

**GW:**

*Great Writing:*  
The International Creative  
Writing Conference

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**Imperial College London  
Huxley Building  
180 Queen's Gate  
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Anna Denejkina University of Technology Sydney, Australia  
**Exo-Autoethnography and the Trauma Narrative**

Since the late 1970s, autoethnographic research and writing has progressively demonstrated that non-fiction creative writing practice can aptly utilise this alternate-ethnographic method as part of its research and narrative, producing rigorous creative work which is palatable both by the academy and the general audience: bringing a social science closer to literature. This paper proposes the use of the methodological model I am calling exo-autoethnography as a form of qualitative research within non-fiction creative writing that deals with the inter-familial trauma narrative.

Exo-autoethnography is the autoethnographic exploration of a history whose events the researcher or author did not experience directly, but a history which impacted the researcher or author through familial, or other personal connections.

This paper will interrogate the notion of exo-autoethnography as a distinct method informing qualitative research, for the purpose of deeply and rigorously exploring inter-familial trauma through generations. This practice is utilised in order to produce a creative non-fiction narrative which is accessible as both memoir, and research text to better understand sole, and cultural experience.

Sarah Penny, Brunel University, UK  
**Seeds of the Future: using arts to support FGM refusal**

Sarah Penny is an activist who uses creative writing and dramatherapy as tools for social change. Currently she is working in the field of FGM refusal, trying to find ways of encouraging communities to reject the practice by sharing inspirational testimony from families who have already transitioned away from cutting. In 2014 Sarah ran refusal workshops with Masai and Samburu communities in Kenya, and in 2015 she led a project with the Midaye Somali Development Network in London (an estimated 5000 British girls are cut each year). This testimony will be used at a grassroots level by community health advocates to encourage the Somali community to reject genital cutting altogether. Sarah will show a short documentary about the Kenyan work and discuss the challenges of the British work, with excerpts from the testimony.

Jed Birch & Catherine Harrison, Bangor University, UK  
**Writing Evil: the challenges of creating an evil protagonist**

Creating the fictional anti-hero is difficult because, although interesting, evil is deeply unpleasant and resists all *creation* (and exposure). Nonetheless, the fictional evil protagonist has huge reader/commercial appeal (mafia-themed literature, e.g.), because evil is more interesting than good. Writing an evil protagonist risks infecting the whole narrative with what Fromm called syndrome of decay. A (brief!) consideration of works thus infected – *Marabou Stork Nightmare*, *Marquis de Sade*, e.g. – elucidates pitfalls writers must avoid, and key reasons for these works' artistic failure/shortcomings.

The philosopher Iris Murdoch once complained that philosophy is preoccupied by what is *right* rather than the *sovereignty of good*. *Writing Evil* suggests that *hope* is more important than either *right* or *good* to readers, and constitutes a non-negotiable plot ingredient. Using a comparative approach, *Writing Evil* examines key literary anti-heroes (Mr Hyde, Richard III, Robert Wringhim, Milton's Satan, e.g.), and identifies how why these creations succeeded.