

## Career Profile: Lucy Gough, playwright

By [Ellie Stevenson](#) Arts Hub | Thursday, November 27, 2008

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Lucy Gough

Lucy Gough left school at 15. After having had children, she began studying with the Open University at 21 and from there went to Aberystwyth University to complete her degree in drama (part of which was creative writing). From there she did an MA in Playwriting at Birmingham University. Lucy has written for theatre and radio for over 15 years, writing for *Hollyoaks* for 10 years alongside this. She is currently still pursuing radio and theatre while dipping her toe into a variety of other TV work.

### **What do you do all day?**

Write.

### **What are you doing today?**

Writing an outline for a play for a theatre, while I wait for notes on the scene-by-scene I've just done for an episode of *Doctors*; and developing a story idea for another continuing TV drama series.

### **What's the best thing about your work?**

When you have hold of an idea and it's flying, and you know that what you're doing is working; and working with people who are on the same wavelength as you.

### **And the worst thing?**

When it isn't working, when you know there's something in this mess somewhere, but you can't find it and you're convinced you never will. You usually do find it after a lot of struggle and then you wonder what all the fuss was about, but it always feels like this is the one you won't crack!

### **You have a passion for the theatre – did you always think you'd have a career in this area?**

As a kid I never dreamt I would go anywhere near the theatre. I loved it from a distance but I was also totally in awe of it: it seemed totally out of my league, some magical place I couldn't enter. I still feel that theatre has a magic about it... at its best, anyway.

**How did your career develop?**

One thing led to the next I guess. Not being afraid to ask people to let me write for them, getting a showcase for my work. It hasn't been a clean run, there have been - and I am sure still will be - plenty of lows as well as the highs. It's really a case of getting your work out there and doing the stuff you believe in, and then just to keep fighting.

**What makes you good at what you do?**

Arrogant as it sounds, an unwavering faith that I can do it. I don't always get it right by any means, but I care passionately about what I write. I feel that writers generally should be trusted as the storytellers – when this happens you get the good stuff. Writing really is a vocation. I would write, whatever.

**Who's been the biggest influence on you professionally?**

That's a hard one. Lots of people, for very different reasons. I'm inspired by anyone who has the courage to write what they really want to say, and by writers, producers and directors who have a vision and find a way of getting that out there. A TV series called *Blackpool* and an American series called *Deadwood* are examples of what powerful stuff can happen when you trust the writer's vision.

**Where would you like to go from here with your work?**

To keep on going, more of all of it. I just want to keep working and to write more of my own original ideas for theatre, radio and television.

**What advice would you give to someone hoping to become a playwright?**

Write the stuff you really want to write - write something you would stake your life on and don't send it out till you feel that sure about it.

**If you could have a complete career change, what would you go for?**

I've always wanted to run a lay-by café for trucks. I think it's the thought of meeting all those people, hearing all those stories and drinking tea.

