"We crossed the Tamar": Moving beyond traditional research practices

My doctoral research explored the lives, identity and mental health of seven women on the European Golf Tour (LET) and prior to this, like the women in my research, I had earned my living playing professional golf. During my Viva I was asked why I thought I was competent to use poetry to present the life of one participant, given that I was in the Department of Exercise, Nutrition and Health Science, rather than in the Department of English or Literary Studies. The implication behind the questions was of course, that I had been schooled to become a researcher, not a poet. Through this talk/presentation/performance I hope to share some of the methodological dilemmas that first drew me to arts-based methods, provide examples of their potential within pedagogy and social science research practice and hope to stimulate further dialogue about their potential to create meaningful, accessible research.

Kitrina Douglas is an award-winning researcher whose work spans the arts, humanities and social sciences. She has carried out research for a variety of organisations including the Department of Health, NHS Trusts, UK Sport, the Women’s Sport & Fitness Foundation and the Addiction Recovery Agency and with populations as diverse as women in areas of extreme deprivation and high health inequalities in England, to injured sick and wounded soldiers returning from wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. Her research is published as films, documentaries, poems, songs, and stories as well as in peer reviewed academic journals and academic books.