I take it, catch up and put into itself certain laws and possibilities of the breath, of the breathing of the man who writes as well as of his listenings. ...

If I hammer, if I recall in, and keep calling in, the breath, the breathing as distinguished from the hearing, it is for cause, it is to insist upon a part that breath plays in verse which has not (due, I think, to the smothering of the power of the line by too set a concept of foot) has not been sufficiently observed or practiced, but which has to be if verse is to advance to its proper force and place in the day, now, and ahead. I take it that PROJECTIVE VERSE teaches, is, this lesson, that that verse will only do in which a poet manages to register both the acquisitions of his ear and the pressure of his breath. ...

Together ... the syllable and the line, they make a poem, they make that thing, the—what shall we call it, the Boss of all, the “Single Intelligence.” And the line comes (I swear it) from the breath, from the breathing of the man who writes, at the moment that he writes, and thus is, it is here that, the daily work, the WORK, gets in, for only he, the man who writes, can declare, at every moment, the line its metric and its ending—where its breathing, shall come to, termination. ...

*Let me put it baldly. The two halves are:
the HEAD, by way of the EAR, to the SYLLABLE
the HEART, by way of the BREATH, to the LINE. ...*

I say a projective poet will [go], down through the workings of his own throat to that place where the breath comes from, where breath has its beginnings, where drama has to come from, where, the coincidence is, all act springs.

From Walt Whitman, *Song of Myself*, 1855 (sections 1 and 2).

1
I celebrate myself, and sing myself,
And what I assume you shall assume,
For every atom belonging to me as good belongs to you.

I loafe and invite my soul,
I lean and loafe at my ease observing a spear of summer grass.

My tongue, every atom of my blood, form'd from this soil, this air,
Born here of parents born here from parents the same, and their parents the same,
I, now thirty-seven years old in perfect health begin,
Hoping to cease not till death.

Creeds and schools in abeyance,
Retiring back a while sufficed at what they are, but never forgotten,
I harbor for good or bad, I permit to speak at every hazard,
Nature without check with original energy.

2

Houses and rooms are full of perfumes, the shelves are crowded with perfumes,
I breathe the fragrance myself and know it and like it,
The distillation would intoxicate me also, but I shall not let it.

The atmosphere is not a perfume, it has no taste of distillation, it is odorless,
It is for my mouth forever, I am in love with it,
I will go to the bank by the wood and become undisguised and naked,
I am mad for it to be in contact with me.

The smoke of my own breath,
Echoes, ripples, buzz'd whispers, love-root, silk-thread, crotch and vine,
My respiration and inspiration, the beating of my heart, the passing of blood and air
through my lungs,
The sniff of green leaves and dry leaves, and of the shore and dark-color'd sea-rocks,
and of hay in the barn,
The sound of the belch'd words of my voice loos'd to the eddies of the wind,
A few light kisses, a few embraces, a reaching around of arms,
The play of shine and shade on the trees as the supple boughs wag,
The delight alone or in the rush of the streets, or along the fields and hill-sides,
The feeling of health, the full-noon trill, the song of me rising from bed and meeting the
sun.

Have you reckon'd a thousand acres much? have you reckon'd the earth much?
Have you practis'd so long to learn to read?
Have you felt so proud to get at the meaning of poems?

Stop this day and night with me and you shall possess the origin of all poems,
You shall possess the good of the earth and sun, (there are millions of suns left.)
You shall no longer take things at second or third hand, nor look through the eyes of the
dead, nor feed on the spectres in books,
You shall not look through my eyes either, nor take things from me,
You shall listen to all sides and filter them from your self.

David is Emeritus Professor of English and former Chairman of the Department of English Studies in the University of Durham. From 2002 to 2007 he was also the University's Public Orator. He has written books and essays on a wide range of poetry, drama, and novels from Medieval to Modern, including work on Chaucer, Spenser, Marlowe, Shakespeare, Ben Jonson, Blake, Shelley, Keats, T. S. Eliot, William Empson, and the theory and practice of criticism.

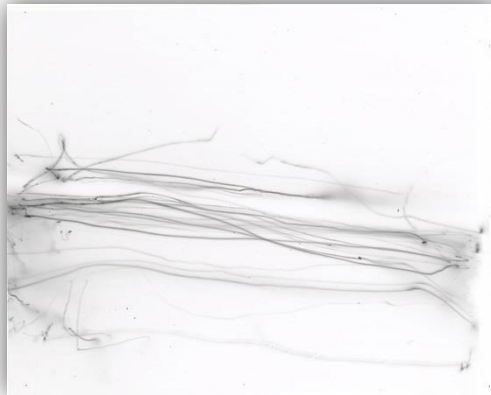
THE ARTISTIC PERSPECTIVE

Jayne Wilton

Freelance Artist

Jayne will discuss an artist's perspective of visualising the dynamics of the exchange between the interior and exterior landscape facilitated by the human breath. She will explore the visual and physical forms such dynamics can create.

Jayne specialises in visualising breath. She uses a wide range of traditional and non-traditional approaches including darkroom processes with drawing, photography, video and sound to capture the usually invisible trace of breath as it moves across a surface. During 2014 she was awarded an Arts Council Grant for the Arts to work with Royal Brompton and Harefield Hospital NHS Foundation Trust to visualise the breath of staff and patients with COPD which led to a solo exhibition entitled *Breathe*, presents new work alongside previous studies of the human breath. She graduated with an MA from The Slade School of Fine Art in 2010 and has shown extensively in the UK and abroad.



From the series 'Drawing Breath' by Jayne Wilton

Breathing Space

SAXOPHONE SOLO

Performed by Alex Wade

'Ignition' by James Rae

Written in the 'funk' idiom, the piece builds relentlessly, creating an almost hypnotic effect with the use of repeated melodic and rhythmic ideas. The lack of 'breathing space' in the music creates a sense of excitement and anticipation, developing a tension which holds right to the final note.

Alex is a multi-instrumentalist based in Durham city, and has been playing woodwind instruments for almost 20 years. Having completed both a BA in Music and an MA in Musicology at Durham University, Alex currently works as a peripatetic woodwind teacher for Durham Music Service. She has played the saxophone in a number of jazz bands, including the student group 'Kinky Jeff and the Hatfield Swingers.'

THE ARCHAEOLOGY PERSPECTIVE

Professor Charlotte Roberts
Durham University

Charlotte will provide an overview of how the study of air quality and its relationship to respiratory health problems may be attempted using archaeological data. As far back as 5th century BC, Hippocrates discussed the quality of air being relevant to good or poor health in his "Airs, waters and places" and Ramazzini, "Father of Occupational Medicine" (17th-18th century AD) discussed potential occupations that led to respiratory disease. Charlotte will discuss potential causes of poor air quality in the past and how it may leave its imprint on the facial sinuses and ribs. There is no doubt that the respiratory tracts of people in the past were affected by poor air quality and that they suffered breathlessness. The archaeological record can provide a window on their experiences. However, mapping the level of breathlessness, and other signs and symptoms onto skeletons showing respiratory disorders is challenging.



Charlotte, a bioarchaeologist, has studied and interpreted human remains from archaeological sites for the past 30 years, and is specifically interested in exploring the interaction of people with their environments in the past through patterns of health and disease (palaeopathology) to link the past evidence for respiratory health to the present challenge that faces many parts of the world. She has a background in archaeology (BA), environmental archaeology (MA), human bioarchaeology (PhD) - and nursing!

Further reading: Roberts CA (2007) 'A bioarchaeological study of maxillary sinusitis'. *American Journal of Physical Anthropology* 133(2): 792-807

Breathing Space

THE BREATH OF GOD

Read by Professor Douglas Davies

'And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being.'

Genesis 2:7

Other readings from

Genesis 2:4b-9

Ezekiel 37: 1-10

John 20: 19-23

Acts 2: 1-4

Veni Creator Spiritus (extract)

Douglas is Professor of Theology and Religion at Durham University. He is an anthropologist and theologian with theoretical and practical interests. His specialisms include Mormonism, Sikhism, Anglicanism and death rites.

THE LITERATURE PERSPECTIVE

Dr Peter Garratt
Durham University

Peter will discuss some of the meanings of breath and breathing that form in the imaginative space of literature, exploring several examples of poetry and fiction. The aim is to explore what might be regarded as special about the literary perspective while taking account of the way that literature can refer to, or model, what lies beyond itself – worlds, minds, bodies, selves, social existences, which is to say, sites where breath can acquire the freight of meaning. His starting point is the uncomplicated observation that breathing, at a first-person level, shifts easily in our experience from being something automatic and subconscious (almost, one might say, experience's unnoticed rhythmic background) to being keenly self-conscious, volitional, or purposive. Literature, too, has the power to perform important shifts in awareness, framing or bringing forth aspects of the world with a new intensity through the means of crafted verbal textures. Literature, Peter suggests, helps to denaturalise breath. In claiming this, he will touch on some thematic instances of respiration in poems and novels, but also on the idea of the reader's breath and the physiological dimension of the reading act and how it contributes to interpretation.



Peter is Lecturer in the Department of English Studies at Durham University, and has teaching and research interests mainly in literature of the nineteenth century, in intellectual history, and in the medical and cognitive humanities. He is the author of the book *Victorian Empiricism* (2010) and the editor of a volume of essays, *The Cognitive Humanities: Embodied Mind in Literature and Culture* (2016).

Breathing Space

CAN YOU HEAR IT?

Created by Mary Robson

"I took a piece of paper, I shaped it into a very tight roll, one end of which I applied to the precordial region and putting the ear to the other end, I was as much surprised as satisfied to hear the heart beats in a manner much more clearly and distinctly than I had by immediate application of the ear...From that moment on, I presumed that this medium could become a utile method, and applicable not only to the study of the heart beats, but furthermore to the study of all the movements that can produce noise in the thoracic cavity, and consequently to the exploration of breathing, of voice, of rattle and perhaps even of the fluctuation of a liquid poured out in the pleurae or the pericardia."

René Laënnec, the inventor of the stethoscope,

'De l'auscultation médiate ou traité du diagnostic des maladies de poumons et du coeur, fondé principalement sur ce nouveau moyen d'exploration l'

THE PATIENT'S PERSPECTIVE

James Edwards & Gaynor Williams
Breathe Easy Darlington

James and Gaynor both have long term lung conditions that affect them in different ways and are active members of Breathe Easy Darlington.



The Breathe Easy support group network provides support and information for people living with a lung condition, and for those who look after them. Breathe Easy groups are run by members, with help and support from the British Lung Foundation when it's needed. There are more than 230 Breathe Easy groups across the length and breadth of Britain. Groups typically meet once a month and members arrange all kinds of things for their meetings, from talks on local patient services and advice from health care professionals, to arts and crafts and trips to the theatre or the seaside.

The British Lung Foundation is the only UK charity supporting people with all types of lung condition. The charity funds world class research into lung disease; campaigns for better services and care for people with lung conditions and spread the word about the causes and signs of lung disease and how to prevent it; brings people with lung disease together through our Breathe Easy support groups, web community and penpals scheme, provides high quality publications and our BLF Professionals and BLF Active fitness instructors support people in their communities.

Find out more about the work of the British Lung Foundation on their website www.blf.org.uk

Breathing Space

CHORAL FINALE

Performed by Renaissance

'Dolce Spirto D'Amore' by Giovanni Battista Guarini

Love's sweet spirit

Held in a sigh.

While I gaze on her fair face

It breathes life into my heart.

Thus it acquires courage

From that lovely mouth

Which, sighing, it touches.

'Breath on me breath of God' by Ned Rorem

'Dolce Spirto D'Amore' by Orlando Gesualdo

'Ohime bel viso' by Claudio Monteverdi

'When David heard' by Thomas Tomkins

'Rimanti in pace' by Claudio Monteverdi

This short programme gives a selection of examples of connections found between breath and music perhaps epitomised by Gesualdo's setting of Guarini's poem above. It ranges from breath's common religious association with life and 'the soul' found in the first two settings to the similar association with the soul's ability to love found in the poems of the three Italian works. Further associations are then drawn between the act of breathing, sighing or crying and both love and sorrow, and the final two pieces demonstrate the ability of composers to actually feature the sounds and feelings associated with breathing and crying within their musical textures, rhythms and harmonies, not just the in poetry they are responding to.

Renaissance are a vocal ensemble, founded in 2011 by Ben Rowarth and a number of then Durham University students. The choir specialises in two specific genres: Renaissance Polyphony and 20th/21st Century, or 'Contemporary Music'. Find out more about the group on their website www.renaissance-ensemble.co.uk



LIFE OF BREATH

www.lifeofbreath.org

 @lifeofbreath

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