Activity Three: Reading Session



On your second day of Welcome Week with us at BCU, you get a fantastic opportunity to meet the author Kerry Hadley-Pryce (The Black Country (2015), Gamble (2018)), who will be talking to all of our new students about her work and about being a writer. You will have the chance to ask her questions and find out first hand what it is like to be a local author.

Before Welcome Week **you need to read her short story, ‘When I Say’**. This will form the basis for discussion for one of your group sessions during Welcome Week. You can find the link to this short story and links to other works from Kerry here:

<https://kerryhadley-pryce.weebly.com/short-stories.html>

**Some questions to think about in relation to ‘When I Say’:**

1. Do you consider this to be a story which is plot or character driven? Give examples to support your choice.

2. Comment on characterization and point of view.

3. How is the social setting depicted? When would you say this story is set? (You could research some of the cultural references.)

4. Examine the relationship between the narrator and Paula. Then the relationship between the narrator and Phil. Why do you suppose that the friendship between Paula and the narrator cooled after the events depicted.

5. What is the role of the frame story in the opening and closing two paragraphs? What relation does it have to the central narrative?

6. The title is taken from a phrase used in the text. This is a common device in contemporary short stories. You will find the significance of the title on p. 5. How might the title point to the story’s events and their outcome?

7. An ending in which little is concluded is frequent in contemporary short stories (and many poems). Could this story be described as a night when something terrible could have happened but didn’t? Many short stories have a ‘moment of being’ or ‘epiphany’ in which there is a symbolic significance. Is there such a moment in this story and for whom? The narrator or reader?