

Resounding Voices: Women, Silence, and the Production of Knowledge

International Women's Day Conference

St. Aidan's College, Durham University

KEYNOTES

Pamela Sue Anderson, Oxford University. 'Silencing and Speaker Vulnerability: Undoing an oppressive form of (Wilful) Ignorance'

Mary Midgley

Katharine Cockin, University of Hull. 'Hearing What They Had to Say: Voice, Silence, and Reading between the Lines of Women's Suffrage Performance'

PARALLEL SESSIONS

1. WOMEN IN ACADEMIA

Katherine Jane Cecil, UCL	'Woman in Science: Epistemic Cracks and Sticky Boundaries'	<p>As a child, I was a keen orienteer. I would spend days attempting to get from point A to point B in the most efficient way. I learnt very quickly, that routes and maps were not always to be trusted, that often there were unexpected features that lay off the grid which could further aid my overall objective. Similarly, In order to explain cultural boundaries in science, Thomas Gieryn (1999) creates a system of epistemic cartography. Gieryn explores the interfaces that exist between knowledge, and how in this grey area, ideas shift and influence the boundaries that surround them. In this paper I will argue that there are weak spots that exist within the spaces in-between the dominant (white/wealthy male) boundaries, and that when pushed from epistemic cracks that females might utilise to break into the current masculine system of science.</p> <p>So as to establish a clearer ground for understanding the genealogy of feminist boundaries within the dominant map I will push for a three-dimensional representation of Gieryn cartography. An imagined picture will be two tiered, placing the rich but neglected epistemic cultures of women (and other underrepresented groups) above the dominant map. This model will allow me to argue that there are cracks that lie between the upper and lower levels that enable women to have an epistemic influence without their knowledge becoming re-appropriated and assimilated to suit the dominant epistemic map.</p> <p>To conclude, I will highlight the feminist epistemic survival rate within science once the ideas themselves enter the dominant boundary, or if once adopted, it is only a matter of time before they become a knowledge that will work against the women active within the field.</p> <p>References: Gieryn, Thomas. (1999) Cultural Boundaries of Science. The</p>
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		University of Chicago Press.
Benjamin Lipscomb, Houghton College	'The Daughters of 1919'	I am at work on a group biography of Elizabeth Anscombe, Philippa Foot, Mary Midgley, and Iris Murdoch, the first "school" of women among British philosophers. They were friends from their university years at Oxford during World War II and converged early around a distinctive and initially unpopular set of ideas, an ethical naturalism which they worked at developing off and on for the rest of their careers. All born in 1919 or 1920, my subjects were children of the World War I generation, and members of the first generation of British women to grow up under a presumption of legal and educational equality. In the chapter from which this talk is drawn, I aim to establish some context for the rest of the narrative, setting observations about the families and childhoods of the four alongside observations about the interwar period, characterized by Richard Overly as a "morbid age": shadowed on either side by war. As time permits, I will say something as well about the logical positivism that was in ascendancy among British philosophers during the 1930s—a philosophy grounded on a fact-value dichotomy—and its relation to its times.
Teresa Barnard	'A Disorderly Education': Volcanology and the Female Imagination'	<p>During the long eighteenth century, the gendered makeup of scientific debate effectively silenced intellectually curious women. They were consigned to separate areas of scholarship, or, at best received what Mary Wollstonecraft called a 'disorderly education'. Although the idea that travel was supposed to develop the understanding and broaden the mind, many questioned whether women should or could do either. While women's capacity to reason remained a contentious issue throughout this period, it is possible to identify the strategic ways in which they employed their knowledge to break through society's imposed silencing and participate in the intellectual world.</p> <p>Women could, if allowed, join the rapidly expanding print culture and it is possible to identify those who fought against the constrictions of silence imposed on them. To the intellectually ambitious, writing could be used as a vehicle for disseminating their acquired knowledge in ways that were accessible to other women. Various expressions of female intellect emerge from such women's writings that ultimately contribute to the advancement of scientific thought and progress.</p> <p>The Age of Enlightenment witnessed dramatic scientific advancement. Take, for example, the study of volcanology. Men who were privileged in education and status could travel to Sicily to witness Vesuvius's spectacular eruptions. But what of the women who wanted to understand the volcano but who lacked a scientific education or the ability to travel? For poets, Eleanor Anne Porden and Anna Seward, self-education and literary imagination led the way towards their own accessible representations. This poetic imagination that complements scientific deliberations of male travellers and scientists forms the subject of my paper. It explores the fascination with scientific and literary images of the volcano which ultimately gave these poets a voice, despite their limited 'disorderly education'.</p>

2. SILENCING SPEECH

<p>Burcu Erciyas</p>	<p>'Does Feminist Self-Critique Contribute to Silencing Women?'</p>	<p>In an October 2013 <i>Guardian</i> article titled 'How feminism became capitalism's handmaiden –and how to reclaim it' Nancy Fraser argues as a self-critique of feminism that it, once highly critical of capitalist exploitation, has now fallen prey to neoliberal ideology by aiding the recruitment of a new (and cheaper) labor force in the service of a market society. Fraser had previously published her critiques on this matter earlier in a 2009 <i>New Left Review</i> piece titled 'Feminism, Capitalism and the Cunning of History', and in an interview that appeared in <i>Europa</i> (a journal for an alternative Europe). Her analysis is important in thinking about the future of feminism. Yet her critique of feminism is itself not free of criticism. In an article titled 'Contra Fraser on Feminism and Neoliberalism' (<i>Hypatia</i>, 2013) Nannette Funk challenges Fraser on two grounds: i) her inaccurate historical account of second-wave feminism and ii) her over-generalizations of feminism(s) and tendency to ignore countertrends. In this paper I do not seek to contest Fraser's ideas. Rather I would explore to what extent, if any, does such self-criticism of feminism and the medium they are published in contribute to silencing of women's voices and arguments. I will examine three questions. First, does a self-critique of feminism formulated as such lead to abandonment of feminism by other leftist movements, activists, and academics, leave feminism without important allies and various platforms of being heard? Second, does such a self-critique fracture the potentially fragile union of feminist movements (assuming that there is one), and possibly silence certain groups of women within the movement? And third, given these possible threats should we (as feminists) censor and suppress (silence) such self-critiques?</p>
<p>Jennifer Hornsby, BBK</p>	<p>'Illocutionary Disablement'</p>	<p>I shall speak to some feminist achievements of the last twenty years, relating them to academic feminist work in philosophy of language and epistemology. (I don't say the academic work has caused change, only that it may have correctly diagnosed things that needed to change.) And I shall explain why I think the idea of <i>illocutionary disablement</i> continues to be of special importance in debates about freedom of speech.</p>
<p>Laura Caponetto-Vita-Salute San Raffaele University, Milan</p>	<p>'Silencing Speech with Pornography: The Case of the Unsuccessful Refusal'</p>	<p>By drawing on Austin's speech act theory, Hornsby and Langton (H&L) (Hornsby 1993, Langton 1993, H&L 1998) have argued that pornography silences women by preventing them from refusing sexual overtures – i.e., it interferes with men's ability to grasp the illocutionary force of women's refusals, thereby causing them to misfire. Besides H&L's proposal, other accounts of silencing have recently been provided.</p> <p>As a result, the notion of 'silencing' has become richer but also much more elusive. My aim is to offer a handy map of the ways in which women's speech can be silenced. Unlike others who have dealt with illocutionary silencing, I shall adopt the Searlian framework, which seems to permit a more precise and coherent understanding of the different facets of the phenomenon at issue. According to Searle, each illocutionary force can be identified by a set of conditions for success. The different types of silencing, I claim, originate from the hearer's failed recognition of a certain constituent of the force of the speaker's act. In recent literature, we find at least three forms of silencing. The first (essential silencing) involves the audience's</p>

failure to recognize that the 'essential condition' – that is, the illocutionary point of the force – obtains. It corresponds to H&L silencing. The second (authority silencing) occurs when the hearer fails to ratify the obtaining of a crucial 'preparatory condition' for refusals – namely, the (practical) authority of the speaker over her own body. Similar sorts of silencing have been discussed by McGowan (2009) and Sbisà

(2009). Note that the failure to ratify women's epistemic authority – i.e., that their utterances meet the standards for counting as expert speech acts – may account for the marginalization of women's voices in the history of science. Finally, the third (sincerity silencing) involves the missed recognition of the 'sincerity condition' (the speaker's act is mistakenly taken as insincere). This type of silencing has been suggested by Langton (1998) and developed by McGowan (2014). In addition to these varieties, I will discuss a form of silencing produced by the failure to acknowledge the speaker's utterance as serious (seriousness silencing).

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3. IDENTITY AND DISAVOWAL

<p>Klaudia Rachubinska, University of Warsaw</p>	<p>'A Girl in the Men's Room: The Double Allegiances of Patti Smith's Troublesome Feminism'</p>	<p>Throughout the years, it was men – the 'geniuses and heroes' of rock'n'roll music – who have occupied a privileged position in the negotiations of the meanings assigned to gender in popular music. Authoring a biased canon of musical narrations they strengthened - sometimes even through otherwise progressive lyrics – biased and conservative ideas of maleness and femininity. Not until the 1970s could the surge of distinct, autonomous women artists initiate the painstaking and laborious process of restoring the narrations of women's subjectivity and agency to the music scene and finally open some space of authentic inclusive debate about the gender roles and identities dominating the discourses of western popular music.</p> <p>The persistence of the harmful clichés that limit women's creative presence in the music scene can be best attested by the difficulties met by the first female artists who decided to enter the highly masculine field of rock music. The lack of positive women role models in both rock music and the community often forced those pioneer women artists to push their way into the music scene through the back door, often through someone's bed. Even one of the greatest woman-legends of punk rock, Patti Smith, had at first imagined herself not so much as an artist but as a muse, or otherwise – as a masculine figure: 'Ever since I felt the need to choose, I' d chose male' – she recalls.</p> <p>In the presentation I wish to examine this choice of maleness – reflected through Patti Smith's idols and inspirations, her visual image and aesthetic choices, as well as her politics – through a feminist lens, focusing especially on the consequences of taking this somewhat ambivalent figure as a feminist role model and the question of how her legacy might have influenced the paths chosen by future women artists.</p>
<p>Emma Major, University of York</p>	<p>'Anna Laetitia Barbauld'</p>	<p>In the 1790s, in the wake of the French Revolution, there was a intriguing but little-discussed rise in women of various denominations writing and publishing sermons, usually anonymously. In this paper I'll focus on those by the Dissenting writer Anna Laetitia Barbauld (née Aikin). Born into an educated Presbyterian family, she wrote across many genres and achieved early fame with her 1773 <i>Poems</i>. Barbauld's a fascinating writer for this panel as her anonymity was adopted at a time when she was a famous poet: the young Samuel Taylor Coleridge walked 40 miles to meet her. (She is also a candidate for the Covert Contributions panel, since the Aikin family were described in 1822 by the influential magazine <i>The Monthly Repository</i> as having 'done more than any other family in England for the promotion of knowledge and the gratification of literary taste', and she co-wrote and published with her brother as well as editing the letters of the novelist Samuel Richardson.)</p> <p>Barbauld published under her own maiden and married names, but also anonymously, according to the genre and historical moment. In this paper I'll discuss her anonymous <i>Civic Sermons</i> (1792) and <i>Sins of Government, Sins of the Nation</i> (1793), in which she uses the sermon form innovatively and effectively to encourage her 'Brethren' to read themselves into narratives of nation and government. The print form allowed her to preach anonymously</p>

		<p>where she could not, as a woman, take the pulpit in her own church. Barbauld's choice of anonymity for her political intervention was strategic, and her wariness validated: the criticism she received for daring publicly to comment on political events under her own name in her magnificent prophetic poem <i>Eighteen Hundred and Eleven</i> was so vicious she stopped publishing poetry and retreated into editing.</p>
Aude Petit Marquis, University of Nantes	'But in Art and Literature, [...] Woman has Something Specific to Contribute': Towards a Definition of Feminine Writing Style in Marion Evans' Women in France: Mme de Sablé'	<p>Published in October 1854 in the <i>Westminster Review</i> and entitled 'Woman in France, Madame de Sablé', Marian Evans's review of Victor Cousin's book <i>Madame de Sablé : Etude sur les Femmes Illustres et la Société du XVII^e Siècle</i> becomes a pretext to address a broader question: that of the place and contribution of female writers in the male-dominated art of literature. Though in this article she is hard on her own sex as she opines that 'with a few remarkable exceptions, our own feminine literature is made of books which could have been better written by men', her real concern is first to redefine the literary canon according to a gender-based framework which allows her to make a distinction between a masculine and a feminine writing style, and second to assert that 'in art and literature, [...] woman has something specific to contribute', and that this specificity lies in women's maternal attributes. In this paper, I propose to discuss how Marian Evans both draws on the biomedical literature of her time and departs from it to justify her point. I will consider to what extent her article aims at scientifically legitimating women's participation in literature. I will also argue that her seminal reflection on a feminine writing style will influence her future prose as a writer, more particularly in <i>Adam Bede</i>, her first novel, ironically published under a famous male pen name: George Eliot.</p>

4. TEXTUAL SILENCING

L.H. McGuire	'Written Echoes: Women in Published Letter Collections in the Roman Republic'	<p>Many studies focus on Roman women as mothers, wives and daughters. This is logical as that is how they are portrayed in texts written by their menfolk. Roman history was produced by elite men who made up an estimated 1% of the 4.9 million Roman citizens recorded in the census of 14 CE. In 2001, Suzanne Dixon urged researchers to look for women's voices, however imperfectly transmitted (<i>Reading Roman Women</i>). Those interested in writing women back into Roman history, have started to take up that challenge.</p> <p>Elite women were expected to convey news to husbands and sons in government and military posts abroad. Letters from female senders have been uncovered at sites like Vindolanda (England) and Oxyrhynchos (Egypt). Yet it is impossible to know how much influence a scribe or male family member exerted when copying down their words. Likewise there are questions about how 'Roman' are these writings of people living so far from the capital city. They certainly represent one voice from the Roman world. We turn to Cicero for another.</p> <p>Marcus Tullius Cicero (106-43 BCE) left behind 900+ letters that unknown</p>
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		<p>person(s) gathered and edited for distribution sometime after his death. The largest collection, the Letters to Atticus, contains 32 examples of female speech, i.e. thoughts and comments of the women close to him that Cicero captured and relayed to his friend. Why did Cicero's editor decide to keep this speech in a work ostensibly commemorating the political life of a senior statesman? What can Cicero reveal about how women used correspondence as a vehicle for private and public self-expression, being denied many other forms? Indeed it appears that the well-off, well-educated women he quotes might not have considered themselves among Moses Finley's silent women of Rome.</p>
Sue Matoff	<p>"Relegated to the Footnotes – Rising to the Headlines: The literary career of Marguerite, Lady Blessington"</p>	<p>My paper would challenge the assumption that women were silenced and marginalised, citing the importance of literary women in the nineteenth century and, in particular, the career of Marguerite, Countess of Blessington, in the first half of that century.</p> <p>Lady Blessington was shunned and stigmatised for her perceived scandalous behaviour. Nevertheless, she ran successful and influential salons, hosting statesmen, artists and writers. Her conversation was valued and she was far from a silenced woman. She was the close friend and confidante of Edward Bulwer Lytton and of Disraeli, both of whom valued her opinion of their literary endeavours. Necessity drove her to write for her living, and she produced travel books, a journal of her conversations with Lord Byron, twenty novels ranging from silver-fork to dark psychological drama, much poetry and also edited two significant gift annuals, <i>Heath's Book of Beauty</i> and <i>The Keepsake</i>. These are not the productions of a silenced woman. As a role model Lady Blessington influenced at the very least, two of her nieces to literary aspirations.</p> <p>It was after Lady Blessington's death that her voice was muffled rather than silenced for eight decades. This was largely because annuals fell out of fashion and other novelists rose to greater popularity in the second half of the nineteenth century.</p> <p>Now, Lady Blessington's works are being resuscitated and re-evaluated. She is gaining a place in the so-called 'canon' of literature - a notion which, as suggested in the CFP, is problematic. I contend that what a 'canon' includes changes over time, and is flexible. For that reason I argue that now is the time for the works of Lady Blessington to receive the critical attention long overdue and for her name to rise from a footnote in early Victorian literature to a headline.</p>
P.M. Higgins, CUNY and Royal Holloway	<p>'Suppressing the Suppression of Fanny Hensel: Textual Ellipsis and other Signs of Biographical Censorship'</p>	<p>A tell-tale sign of the longstanding gender politics in which the subject of Fanny Hensel (1805-1847) and her quest for musical authorship have become enmeshed are repeated attempts on the part of biographers to shield and exonerate her brother, Felix Mendelssohn (1809-1847), from unseemly accusations of thwarting his sister's ambitions, or, to put it more bluntly, of 'suppressing' her. Certain Hensel scholars, they claim, have sought to demonize Felix and to victimize Fanny, thus vicariously acting out their own 'feminist indignation' and appropriating Hensel for present-day political agendas. Felix-exonerators and -demonizers alike tend to share the unexamined (and by now entrenched) critical assumption that Hensel, who</p>

		<p>composed some 500 works, was herself 'quite neutral' or 'indifferent' to their publication--a happy dilettante blissfully devoid of inadmissible ambitions.</p> <p>This paper proposes to explore the ongoing critical silence on the part of both Hensel and Mendelssohn scholars with respect to two key documents (among others) bearing directly on Hensel's life and works, both examples of unequivocal posthumous censorship: 1) the suppression from publication, by family members, of epistolary evidence that Mendelssohn sought his mother's collusion in concealing from his sister his whole-hearted disapproval of her quest to publish her music; and 2) the deletion, via ellipsis, from the memoirs of composer Charles Gounod, of evidence asserting Mendelssohn's appropriation and publication under his own name of a number of Hensel's Songs Without Words for solo piano. The extent to which scholars have painstakingly glossed over and dismissed out of hand, when not ignored altogether, the implications of these censored documents for Hensel's biography is quite remarkable, suppressing, as they do, inflammatory evidence both compromising the reputation of a famous brother and cherished public persona, and exposing the transgressive aspirations to authorship of his lesser known sister.</p>
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5. CANON AND OMISSION

<p>Alan Coffee, KCL</p>	<p>'Macaulay, Wollstonecraft and the One Fault Women May Commit with Impunity'</p>	<p>Republican theory is often regarded as being patriarchal and hostile to women. Even in its revived, inclusive contemporary form, non-domination, feminists often ask the question, 'can republicanism be good for women?' And yet, not only is there a long history of women writing within this political tradition, but they have written some of its most significant and innovative work. Nevertheless, their contribution to this field remains almost entirely unseen. From Livy, through Machiavelli and Milton, to the eighteenth century revolutionaries, the accepted canons of republican sources are exclusively male.</p> <p>A great many women were writing during this revolutionary period across Europe and in America. I focus on two of the most prominent. Catharine Macaulay could plausibly claim to be the greatest of all republican writers. She was highly influential in her own time and may even have first introduced the phrase 'the equal rights of men'. Although her monumental <i>History of England</i> and her <i>Letters on Education</i> stand as exemplary republican treatises, as rigorous and detailed as any, there are no currently widely available published editions, and she remains an obscure figure in intellectual history. Her influence on Mary Wollstonecraft was very profound. While Wollstonecraft is celebrated today for her inspiration to feminists, her achievements as a broad-ranging philosopher and political theorist in her own right have been neglected (I argue elsewhere for their continuing relevance, especially in securing equal freedom for all in diverse populations).</p> <p>Taken together, Macaulay and Wollstonecraft provide a thorough,</p>
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		<p>insightful and still relevant blueprint for analysing and remodelling the structural forms of domination that combine to prevent women from acting as free agents and citizens on their own terms. Legal, political and economic dependence on men play their part but their ultimate source of oppression is cultural. Wollstonecraft in particular shows how collaboratively rebuilding social values and practices with men and women both contributing must form the basis of any lasting social and political equality.</p>
Julie Watt	'The Unladylike Ferrier'	<p>Walter Scott recognised that his friend, the Edinburgh novelist Susan Ferrier, was better at describing social relationships and creating female characters than he was. But, despite the fact that Ferrier has since been dubbed 'the Scottish Austen', Scott's work is still part of the canon while hers remains largely unrecognised. This is partly because she published anonymously – one reason being that it was unacceptable for the daughter of an eminent Edinburgh lawyer to be seen to have a public persona, to be writing 'frivolous' novels, but also because her characters were based on recognisable people alive in the then suffocatingly small city of Edinburgh. Her novels, which have been compared with those of Smollett, are satirical and broadly comic, and explore the themes of nation, history, and the evolution of female consciousness, with sharp views on marriage and female education. However, for a later (Victorian) illustrated edition of her three novels, her publisher, who dealt with her brother rather than her, asked her to revise her work, pointing up moral themes and omitting much of the 'Scotticism' and unladylike broad comedy. Burns and Scott were not obliged to do the same. It is not simply that her novels have been largely ignored since Victorian times, but her views on contemporary womanhood were simultaneously silenced.</p>
Sara L. Uckelman, Durham University	'Medieval Women and the Adversariality of Logic'	<p>The underrepresentation of women in contemporary philosophy, particularly in subfields such as logic, has received quite a bit of attention recently, with people interested in both why women are underrepresented and how this underrepresentation can be combatted. The 'why' is of course deeply rooted in the history of how philosophy (and logic) developed as a discipline, but to date there has not been much attention given to looking at this history. In this talk, I look at the question of women's involvement in the study and practice of logic in the Middle Ages, and show that institutional factors of the teaching of logic meant women were often systematically excluded. In addition to this, the study of logic was often seen as explicitly gendered: In the 12th century, Eloise d'Argenteuil complains about Peter Abelard's use of bellicose, military metaphors for argumentation, disputation, and logic. In the 15th C, Christine de Pizan specifically abrogates her claim to 'masculine' rationality by telling her male correspondent "Je ne suis logicienne" (I am not a logician), immediately before she goes on to make use of specifically logical techniques to dismantel her correspondent's position. From this, we can see that the view of logic or reason as a male purview, with the concomittant lack of welcome to women in the field, has extremely deep roots going back centuries. On the one hand, this shows that the task of disrupting this view is perhaps more difficult than one might have hoped, since it is so deeply rooted. On the other hand, looking at the ways in which women interacted with logic or reason in the Middle Ages will</p>

		provide us with examples of how, historically, women could exploit and, when needed, subvert this male-dominated field.
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6. CREATING A VOICE

Kerry Myler	'Sexing it up: Post-war women's writing and the escape from sex censorship'	<p>The post-war period in Britain saw a loosening of literary sex censorship; however, for female authors there had to be a careful negotiation of this new territory of representation - their own sex and bodies - not only in terms of what could be written but also what could be written about women by women. The old librarian in Elizabeth Taylor's <i>A View from the Harbour</i> (1947) sees 'no need to be prejudiced against lady novelists' who have 'their own contribution to make. A nice domestic romance. Why ape men?' (2013, p. 38). But what happens when the 'nice domestic romance' is also a sexually explicit domestic romance? How did the post-war cultural and political landscape affect women's ability to write about sex, desire and reproduction?</p> <p>This paper argues that the gradual liberalisation of literary and cultural sex censorship between 1945 and 1970 resulted in a major shift in the representation of sex in women's writing. It is, as Nancy Mitford's Fanny comments in <i>The Pursuit of Love</i> (1945), 'our great obsession' (2000, p. 18), but it is an obsession that initially remains encased by Victorian sensibilities and represented in terms of shame. In the 1960s, after the watershed events of the <i>Lady Chatterley's Lover</i> trial and the advent of the contraceptive pill, the sexual experiences of women begin to be more fully and explicitly represented in women's fiction. Pregnancy outside of wedlock becomes a major theme and is explored at length in novels like Lynne Reid Banks's <i>The L-Shaped Room</i> (1960) and Margaret Drabble's <i>The Millstone</i> (1965). It is also at this point that the literary landscape alters significantly not only in terms of <i>what</i> experiences women can represent but <i>how</i> they represent those experiences. For instance, in Doris Lessing's <i>The Golden Notebook</i> (1962) the politics of sex and the politics of representation meet in a conscious and critical examination of the 'nature' of female sexuality and its place in print. Towards the end of the post-war period, now essentially free from the constraints of sex censorship, women's 'great obsession' with sex peaks and women writers are able to move the battle out of the bedroom.</p>
Gabrielle McNally, Northern Michigan University	'The Feminist Voice: Improvisation in Women's Autobiographical Filmmaking'	<p>For decades, filmmakers and scholars working in feminist autobiography have attempted to define their work outside of standardized, patriarchal means. This creates schisms in feminist autobiographical work as the women find themselves as part of the problem while also being marginalized by it. The notion of a specific and unique feminist documentary voice that can be utilized by both Western and non-Western filmmakers remains under-developed. However, scholars working in women's autobiographical theory have not adequately addressed improvisation as a method of feminist praxis. Improvisational studies, a new field of interdisciplinary inquiry, has no academic discourse with nonfiction filmmaking, despite its obvious intersections. Documentary is</p>

		<p>film's engagement with improvisation.</p> <p>This paper discusses the mindful use of improvisational methods in women's autobiographical filmmaking as a means to establish a feminist documentary voice that lies outside of patriarchy and established Western notions of subject. In this paper I will be looking at intersections between improvisational theory and the well-established theories of subjective voice in documentary. I will specifically be applying improvisational theory to the documentary practice of feminist autobiographers. The female subject in self-reflexive documentary is often described as relational and fragmented, working through a process of self-definition. By relating these methods to improvisation – the relinquishing of power in the process and trusting relationships with outside forces, feminist filmmakers can neutralize the patriarchal voice of naming, power, and control, referred to as textual speech by Michel Chion and the documentary voice by Bill Nichols.</p> <p>The documentation of improvisation as a working method in other feminist art practices is well established. Through experimentation and self-reflection, improvisation can help women discover their own strength and power creating an empowering and cathartic experience. The mode of work is particularly useful for underrepresented and marginalized individuals with great social and political possibilities already visible in other art forms. These methods could also be applied to filmic forms of self-representation. I argue that by establishing connections between documentary and improvisation and focusing on work created by non-Western female autobiographers, a new possibility for female subjectivities can evolve that exist outside of the control of Western, patriarchal establishments, one in which non-Western female autobiographers can develop their own voices.</p> <p>As Audre Lorde states, we can locate revolutionary change in identifying "that piece of the oppressor which is planted deep within each of us" (Audre Lorde, <i>Sister Outsider: Essays and Speeches</i> by Audre Lorde, Berkeley: Crossing Press, 1984, 2007, 123) improvisation theory and the feminist autobiographical film subject, women finally have the means to resist assimilation into conventional modes of documentary storytelling. By developing a dialogue between improvisation theory and the feminist autobiographical film subject, women finally have the means to resist assimilation into conventional modes of documentary storytelling.</p>
<p>Majeed Midhin, University of Essex</p>	<p>'The Dilemma of Women Playwrights in Contemporary British Theatre: A Close Reading in Timberlake Wertenbaker's Plays'</p>	<p>Undoubtedly, Contemporary British Theatre passed through different stages of developments following John Osborne's <i>Look Back in Anger</i> (1956), which ushered in a new period of important playwriting. The social and political changes, together with the technological advances have left their imprint on British theatre. Motivated by new ideologies, from Marxism to feminism, playwrights take on their shoulders the task of political and cultural change. Their efforts had crowned by the abolition of state censorship of theatre in 1968.</p> <p>However, the change of democratization of British society was male-dominated playwrights. One of the reasons for the absence of women</p>

		<p>playwrights during 1960s has ascribed to the cultural climate of British society which made women avoid drama as a social art, requiring the strength and personal acerbity necessary for sustaining one's views in a public arena. Moreover, the playwright has to battle with producer, director and actors for her plays to see the light.</p> <p>In addition to the cultural factors, the internal censorship imposed by the governing boards of subsidised institutions together with 'market pressure' restrict women playwright from active role in the literary scene.</p> <p>The present paper is an attempt to trace the dilemmas of playwrights in contemporary British theatre in general and women playwrights in particular. I am going to deal with Timberlake Wertenbaker as an example to see the most important dilemma faced women playwrights during the last forty decades.</p> <p>The rise of female or women-centred companies, such as the Women's Theatre Group (est. 1973) offered increased opportunities for female playwrights. Wertenbaker has emphasised how important it was to have female role models. Those models are not exclusive to historical but contemporary ones. She takes women figures such as Caryl Churchill and Louise Page as potential encouragement for other women playwrights to go on. So, the 1980s saw the explosion for women playwrights which continue to the present day.</p> <p>Wertenbaker's <i>Case to Answer</i> (1980) and <i>Our Country's Good</i> (1988) will be tackled to show how the dilemma of women playwrights is represented.</p>
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7. FINDING A VOICE

Ana Barandala	'The pernicious silencing of stereotype threat, or how following the norm for belief can lead to alienation'	
Mauro Di Lullo	'Gillian Rose and Maurice Blanchot: an answer to silencing women'	<p>This paper will discuss Gillian Rose <i>Mourning Becomes the Law: Philosophy and Representation</i> with particular regard to her essay and highly critical meditations on Maurice Blanchot. The discussion will develop through a comparative reading of one of Blanchot's most relevant early texts: <i>Le Tres –Haut, The Most High</i> (1948). In <i>Mourning Becomes the Law</i>, Gillian Rose wants to take us beyond a certain philosophical, political and ethical stalemate of post-modernism. She is arguing that the post-modern search for a 'new ethics' philosophy, politics and maybe <i>religion</i> are incoherent for a debate on power and domination, transcendence and eternity.</p> <p>Yet, through a reading of <i>Le Tres –Haut, The Most High</i>, this paper will</p>

		<p>show the relevance in any feminist debate on silencing, of Rose's work on Blanchot and more particularly on a 'male orientated' philosophy. <i>The Most High</i> was written in 1948, the same year as Albert Camus's <i>The Plague</i> and George Orwell's <i>Nineteen Eighty-Four</i>. 1948 was a 'particular' time in European and Western history. The Second World War was ended in 1945, the Americans <i>liberated</i> Europe bringing with them 'authentic sense of freedom and democracy'. At the same time, the entire West was beginning to become highly suspicious of the 'Communist danger and the possible plague it represented'. The Hegelian 'end of history' was now triumphant. The narrator in the <i>récit</i> is a young 25 years old male and the role given to women in <i>The Most High</i>, is highly enigmatic, with all of the female characters usually representing troubling figures from the Greek mythology. It will be through this attempt of writing a 'political story' where male figures are highly protagonist, that Rose's essay will be commented and explained as an answer to any attempt of silencing women through a misuse of philosophy.</p>
<p>Sharihan Al-Akhras</p>	<p>'The Voice of Women is a Shameful Thing': Between Religious Dialogue and Political Reform where does Arab Feminism Stand?</p>	<p>Whenever a critical discussion of the many challenges Arab women face is initiated, it is quickly made apparent that such discussions become hindered by supposedly religious, cultural even political restrictions. Constantly we hear the obstructive narrative that the situation of women in the Arab world is 'different' and 'tricky' as it merges with religious, political and cultural complexities; therefore, we must approach the feminist dialogue 'carefully' and 'considerably'. This paper proposes that by silencing the movement of feminism in the Arab world, due to cultural or even religious sensitivities, the battle towards equality becomes even more challenging and the victims of gender inequality continue to increase.</p> <p>While Arab feminism (or 'Nasawiya' as most Arab feminist prefer to call it) is on the rise, the discussion of what makes an Arab female identity becomes even more complex, and often the word 'choice' becomes surprisingly problematic when associated with an Arab woman. As Arab feminists begin to finally address such complexities, a mixture of unsupportive civil laws and ideologies of religious extremism constantly silence them. Furthermore, they have been recently pointing out that, in few instances, they are unfortunately silenced by what they identified as 'Western liberal feminism' as it found in critiquing gender issues in the Arab world an attack on Arab culture and heritage. Therefore, this paper aims to convey the varying views and voices of Arab feminists (who embody multiple identities and defy the single prototype of an oppressed woman) in contemplating the question how to best reconcile feminism with Arab society, eventually concluding that what is 'offensive' is not dialogue but the lack of it.</p>

8. CREATIVE PRACTICES

Maggie O'Neill, Durham	'Women, Walking, Arts Based Research and the Production of Knowledge'	TBC
Kathy D'Arcy, University College Cork	'Re-Articulating Irish Women's Poetry: an experiment in creative knowledge texts'	<p>I'm an Irish poet with two published collections. Having studied Irish women's literature along with other academic subjects including medicine and women's studies for many years, I feel ever more strongly that the structures of academic 'knowledge writing' are inherently patriarchal and not suitable for gender balanced knowledge transmission. I've also grown increasingly frustrated with the continuing under-representation of women in Irish poetry (for example, Poetry Ireland's recent Arts Council-funded anthology of 'sports poetry' with contributions from 90 men and 16 women), and how the future of Irish women's poetry seems inevitably mired in its half-forgotten, fragmented past.</p> <p>My Creative Writing PhD (generously supported by the Irish Research Council) seeks to experiment with feminist poetry as a new form of knowledge text, and I have been working on long-form heteroglossic sequences, involving elements of epic and traditional Irish poetics as well as overheard spoken word, found poetry, correspondence and archive material to create a reimagined history of Irish women's poetry. My work weaves fiction and historical fact in a way that I hope will be both educational and iconoclastic.</p> <p>My presentation would involve a brief introduction to my doctoral work followed by a performance of the creative work in progress.</p>
Guila Custodi, ENSA Paris La Villette and Sorbonne	'Kitchens: A Story of Cultural Production'	<p>In considering women voices I would start from that place in which their know-how seems to have been relegate (and silenced) for centuries. The kitchen.</p> <p>In particular , the paper will show the development of the idea of kitchen, starting from an historical analyze, to reach the innovations of modernism, than conclude trying to go beyond with a critique of the rationalism with the social analyzes of Pierre Gilbert in France, and Sara Fichera's memories in Sicily.</p> <p>Gisella Bassanini (Bassanini Gisella, Faré Ida,., La donna e la casa, Milano, FrancoAngeli, 1995) become the unique place for women in middle Europe, in Italy and France in particular.</p> <p>Later, with the modernist architects such as Charlotte Perriand and Margarete Schütte-Lihotzky (the "Frankfurt kitchen" (1926)) (and also thanks to Catharine Beecher (American Woman's Home: Or, Principles of Domestic Science; by Beecher and Stowe, New York, 1869)) kitchens because more functional, with electrical appliances, in order to follow the innovations in the "rationalization of spaces" which involved in those years the whole architectural field.</p>

		<p>Hence the consequent simplification of the domestic work , has been described as an emancipation of the kitchen space: it was seen as an enfranchisement of women too.</p> <p>But rationalism was a partial point of view, without women's feedback. For instance, asking to a woman of a popular French milieu what does she think about the "cuisine ouverte" (as Pierre Gilbert does at the univesité Lyon 2) highlight that, if the kitchen became smaller and smaller,</p> <p>and allows just one person, the risk of alienation is intensified: the emancipation of the worker class outside, correspond to the alienation of the worker's wife inside. The Sicilian architect Sara Fichera described her relation with this important space: kitchen as a place to live, of creativity and socialization.</p> <p>In conclusion, this paper would like to introduce a more complex approach in design, which could effectively involve the voice of women.</p>
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