

# Peripheral Visions



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**Collated Abstracts and Bio Statements**

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**Claire Albrecht**  
University of Newcastle

## **Mixed messages: Use of the page as artistic space in contemporary multimodal poetry**

### **Abstract**

This paper looks at multimodal poetry in the contemporary Australian literary landscape and explores the potential for works combining text and image to change or enhance meaning within, outside and between the margins of the text. Australian poets and artists Bella Li, Toby Fitch, Jean Kent, Pam Brown and Caren Florence, among others, combine the visual medium with text to introduce further depths of (mis)understanding and to open alternative responses for the audience. This interdisciplinary style follows on from 'artists' books' of the 20th century, a form of multimodal publishing which dominated the burgeoning independent publishing sector outside of the visual (gallery) and textual (traditional book) mainstream.

### **Biography**

Claire Albrecht is a poet and PhD candidate at the University of Newcastle. She is currently looking at the connections between poetry and photography. Claire's work appears in Cordite, Overland, Plumwood Mountain and others. She also runs Cuplet Poetry Night, a monthly night of touring poets in Newcastle. Claire's debut chapbook 'pinky swear' will be launched in October 2018.

**Lillian Allen**  
Flinders University

## **A two-way mirror: The space where fiction and historical facts create the story**

### **Abstract**

Fiction and historical facts can work together to re-tell a version of the past that hasn't been told before. The space where fiction influences historical facts and vice versa in a fictional story can be difficult to pinpoint, yet it exists enriching storytelling, and revealing new perspectives of the past.

When recording my anecdotal family stories of my great-grandmother who was a homesteader of the prairies, it became evident there were too many unknown details leaving the story fragmented and out of alignment with historical facts. In order to bring together these stories in a written format, I used both fiction and historical facts to speculate what might have occurred. What began to emerge was how fiction was equally influential in filling the gaps as historical facts.

This in turn complicated the re-telling of my family stories as the truth remains elusive. At least now, this influence, fact or fiction is identified and part of the story. By allowing a two-way mirror situation between facts and fiction, the story telling was enriched, and new perspectives of the past revealed, and have become part of the story itself. The story, as they do with each generational re-telling has evolved. This time it has been deliberate and ensures these stories remain being told for the future generations.

### **Biography**

Lillian Allen has a Masters in Science, a Graduate Diploma in Education and Counselling, a Masters in Creative Writing, and is currently a PhD candidate in Creative Writing at Flinders University. She has over 50 poems and ten fictional novels, and two poetry collections published under pseudonyms.

**Patrick Allington**  
Flinders University

## **Rejected vision: On *Potatoes In All Their Glory*, the really really really difficult second novel**

### **Abstract**

The proposed paper 'Rejected vision' combines exegetical commentary and scholarly cultural commentary via a discussion of my unpublished novel, *Potatoes In All Their Glory*. This manuscript was unloved by the gatekeepers/commissioning editors who read it, and it has ultimately been abandoned by its author, perhaps permanently. This paper briefly tracks the manuscript's history of submission and rejection. In more detail, it describes what I set out to achieve with the novel and offers some exegetical observations in response to the stated reasons why publishers rejected the manuscript, often because of the perceived absence of plot, but also to do with the narratorial voice and the comic devices employed. In the process, I analyse notions of 'rejection' and 'failure' from the perspective of writer, editor, and critic, and in the context of current trends in Australian fiction publishing.

### **Biography**

Patrick Allington is writer, editor and academic. His novel *Figurehead* (Black Inc. 2009) was longlisted for the Miles Franklin Literary Award, and his essays, short fiction, criticism and edited works have appeared widely. He was formerly Commissioning Editor for the University of Adelaide Press, and currently teaches at Flinders University.

**Chris Arnold**  
University of Western Australia

## **Evil twins: Hacker practice and writing in the network's peripheral spaces**

### **Abstract**

Hackers have risen from specific curiosities to front page news in only a few years, catching public attention with digital ransom, census interruption and nuclear facility sabotage. With people reading more today than at any time in history, and with much of that reading taking place over networks, this paper investigates the potential uses of hacking practices as disruptive interventions in electronic literature. In particular, wireless hacking techniques can be used to create peripheral spaces on the networked landscape—a landscape that tends to centre all participants. How can hacking culture and practice be understood as a medium for writing? Drawing on McKenzie Wark's critique of the vectors of communication and his notion of the antipodal, this paper will look towards what might be said through electronic literature in the context of installation work: creating unexpected sites of reading within a wireless network's limited range, the writer is afforded an opportunity to speak about place in ways that are not possible over the Internet.

### **Biography**

Chris Arnold writes poetry and software. He's studying the poetics of hacking as part of his PhD at UWA, where he also works as *Westerly's* web editor. He programmed David Thomas Henry Wright's *Little Emperor Syndrome*, which won the digital prize at 2018's Queensland Literary Awards.

**Sarah Ayoub**  
University of Notre Dame, Sydney

## **Someone else's shoes: Empathy versus experience in refugee narratives**

### **Abstract**

Refugee narratives in children's fiction have traditionally been based on real-world experiences, with storylines that history recognises from numerous conflicts dating back to the start of World War II. In Australia, a growing body of contemporary children's fiction addresses the issues of displaced children and "actively dissents against" government policies of mandatory detention (Dudek 2006:185). This body of literature is seen to foster empathy in readers for refugees and other displaced peoples, making "the impersonal personal and the abstract immediate" (Parsons 2016:20). In comparison, the processes and experiences of writing these stories is not as detailed nor explored.

This paper will draw on my current experiences and considerations as I undertake the writing of a Young Adult novel for my PhD. The novel imagines the war on Syria spilling over into neighbouring Lebanon, and the impact this has on a young Lebanese teen who eventually finds herself seeking refuge in Australia. It will detail the challenges of writing with my authentic cultural voice while adapting the refugee experience for creative purposes.

My paper will position my novel within a broader framework of narrative techniques that construct displaced characters in contemporary children's refugee literature (including Morris Gleitzman's *Boy Overboard*, Alan Gratz' *Refugee*, and Clare Atkins' *Between Us*) to understand otherness, and mediate and navigate social change.

### **Biography**

Sarah Ayoub is a Young Adult Author and a PhD candidate (exploring race, class and gender in contemporary YA novels) at The University of Notre Dame in Sydney.

**Deepti Ruth Azariah**  
Curtin University

## **Writing silver travel: Examining the peripheral in senior travel blogs**

### **Abstract**

There is a growing recognition that senior tourism has significant socioeconomic benefits for countries with ageing populations (Bates, 2004; Small, 2003; Vojvodic, 2015) and that the practices of older travellers need further investigation. Seniors are often relegated to the wrong side of the digital divide and, although this gap is rapidly diminishing (McMurtrey, Zeltmann, Downey, & McGaughey, 2011), the critical examination of senior travel bloggers, or silver tourists, and their narratives remains on the peripheries of academic debate. In response to a need for further research into “digital seniors” (Quan-Haase, Martin, & Schreurs, 2016) and their online narratives, this paper explores the concept of the peripheral within the context of senior travel blogs and asks how these narratives both embrace and challenge the notion of core/periphery. To answer this, the paper draws on various theories of travel and social media and aims to offer a nuanced understanding of how these narratives negotiate the persistent tensions between Home and Away, Self and Other, and escape and social connectedness, which concepts and discourses are integral to the writing and practice of silver travel.

### **Biography**

Deepti Ruth Azariah teaches Creative Writing and Internet Communication at Curtin University. Her research interests include travel writing, children’s literature, social media, and digital publishing. She also writes an occasional blog at <https://perthinent.wordpress.com/>

**Eugen Bacon**  
Swinburne University of Technology

## **Across the boundary line**

### **Abstract**

Borders, genres, and their limits... In a war of words with Ursula Le Guin, literary author Margaret Atwood hurled the term 'speculative fiction' rather than science fiction to label those of her works with a genre slant. These included her dystopian novel *The handmaid's tale* (1985) that draws attention to gender, religion and power, or the apocalyptic *Oryx and crake* (2003) that is part of the MaddAddam trilogy, selling on Amazon under the label of science fiction (genetic engineering). To designate a work as belonging to a particular literary category is to place it within a specific framework: for example, poetry. The classification arouses in the reader an expectation that the work will exhibit certain features stylistically appropriate to that category. Definitions demand that the reader enters the reading with pre-established and familiar understandings of the conventions of the narrative mode. This paper will discuss how, as a literary speculative fiction writer, I strive to write work that is cross-genre and challenges traditional paradigms of storytelling in a male-dominated world of genre fiction.

### **Biography**

Eugen M. Bacon is a computer graduate mentally re-engineered into creative writing and has published over 100 short stories. Her work has won, been shortlisted, longlisted or commended in the Copyright Agency Prize 2017, Fellowship of Australian Writers National Literary Awards 2016, Alan Marshall Short Story Award 2016, Lightship Publishing (UK) international short story prize 2013 and Fish Short Story Prize 2013/14. Her creative articles were nominated for the 2017 Aurealis Convenors Award For Excellence. Eugen's creative work has appeared or is forthcoming in *Award Winning Australian Writing*, *AntipodeanSF*, *Andromeda*, *Aurealis*, *Bards and Sages Quarterly*, *Breach*, *Bukker Tillibul*, *Every Day Fiction*, *Farther Stars Than These*, *Horriified Press anthologies*, *4 Star Stories*, *Mascara Literary Review*, *Meniscus*, *TEXT*, *Parentheses*, *The Victorian Writer*, the Canberra Speculative Fiction Guild – *A Hand of Knaves Anthology* and through Routledge in *New Writing*.

**Daniel Baker**  
Deakin University

## **Anywhere, out where: Fantasy, psychosis, and writing worlds**

### **Abstract**

Ursula Le Guin claimed that fantasy 'is a different approach to reality, an alternative technique for apprehending and coping with existence' (1979: 84). In 2015, I began work on a fantasy novel, *A Life in Streets*, and discovered that to write fantasy is to simultaneously exist in this world, that world, and the world of the keyboard. Consequently, the need to see and keep seeing an alternative vision of my past, present, and future realities is not without its illuminations, not without its spectres.

Anchored by the work of writer/academics China Miéville and R. Scott Bakker, this paper argues that Todorov's paradigmatic 'fantastic hesitation' corresponds to a crisis in apprehending reality. Here, the literary marvellous (fantasy) mimics a psychotic break: the articulation of an alternative reality involving a rejection current forms of social authority and their subsequent reimagining in different developmental pathways. Tellingly, this process, is not unlike a conversion experience that profoundly (re)defines subjective frames.

Significantly, such a revision of the genre, forces both reader and writer into an apprehensive position. That is, it requires that traditionally dismissive attitudes attached to fantasy criticism—escapism and regression, for example—be fundamentally re-examined.

### **Biography**

Daniel Baker is a casual academic, holds a PhD in Literary Studies, and teaches Supernatural Literature and Shakespeare at Deakin University. Focusing on the intersection of fantasy fiction, dystopian aesthetics, and formula fiction, he has published scholarship in *Otherness*, *JFA*, and *TEXT*, and fiction in *Aurealis* and *Beneath Ceaseless Skies*.

**Jonathon Ball**  
University of Newcastle

## **‘I guess love laughs at history a little’: Approaches to writing queer male identity in historical fiction**

### **Abstract**

This paper examines ways in which writers of historical fiction featuring queer male characters approach the representation of queer identity in their works.

Because sexual-orientation, gender, and identity are definitively modern concepts, conservative historians often level charges of anachronism and inaccuracy against queer historical narratives. I contend, however, that the role of the historical novelist must be to bring into relief the inner lives, emotional and cognitive states, and lived experiences of people throughout history; those subjective aspects of history that historians are necessarily unable to explore.

Compounding the issue, evidence of same-sex attraction and queer people throughout history is often obscured or non-existent due to, for example: illegality, persecution, or absence of sexual-social identifiers. This presents research and creative challenges to the historical novelist and reinforces the need for queer historical fiction that gives voices to the voiceless and explores peripheral sexualities throughout history.

Because the writing of queer representation and identity in historical novels affords readers an invitation to identify with LGBTQ+ figures from the past “as a complex and sophisticated mode of knowing” (Jones, 2007), it is important to encourage and promote the production of queer historical fictions and harness strategies to most effectively balance historical accuracy with historical creativity to effect historical-literary cogency.

I propose that writing approaches involving methodological rigour with transhistorical queer representation strengthen, rather than discredit, historical narratives featuring and exploring queer identities. Issues around the ‘homosexualising/queering’ of real historical personages are also considered.

## **Exploring a new era of creative writing research: Laying foundations for engagement and impact**

### **Abstract**

The discipline of creative writing has, over the past 20 years, firmly got to grips with what it means to research about, for and through practice; but now a new research challenge emerges. How can we see this research as engaging with those beyond the academy, and how might this research have an impact? In many ways, the idea of engagement and impact should be easy for creative writers, given the nature of its form, audience and intent; but it is not so easy when we put research into the mix. For example, what is the relationship between research and engagement? How can impact be measured in relation to research intentions and contribution? Will the desire for impact change the very nature of creative writing research, and/or will it only be seen as a 'service provider' for other (more important) disciplines?

In this paper, I outline some of the key ideas and contexts for engagement and impact in Australia, and consider how the discipline of creative writing might respond. I draw in part from a symposium I co-organised on the subject at UTS in 2017, for the screen production discipline, which brought together academics and those from industry to explore possible strategies for leading on the engagement and impact agenda. This symposium explored what engagement looks like and how it can be structured as a pathway to impact; the implications and mechanisms for measuring impact in a variety of contexts; and the possible ramifications of the engagement and impact agenda on the nature of a practitioner-researcher's work. How do these questions also relate to creative writing, and are there examples of 'good' engagement and impact already out there? And importantly, how might we develop our discipline to thrive in this new environment?

## **Biography**

Craig Batty is Associate Professor of Screenwriting and Creative Practice at RMIT University, Australia. He is author of over 50 books, chapters, journal articles and refereed conference proceedings; editor of two books and 10 journal special issues; and has worked as a writer and script editor on various film/screen projects. He has won local and national awards for excellence in research supervision. His current areas of research are screenwriting practice research, script development, and doctoral education in creative disciplines. Craig is Adjunct Professor at Central Queensland University and the University of Central Queensland, and Visiting Research Fellow at Bournemouth University (UK).

**Rachelle Bews**  
Deakin University

## **Glyph: The nature of literary operations in constrained writing**

### **Abstract**

Oulipian writing occurs on the premises that all literature is written using conventions and restrictions; and, further, that voluntary submission to a chosen rule becomes a freedom from these unspoken rules. With its focus on experiment, invention and 'potential', it is perhaps not surprising that the highly formalised model of mathematically generated language play delineated by the French Oulipo workshop has colonised areas of writing practice beyond their tightly specific concerns. Millennial and largely English-speaking /n/oouliopian and fouliopian writers owe their literary schema to the history of Oulipian work, but shift ground by directing Oulipian forms onto new, often politically charged, subjects. My research moves to stretch boundaries in the opposite direction: I reimagine constraint's procedural forms and assumptions so as to innovate on the edges of what constraint can be, rather than in why or in where it can be applied. My reconnoitre of the definitional terrain of constrained writing has initiated an original constraint, a literary-spatial model which directs the creative writer using gestural operations rather than formally mathematical ones. Thus, my research is an act of synthouliopism – the invention and deployment of a new constraint –looking towards previously unknown possibilities on the frontier of constrained writing.

### **Biography**

Rochelle Bews is currently completing her PhD in creative writing at Deakin University, where she is painstakingly constraining her creative output to in a generative exploration of literary bondage. She has also co-edited several editions of a creative experiment of poetic translation published as 'Testament – Anthology of Romanian Verse'.

**Pam Blamey**

## **Journaling and bibliotherapy: A personal case study of preparation for surgery**

### **Abstract**

You never know how people are going to react when you tell them you have been diagnosed with breast cancer. Will they smother you with sympathy or launch into their own or their aunt's gruelling story? I came out fighting from day one. I wasn't going to let this beat me; it would cramp my style for a while, that's all, just a glitch.

There is evidence (Kroenke: 2006) of the efficacy of strong social support in breast cancer recovery and survival. Combining my art therapy training and my interest in women's solidarity, I arranged a Sacred Women's Ritual to farewell my offending breast, inviting some close friends to witness my descent to the underworld. Candles and cake, poetry and a plaster cast produced the ambience for a heightened sense of well-being that lasted for days afterwards.

My research looks at how to use journaling and self-prescribed bibliotherapy to look inwards for meaning in preparation for surgery – using authors like Silvia Brinton Perera and Gabor Mate. This research provides an introspective case-study which aims to inspire others to experience the positives of potentially life-threatening illness.

### **Biography**

Pam Blamey, Master of Mental Health, Art Therapy (UQ) and member of the Australian Counselling Association (ACA), is a self-employed art therapist. She specialises in using fairy tales, mythology and traditional oral storytelling to explore creativity while examining personal and social issues, and to foster meaning-making, problem-solving and wellbeing.

**Donna Lee Brien, Craig Batty, Elizabeth Ellison & Alison Owens**  
Central Queensland University

## **The peripheral world of the doctorate: Candidate journeys beyond the thesis**

### **Abstract**

This presentation focuses on what are commonly seen as, at best, peripheral aspects of the creative writing doctorate, by which we mean aspects that beyond, and outside, the core work of what is widely understood to be research training. It draws on the findings of a recently completed research project, which saw 18 candidates from the creative arts and humanities reflect upon their learning journeys, and present, workshop and theorise the human dimensions of undertaking a doctorate. These often-peripheral aspects were revealed to have a major influence on undertaking a research degree, as well as affecting candidates' progress and satisfaction with their studies. By embracing the candidate voice in the development of an enhanced doctoral experience, this project suggested that a more holistic approach to research training can yield dividends not only to the candidate, but also to supervisors, institutions and the discipline at large. In this presentation, we outline some of the major human dimensions of the doctoral journey that emerged from the project, and how candidates were able to develop a language with which to identify their challenges and issues, and – importantly – articulate their own growth so that others might benefit from this learning. We also discuss how this project has influenced approaches to doctoral training, and resulted in the publication of an edited collection of candidate stories and strategies for success.

### **Biographies**

Professor Donna Lee Brien is Professor of Creative Industries at Central Queensland University. She has researched and published extensively on creative writing and publishing, the creative arts, and research higher degrees, and has been a chief investigator on a number of OLT and other grants on the creative arts higher degree. Donna has won numerous awards for her supervision of research higher degrees, including a Vice-Chancellors.

Associate Professor Craig Batty is Associate Professor of Screenwriting and Creative Practice at RMIT University, and Adjunct Professor at Central Queensland University. He is author and editor of over 70 books, chapters, journal articles and refereed conference proceedings. In 2016, he received an Australian Award for University Teaching for his work supervising creative writing PhDs, and in 2017 won the Vice-Chancellor's Award for Excellence in Research Supervision at RMIT.

Dr Elizabeth Ellison is Lecturer of Creative Industries at Central Queensland University. She researches Australian writing, film and television, with a special interest in the Australian beach. She has been involved in two OLT grants in postgraduate supervision of creative arts research degrees, and supervises research students in creative arts and creative industries.

Dr Alison Owens is an adjunct Associate Professor of Education at Central Queensland University with over twenty years' experience in teaching and researching education in University contexts, currently at the Australian Catholic University. Alison is the recipient of multiple internal and external research grants and publishes widely on education topics.

**Jessie Byrne**  
University of Adelaide

## **The Davitt Awards: Making space for Australia's women crime writers**

### **Abstract**

The Davitt Awards were established by Sisters in Crime Australia in 2001 to recognise women crime writers in Australia. The awards are open to books published in the previous calendar year and in 2018 sought nominations in the categories of best adult crime novel, best young adult crime novel, best children's crime novel, best non-fiction book and best debut book. In addition, nominated books are eligible for the readers' choice award. Predominantly managed since their establishment on a volunteer basis, the awards have in their 18-year history attracted 893 nominations for crime books published by women. In 2018 a record 101 books were nominated from 94 writers. This paper examines the establishment, development and impact of the awards now that, at age 18, they have come of age. It is informed by interviews with members of Sisters in Crime and the publishing industry as well as by archival research. It argues that the awards, while not widely known outside crime-writing circles, have become an important component of Australia's literary landscape and have helped to promote the recognition and careers of Australia's women crime writers.

### **Biography**

Jessie Byrne is a Postgraduate candidate at the University of Adelaide.

**Andrew R. Cameron**  
Curtin University

## **Lessons in space and time: Teaching science fiction in the tertiary Creative Writing classroom**

### **Abstract**

The genre of science fiction (SF) offers Creative Writing students a versatile imaginative framework for social and technoscientific speculation. Although there is a vast body of literature on how to teach SF as part of a tertiary literary studies course, there is comparatively little about how the genre can be taught within a tertiary Creative Writing context, especially in modules where SF is included alongside other speculative genres. The limited scope of such classes often prevents detailed explorations of the genre's history, its long list of themes, iconography and ideologies, and the diversity of theoretical approaches. Lecturers face the daunting challenge of introducing a broad genre which has often defied attempts at definition, alongside instructing students on how to utilise its conventions and strategies in their own creative practice.

The purpose of this paper is to outline one possible strategy of approaching SF in a tertiary Creative Writing lecture. It discusses the challenges and opportunities of designing and delivering such a lecture, as well as proposing a number of classroom exercises designed to stimulate science-fictional thought and encourage critical reflection on the genre.

### **Biography**

Andrew is a sessional tutor in Creative Writing at Curtin University. His PhD focused on science and religion in the genre of science fiction. He enjoys writing across many different genres and exploring the connections between them. Andrew also works as a student counsellor.

**Kate Cantrell**  
University of Southern Queensland

## **The shape of the story: Using the lemniscate as a narrative structure for writing non-linear Stories**

### **Abstract**

Just as geometers must choose the proper setting for a mathematical problem, writers must choose the most suitable shape for a story. However, this task is difficult for writers whose work does not conform to a linear form. This is because linear narrative, which is typically structured around a beginning, middle, and end, does not serve a story that defies chronological order, such as an illness memoir, which is marked by relapse, or a story of diaspora, which is fragmented. The frustration that writers often feel when confronted with structural problems may be alleviated through deeper consideration of the relationship between content and form, or what a story says and how a story works. This paper proposes the lemniscate as a new way of writing non-linear stories that oscillate between spatio-temporal constructs, such as past and present. The lemniscate, as the mathematical symbol for infinity ( $\infty$ ), is a line that moves continuously forward as it moves continuously backward. As the shape is defined by continuity, counterpoint, and simultaneity, it may assemble stories with the same qualities. This paper demonstrates how the lemniscate differs to other non-linear structures, such as the rhizome, and as such, is a new tool for bringing shape to narrative.

**Nicki Cassimatis, Leanne Dodd, Pam Blamey & Elena Volkova**  
University of Queensland

## **Tell me your story: The role of storytelling in personal transformation – evidence from multiple writing genres**

### **Abstract**

Storytelling has had an important role to play throughout history for validating human existence and experience, whether joy or suffering, or whether through the literal, lyrical or metaphorical. Just as trauma and suffering interrupt the natural flow of people's life stories - their narratives - by 'muting their voices', the 'reverse' process, creative writing and storytelling, encourages and empowers voices to be expressed (Bolton: 1999). This allows stories to be re-imagined and re-authored for better futures (White and Epston: 1990).

Literary artists and health professionals around the globe are increasingly collaborating, using writing and storytelling with diverse populations, as tools for preventative and restorative well-being and transformation.

This session aims to highlight how the written word can be a powerful lens of transformation. It will present research and case studies to add to the growing body of international evidence to gain wider acceptance of creative writing for healing, connection and recovery, specifically through the genres of narrative life fiction, fairy tales, poetry and digital storytelling.

### **Biographies**

Nicki Cassimatis is an experienced language and pastoral care teacher, workshop facilitator and published poet. She holds a Bachelor of Arts (UQ) and is completing a Graduate Certificate in Mental Health (UQ). Her poetry workshops take a multisensory approach to creative writing as a tool for well-being and personal transformation.

Leanne Dodd is a lecturer in Literary and Cultural Studies at Central Queensland University and published author. She holds a Bachelor Commerce (Communications) (USQ), GC Tertiary Education (CQU) and has

submitted a PhD in Creative Writing (CQU). She workshops her innovative practice of using creative writing framed by narrative therapy.

Pam Blamey, Master of Mental Health, Art Therapy (UQ) and member of the Australian Counselling Association (ACA), is a self-employed art therapist. She specialises in using fairy tales, mythology and traditional oral storytelling to explore creativity while examining personal and social issues, and to foster meaning-making, problem-solving and wellbeing.

Elena Volkova is a transmedia storytelling practitioner with qualifications in literary and museum studies and creative industries (QUT). Her innovative narrative-based artistic practice focuses on building resilient and sustainable peer support communities. Her area of practice includes creative life story writing, digital storytelling, and oral history practice.

**Nicki Cassimatis**  
University of Queensland

## **Poetry at the crossroads: More than just words**

### **Abstract**

“Since the Sumerian poet Enheduanna carved her odes to the goddess Inanna ... more than 4,500 years ago, civilizations have expressed their most beautiful, tragic, triumphant, and perceptive thoughts through poetry”<sup>i</sup>. This poetry has provided a rich window into human experience for creative writers, educators, philosophers and socio-cultural and political historians, among others.

In our own day, the growing health humanities movement across the globe<sup>ii</sup> is broadening the scope and reputation of literature, beyond its traditional academic and vocational roles, to bring the reflective and healing power of poetry into everyday life for ordinary people to enhance well-being. Creative writing is increasingly being accepted as an accessible tool for well-being and healing within a broad range of clinical, educational, organisation and community settings, but has yet to gain serious traction in Australia.

This paper and mini-workshop will aim to affirm the vision for poetry as ‘vital creative endeavour’, citing examples from the presenter’s own work and lived experience, to illustrate the creative, healing and transformative power of words<sup>iii</sup>. Participants will sample guided sensorimotor activities designed to encourage social and emotional connection, simultaneously to the writing process and to self.

### **Biography**

Nicki Cassimatis is an experienced language and pastoral care teacher, workshop facilitator and published poet. She holds a Bachelor of Arts (UQ) and is completing a Graduate Certificate in Mental Health (UQ). Her poetry workshops take a multisensory approach to creative writing as a tool for well-being and personal transformation.

<sup>i</sup> <http://www.webexhibits.org/poetry/index.html>

<sup>ii</sup> Crawford, P., Brown, B., Baker, C., Tischler, V. & Abrams, B. (2015) *Health Humanities*. Palgrave: London.

<sup>iii</sup> Bolton, G., G (1999) *The Therapeutic Potential of Creative Writing*. Jessica Kingsley: London.

**Janice Caulfield**  
Curtin University

## **Writing biographical fiction: What is left over, after?**

### **Abstract**

Biographical fiction narratives, often of famous artists have, claims David Lodge (2014), become 'a fashionable form of literary fiction'. Yet in writing about famous people, the novelist is most often faced with countless biographies and archival materials in letters, literary notes, diaries, and in the works (and reviews) of the subject author/artist themselves, to say nothing of the academic studies surrounding the subject and their work. The problem for the novelist then, in researching their subject, is where to draw the line. Should we, as Hayden White (1974) suggests of historiography, feel obliged to interpret every available text, in order for a full and accurate picture to be faithfully drawn? Or, in doing so, are we impeding the originality of our own work? As one critic has suggested, 'the more (biographical fiction) stacks up its evidence, its sources, its academic credentials, the more it condemns itself to a secondary status' (John Mullan, 2005).

This paper examines the challenge for biographical fiction writers in imagining the lives of our subjects beyond that which has been documented — the 'what is left over', after reading the extant literature. The paper's focus is on my own work in progress, a biographical novel about the life of the South African writer and social theorist, Olive Schreiner.

### **Biography**

Janice is a PhD candidate in the School of Media, Creative Arts and Social Inquiry. She has embraced creative writing, in particular, historical fiction as a medium to explore the history of social and political thought. In 2018 she was a recipient of a Katharine Susannah Pritchard Writers Centre Residential Award.

**Cuifen Chen, Nicole Kwan, Peter Morgan, Prachi Agarwal & Seema Punwani**  
College of the Arts, Singapore

## **Finding home from the outside in: 1 reading by 5 Singapore postgraduate students from 12 countries**

### **Abstract**

Singapore is a place of dynamic convergences. One-fifth of the population comes from outside the country. For five postgraduate students — citizens, residents and expatriates — it is a place for warm hellos, bittersweet goodbyes, frustrations and the magic of discovery. With experiences living in a dozen countries, we present readings of fiction and creative nonfiction that explore heart and home through the context of global literature and diaspora referencing Edward Said (*The Other*), Homi K. Bhabha (questioning binary dichotomies) and Gayatri C. Spivak (ownership of discourse).

Singapore—with its four official languages and a hybrid ‘Singlish,’ to say nothing of home-grown slang, jargon and codes—is an ideal place to question and form tentative answers about the globalisation of literature. Amidst recent SingLit critical and popular successes (Kevin Kwan’s *Crazy Rich Asians*, Sonny Liew’s *The Art of Charlie Chan Hock Chye* and Sharlene Teo’s *Ponti*), we explore questions such as: does globalisation produce homogeneity? Or do culture, identity, territory and citizenship still triumph? To what extent is a ‘Singaporean voice’ possible, and if it is, is SingLit hampered by being exclusionary of the expatriate voices writing from its shores?

In a city-state that is both hyper-globalising and post-colonial, five writers who have lived in 12 countries explore and wrestle with these questions through their postgraduate Creative Writing education.

### **Biographies**

Cuifen Chen, MA Creative Writing student, LASALLE College of the Arts, Singapore. Cuifen grew up in Singapore and studied in York, the UK’s most

haunted city. She has also lived in London and Sydney, and explores place, personhood, and belonging.

Nicole Kwan, MA Creative Writing student, LASALLE College of the Arts, Singapore. Nicole examines her place in the world through narratives of identity, disability, and community from the heart of Singapore, where she was born and raised.

Peter Morgan, MA Creative Writing student, LASALLE College of the Arts, Singapore. Canadian-born Peter has lived and worked in China, the United Kingdom, Indonesia — amongst other places — and is now based in Singapore. His writing and photography investigate universal truths and local realities from inside the modern organisation.

Prachi Agarwal, MA Creative Writing student, LASALLE College of the Arts, Singapore. Prachi is from Mumbai — a city of contradictions, a modern metropolis in a profoundly conservative country. Now she lives in Singapore and explores paradoxes within herself and her adopted city.

Seema Punwani, MA Creative Writing student, LASALLE College of the Arts, Singapore. Born in Spain and raised in Mumbai, Seema has now lived in Singapore longer than India. A 'local-expat,' she writes from an outside-in view of the island-state.

**Matthew Chrulew**  
Curtin University

## **Writing the mammoth: Prehistory and postapocalypse**

### **Abstract**

The mammoth is the totem animal of the Anthropocene. It features prominently in novels, films and other media reflecting on environmental vulnerability and the place and power of humans among other animals. Debates continue about the causes of their prehistoric extinction—was it human hunting (overkill), climate change (overchill), or disease (overill)?—and about the ethics of de-extinction projects to clone, backbreed or synthesise them. Some even dream of reintroducing mammoths to a rewilded Siberian Pleistocene Park that would help arrest global warming. In this presentation I will discuss my research on the natural and cultural history of the mammoth, and read from my work in progress *The Lay of Mamont*, a speculative fiction novel about a community devoted to protecting a resurrected mammoth herd in a postapocalyptic world.

### **Biography**

Matthew Chrulew is a Senior Research Fellow in the Centre for Culture and Technology and the School of Media, Creative Arts and Social Inquiry at Curtin University. He has published numerous essays and short stories, and the novella *The Angælien Apocalypse*. He edited, with Dinesh Wadiwel, *Foucault and Animals* and, with Deborah Bird Rose and Thom van Dooren, *Extinction Studies: Stories of Time, Death and Generations*, and was founding associate editor of *Environmental Humanities* from 2012-2017.

**Lowen Clarke & Adrian Masterman-Smith**  
The Miecatt Institute

## **Empowerment script/Story seats**

### **Abstract**

We want to introduce our work and start ongoing conversations. Adrian has been a local council arts officer who ran a Story Seats project in Central Victoria. The project inspired groups to create story seats and books. Adrian will show how the project unfolded. Lowen is a doctoral candidate at Miecatt, and an ethicist, and has created a new script, Empowerment Script, which is takes story and image to another level of helping with PTSD and trauma. There has been some initial clinical work with good results for PTSD, dissociation and dyslexia.

Together, we help communities and individuals tell their stories. We explore the combination of fiction, words and visuals for practice, research and therapy. Out of both the doctoral and community work, we believe that creative writing therapy can be enhanced if it is undertaken by creating fictional stories with words and visuals. Doing fictional writing and art takes the pressure off the therapeutic process. The created story can then be explored by the participant.

We have undertaken many diverse projects, and the common thread seems to be getting people to enjoy themselves, and have fun. We are proposing to develop a conversation based around these insights and practices.

### **Biographies**

Currently a doctoral candidate, Lowen is a picturebook author and illustrator, animator, theologian, classicist, and ethicist on the DHHS HREC. He was vice-president of the Williamstown Literary Festival, was on the National Trust Committee that saved Melbourne's W-class trams, is on the Arts Advisory Panels register of Creative Victoria. He is the Agent in Victoria for the National Association of Poetry Therapists, has coached at national level in sport, and is a member of the ISSTD.

Recently arts project officer of Central Goldfields Shire, Adrian has a Masters in design from prestigious St Martins, London, run design practices, been a coach and sports educator, facilitated community events for Midsumma. He has a Masters in Organisational Dynamics, and was a director at the Louis Joel Community House, Altona.

**Katharine Coles**  
University of Utah

## ***Look Both Ways: Reassembling history, negotiating family***

### **Abstract**

Seventeen years ago, I conceived the nonfiction book just published as *Look Both Ways* as a straightforward narrative about my grandparents: his life as an explorer (eventually chief geologist and head of exploration for Standard Oil); hers as carefree expatriate wife in Bogota, Batavia, San Jose, and Havana. However, first sorting through literally thousands of pages of letters, journals, and my grandmother's poems, along with photos, sketchbooks, and the expedition films my grandfather began shooting in the late twenties, then traveling to many of the places they lived, some glamorous and some not, I realized I had a complicated set of stories to tell alongside theirs: of women and of resource capitalism in the early 20th century, of my family, of my own journeys. As I slowly assembled my narrative, at any moment of building or unwinding, the question pressed: what story occupied the center? And what, at any given moment, was the right strategy or technique to bring to bear: narrative, lyric, elliptical, disjunctive? In this presentation, I will read from the book, show images from their sketchbooks and photo albums, and address the many formal problems, and provisional solutions, writing the book raised.

### **Biography**

Katharine Coles' seventh collection of poems, *Wayward*, is forthcoming in 2019; in 2018, she published a memoir, *Look Both Ways*. In the US, she has received awards from the NEA, the NSF, the NEH, and the Guggenheim Foundation. She is a Distinguished Professor of English at the University of Utah.

**Katharine Coles & Shane Strange**  
University of Utah & University of Canberra

## **Abstractions**

### **Abstract**

In writing poetry, we are often forewarned to, after the moderns, ‘avoid abstractions’. This in some way aligns with the old writing class dictum ‘show don’t tell’, where description of the concrete alludes to, but never should foreclose upon, the ultimate effect of a poem. However, in the field of creativity research, abstraction is seen as a key tool of creative cognition, along with application, analogy, and combination (Ward et. Al 2004; Welling 2007). What happens when the concept of abstraction forms the basis for the creation of poetry?

In 2018 a group of ten poets were tasked with addressing poems to ten different abstractions: cost, obligation, nonsense, space, pleasure, identity, rhythm, accuracy, conjecture and youth for an anthology aptly titled *Abstractions*. In this creative/critical presentation we will both read and report upon work arising from this book.

### **Biographies**

Katharine Coles’ seventh collection of poems, *Wayward*, is forthcoming in 2019; in 2018, she published a memoir, *Look Both Ways*. In the US, she has received awards from the NEA, the NSF, the NEH, and the Guggenheim Foundation. She is a Distinguished Professor of English at the University of Utah.

Shane Strange is a doctoral candidate and Teaching Fellow in the Faculty of Arts and Design at the University of Canberra and an HDR member of the Faculty’s Centre for Creative and Cultural Research (CCCR). He is also a publisher and editor at Recent Work Press, a small poetry press based in Canberra, Australia.

**Nicole Crowe**  
James Cook University

## **Funny strange: Dismantling tropes of place through humour**

### **Abstract**

In this paper I will investigate how applied incongruity humour in creative writing can aid in overturning the trope of the 'island paradise'. Writers, artists, travelers and poets have metaphorically represented islands as redemptive utopias, offering the promise of adventure (Howe 10-12). As Royle notes, "Islands have a favoured place in popular culture, a romantic association aided by the media, which seemingly cannot write or broadcast the word 'island' without attaching 'paradise' to it" (154).

Having grown up on an island in north Queensland, I do not easily relate to the 'paradise' image of an island. I am writing a memoir set on Magnetic Island and this paper will explore the practical applications of incongruity humour theory to my creative work, and its value to both representing place and dismantling and deconstructing these enduring island tropes.

### **Biography**

Nicole is a PhD candidate in creative writing at James Cook University with the aid of an Australian Postgraduate Award scholarship. Her thesis considers the uses and functions of humour in regional family memoir. Drafts of her creative work have been awarded an Australian Association of Authors Mentorship for Emerging Writers (2017) and a Varuna Writers' Fellowship (2017).

**Christelle Davis**  
Chinese University of Hong Kong

## **English across the curriculum project**

### **Abstract**

The English Across the Curriculum Project (2016-2019) at The Chinese University of Hong Kong aims to investigate and support the way that English writing is taught and assessed in various disciplines across campus. CUHK is a bilingual university with classes taught mostly in English, yet until the EAC project, there was no monitoring of nor guidance for how English was used by both teachers and students. Thus, the initial research revealed somewhat sensitive truths about how language and writing had been utilized in most courses. This project was conceived as alternative approach to manage the language and writing issues that content teachers could not independently address.

This presentation will demonstrate the ways the project has supported English writing in various faculties including Science, Engineering, Linguistics, Business and Architecture. It will explain the theory behind the project, showcase some of the materials used and discuss the many obstacles that were encountered along the way. In particular, it will explore how aspects of creative and academic writing were integrated with content teaching to bridge gaps in students' learning and support their needs.

### **Biography**

Dr Christelle Davis is a lecturer at the Chinese University of Hong Kong and co-supervisor of the English Across the Curriculum Project and the Capstone Writing App Project. She is course coordinator for English Through Popular Culture, English Through Creative Writing and Business Communication.

**Katrin Den Elzen**  
Curtin University

## **Rewriting loss: An alternative way of approaching extreme life experience**

### **Abstract**

Austrian author Barbara Pachi-Eberhart's memoirs *vier minus drei* [four minus three] (2010) is noteworthy for the portrayal of her unorthodox and life-affirming way in which she responded to the deaths of her whole family. This paper researches this text, which is written in unsentimental and eloquent prose, to explore the narrative strategies employed by the memoirist to represent her identity construction. It will show that the author's narrative tone is characterised by drawing on unique metaphors, images and parables, thus giving a strong personal and philosophical voice. This can be seen as a personal as well as a cultural signature. Further, the positioning of the worldview of Pachi-Eberhart's clown identity represents a new characterisation of bereavement. The memoirist makes use of citing a long personal email in the text, which she wrote to friends immediately after her loss in order to keep communication open. The book is structured around this email, which serves as her gateway to the memoir and leads to her new subject position of inspirational speaker on grief. This research is intended to contribute new knowledge to the scholarship on life writing about grief by researching an alternative way of portraying loss.

### **Biography**

Katrin Den Elzen holds a PhD in creative writing and is a sessional academic at Curtin and Murdoch University. Her work has been published in *TEXT*, *Life Writing*, *The European Journal of Life Writing*, *The Australian Association of Writing Program's refereed conference proceedings* and *the British Journal of Guidance and Counselling*.

**Robyn Dennison**  
Melbourne University

## **Writing the adolescent perspective beyond young adult fiction**

### **Abstract**

This presentation argues that YA can be defined not by the presence of an adolescent perspective alone, but by a set of formal and ideological tendencies that, narratologically speaking, construct the implied reader as themselves adolescent. While literary novels such as *Floundering* by Romy Ash and *Extremely Loud and Incredibly Close* by Jonathan Safran Foer feature the perspectives of children, there are few examples of an adolescent perspective within non-YA literary fiction. I consider this phenomenon in relation to the cultural position of adolescence in the West, where it occupies an abject space of transience, turbulence and *sturm und drang*. By comparing two contemporary Australian YA texts — Claire Zorn's *The Protected* and James Roy's *Town* — to two Australian literary novels that feature adolescent perspectives — Justin Chambers' *Suburbia* and Christos Tsiolkas' *The Slap* — I reveal the current constraints on how we are expected to write adolescent characters, and I explore the motivations for writing beyond them. I conclude by suggesting such writings challenge dominant understandings of adolescence, which imagine the teenager as an incomplete precursor to the ostensibly fully-formed adult subject.

### **Biography**

Robyn Dennison is a PhD candidate at Melbourne University, where she teaches creative writing and is researching the narrative production of identity in lesbian young adult fiction. Her fiction and research have appeared in publications such as *Overland*, *Voiceworks* and *Children's Literature Association Quarterly*.

**Carlos Dews, Elizabeth Geoghegan & Susan Bradley Smith**  
John Cabot University & Curtin University

## **Grace, lost & found: Writers on the run (an experiment)**

### **Abstract**

It may be true that 'Rome was a poem pressed into service as a city', and that we all of us came here looking for a landscape that suited our elusive genre(s), but we were unprepared for the lost and found life to come. As expatriates, living in one language and writing in another, we may have arrived as minimalists but soon became baroque, loving Rome because we were not Roman, living in the shadows cast by the church and State, forever peripheral, yearning to journey beyond our native cartographies. This panel considers the lives of three (wildly) different writers on the run from different places for different reasons, and their lost and found relationships to Rome and its (elusive) grace. Experimental in form, the panel will be the record of an imagined conversation, with both prepared and impromptu questions, with the answers in the form of a conversation, a fictional recitation from the writer's own body of work, or at times a dramatic triologue. Themes of exploration include trauma as trigger for flight from home, the effect of landscape on genre, how 'The soul becomes dyed with the colour of its thoughts' [Marcus Aurelius], and what it might mean to be forever homeless and also at home, lost and found, with and without the grace of the Eternal City.

### **Biographies**

Elizabeth Geoghegan is the author of *Natural Disasters: Stories* and the bestselling memoir *The Marco Chronicles*. Her work has appeared in *The Paris Review*, *The Best Travel Writing*, *El Pais*, and elsewhere. Her story collection *eightball* is forthcoming with Santa Fe Writers Project. She lives in Rome.

Carlos Dews is the world's leading authority on the American novelist Carson McCullers. He is professor of literature and creative writing at John Cabot University in Rome, Italy, where he also directs the Institute for Creative Writing and Literary Translation.

Susan Bradley Smith is a poet and lifewriter. Her latest book is the verse novel *The Postcult Heart*, with her memoir *We Had Love*, and the suffrage theatre history *Dramatic Negotiations* forthcoming in 2019. She teaches creative writing at Curtin University and John Cabot University, Rome.

**Jacqueline Dickin**  
Curtin University

## **Entrepreneurial Illness: Reading the ‘sick body’ and wellness through Belle Gibson’s Insta-memoir**

### **Abstract**

In 2015, ‘wellness warrior’ Belle Gibson’s lie about healing her malignant brain tumour with whole foods and alternative natural therapies was exposed by Australian media. This hoax functioned through Gibson’s use of automedial and traditional forms of life writing about cancer and wellness through social media site Instagram and the controversial publication of *The Whole Pantry* by Penguin Random House. This paper uses the Gibson hoax to investigate how new forms of illness life writing on social media function as a site where social ideas about ‘proper subjects’ shape illness practices. Informed by the research of Carsten Stage in his book *Networked Cancer* (2017), I use the ‘logic of effectuation’, where contingencies of life are treated as entrepreneurial opportunities, to problematize the popularity of Gibson’s wellness industry as a form of constrictive normativity that determines who is a ‘proper subject’ and who is not. This paper asks what the Gibson hoax can tell us about new forms of life writing, and how a sociology of the ‘sick body’ manifests in a neoliberal capitalist society. Conclusively, I argue that the Gibson hoax promotes unrealistic and privileged accounts of illness ‘living’ which dangerously oversimplifies the diverse realities of illness ‘suffering’.

### **Biography**

Jacqueline Dickin is a PhD Candidate from the college of Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences at Flinders University, South Australia. She received a Bachelor of Arts (H1) from Curtin University. A member of the Flinders Life Narrative Research Group, her interests are the intersections of life writing and trauma/redemption memoirs.

**Dan Disney**  
Sogang University, Seoul

, et c-

### **Abstract**

Through undertaking extended periods of Vipassanā meditation (a methodology which foregrounds processes of disengaging from sensory stimuli), these so-called sijo/stlings arise. The texts, which appear unbidden and are often directly transcribed, extend (or “jostle”) into the lines of these experimental sijo, that aphoristic three-lined Korean song form. Historically, sijo were accompanied by the gayageum (a 12-stringed zither), and first appeared in the courts of the Chosŏn dynasty (1393-1598). As per Korean Studies scholar, David McCann, “[t]he deliberate slowness of a sijo performance is said to bring the performer and audience into a state of tranquility and profound concentration” (*Princeton Encyclopedia*, 5th ed., p. 776). Interweaving translations from a range of centuries-old sijo, “ , et c-” explores notions of subjectivity, exile, intimacy and dis/connection.

### **Biography**

Dan Disney teaches with Sogang University’s English Literature program. A selection of his critical writing, ficto-criticism, co-translations, and book reviews appears online at <https://sogang.academia.edu/DDisney>. He collects broadsides (avidly) and old typewriters (occasionally), and recently purchased a 25 acre mountain, deep in the wilds of the Korean peninsula.

**Dan Disney**  
Sogang University, Seoul

## ***Periferal* others: Language, lyric, alterity, identity in John Kinsella's *Graphology Poems 1995-2015*.**

### **Abstract**

If poets are in the business of cultivating “voice” then, logically enough, to which ends? Is there an onus not only to learn how to speak but also to become versed in what to speak of? In the nearly 800 pages that comprise the three volumes of his *Graphology Poems 1995-2015* (2016), John Kinsella demonstrates an exemplary moral anger registering iterations of colonial “omni-speak” as unethical (1: 93). Asserting in his recent *Polysituatedness: a poetics of displacement* (2017) how “[p]oetry is so often less about ‘art’ and more about ‘activism’ [...] I am interested in the poem’s potential for resistance, not its compliance with a status quo” (40), this paper reads Kinsella’s *Graphology Poems* as exemplary in their resistance and outright refusal to acquiesce to the epistemically violent nullifications of “Australia” as a place and discourse that has historically centralized its compliances.

### **Biography**

Dan Disney teaches with Sogang University’s English Literature program. A selection of his critical writing, ficto-criticism, co-translations, and book reviews appears online at <https://sogang.academia.edu/DDisney>. He collects broadsides (avidly) and old typewriters (occasionally), and recently purchased a 25 acre mountain, deep in the wilds of the Korean peninsula.

**Leanne Dodd**  
Central Queensland University

## **A hero's journey framework for post-traumatic recovery through creative writing**

### **Abstract**

Narrative therapy comes out of postmodern and social constructionist critiques of human behaviour, asserting we can choose who we want to be through retelling the story of our lives. White and Epston (1990: 3) propose behaviour associated with trauma is determined by the meanings people attribute to traumatic events. These meanings are ascribed through a process whereby people 'story' their lives. The most powerful transformation trauma survivors can make is to re-write their life stories. I chose to do this through a fictionalised account of my traumatic experience because of the difficulty of exposing the 'real' story. Creating a fictional work allowed me to reflect on traumatic experiences with similar emotional aftereffects, but with the emotional distance to be able to write with a deeper exploration of the subjects. This paper proposes that writing a fictional account of traumatic experiences could achieve similar benefits as the real accounts relied upon in narrative therapy. It further deduces that Campbell's (2004) hero-journey model could provide a metaphor for writers to become the hero in their own post-traumatic growth journey through creative writing. The resulting framework may be useful for other creative writers embarking on a similar writing journey for post-traumatic recovery.

### **Biography**

Dr Leanne Dodd is a lecturer in Literary and Cultural Studies at Central Queensland University, researching the transformative potential of creative writing, with qualifications in arts, education, training, mental health, communications and business. Under the pen name of Lea Scott, she has published three crime novels with developing themes of trauma. Leanne served on the Queensland Writers Centre Management Committee for six years, most recently as Chair, and is an appointed mentor for emerging writers. She has appeared on festival panels and facilitated writing workshops

and seminars throughout Queensland. This research was supported by an Australian Government Research Training Program (RTP) Scholarship.

**Gillian Dooley**  
Flinders University

## **From Timor to Mauritius: Matthew Flinders' Island identity**

### **Abstract**

In the official journal that Matthew Flinders kept on the *Investigator* there appears, peripherally and unexpectedly, a decidedly personal and romantic account of his visit to an estate on Timor in April 1803. It does not appear in his published account of *Voyage*. Despite the initial attraction of this paradise, he decides the island life is not for an ambitious man like him.

Later the same year, Flinders arrived at Mauritius seeking a safe harbour and was detained by the French governor until 1810. In 1805 he ruminated in his *Private Journal* about his situation – there were unexpected compensations for his enforced sojourn: new friendships, and time to write, read, think and mature. His view of the drawbacks of island life was confirmed in one respect: the pace of his life on the island necessarily slackened, or relaxed; but this allowed, or forced, this driven over-achiever to 'learn patience'. As chronicled in his journal, he developed in ways he could not foresee.

In this paper I explore the island identity that Flinders developed during his long stay on Mauritius, in the context of his vision of islands as sites of romance, contemplation and stagnation on the periphery of intellectual life.

### **Biography**

Gillian Dooley is an Honorary Senior Research Fellow at Flinders University, South Australia. She is the co-editor of Matthew Flinders' *Private Journal* (2005) and has published several articles on Flinders. In 2014, she was invited to give the Royal Society Matthew Flinders Memorial Lecture at the Royal Society of Victoria in Melbourne, and in September 2017 she gave a lecture on Flinders and Sir Joseph Banks at the Royal Maritime Museum, Greenwich. Gillian is also the editor of two electronic journals, and the author of books and articles on literary subjects from Jane Austen to JM Coetzee.

Lucy Dougan  
Curtin University

## The vesuvian imaginary

### Abstract

This paper looks at the various imaginative uses of undergrounds, real and mythic, in key texts about the city of Naples: Roberto Rossellini's film *Journey to Italy*, Shirley Hazzard's novella *The Bay of Noon*, and Mario Martone's film *L'amore molesto*. Each of these texts resists the over-determined picturesqueness of the panorama of the Bay of Naples to explore instead ancient alleys, catacombs and ruins. In turning inwards to investigate ruined spaces, I want to argue that these texts investigate radical sites of anti-spectacle and that the self-reckonings of the central character in each text are each aided by access to the hidden and the buried. The model of access to knowledge through a breaching of boundaries between the present and the past, and the living and the dead, can be approached via Walter Benjamin and Asja Lacis's notion of porosity. How could Naples, "built on the roof of the underworld," not prompt a spatial interpretation?\* I will also consider the ways in which this material has informed my own creative response to a buried family history: what it is to have been born and raised in Australia without knowledge of an Italian father and a family in Naples.

**Quinn Eades**  
La Trobe University

## **Trans memoir as fragment and failing: a *hymenography* of the body-in-transition**

### **Abstract**

This paper is a *hymenography* of the body-in-transition, which sits “in the spacing between desire and fulfilment, between perpetration and its recollection” (Derrida, 1981) and is only ever written in fragments. What you will read here is a becoming-body, teeming with an artificially introduced hormone, which is also a text-body who deems it necessary to break with the traditional trans memoir narrative arc. But how to do this? Most trans memoir that we read follow a comforting path – the trans body is ‘wrong’ and is then made ‘right’. The gender order is maintained. Time stays linear. Making the crossing is difficult, but once we have arrived there is a measure of celebration; a sense of success.

By writing the body-in-transition, which is a body infected (loved?) by theory, a body out of place in time, a collection of ghosts wrapped around the same beating heart, a poem, a fragment that is a version of the whole, I am making narrative space for new trans narratives where there is no ‘here’ or ‘there’. There is no ‘arrival’ (unless of course one wants to arrive, because nothing is off the table when we allow our stories to hold textual complexity). I offer you here the story of one becoming-body, a re-figuring of Derrida’s spectre, a hymenography, a series of tracteries and cellular smears, a trans body that is in-text, out of time, and always, queerly, failing.

**Sara El Sayed**  
Queensland University of Technology

## **Authentic voices for minority characters**

### **Abstract**

When a person from a dominant culture engages in research with a minority group, both ethical practice, as well as authenticity, can be compromised. The same can be the case when writing stories – particularly when a writer from a dominant culture assumes the perspective of minority characters.

However, the authentic telling of minority stories is essential in countering vilification by public figures and mainstream media.

With a focus on migrant Egyptian women living in Brisbane, this paper will explore how power dynamics can change when research in creative practice is led by someone from within the minority group in question.

Through this exploration, this paper will discuss the creative writing process of constructing an authentic minority voice; barriers and challenges associated with creating a visible community identity through digital storytelling; and whether digital storytelling as a tool is effective in allowing minority groups to claim ownership of their voice in public spaces.

### **Biography**

Sara El Sayed is a Master of Fine Arts (Research) student studying at Queensland University of Technology (QUT) in Brisbane. Born in Alexandria, Egypt, Sara's identity as a migrant living in Australia has influenced her fiction and non-fiction work. Her experience in writing and publishing ranges from creative fiction, to journalism and corporate writing.

**Hayley Elliot-Ryan**  
Deakin University

## **Barbara**

### **Abstract**

*'Dreaming of islands...is dreaming of pulling away, of being already separate, far from any continent, of being lost and alone—or it is dreaming of starting from scratch, recreating, beginning anew'* (Deleuze 1974: 2).

Drawing on Deleuze's essay 'Desert Islands' and developed during research trip to the Faroe Islands in 2018, this work—part fiction and part lyric essay—serves to interrogate the position of the listener, or “peripheral narrator” in writing. It is an excerpt from the in-progress collection of interconnected short fictions: *Thief Knot*.

**Hayley Elliot-Ryan**  
Deakin University

## **Missing persons: Using genre to interrogate process**

### **Abstract**

Police procedurals, detective narratives, missing person fictions and true crime documentaries continue to grow in popularity and diversify, leading to questions about why these genres are so popular in the first place. Inspired by David Lynch's claim that 'every story is a detective story,' this paper argues that in fiction, every story is a missing persons story, an unstable and forensic gathering and narrativizing of evidence that seeks to stabilise the position author, but instead reveals their absence both in the process of writing, and in the final product.

**Robyn Ferrell, Barbara Holloway & Jennifer Rutherford**  
Australian National University & University of Adelaide

## **The crisis deepens: On writing in a time of troubling change**

### **Abstract**

This panel looks at some contemporary writing landscapes from out of the corner of the eye –in our peripheral vision is the impending calamity of climate change, the upending of cultural norms by digital disruption, the collapse of realism and the novel as the documenting form for our time ... In our different writing practices, we move to meet the crises with new ways of writing:

Robyn Ferrell captures an argument about the culture industry, the commodity of the book and the imposing of marketing imperatives and digital disruption. Through her project *Free Stuff*, she looks to new genres of creative non-fiction to take over the old-world space of the essay.

Barbara Holloway, drawing on three manuscripts she has written for three rural localities within a single region, argues for human voices as integral to place-formation. Continual negotiations with the post-colonial Anthropocene present are enabled by including other voices, informal and local, historical, literary and virtual.

Jennifer Rutherford turns to lifewriting as particularly attuned to writing the uncanny and the improbable. Parsing the indecipherable elements of a life its *forte*, the intimate self illuminates aspects of a larger collective condition in her current project, *The Encyclopedia of Lost Things*.

This panel involves creative work which incorporates a scholarly framework to be presented along with the creative element.

### **Biographies**

Robyn Ferrell is Adjunct Professor at the Centre for Law, Arts & Humanities at the Australian National University. She has written several books of philosophy and creative writing; *The Real Desire* (2004, Indra) was shortlisted for the NSW Premiers' Awards. She is currently working on projects in

memoir, creative nonfiction and art writing; her most recent published essay is 'Genealogy and the Sea' in *Offshoot*, UWA Press 2017.

Barbara Holloway is Visiting Fellow in Literature, Languages and Linguistics at the Australian National University. Her creative and academic work has focused on language and embodiments of place. Her most recent publication, 'The Undead of Australian Forests' appeared in *Fusion*, 2017.

Jennifer Rutherford is Professor and Director of JM Coetzee Centre for Creative Practice at the University of Adelaide. Her create interdisciplinary work fuses the Humanities and Social Sciences, experimenting with writing and visual representation. She is interested in narrative, memory and place-making; her most recent essay publication is 'House of Flowers' in *Best Essays 2017*, Black Inc.

**Rose Ferrell, Janice Simpson & Kate Sands**

Edith Cowan University, Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology & University of Technology Sydney

## **Voice as concept; voice in practice**

### **Abstract**

In juxtaposing voice in screenwriting with the voice of the art critic and with the stories of adoptees told through the lyric essay, this panel seeks to expand a concept of voice, contrasting what may be perceived through sight with what may be experienced through the body, bringing greater awareness to the processes of translation which are necessarily entangled with speaking/writing these perceptions.

Presentation One: What voice in screenwriting can illuminate about voice in other genres of writing (Rose Ferrell)

In the course of creative practice research into voice in screenwriting a comprehensive questionnaire on screenwriter's voice was completed by Australian and international screenwriters. The questionnaire interrogated the ways that screenwriters experienced voice in their work. The findings, in tandem with other creative practice research methodologies, led to the development of a conceptual framework which aids in discerning and describing voice in a screenplay.

Extrapolating from the ideas encapsulated in the framework, this paper seeks to explore the ways in which the framework may be relevant to other genres of writing, asking are their universal concepts and practices which are common to voice in writing more generally? Coming full circle, the paper then seeks to tease out the ways that this knowledge of voice may be helpful to writers in other genres in the flow of their practice.

Presentation Two: An adoption chorus (Janice Simpson)

Based on interviews with three women who were adopted under closed adoption laws, I have written an experimental lyrical essay using a shared voice to tell what ties these women's' stories to each other: being adopted as

infants and a strong link to Scotland; and individual voices to describe each woman's unique experiences with place, memory and identity. The creative work in part uses the structure of a Greek Chorus for the women's collective voice, which comments on and draws together their shared experiences. It also borrows from the witches in Shakespeare's *Macbeth*, who speak both collectively and individually. This work is undertaken during my creative practices research. The reader is invited to form fresh, and perhaps transformed, understandings of the impact of adoption on the Australian cultural and emotional psyche.

### Presentation Three: The voice and creative criticism (Kate Sands)

In recent decades art criticism has undergone a quiet revolution. Expanding beyond the valorisation of standards or the defence of the old against the new, or vice versa, it can now be found in expanded forms of creative criticism, literature as criticism, or multi-discursive forms that combine the role and tropes of both. This paper concerns the search for a voice with which to write about artistic practice in the context of contemporary visual art. Contemporary visual art is a diverse and ever expanding field, one that continually pushes the boundaries between art and non-art. An array of factors, including the material and environmental, influences both artist and the shape of the artwork. Mapping the emergence of individual works of art from a materialist perspective generates a heterogeneous text, one that encompasses narrative, thick description, criticism, discussion of ideas and reflection.

### **Biographies**

Dr Rose Ferrell has a PhD in screenwriting through the Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts, and is an adjunct lecturer at Edith Cowan University. She has twenty years' experience as a technician and writer working on feature film, television drama series and commercial production. Her specific research interests have been screenwriter's voice and national inflection in voice. She is author of a journal article introducing the concept of voice in screenwriting (Journal of Screenwriting, Vol 8, Issue 2(June 2017c),

and a chapter on voice in the Disney-Pixar transnational film, *Big Hero 6* (2017b). Rose currently lives in regional West Australia, where she constantly finds inspiration for madcap characters and off-beat adventure in the stunning frontier: the wild Australian west.

Janice Simpson is a part-time PhD candidate in the School of Media and Communication at RMIT who has completed her Mid Candidature milestone. Her creative practice research is focused on adoptees' connections to (dis)place. She is exploring the lyric essay and where that might lead in her creation of stories about place, memory and identity. She is working on representing the layers of meaning that make up a person's story, trying to shape these layers as both physical and narrative representations. She has published a travel memoir '*Let Sleeping Dogs Lie*' (2012) and a crime novel '*Murder in Mt Martha*' (2016). A new crime novel '*A Body of Work*' is due out in September 2018.

Kate Sands is a former art educator at the Museum of Contemporary Art and an occasional art and dance critic. She is currently in the final stages of a Doctorate of Creative Arts at the University of Technology Sydney. Her creative work is a non-fiction book of essays in the genre of creative criticism. Its focus is the work and practice of six contemporary Australian visual artists, and it maps the material and environmental factors that have helped shape their work. The book is designed for a non-art world readership and its conceptual framework derives from a work of literary theory by the writer Italo Calvino. His schema comprises a series of universal values. In the book she pairs both his choice of qualities and his literary treatment of them with artist case studies, transposing them into a different field of creative endeavour. She also strives to adopt something of Calvino's economy and elegance of style, and the encyclopaedic nature of his approach.

**Katrina Finlayson**  
Independent Scholar

## **Braided lyric essays and conversations with ghosts of place**

### **Abstract**

The braided essay, a form of lyric essay, ‘allows a way for research and outside voices to intertwine with your own voice and experience’ (Miller and Paola: 2012). Jennifer Sinor (2014) suggests that the braided essay is an ideal form for writers marginalised by gender, sexuality or race, and for the researcher who ‘understands that all knowledge is subjective and wants to highlight the porosity between knower and known’. As T Clutch Fleischmann (2013) notes, genre bending essays position the writer as guide and informant rather than authority, and use ‘the shifting, hidden, exposed, and expansive truths of the margin as collective tools to help us better understand the world’.

In exploring the braided essay form, I examine, as case study, a growing collection of my own braided travel essays. In writing these essays, I drew heavily on Sinor’s approach to teaching braided essay writing, but also experimented with the form and the writing process, creating a variant of Sinor’s model.

This discussion speaks both to the broader value the braided essay form offers creative writers, and to its specific usefulness as a form for a queer feminist writer who seeks to engage in conversations with marginalised ghosts of place.

### **Biography**

Dr Katrina Finlayson is an early career researcher, who currently works independently towards opportunities with creative nonfiction. Her personal and critical essays have been published in *Meanjin*, *TEXT*, and *Axon*. Her writing explores the uncanny anxiety of being a stranger, with motifs of travel, contested memory, and home.

**Brentley Frazer**  
Griffith University

## ***The Inflicted Yard* (creative work)**

### **Abstract**

*The Inflicted Yard* presents as a narrative lyrical poem about Australia, but soon the charade drops revealing a semantic phantom who, via an inverted syntax, orates a phenomenological post-Baudrillardian psychotropic meditation on conceptual thinking, its cracked lens focused on ideas of place and people. From those hair-line fractures in the spectres loupe-eyes, a transliminal perspective emerges, critical of symbolic ambiguity and resulting cognitive dissonance inherent in self-aware and self-defined animals with language. Two contradictory concepts dominate belief in Western cultures: we occupy a universe governed by material causality comprehensible to reason, yet we are also the agents of free will. We name ourselves Human; *trans*. 'Earthly Being', i.e., dirt and spirit, the obvious and the unimaginable, simultaneously. Grand deities we are then, so let us proclaim ourselves sapiens, or wise. These conceptual abstracts are semantic spooks, spectral relics haunting thinking. *The Inflicted Yard* invites the reader/listener to hold contradictory ideals in mind, beauty in rust and ugliness in puppies. The vocal presentation of the poem by the author is accompanied by a film of a woodpecker slaughtering two Mourning Dove chicks in their nest.

### **Biography**

Dr Brentley Frazer is an Australian author of poetry, prose & academic papers on experimental creative writing. *Riding Sharks: new poems* HeadworX, (2019) *Scoundrel Days: a memoir*, UQP (2017). *Aboriginal to Nowhere: new poems*, HeadworX (2016).

**Fox Fromholtz**  
University of Canberra

## **‘No place for homosexuals’: National identity and belonging in the context of the Australian marriage law postal survey**

### **Abstract**

This presentation is a preliminary examination into the contentious relationship between queerness and Australian national identity. The inclusive-exclusive nature of national identity and the discursive nature of its construction mean that the extent to which queer communities can be seen as belonging within national boundaries is constantly under debate. Indeed, nationalistic arguments have been documented as flavouring a number of public debates regarding queer issues. The recent Australian Marriage Law Postal Survey (2017) foregrounded this debate, with activists both for and against marriage equality framing arguments around conceptions of Australian national identity and belonging. This presentation will discuss the findings of a practice-led research project examining how notions of national identity, queer identity, and belonging, arose during the Australian Marriage Law Postal Survey. Drawing on standpoint theory, the project will utilise a series of interviews with queer Australians to inform the basis of a work of creative nonfiction documenting the lived experiences of queer Australians with regard to national identity and belonging during the debate.

### **Biography**

Fox Fromholtz is a Canberra writer with an interest in telling queer stories. He has written for a number of short films, including the Art with Impact Short Film Competition winner, *Core*, and is currently an honours student at the University of Canberra.

**Simon Gluskie**  
Deakin University

## **Experimental literature: Reshaping traditional forms for an alternate account of reality**

### **Abstract**

This paper will be a discussion of how experimental approaches to storytelling can allow the exploration of subject matter that would prove more difficult if tackled using traditional narrative forms. Alain Robbe-Grillet and the more recent David Foster Wallace will be used as examples of writers that have purposefully moved away from established modes in an attempt to approach abstract and metaphysical problems that arise in the traversing of reality. Both Grillet and Wallace allow traditional ideas of characterisation to be questioned, while still maintaining a level of fundamental humanity in the way their characters interact and experience the world around them. Each author also uses varying degrees of fractured form to mirror content, a technique that enables the displacement of time and the reader's experience of this time. I will include creative work that has been written with these ideas in mind, practice encouraged by experimentation as a means of altering the way both writers and readers experience narrative.

### **Biography**

Simon is undertaking a PhD in creative writing at Deakin University. His research interests are simulation, surveillance, control and paranoia. Currently reading Gravity's Rainbow for inspiration, his favourite authors are Haruki Murakami and David Foster-Wallace.

**Donna Maree Hanson**  
University of Canberra

## **Popular romance fiction: Reconciling feminism to romance reading and writing**

### **Abstract**

Contemporary popular romance novels are set in the everyday context and as such cannot but help portray the world in which the authors and their characters exist, including social issues present in the mind of the author, whether consciously or unconsciously. Throughout the 1970s and 1980s and since, the woman's movement has been politically active and concepts of feminism have entered into everyday discourse. Eva Illouz describes this as feminism as a 'cultural code' (Illouz, 2014, p. 55).

This paper discusses feminism in popular romance fiction and the views of romance readers and writers gathered through an international survey undertaken in 2017. Selected analysis from the survey add to the understanding of the motivations of writers and readers of popular romance fiction, particularly the survey participants' level of identification with feminism and feminist ideals. Before the "me too" movement brought the issue of sexual harassment to the fore, it had been an issue of concern of romance readers and writers alike.

Popular romance fiction more than flirts with feminism. Writers as well as readers of popular romance fiction have no issue reconciling their concept of feminism with writing and reading in the genre.

### **Biography**

Donna Maree Hanson is a creative writing PhD candidate at the University of Canberra. Her research area is popular romance fiction and feminism. She is currently mid-way through her research.

**Lynda Hawryluk**  
Southern Cross University

## **Capturing the gloriously gloomy Gothic sub-tropics**

### **Abstract**

This paper continues my creative practice research into the emerging genre of coastal Gothic through landscape writing, and seeks to evoke the sensation of this aesthetically and thematically in poetry accompanied by a photographic exhibition. The poetry and photographs in this creative practice presentation arises from explorations around the waterways of the northern rivers region of far north coast NSW. As a keen photographer, practising poet, and amateur explorer I merge these interests and skills to capture the Gothic elements of a geographic place in images and words. The work shown will attempt to provide Oliver's 'moment of connect', that she refers to as the 'glimpse' (1994, p. 84). brought the issue of sexual harassment to the fore, it had been an issue of concern of romance readers and writers alike.

This writing from the regions explores the oppressive and sometimes restrictive atmospheric pressure and vegetation endemic to sub-tropical coastal regions. This paper will also refer to other landscape writing from similar coastal regions, providing a contextual framework for the genre, and a contemporary glimpse of the Gothic. The presentation corresponds to the conference themes of *writing from the regions, the looming; the unavoidable; the obstructive* and *reading/writing through a different lens*.

### **Biography**

Dr Lynda Hawryluk is a Senior Lecturer in Writing and Course Coordinator of Creative Writing programs at Southern Cross University. Lynda lectures in Writing units and supervises Honours, Masters and PhD students. An experienced writing workshop facilitator, Lynda has been published in both academic and creative publications.

**Dominique Hecq**  
Independent Scholar

## **Incidental subjects**

### **Abstract**

From *The Book of Elsa* to *Hush: A Fugue*, and recent work in progress, my writing is concerned with incidental subjects. *The Book of Elsa* (2000) traced the tribulations of Elsa, who was composed of seven characters, and so presented some incipient dramatisation of heteronymy. *Out of Bounds* (2009), a double story of dislocation explored autobiographical fragments drawing on the protagonist's experience of migration and motherhood by knotting together the two strands to reveal a subject at pains to re-define herself through language in a space circumscribed by sexuality, culture, and post-colonial politics, thereby piecing together the many parts that symbolically Elsa may have already comprised. *Hush: A Fugue* (2017) reified this preoccupation with dilapidated selves coalescing or coming back together by exploding the very notion of genre. 'Air' (forthcoming) returns to the idea of incidental subject by pushing the expectations of genre far beyond the limits of poetics partly through delineating the concept of heteronymy. 'Masks' explores and explodes the concept of heteronymy by putting at work a character who is anachronistic: Eurydice. This creative paper approaches the radical otherness of self, as embodied in the politics of voice by pitting it against language, its discourses and ideologies.

### **Biography**

Dominique Hecq grew up in the French-speaking part of Belgium. Her works include a novel, three collections of short stories and six books of poetry. *Hush: A Fugue* (2017) is her latest book in English. *Hors Limites*, her recreation of *Out of Bounds* (2009) is hot off the press at L'Harmattan. *Kosmogonies* is forthcoming.

**Louise Helfgott**

Edith Cowan University & University of Western Australia

## **Reading/Writing through a different lens**

### **Abstract**

My proposed paper explores family history through the intersection of three perspectives. It is based on my novel *Thistledown Seed*, shortlisted in the Dorothy Hewett Awards 2018. Part memoir and part fiction the story follows three narratives in three time periods. The three strands intersect and cross over each other connecting ancestral history with contemporary events.

- Present day Poland.
- A child growing up in Perth in the 1960s.
- A fictional narrative about my Aunts who died in the Holocaust.

The story begins when I am 11 and my brother returns from England tragically transformed. My father is devastated because David was his beloved child prodigy. Many years later, I travel to Poland to investigate the lives of my aunts, Gutka and Childa, hoping to uncover the secrets that bind and divide. I retrace my parents' journey, but my travels raise more questions than answers. Why did my father not mention his twin sister? Why did the young Gutka move to the line that led to her death? How has my life been shaped by my family's history?

By giving a brief reading from the three narratives, I will demonstrate how we are shaped by immediate and historic political and social events.

### **Biography**

Dr Louise Helfgott is an award-winning playwright, poet and author particularly interested in writing about psychological, social and cultural themes. Recent credits include *Thistledown Seed* - shortlisted Dorothy Hewett Awards, 2018. *Light of her Eye* Todhunter Literary Award, 2014. Staged 2018 Perth Fringe Festival. *Frames* staged Subiaco Arts Centre, 2014. *A Closer Sky* nominated AWGIE award, 2005.

**Alex Henderson**  
University of Canberra

## **The butterfly effect: Player agency and trope subversion in *Life is Strange* and *Until Dawn***

### **Abstract**

Interactive narratives—such as story-driven, choice-based video games—provide a unique space for playing with tropes and genre. In this paper I will explore how two different games place emphasis on player choice in shaping their narrative, and how this invites players into a process of collaborative storytelling. This process allows player-storytellers to interact with and potentially subvert familiar narrative devices and historically problematic tropes within the games. In horror-movie-inspired *Until Dawn*, the player-storyteller can ensure the survival of characters who would usually perish by the normal conventions of the horror genre, thus subverting or avoiding tropes like ‘The Final Girl’; and in *Life is Strange* the player-storyteller can choose to save a queer character from dying, thereby subverting the historic trope of ‘Bury Your Gays’. Alternatively, the player-storyteller’s choices can create narratives that play directly *into* these tropes, if they want to. Through this emphasis on “participant agency” in shaping the story, a space for narrative play emerges that allows the audience to quite literally take tropes into their own hands.

### **Biography**

Alex Henderson is a PhD candidate at the University of Canberra. Her creative thesis explores the ways writers can play with familiar tropes and archetypes for the purpose of social commentary and diverse narratives. If you ask, she will talk for days about queer YA fiction and mythology retellings.

## Writing beyond bias: Sartre and fictocriticism

### Abstract

The problem of bias in writing is necessarily an extension of bias in subjectivity. For this reason, if we wish to pursue a writing which deviates from bias, we first must consider the writer – the agent – to ask the question: What are the conditions by which bias is cultivated? The first part of this paper engages with Jean-Paul Sartre to discuss his *unreflective* and *reflective* consciousnesses. In doing so, I will show that bias is unmovable in *unreflective* consciousness and, due to the scarcity of *reflective* consciousness, is thereby tied to the fact that 'free will is at best an occasional phenomenon' (Pareboom & Caruso 2002, p. 8). That is, we (currently) do not have the capacity to maintain an acute awareness of our existence and therefore fall prey to bias; we can't negate what we aren't aware of. However, the act of writing, with its intrinsic self-reflexive potential is a viable space to counteract: What are the conditions by which *reflective* consciousness is dynamised (in turn, bias transcended)? The second part of this paper illuminates fictocriticism as a competent mode with which to explore this question and push the boundaries of what it means to write beyond bias.

**Per Henningsgaard, Danielle O’Leary & Anne Ryden**  
Curtin University

## **Professional writing as a peripheral academic discipline**

### **Abstract**

The teaching of writing in the Australian university sector is big business. One reason for this is that employers list ‘writing skills’ among the most sought-after attributes in recent graduates. Universities’ self-serving interpretation of this mandate has led them to focus on instruction in the area of academic writing, privileging it over other types of writing. Creative writing sometimes gets a look-in because it can put butts in seats or when, for example, a staff member wins a major literary prize; the cultural capital that accrues to such prizes is valued by the university. Professional writing, on the other hand, is a peripheral academic discipline. One of the factors contributing to this status is the almost complete lack of higher degrees by research in the area of professional writing in Australia. Professional writing is seen as merely ‘a market-driven, instrumental field’, not a site for research (Surma 2000). Consequently, staff who teach professional writing almost invariably come to it from other disciplines. In this panel, three instructors discuss their academic and professional journeys to this peripheral discipline, and how these journeys have informed their efforts to revise the professional writing curriculum to make it more central to the university’s mission.

### **Biographies**

Per Henningsgaard is a teacher and researcher of publishing. His scholarly research has been widely published and includes topics such as regional publishing, editorial practices, Australian publishers in the global marketplace, and more. He is a lecturer in Professional Writing and Publishing.

Danielle O’Leary is a lecturer in Professional Writing and Publishing. She completed her PhD in English and Literary Studies at the University of Western Australia in 2014 and is passionate about teaching writing in all forms.

Anne Ryden teaches Professional Writing and Publishing. She holds a doctorate in literary translation, and her professional background covers the full spectrum of professional writing: literary and business translation, editing of fiction and non-fiction, writing for corporations and government. Anne draws extensively on her professional and freelance experience in her teaching.

**Louise Henry**  
James Cook University

## **A perspective from the periphery: Using historical fiction to recover regional women's stories in 'The Wild North'**

### **Abstract**

In popular published accounts during settlement and into the early part of the twentieth century, the North Queensland region was often portrayed as 'wild'. This is a perception ripe for re-examination from the perspective of women of lower socio-economic standing and something I am attempting to explore through my creative work. Writing historical fiction about my Grandmother's life in the first half of the twentieth century requires me to consider strategies to recover a peripheral history that is specific to regional geography, class and gender, and the ethical representation of these. This task is complicated by the limited source material available about the lived experiences of poorer women living in North Queensland. The most fruitful sources are first-hand accounts such as life writing, personal recollections, memoirs, letters or journals and oral histories. These artefacts make up much of the primary archival material that forms the background and contextual groundwork for my historical fiction. Historical fiction relies on an 'authenticity effect' (Padmore, 2017) to effectively build a past world, and primary sources such as these offer several possibilities and opportunities in how they can be utilised and integrated in historical fiction to effectively and ethically represent women living in the margins.

## **The palimpsest of practice-led enquiry: A conversation**

### **Abstract**

This paper aims to deconstruct a foreign writer-researcher journey. Indeed, the quest of a migrant writer for recognition of their writing in a foreign land requires a deep understanding of the many layers that make up the provenance of their writing practice. A borrowed language, and both their cultural and literary background, provide layers of knowledge and experience that fuse to form a 'style' and ultimately a writing niche. The readership of their writing is not innocent either, as it has its own provenance, albeit with the advantage of playing in 'home ground'.

The notion of palimpsest, in its figurative sense, signifies levels of meaning in a literary work. Barthes refers to a layered discourse, "an onion, a superimposed construction of skins (of layers, of levels, of systems) whose volume contains, finally, no heart, no core, no secret, no irreducible principle, nothing but the very infinity of its envelopes — which envelop nothing other than the totality of its surfaces". (Barthes, 1989, p.99)

As a writer can discriminate and understand the different layers that fashion the creative writing and wield their particular use of English as second language, their practice becomes more authentic. That authenticity becomes a threshold element of an exegesis argument, representing faithfulness to the practitioner, and translating or bridging the gap between native readers and foreign voices.

**Siobhan Hodge**

ARC Centre of Excellence for the History of Emotions

## **“Re-reading the gaps”: Lacunae in poetry translations**

### **Abstract**

A lacuna is a perceived “lack” or missing piece within a text, often physically depicted as unusual line breaks or distances within the field of the page, or symbolically through withholding of detail. The intentions behind lacunae can be ambiguous, offering space for power-plays between poet, translator, and reader. Such breaks and gaps impose limitations on understanding, emphasising issues of control, slippages and hierarchies, as well as potential “untranslatabilities”. By engaging with a variety of languages, poets and translators can create spaces for negotiation of issues of agency and control.

In this discussion, I will highlight a range of approaches adopted in English-language translations of lacunae-rich poems. By examining a selection of ancient and modern poets, across a range of languages – including ancient Greek, Japanese, Chinese and Thai – issues inherent in translation processes, alternately exacerbated and delicately addressed, will be demonstrated. The importance of translating space and its delineation will be closely examined in the works of the ancient Greek “pattern poets” Simias and Theocritus, fragmentary poet Sappho, first century Chinese poet Li Bai, twentieth century Japanese poet Seiichi Niikuni, and twenty-first century Thai poet Padcha Tuntha-Obas.

### **Biography**

Siobhan Hodge has a Ph.D. in English. She won the 2017 Kalang Eco-Poetry Award and 2015 Patricia Hackett Award, and has had poetry and articles published in a range of places, including *Westerly*, *Southerly*, *Cordite*, *Plumwood Mountain*, *Axon*, *Peril* and the *Fremantle Press Anthology of WA Poetry*. Her newest chapbook, *Justice for Romeo*, is available through Cordite Books.

**Belinda Hopper**  
Macquarie University

## **A new vision of beauty**

### **Abstract**

Aesthetics is a contested idea in the realm of art and literature. The post-modernist project deconstructed the beautiful, elegant whole in favour of the raw and disjointed parts; the cohesive narrative for the fragmented. The sacred function of beauty, to transcend and redeem suffering, was desacralized and the aesthetic of beauty was sidelined to make way for the edgy, the cool, the ironic. Realism succumbed to hyper-realism; representation replaced transfiguration, resulting in an apologetic of “ugly”. With no author to redeem a satisfying or hopeful end to a narrative, it fell to the reader to interpret the ambiguous, open-ended, or meaningless denouement. Where to now, in the trans-modernist era? Based on two recent face-to-face interviews I have conducted with Marilynne Robinson to discuss her work—how her worldview informs her fiction, her creative writing teaching practice at the Iowa Writers’ Workshop, and the writing advice given her by her erstwhile creative writing teacher at Brown University, novelist John Hawkes, I would like to explore whether there is a place to re-imagine creative writing practice in the Australian academy from an apologetic of Beauty, with Robinson’s award-winning novels, *Gilead*, *Home*, and *Lila* serving as exemplar texts.

### **Biography**

Belinda Hopper is a PhD Candidate at Macquarie University. North Sydney Council’s 2018 Don Bank Writer in Residence, Belinda has a Masters of Creative Arts (Sunshine Coast) and a Bachelor of Communication (Western Sydney). She has worked as a freelance writer and editor for over a decade and was semi-finalist in the Willam Van Dyke Short Story Prize (2015).

**Christine Howe**  
University of Wollongong

## **Writing on common ground: The lyric essay as a decolonising form?**

### **Abstract**

In his introduction to the 'Decolonisation and Geopoethics' edition of *Plumwood Mountain*, Peter Minter suggests that 'Decolonisation can be shared by everyone, not least the hegemony, for everyone needs to take responsibility for imagining their own unique kind of transformation' (2016). For Minter, this includes non-Indigenous writers decolonising their own writing in a transformation of both content and form, participating in an emerging 'existential common ground' shared between both Indigenous and settler cultures (2016). Evelyn Araluen contends that this call for non-Indigenous writers to be responsible for searching for new ways of writing into this shared space has been 'misconstrued as an invitation to cultivate Aboriginal associations for political and poetic capital, rather than as a call for material solidarity' (2017). This paper will explore the challenges facing non-Indigenous writers who wish to respectfully acknowledge the sovereignty of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, and to participate in the movement towards a 'fair and truthful relationship' ('Uluru Statement from the Heart', 2017). The value of the lyric essay as a poetic form that resists straightforward answers – but rather allows for links to be drawn between the past and the present, complicity and healing, the land and our experience of it – will be explored with reference to my own creative work.

**Hélène Jacomard & Vivienne Glance**  
University of Western Australia

## **A common space: Translation, transcreation and drama**

### **Abstract**

Internationally renowned French playwright and novelist Yasmina Reza's ten plays have been translated into more than 35 languages, with the exception of *On Arthur Schopenhauer's sledge*. This short play is made up of seven monologues for stage but is resolutely non-dramatic. The translation of such a hybrid text from French into English is a first-time collaboration between Dr Vivienne Glance and Prof Hélène Jacomard.

Prior to this, Vivienne has been working with limited-English speaking authors to transcreate their works into English, doing so with no knowledge of their mother tongue. In contrast, for *On Arthur Schopenhauer's sledge*, Vivienne worked on a rough English translation, with some knowledge of the original French but no access to the author. Her professional experience of acting and directing plays allowed her to ensure each character's voice sounded natural, true and distinctive in English.

Hélène translated the text into English, her second language, when literary translators typically work into their first language. Her command of English was often challenged by transferring a source language that is both abstract and precise, tackles philosophical ideas, and creates the characters' moods and humour.

This paper analyses how co-translators operate in the space common to translation for the stage, close textual analysis and drama performance.

### **Biographies**

Hélène Jacomard is a professor of French Studies at the University of Western Australia, an occasional literary translator, and scholar of the works of internationally renowned playwright, Yasmina Reza (*Art, God of Carnage* and others).

Dr Vivienne Glance is an Honorary Research Fellow at the University of Western Australia, a practicing playwright and transcreator of literary works for over fourteen years.

**Stefan Jatschka**  
Griffith University

## **Filling the gaps of the writer's mind: Exploring the peripheries of the reader's mind and the story world**

### **Abstract**

When readers identify with individuals or experiences described in a text, their understanding of the *real world* and the *story world* merges and creates a fuller understanding of the world, others and the self (Shoutte & Malouff, 2006). Reader-response criticism has been a powerful theory to investigate the reader's relationship to the text and how narratives only make sense through interpretation (Iser, 1978).

This paper explores the author's writing process under the prism of reader-response criticism and theory of the mind, investigating how a writer creates a narrative that allows the reader to deconstruct and re-construct a text (Kermode, 1996) in order to achieve a 'feedback loop' between text and reader (Shoutte & Malouff, p. 93). Furthermore, my paper will investigate how writers use gaps, blanks and fragmented narrative techniques to provide a literary text that links fiction and reality, yet remains open to interpretation for the reader's meaning of the text (Iser, 1978). Finally, I will explore the writer's role in creating these literary gaps, that seem to bridge 'the other and the self' (Palmer, 2004), begging the question whether the writer is part of the *story world* or the *real world*.

### **Biography**

Stefan Jatschka is in the first year of his PhD studies at Griffith University. His project investigates new research territory where travel writing and mother-son relationships are brought into focus. The project examines how a son at odds with his mother might better discover her by following a journey she took when she was a young woman, as recorded in her journal. This project promises research publication in the fields of Cultural Studies, Sociology and Creative Writing. He has been published in *Talent Implied* and *Getamungstit*.

**Luke Johnson**  
University of Wollongong

## **Short circuits: Form and effect in the short story**

### **Abstract**

Almost 180 years have passed since the publication of Edgar Allan Poe's 'The Importance of a Single Effect in a Prose Tale' (1842) in which Poe locates the virtue of short-form fiction in its ability 'to carry out the fullness of [its author's] intention' without cessation, weariness or interruption for the sake of achieving a 'certain unique or single effect'. Despite the time lapse, Poe's insights continue to hold currency for writers and theorists of the form. In a 2008 OpEd for the *New York Times*, Pulitzer Prize-winning author, Steven Milhauser, praises the short story for its 'claim to a kind of completeness that eludes the novel', while Janet Burroway identifies 'a single emotional impact and single understanding' as one of three conventions, alongside brevity and economy of style (Lee 2009).

In this paper, I am interested in the role that structure plays in producing this so called 'effect' or 'understanding'. Through a reading of a several key texts, I will argue that the impact Burroway identifies is achieved through the completion of a 'narrative circuit' particular to the form itself.

### **Biography**

Dr Luke Johnson's scholarly research has been published both nationally and internationally, while his short stories and poems have appeared in numerous Australian journals. He is a lecturer in creative writing at the University of Wollongong and treasurer of the Australian Short Story Festival, which is to be held at Swinburne University in 2019.

**Emma Marie Jones**  
University of Melbourne

## **Millennial insincerity: Glimpsing the future of literary genre**

### **Abstract**

Postmodernist novels gave us a joyous fragmentation of the protagonist. They took pleasure in disrupting the linearity of plot, the concept of plot.

Postmodernism led us to a New Sincerity. But this was ten, twenty years ago. What happens next? What's happening now?

My paper unpacks the answer to this question by grouping contemporary novels together stylistically. The novels all share a tired awareness of the layered act of construction inherent in their own writing. Every sentence throbs with meaning in impudent triplicate: a bold invention of self, text, and world.

Such awareness and play suggests a timely shift. The textual construction of self — an act already performed fluently and perpetually by contemporary authors on social media — is being transplanted into literary spaces. Such a shift cannot happen without impacting literary writing as a whole.

My paper will show that novels as old as Tao Lin's *Taipei* (2013) and as recent as Olivia Sudjic's *Sympathy* (2017) are exemplary of this new literary moment, which I'll dub Millennial Insincerity: appropriate, given the pretension involved in multiple acts of self-construction. It will pose important questions: does the work of constant online self-writing impact literary voice? How can online worlds be constructed textually on the page? And is there a difference anymore between online and literary self-writings?

### **Biography**

Emma Marie Jones is a Melbourne-based writer and the author of *Something To Be Tiptoeed Around* (Grattan Street Press, 2018). She is a PhD Candidate and teacher of Creative Writing at the University of Melbourne. Her research interests include contemporary literary fiction, self-writing, and literary depictions of the online.

**Sue Joseph**  
University of Technology Sydney

## **Bolivian ghosts exorcised with literary journalism: Teaching first person trauma narration through exemplar**

### **Abstract**

In 2001 a young Argentinian reporter organised a meeting with a union official named Casimiro Huanca, advisor to then Bolivian guerrilla leader Evo Morales.<sup>1</sup> It would take him 24 hours to get to their meeting place in The Chapare province in Cochabamba, Central Bolivia, through the dangerous depths of the jungle.

Reporting for *Clarín*, the largest newspaper in Buenos Aires at the time, reporter Pablo Calvi did not make it to the meet in Chimoré. Huanca did; and was gunned down, murdered by local special troops deployed in the region. Calvi did not write the story in 2001. And for 16 years, barely spoke of it, haunted by the belief that he was responsible for this man's death. In 2016, he returned to Bolivia to find answers, publishing in *Guernica*<sup>2</sup> in 2017.

Through narrative inquiry and textual analysis, this paper investigates the background to this story, unpacking its trauma frame through characterisation and structure. It focuses on the subtle use of the vertical pronoun in the piece, arguing it is an exemplar of narrative placement.

### **Biography**

A journalist for more than thirty-five years in Australia and the UK, Sue Joseph (PhD) began working as an academic at the University of Technology Sydney in 1997. As Senior Lecturer, she teaches journalism and creative writing. She is currently Joint Editor of *Ethical Space: The International Journal of Communication Ethics*.

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<sup>1</sup> who five years later became president.

<sup>2</sup> *The Chosen and the Forgotten: Evo Morales, Casimiro Huanca, and the human grid beneath Bolivia's power*, January 18, 2017

**Daniel Juckes & Marie O'Rourke**  
Curtin University

## **June 21 twice and again: Essays and memories in conversation**

### **Abstract**

This paper stems from a challenge set by *Essay Daily*: in the spirit of Nicholson Baker's 'What Happened on April 29, 1994', contributors were asked to write about what happened on one day—June 21, 2018.

As we were working on our essays we realised that we had shared the same day of the preceding year. We were in Haworth, West Yorkshire, looking for evidence of the Brontë family who once lived there. It was bittersweet to reflect on a previous (and bonus) summer spent under high skies and late sunsets, and, when this coincidence became apparent, it was difficult not to keep memories of the year before from our thoughts. We became interested, then, in the ways our memories of that day in Haworth might have differed. We rewrote our essays with this thought in mind, and then let them converse—we aimed to conduct a dialogue between what was then and what is now, for both of us. In that sense, this paper is a test of the ways memories work, of how they shape the present, and, ultimately, of how the capacious form we call 'personal essay' might allow subjectivities to intermingle.

### **Biographies**

Daniel Juckes recently completed a PhD at Curtin University. His research interests include nonfiction prose, objects, and the representation of the past. His writing has been published in journals such as *Axon*, *M/C Journal*, *TEXT*, *Westerly*, and *Life Writing*.

Marie O'Rourke is a PhD candidate from Curtin University, exploring memory's quirks and experimental essaying to push the boundaries of contemporary memoir. Marie's creative and critical work has been published in *Mediating Memory: Tracing the Limits of Memoir* (Routledge, 2017), *a/b: Auto/biography Studies*, *ABR*, *Axon*, *Meniscus*, *New Writing*, *TEXT* and *Westerly*.

**Helena Kadmos**  
Murdoch University

## **Kicking up the dust: Travelling through the Pilbara on a storytelling adventure**

### **Abstract**

Writing about ecological creative writing, James Engelhardt and Jeremy Schraffenberger (2015) remark that ‘students write in a place, their writing is placed, and we teach in particular places,’ and that it is to these places that we ‘bring our intellectual histories as well as our bodies’. For many teachers and students of writing courses in the academy that place is a lecture or tutorial room during defined hours in specified teaching weeks. This paper reflects on a recent opportunity to break out of these traditional confines to take our bodies (students and teacher) on a four-wheel-drive bus trip up the Western Australian coast and across the Pilbara on a storytelling adventure. The intensity of the experience and the ability to engage in the moment with students’ creative processes brought about unforeseen and delightful outcomes for both teaching and learning. The red dust that stubbornly clings to my boots and notebooks brings to mind Engelhardt and Schraffenberger’s claim that transformative creative writing can encourage students ‘to understand that they are indeed a part of – and not apart from – the world around them’ and provokes this discussion about opportunities to lead creative work outside the walls of the university.

### **Biography**

Helena Kadmos is an early career researcher who teaches in WA universities.

**Jessica Kirkness**  
Macquarie University

## **Writing the ‘hearing-line’: Telling stories about deafness and hearing**

### **Abstract**

There are currently only three Australian memoirs that discuss the topic of deafness. As such, scholars have lamented the invisibility of deafness in the cultural imaginary (McDonald, 2012). My work seeks to address this gap, focusing on the story of my Deaf grandparents and my relationship with them. This project rose in me with palpable urgency, not only because of my proximity to the Deaf community, but because the lives of deaf people are so seldom depicted; their voices seldom heard.

In this paper, I reflect upon the process of writing a memoir that deals with a minority group that has been relegated to the cultural periphery. I explore the looming ethical questions I had to ask myself over the course of the project, particularly those relating to ownership of story, and my status as a hearing person. I discuss the precariousness of my position as both an insider and outsider in the Deaf community, and also as a member of the dominant majority culture. This paper considers what it means to tell the stories of others, and suggests ways in which we might ‘speak with’, rather than ‘speak for’ when narrating from the edge of cultures, and under-explored life-worlds.

### **Biography**

Jessica is a writer and PhD candidate at Macquarie University. As part of her creative practice research, Jessica is writing a memoir about the lives of her Deaf grandparents and her relationship with them. Her work has been published in Meanjin Quarterly.

**Jack Kirne**  
Deakin University

## **Exploded atmospheres: Stray writing and affective atmospheres**

### **Abstract**

Many theorists have lamented the lack of serious literary fiction addressing the shifting realities of climate change, or ecological collapse. While the reasons for this lack are diverse, most hinge on the temporal dimensions of the Anthropocene. Elsewhere, drawing upon Barbara Creed's formulation of the stray (2017), I have forwarded the idea of 'Stray Writing' (Kirne 2018: forthcoming) as a possible method for writing and analysing texts that draw attention to how catastrophe manifests and informs the literary text. In this paper, I will consider how atmospheric change has been constructed both socially and in the literary text. The paper will first braid an understanding of climate as an assemblage made not only of aggregated data, and weather patterns, but also expectation, effects, community, and experiences of time. Following my contention that climate disruption poses moral and physical challenges to social and material worlds, I will draw upon Don DeLillo's *White Noise* (1984) and Delia Falconer's *The Service of Clouds* (1997) to argue that changes in climate enacts a psychic and spatial "straying" of citizens from place and empire.

### **Biography**

Jack Kirne is a PhD candidate at Deakin University in the School of Communication and Creative Arts. His fiction has appeared in *Voiceworks* and *Exposition Review*. In 2016 he featured in the Wheelers Centre's *The Next Big Thing*.

**Nigel Krauth**  
Griffith University

## **The writer's mind: Consciousness and the writing process**

### **Abstract**

Major advances by cognitive studies in the last two decades have focused on reading and other processual activities associated with learning and decision-making, but the full beam of this research spotlight has yet to focus on the creative writing process.

Writers themselves have had much to say over centuries about how they write, but little of this has been gathered together in a scholarly fashion in the Creative Writing discipline. Even less of it has been analysed against the latest advances in cognitive science.

There is international debate about how much we *hear* and how much we *see* in our minds (see e.g. Pylyshyn 2003; Skov et al 2007; Zimmer 2014). The 2017 paper 'Ekphrasis and the Writing Process' (Krauth & Bowman 2017) teases out visual thinking aspects of the writing process.

There has been almost no sharing of information across the academic boundaries of Creative Writing and Cognitive Psychology. This paper looks at the possibilities of combining creative writing research with fMRI scanning and other cognitive studies research.

**Jose Lai**  
Chinese University of Hong Kong

## **The birth, nurture, and growth of an alternative provision for ESL learners**

### **Abstract**

The English Across the Curriculum (EAC) project, a government funded initiative, was formally launched in 2016 as an institutional movement at The Chinese University of Hong Kong. This three-year project includes but extends the acquisition and use of English in formal English course settings to other subjects and disciplines by setting up Communities of Practice (CoP) collaborative projects with content teachers. The key aims of this EAC project are to 1) explore different academic literacies and help to develop among both content teachers and students a heightened awareness of language use in different disciplines; 2) support content teachers in implementing an assessment approach that encourages a dual attention of content and language; and 3) encourage content teachers to assume a stronger ownership of language education in an English as a second language (ESL) setting. This presentation will first underscore the need and rationale for such an alternative approach to language empowerment in addition to the formal university core curriculum. It will then focus on the development, implementation, monitoring, and outcomes of this large-scale project to date. Finally, it will discuss the challenges and future direction of this initiative that involves eight faculties within a comprehensive research university in Hong Kong.

### **Biography**

Dr Jose Lai is Director of the English Language Teaching Unit of The Chinese University of Hong Kong. She is also the Chief Supervisor of the English Across the Curriculum (EAC) project funded by TDLEG. Her professional interests include EAC, learner autonomy, service learning, reflective learning, programme development and evaluation.

**Evan Lawless**  
Curtin University

## **Articulating incipient homosexuality in young adult fiction**

### **Abstract**

Incipient homosexual subjectivities, much like Kathryn Bond-Stockton's 'proto gay,' find themselves torn between the desire to be acceptable and accepted (homonormative), or to accept marginalisation (queerness), and writers of homosexual young adult fiction find themselves in the position of needing to articulate this becoming. The aim of this paper is to address how the tropology of homosexuality has developed under neoliberalism, as well as the development of acceptable and ethical homosexuality in young adult literature. This discussion will be managed through the negative politics of 'coming out,' versus a more politics of 'coming out' as a form of Foucauldian care-of-self and a single-text analysis of Becky Albertalli's 2015 novel *Simon vs. the Homo Sapiens Agenda*. The purpose of this paper is to really consider the implication that neoliberal individualism has had on what Lee Edelman has termed, homographesis, and how the topological imperative toward homonormativity is represented in young adult literature. The need for this discussion is pinned around the figure of the incipient homosexual and the pressures they feel to present themselves as homonormative – particularly as that normative subjectivity is represented in mainstream young adult literature.

### **Biography**

Evan Lawless is a PhD student at Curtin University whose thesis looks specifically at the ways in which incipient homosexuality has developed across post-millennial gay male fiction. Broadly speaking, his research works across contemporary queer theory analysing the production of precarious subjectivities.

## **Leaps of experience: Digital storyworlds, transformative poiesis/praxis and narrative agency**

### **Abstract**

Entering the digital storyworld of *Deakinopolis* (a world of interrelated settings, characters and situations) is about imaginatively entering an alternative fictional storyworld that largely presents as factual, an experience that mirrors tertiary learners' realities. Malouf (2008) talks of experience of story as '... being taken out of ourselves into the skin of another; having adventures there that are both our own and not our own ... Release ... into a dimension where reality is not limited' (*On Experience*, p. 19).

The world contains alternative or imagined realities, where learners project their own experience in making the storyworld coherent through engaging with differing perspectives. To encourage agency in active learner exploration, the storyworld is suspended out of time and sequence so that participants can imagine themselves into a state of being in that seemingly peripheral world, of experiencing the narration and adapting to differing perspectives, using Quay's (2013) framework of be-ing, doing and knowing. The learners activate their immersive engagement in this digital storyworld through praxical experience leading to, and concurrent with, transformative immersion of imagination and perspectives as poiesis.

**Michael J. Leach**  
Monash University

## **Five types of science poetry**

### **Abstract**

While the synergy between science and the arts has ebbed and flowed throughout history, the 21<sup>st</sup>-century has seen a growing movement toward combining STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) with the arts to give STEAM. Poetry is a prime example of an art form that complements science. When scientific concepts are expressed in verse, the aesthetics, intuition, emotion, and poetic devices that characterise poetry may enrich the inductive reasoning, logic, pragmatism, and precise terminology of science. In 2017, the American Society for Science Advancement highlighted the suitability of poetry for science communication by publishing a haiku about each chemical element in its journal *Science*. There is, thus, a firm basis for an interdisciplinary approach whereby science and poetry are combined for reflection, emotional enjoyment, aesthetic pleasure, and improved information exchange. In this paper, I will begin by describing the benefits of blending different branches of science into poetry. I will then proceed to highlight five types of poetry that I have found to be particularly well suited to communicating scientific concepts, providing examples from my body of published works as I go. I will discuss and exemplify concrete poetry, haiku, the villanelle, poetry with combinatorial rhyme schemes, and Fibonacci poetry.

### **Biography**

Michael Leach is a statistician, researcher, and poet with a PhD in a pharmaco-epidemiology and a passion for combining science with art. He works at Bendigo Health and Monash University School of Rural Health. Michael's poems have appeared in scientific journals, including MJA, as well as literary journals, including Cordite.

**Dr Joshua Lobb**  
University of Wollongong

## **Relational ethics: Writing about birds; writing about humans**

### **Abstract**

Philip Armstrong points out that scholars in Animal Studies are “interested in attending not just to what animals mean to humans, but what they mean to themselves; that is, to the ways in which animals might have significances, intentions and effects quite beyond the designs of human beings”. This paper asks: what are the ethics of representing birds in fiction? It promotes the model offered by Linda Alcoff in “The Problem of Speaking for Others” (1991-2). Alcoff offers a set of ‘interrogatory practices’ for writers, including: analysis of our speaking position to expose any implicit discourses of domination at work, and, most importantly, consideration for the effects of ‘speaking for’ on actual animals.

Using Alcoff’s interrogatory practices, I examine the representational strategies used by a range of writers to portray birds. The paper analyses Alexis Wright’s *The Swan Book* (2013), Evie Wyld’s *All the Birds, Singing* (2013) and Catherine McKinnon’s *Storyland* (2017). I will also reflect on the attempts I have made in my collection of stories, *The Flight of Birds*, to grapple with the discourses of power at work and the impact on real birds.

### **Biography**

Dr Joshua Lobb’s stories have appeared in *The Bridport Anthology*, *Best Australian Stories*, *Animal Studies Journal*, *Text* and *Southerly*. In 2014 he won the LitLink Unpublished Manuscript Award. His ‘novel in stories’ about grief and climate change, *The Flight of Birds*, is published by Sydney University Press.

**Lynnette Lounsbury**  
Avondale College of Higher Education

## **Glimpsing futures: Australian speculative histories**

### **Abstract**

At first glance speculative texts have little in common with historical ones. One represents what *has* happened, one attempts to predict what might yet take place. And yet, the speculative allows an exploration of the potential that historical writing does not. It is moldable and predictive in a way that can allow the writer to create a new vision of the past. Using Mark Salber Phillip's (2003) claim that history cannot be understood as a singular form, but rather as 'a cluster of overlapping and competing genres, "low" as well as "high"', this paper argues that an understanding of Australian history and its people, is enhanced by the experience of Australian speculative histories – in this case Terry Pratchett's *The Last Continent* (1998), Clare G. Coleman's *Terra Nullius* (2016) and Ryan Griffen's *Cleverman* (2017). The texts are atypical historical engagements and yet they all examine influences on Australian cultural behavior and evolution through re-imagined interactions with Australian history, environment and mythologies. Janice Liedl (2015) asserts that when a history is presented speculatively 'the differences it presents can be strong enough to suggestively reshape the audience's understanding of the past.' Building on that notion, this paper suggests that the alien setting of speculative fiction makes it possible for the reader and audience to engage with historical thought in a new way, extramural to the usual and culturally defined notions of that history.

### **Biography**

Lynnette Lounsbury is a lecturer in Communications and History, and a creative arts practitioner at Avondale College of Higher Education in NSW. She is the author of *Afterworld* (Allen & Unwin, 2014) and *We ate the Road like Vultures* (Inkerman & Blunt) and is a PhD student at the University of New England.

**Holly Lovegrove**  
Southern Cross University

## **Answering back: Reimagining my father's life as patriography**

### **Abstract**

Parental memoirs and patriographies are sub genres within life writing. Recent decades have seen a stronger emergence and spike in sales of memoirs authored by adult children about parents, and overwhelmingly about fathers. Thomas Couser (2014) hypothesises this growth in the genre is due to ageing Baby Boomers experiencing their father's death and/or decline, facing their own mortality, and being compelled to write to connect with their distant or absent fathers in some way. Patriographies have mostly been written by sons, and most commonly examine masculinity and identity themes in a father-son relationship (Couser 2014, p. 22). In his book, *Australian Patriography: How Sons Write Fathers in Contemporary life writing*, Stephen Mansfield describes his research as exploring 'representations of male patrimony by male authors in Australian memoir and autobiography' (Mansfield 2014, p.2). I am drawing on this model for my PhD thesis: *The Life and Work of Vincent Lovegrove: a daughter's perspective*. There appears to be little or no literature towards understanding the ways Australian women write about their fathers, and very few examples of patriographies written by Australian women. This paper will explore this genre, and look at the implications of the lack of female authored patriography in Australian writing. This contribution to the gap in the body of creative work and theoretical knowledge of patriography has new temporal and gender considerations, from the perspective of a Generation X daughter writing about her transgressive Baby Boomer father.

**Alexander Luft**  
Macquarie University & University of Illinois at Chicago

## **(Re)imagined communities: Novels, newspapers and representing publics**

### **Abstract**

In Benedict Anderson's seminal *Imagined Communities*, he identifies the novel and the newspaper as textual forms fundamental to the construction of national identity. Novels and newspapers make possible the idea of a coherent public character and allow readers to reduce a variety of asynchronous, disparate experiences to a legible object.

One of the ways that novels legitimate their historical settings is through a metatextual treatment of an imagined community's newspaper—in other words, representing the way that a public represents itself. This paper will examine Annie Proulx's *The Shipping News* and E.L. Doctorow's *The Waterworks* to demonstrate how these novelists depict journalistic practice as a way to reimagine the communities of outport Newfoundland and 19<sup>th</sup>-century Manhattan, respectively.

In addition, I will explain how these and other works have informed my approach to my novel-in-progress, which centers on a rural weekly newspaper. I will read a short selection from *We Regret the Error* to demonstrate how my work aims to represent small-town America during the War on Terror.

### **Biography**

Alexander Luft is a Ph.D. candidate at Macquarie University and at the University of Illinois at Chicago. His fiction has appeared in more than a dozen U.S. literary magazines, including *Yemassee*, *Midwestern Gothic* and *The Barely South Review*. He is at work on a debut novel.

**Caitlin Maling**  
University of Sydney

## **Writing the reef**

### **Abstract**

This presentation presents some of the early work from a three year Australia Council funded project “Fish Work”. “Fish Work” comprises an interdisciplinary ecopoetic experiment. Written out of time spent living at Lizard Island Research Station on the remote Northern Barrier Reef, these poems engage with the work of the scientists – marine biologists, oceanographers, archaeologists – in residence. They ask, how can poetry make sense of science, particularly the science of climate change? How might a poem about a specific cleaner fish speak to a poem about coral bleaching across the acres of the reef? The presentation outlines the critical rationale for the project and discusses how the research questions become translated into poetry. Finally, some of the poetry itself will be read.

### **Biography**

Caitlin Maling is a Teaching Fellow at the University of Sydney where she is also about to submit a PhD in English. She has also published two books of poetry through Fremantle Press, with a third – *Fish Song* – due out in early 2019.

**Katherine Mann**  
Swinburne University of Technology

## ***Playing In The Long Grass: A creative reframing of personal cultural bias***

### **Abstract**

This hybrid presentation addresses the conference theme of Peripheral Visions by exploring my attempt to reframe personal cultural bias and to present an alternative truth. The paper includes a theoretical introduction, followed by a chapter from my novel in progress, *Playing In The Long Grass*. The narrative of this chapter deals with two children playing truant and becoming lost in the forest after their father abandons the family. This example gives opportunity to redress my unconscious preconceptions evident in my employment of figurative forms, perpetuating the 'lost in the bush' trope and enabling a reframing of my childhood experiences within rural and Indigenous landscapes. I will employ figurative and parranarrative theory to interrogate and rewrite my cultural bias, referencing the work of theorists: George Lakoff, Gunther Martens and Benjamin Biebuyck. This approach complements my creative work and will attend to the following questions: How do I creatively address what I perceive as the cultural silences pertaining to Australia's ongoing Colonial lived experience? Is it possible to produce work that operates outside of my Colonial lens?

**Victor Marsh**  
University of Queensland

## **Reality shifts: The political and ontological potencies of life writing**

### **Abstract**

If, as Socrates is reported to have said: “the unexamined life is not worth living”, then the various genres gathered under the rubric ‘life writing’ provide potent tools — not only for reflection, but — for the resurrection of parts of self that are otherwise cast beyond the possibilities for being and knowing coercively authorised by dominant discourses.

By insisting on the validity of versions of experience explored and discovered beyond the frame, testimony of heretofore peripheral lived experience may work to turn the so-called ‘natural order’ upside down (and inside out), dislocating the moorings of ‘meaning’ itself. As J.F. Lyotard insists: ‘[K]nowledge and power are simply two sides of the same question: who decides what knowledge is, and who knows what needs to be decided?’ (1986, p. 9).

Texts insisting on different ‘valorisations’ (Watson & Smith) of identity can form sites of resistance with the power to detoxify and neutralise the political power of discourses hostile to a fuller expression of the potential of human experience, offering testimony of realities otherwise starved of oxygen by the inertia of everyday consensus realities.

I discuss using examples from my biographical research (on the work of Christopher Isherwood, for example, in 2010), from my own memoir writing (*The Boy in the Yellow Dress*, 2014 and “*The Touch of Silk*”, 2013), and the collection of essays edited for the collection *Speak Now: Australian Perspectives on same-sex marriage*, 2011.

### **Biography**

After earlier work in political theatre (in Perth, Sydney and Melbourne) in the early 1970s, Victor Marsh taught meditation in a dozen or so countries

through Asia and the Pacific, from the mid-1970s to mid-1980s, followed by an exhausting 20 years in commercial television in Melbourne, Sydney and Los Angeles. From a mid-life retreat into the groves of academe at the University of Queensland he emerged brandishing a dissertation titled “The Journey of the Queer ‘I’: Spirituality and subjectivity in some life writing by gay men.” After 50 years on the road, he has recently returned to live in Perth, where he is working on a novel and a follow-up to his memoir *The Boy in the Yellow Dress*.

**Gerard McArtney**  
Curtin University

## **Becoming David Bixby**

### **Abstract**

Collaboratively writing an autobiography requires something special—something close to method acting. David Bixby belonged to a militant Christian cult that banned members from reading fiction, reading or watching the news, and he was cut off from the outside world for nearly ten years. Because of this, David has profound insights into human nature, but he also has almost no understanding of narrative convention. When David sent me his 20,000-word manuscript, it was borderline incoherent. My initial instinct was to scrap it and start again, but there is a quirkiness in the way David writes that I felt needed to be preserved, as it adds a rich and meaningful texture to the work. But, before putting my own words into David's mouth, I felt compelled to understand his mind.

As a research experiment in authenticity, and as experimental creative non-fiction writing, my personal essay 'Becoming David Bixby' excavates a new and unexpected truth about the dynamics of a cult, and its wider implications for human nature. I will be reading a condensed version of 'Becoming David Bixby' that documents the experiments I designed and the insights I gained after taking an alternative approach to collaborative writing.

### **Biography**

Gerard is a masters student of professional writing and publishing at Curtin. After making contact with David Bixby in 2017, he began the process of collaboratively writing his autobiography, which ended up becoming the focus of his dissertation. Gerard has been published in *Kill Your Darlings*, and in *Allegory Ridge*.

**David McCooey**  
Deakin University

## **Peripheral hearing: ‘Collaborative audio literature’ and the uncanny**

### **Abstract**

‘Collaborative audio literature’ brings together music, sound design, and literature. Peripheral to the mainstream audio literary genres of audiobooks and podcasts, it exists at the margins of literature, sound design, and music, as an experimental, interdisciplinary form of literary sound art. In my presentation, I will attend to my album *The Apartment* (2018), an audio adaptation of eight prose poems by my collaborator, Paul Hetherington. In *The Apartment*, I place Hetherington’s texts (read by various readers) in a complex sonic field of music and sound design. The ‘un-performability’ of these pieces is central to the album’s aesthetic, in which literature, music, and performance occupy virtual, peripheral spaces. The use of additional vocal recordings at the threshold of hearing also produces an aesthetic of ambiguity with regard to the usual predominance of words. *The Apartment*, then, works with ambiguous, threshold spaces that test the limits of perception, authorship, genre, and the categories of literature and music themselves. I will discuss my collaborative creative practice in terms of the periphery-as-uncanny, a virtual space that evokes the disquieting interplay between the familiar and the unfamiliar. In particular, I will consider how the sonic uncanny suggests both the ghostly and the domestic.

### **Biography**

David McCooey is a prize-winning poet and critic (and composer), specialising in poetry, life-writing, and sound art. His latest poetry collection is *Star Struck* (UWA Publishing, 2016), and his latest album (with Paul Hetherington) is *The Apartment* (2018). He is a professor of Writing and Literature at Deakin University.

**Ian McHugh**  
University of Canberra

## **Australian literature: Writing from the periphery as post-colonisers**

### **Abstract**

Applications of world systems analysis to the literary sphere, by Franco Moretti (2000) and Pascale Casanova (2004), position Australia as a literary culture of the periphery. For both authors, the literary sphere is partly autonomous from the geopolitical and economic, but its hierarchies are likewise rooted in European colonialism. The globalised possibilities available to a writer from the periphery are arbitrated by the dominant taste-makers in the dominant centres (London, New York and Paris) of the dominant global languages (English and French).

In Australia, a settler country sharing language with the former colonial centre and literary core, Herderian recourse to the specialness of language is not available to distinguish and defend the national literary space. While this offers advantages for individual writers, the legitimacy of the national literary space remains compromised by the violent and unreconciled distinction between post-colonisers and post-colonised. This ambivalent condition feeds into the discursive coding of core and periphery, and the active production of peripheralness in Australia's national literary space.

### **Biography**

Ian McHugh's stories have appeared in magazines and anthologies in Australia and overseas. He is a current PhD candidate at the University of Canberra.

## **‘Story truth’ and the lens of the real: A case for fiction in the telling of true crime events**

### **Abstract**

True crime was once a discrete genre. Now it is also the province of popular fiction and creative non-fiction; reconfigured and narrativised, solved or left cold. This hybrid narrative mode invites complex enquiry into the ethical, ideological and epistemological issues surrounding the fictive representation of marginalised subjects. Amy Srebnick utilises author Tim O’Brien’s dichotomy between ‘the happening truth’ and ‘story truth,’ (Srebnick, 12, 2005) to illustrate how narrative operates as ‘a wide-angle lens’ (Srebnick, 12) in viewing the complex cultural topography surrounding celebrated crime cases. Haebich concurs with Srebnick, stating that “crime sources actively encourage writing that is imaginative, subjective and ambitious.” (Haebich, 1, 2015)

Drawing upon key theoretical and literary works from my exegetical research into true crime, feminist and narrative ethics and my own practice in true-crime inspired fiction, I argue that an intimate and subjective response is necessary in the context of private and collective trauma. I propose that true-crime inspired fiction embodies the tension between ‘story truth’ and ‘happening truth’ on a metanarrative level and can assist in collapsing culturally constructed dichotomies between private and public narratives; the objective and subjective, the real and the fictive.

**Vahri McKenzie**  
Edith Cowan University

## **The other writing group: Giving form to practice and embodying voice**

### **Abstract**

This presentation will describe a research project centred on a writing workshop that gives form to practice, with a focus on embodied creativity. The Other Writing Group (TOWG) applies a performance-based creative process to a writing workshop. Through somatic awareness and improvisation, TOWG offers a structure for writers to explore embodied strategies normally used by performers to develop character. The research connects practise to theory via Aristotle's *Rhetoric*, where 'ethos' (character) was concerned with the influence of the physical voice in oration. 'Voice' is a much used but little understood analytical term in creative writing theory. By transferring performance strategies to creative writing, TOWG has the potential to show how the voice on the page has its origins in an audible and embodied voice.

### **Biography**

Vahri McKenzie is a Senior Lecturer in the School of Arts and Humanities at Edith Cowan University who publishes research about the creative arts and makes performance works. Her short fiction has been published by MidnightSun (SA), Hunter Writers Centre (NSW), *Gargouille* (VIC), and Margaret River Press (WA).

**Meghan McLean**  
University of Western Australia

## **Writing from the periphery: Framing the 'real' in autobiographical practice**

### **Abstract**

This paper will present a creative piece alongside a scholarly framework for the practice autobiographical writing. The creative component will be composed of a series of fragmented vignettes focusing on the presenter's experience as a family member on the periphery of drug addiction. The fragmentation of the piece will mimic both the ability for trauma to distort time and the unreliability of writing into our past. The critical aspect of this paper will ask what it means to write from the periphery and how autobiographical practice can confront its liminal status. This paper will involve an analysis of what it means to write about other people, looking at both the ethics of writing family memoir and the representation of the 'real' characters in creative non-fiction. This paper will also examine what it means to write into our past, a space we no longer occupy, and how this disjunction can be taken up in the form of autobiographical texts.

### **Biography**

Meghan McLean is a PhD candidate at the University of Western Australia. Her project, seated within the field of creative writing, examines the relationship between the experience of trauma and the act of autobiographical writing, with a specific focus on addiction narratives and family memoir.

**Threasa Meads**  
Federation University

## **Liminal interventions in the regional creative writing classroom**

### **Abstract**

*'Liminality is not only transition but potentiality, not only "going to be" but also "what may be".'* – Victor Turner

The vast region of Gippsland in south-eastern Victoria is home to approximately 270,000 people, with many experiencing complex and entrenched disadvantage. Most of my students are first in family, and very few aspire to a career in writing, or even consider themselves creative; however, they are, on the whole, hungry for knowledge, bright and engaged. Many have responded with startling creativity and enthusiasm to specific exercises designed to foster writing practice and reading as a writer, and most have flourished in a structured workshop environment that affirms workshop method and process as a learned skill. Drawing on research, including regional teaching and learning scholarship, Sally Kift's 'Transition Pedagogy', Janelle Adsit's 'Threshold Concepts' and Victor Turner's 'Liminal', this paper considers some of the strategies I've been employing in Federation University's first-year creative writing course to conquer resistance to the notion of being creative, facilitate creative writing practice and foster a culture of creative writing production.

### **Biography**

Threasa Meads has published in various places including, *LiNQ*, *Double Dialogues*, and *TEXT*. Her work has been shortlisted for The Australian/Vogel's Literary Award and earned her a couple of fellowships. She is the author of *Nobody* and *Mothsong* (Rare Bird Books 2016), and lectures in creative writing at Federation University.

**Carol Mills**  
Curtin University

## ***Northerly winds: Life on the periphery***

### **Abstract**

I was living in the outer suburbs of Perth when I met my future husband Paul. I had always imaged that one day I might visit a tropical island, and even perhaps live on one. But in my suburban imagining, living in a tropical place included walking on the beach, watching sunsets on palm fringed beaches and other cliqued romantic activities. My idea of tropical places, however, would change dramatically after moving east with Paul; first to Cairns, then to Innisfail and finally to Magnetic Island where I still now live.

This paper is a reading of *Northerly winds* a small section of my memoir *The Pilot's Wife*, the creative component of a PhD. The creative work explores personal experiences with my husband Paul prior to, and including, the establishment of a tourism floatplane business on Magnetic Island in 2007. Through the use of creative non-fiction techniques *Northerly winds* challenges the way in which the tourism places might be perceived by illuminating the human experience of living and working in regional Australia.

### **Biography**

Carol Mills is a PhD candidate in creative writing and cultural studies at Curtin University. Her thesis, comprising a creative work and exegesis, is an interdisciplinary study that draws on her experience of establishing a tourism floatplane business with her husband Paul on Magnetic Island within the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park. The creative work, a memoir, describes events from meeting her husband Paul in Perth Western Australia though to the establishment of the business on Magnetic Island in 2007.

**Carol Millner**  
Curtin University

## **Strategy and voice: Reading and writing migrant short fiction**

### **Abstract**

*'I met an Aboriginal guy once with Hebrew language tattoos,' said Lijah.*

*'What was that about?'*

*'Dunno. Not my business to ask him where he's from. Maybe he had a Jewish ancestor. Who knows? Look at me, half-Chinese, half-Indonesian, half-Jewish.'* Lijah raised his porcelain soup spoon to gesture at the room. *'And raised in Perth.'*

In 2003, Jago Morrison suggested that two main narrative strategies have influenced the novel since 1945; hybridity and historiographic metafiction. This paper will consider the extent to which Morrison's suggestion, and theories of minor transnationalism (Lionnet and Shih, 2005) apply to the reading and writing of short fiction written by migrants to Australia.

This paper will include a reading from the collection of short stories I am developing as a PhD. student at Curtin.

### **Biography**

Carol Millner (Stevenson) is a PhD. student in creative writing at Curtin University. Her creative and academic writing have been published in Australia, New Zealand and Spain, most notably in *Coolabah* (2018), *Poetry New Zealand Yearbook 2017*, *Westerly*, *Australasian Drama Studies* and *The NZ Women's Studies Journal*. Carol's first full length poetry manuscript, *Settling* was shortlisted for the inaugural Dorothy Hewett Award (2015). Her current research interests include immigration, short fiction, hybridity, historiographic metafiction and practice-led research.

**Sarah Mokrzycki**  
Victoria University

## **Out of sight: The censoring of family diversity in picture books**

### **Abstract**

The representation of families in picture books is overwhelmingly traditional. Families are commonly depicted as white and middle class, consisting of both biological parents and a (frequently blonde) male child protagonist. A recent increase of diverse picture books, such as *I'm Australian too* (Fox 2017) and *Love makes a family* (Beer 2018), shows a newfound progression in the representation of family diversity – however, family diverse picture books have a contentious history of publication and censorship challenges. *Heather has two mommies* (Newman 1989), one of the first picture books to present a lesbian couple with a child (Peel 2015, p. 475), has been met with a constant stream of criticism and censorship since its publication in 1988; including protests, book burnings and no less than 42 attempts to have the book removed from schools and libraries (Hetter 2015). It has been nearly thirty years since *Heather's* original publication, and diverse books continue to struggle for representation. Vivian French highlights this permeating issue in *The covers of my book are too far apart* (2017), summing it up with a poignant message to the reader: 'We need to speak to the people who make books' (French 2017).

### **Biography**

Sarah Mokrzycki is a PhD candidate at Victoria University, completing a PhD by creative project. Her research examines the importance of family diversity in picture books through an original illustrated picture book and accompanying exegesis.

**Glenn Morrison, Raelke Grimmer & Adelle Sefton-Rowston**  
Charles Darwin University

## **Borderlands: Scoping the publishing landscape for a regional Australian literary journal**

### **Abstract**

Literary journals are an important component of Australia's literary culture and foster a range of voices. However, the Northern Territory has no such platform, and its lack is a significant shortfall in the artistic lives of Territorians. This is especially significant at a time when public interest in literature is growing and Indigenous voices are achieving greater prominence, within the Territory and across the nation. Furthermore, with so many hopes, dreams and funding pinned to developing Northern Australia, Territorians remain without the regular forum a literary journal might provide, a place where creative and critical thinkers might evaluate the 'frontier' rhetoric that grand schemes such as 'Develop the North' entail. Borderlands is a 2018 strategic arts project jointly funded by Arts NT and Charles Darwin University to develop a literary journal of the Northern Territory in three phases. The first phase is to confirm the need for a journal, and to research and develop a sustainable business plan (Phase 1). Next is to secure funding and publish a 2019 pilot edition (Phase 2) then establish an ongoing publishing enterprise from 2020 (Phase 3). This paper outlines the research for Phase 1, describes preliminary results, and suggests directions for the future of Australian literary journal publishing.

### **Biographies**

Dr Glenn Morrison is lead researcher for The Borderlands Project and a sessional lecturer at Charles Darwin University. He is the author of *Songlines and Fault Lines: Epic walks of the Red Centre* (MUP 2017) and the academic text *Writing Home: Walking, Literature and Belonging in Australia's Red Centre* (MUP Academic 2017).

Raelke Grimmer is a lecturer at Charles Darwin University and a Creative Writing PhD candidate at Flinders University. Her thesis combines a creative

non-fiction work exploring monolingualism and Australian multiculturalism with an exegesis on the role of genre in writing. Her work has been published in *Griffith Review*, *Westerly* and *Meniscus*.

Dr Adelle Sefton-Rowston is an award-winning essayist and literary critic, and the author of *Politics and Poetics: Race Relations and Reconciliation in Australian Literature*, forthcoming for Peter Lang (2019). She is President of the NT Writers Centre and a lecturer at Charles Darwin University.

**Ffion Murphy**  
Edith Cowan University

## **Border protection: Exclusion, secrecy and the spectre of censorship**

### **Abstract**

Peer reviewers have become essential to academic publication; in ‘gold standard’ publishing they read secretly, their identities guarded by journal editors. Reviewers are selected for their expertise and readiness: their border-keeping is influential but unpaid work in support of disciplinary integrity, reciprocity, collegiality and status. ‘Double blind’ reviewing reduces the potential for bias or conflicts of interest. Universities and governments depend on this cost-efficient, clandestine economy to evaluate and fund research performance. But do we give enough thought to peer reviewing in our field—why it functions as it does, how it interacts with traditional expectations of editing and how it might potentially slide into censorship? Peer review seems an immovable fixture; indeed, I have always taken it for granted as an age-old form of quality assurance in scholarly publishing that, while imperfect, is—in the humanities at least—unlikely to do harm. Yet, peer reviewing as we know it developed during the later decades of the twentieth century and, like other cultural practices, is historically contingent. This paper explores potential pitfalls of pre-publication double-blind peer review and speculates on alternatives and possible amendments for key journals in our discipline, such as provision of clear and transparent policies and ethical guidelines for reviewers.

### **Biography**

Ffion Murphy is a Senior Lecturer in the School of Arts and Humanities at Edith Cowan University. Her publications include *Devotion*, a novel, and journal articles, book chapters and edited books concerning literature and writing.

**Peta Murray, Cath McKinnon, Joshua Lobb & David Carlin**  
RMIT University

## **Mixed doubles: Collaborative writing, peripheral strategies and some friendly serve-volley**

### **Abstract**

This peripherally performative panel-event wraps itself around the conference tentacle of *collaborative writing*. It co-mingles accounts of two collaborative writing projects in which the panellists are enmeshed: the collectively written *100 Atmospheres; Studies in Scale and Wonder* (2018), and the Murray/Carlin speculative research endeavour *How To Dress For Old Age*. The panellists form two non-competing teams, engaging in a back-and-forth play about project methods. What does collaboration offer writers and writing processes? How is vision refracted through a multiplicity of gazes? How does the peripheral make itself felt? In an era shaped by critical ecological transformation *100 Atmospheres* - speculative, poetic, provocative - pays attention to future ways of being and becoming. Lobb and McKinnon reflect on a collaborative process that used writing over and into fluid boundaries, multiple entries and exits, and other peripheral strategies, to enliven the book's approach to living in the Anthropocene. In thinking about *How To Dress*, Murray and Carlin re-construct their collaborative process as a live and unfolding methodology (including costume changes). They report on how, in improvising with writing methods that involve alternating responses, redirections, and unanticipated shifts in focus / tempo, they have been drawn to sport and theatre metaphors to negotiate evolving rules of engagement and exchange.

### **Biographies**

Peta Murray is a writer-performer, dramaturge and researcher. Her best-known plays are *Wallflowering*, and *Salt* which won the Victorian Premier's Award for Drama. Her most recent work for performance, *Missa Pro Venerabilibus: A Mass for The Ageing* was presented at Footscray Community Arts Centre in 2016. Peta is a Vice-Chancellor's postdoctoral research fellow at RMIT University where her research concerns the use of

transdisciplinary and arts-based practices as modes of inquiry and forms of cultural activism.

Catherine McKinnon is a novelist, playwright and academic. Her most recent novel *Storyland* (2017) was published by Harper Collins, and *The Nearly Happy Family* (2008) by Penguin. She was co-winner of the *Griffith Review: Tall Tales Short – The Novella Project 111 Award* in 2015. Her plays have been produced nationally and her short stories, reviews and essays have appeared in *Transnational Literature*, *Text Journal*, *RealTime*, *Narrative* and *Griffith Review*. She teaches creative writing and performance at the University of Wollongong.

Joshua Lobb is a Senior Lecturer in Creative Writing at the University of Wollongong and a member of the Material Ecologies research network. His short story 'I forgot my programme so I went to get it back' was included in *The Bridport Anthology 2009* and *Best Australian Stories 2010*; he has also had short stories published in *Text*, *Animal Studies* and *Social Alternatives*. His plays include *Daedalus* (Newington Theatre, 2001), *Still at Aulis* (The Actor's Centre, 2003) and *Wilde Tales* (Belvoir St Theatre B Sharp 2044; NSW tour 2007). His current project, a novel, *Real Life*, won the LitLink Unpublished Manuscript Award in 2014, as well as two residential fellowships at Varuna, the Writers' House. He is also working on a series of short stories about human/bird interactions. Scholarly publications include: "'They don't flinch': Creative Writing/Critical Theory, Pedagogy/ Students" (AAWP 2012); 'Narrative Possibility in the Fairy Tales of A. S. Byatt' (UEA, 2009); 'But if the author is dead, what are we doing here?': Teaching Critical Theory in a Creative Writing Program' (AAWP, 2008) and (with Dr Malcolm Ryan) 'The Tale of Peter Rabbit: A Case Study in Story-Sense Reasoning'(AAAI, 2007).

David Carlin's books include the forthcoming *The After-Normal* and *100 Atmospheres: Studies in Scale and Wonder*, as well as *The Abyssinian Contortionist*, *Our Father Who Wasn't There*, and the co-edited anthologies, *The Near and the Far*, and *Performing Digital*. He is also an award-winning playwright, theatre, film and radio-maker, with diverse works including

*Frankenstein's Children, Out of Our Minds, and the Circus Oz Living Archive.*  
David is Professor of Creative Writing at RMIT University, where he co-founded WrlCE and the non/fictionLab.

**Khin Myint**  
Curtin University

## **Writing in polarised territory**

### **Abstract**

When I began to write memoir, I did it because I needed to. My sister had euthanised herself over what I thought was a mental illness seeded in the ethnic tensions of our youth. In a seemingly unrelated matter, I also fought against my own politics in a New York county court the day she died. I was profoundly disoriented as I wrote for recovery.

It soon became obvious that parts of my story were offensive within the current cultural reckoning. I felt trapped between the need to think, and the social costs of doing so. I left my hometown and spent the next four years alone in foreign countries, repeatedly learning to navigate their cultures as I wrote. It was an irrational yet healing move, and as a result I became fascinated with phenomenology. Heidegger's notion of world disclosure describes how we make sense of things in relation to each other. I considered events in my memoir and its writing in light of this. Both were riddled with my own and others' attempts to disclose chaos.

This paper accounts that creative process, and it asks how personal stories which highlight the politics of uncertainty can offer insights about knowledge production on polarising topics in polarised times.

### **Biography**

Khin Myint is a Burmese-Australian PhD candidate in creative writing at Curtin University. He has worked both in Australia and overseas in music, and refugee support.

**Richard Nile**  
James Cook University

## **Revenge writing and the appropriation of Cressida Morley**

### **Abstract**

Publications come into being via a chain of collaborations, though these have only recently been acknowledged in an industry that continues to identify and name authors as sole creators. Agents, manuscript assessors, editors, publishers, printers, designers, and distributors have traditionally been anonymised and hidden from the view of reading publics. The obvious contrast here is with film which acknowledges co-creation with rolling credits at every screening: directors, producers, screenwriters, actors, cameras, publicists, gaffers, grips, runners and best boys, among others. The privileging of the sole author in the literary industry also means that collaborative creative writing is rare. Pseudonyms offer a convenient cover for those authors who do collaborate; for example in Australia, M Barnard Eldershaw (Marjorie Barnard and Flora Eldershaw) and Emma Darcy (Wendy Brennan and Frank Brennan), while it has long been suspected that “significant others” such as Nettie Palmer made major unacknowledged contributions to their partners works. Charmian Clift and George Johnston collaborated on several books, some of which they wrote using the pseudonym of Shane Martin—taken from the forenames of two of their children. They also fictionalised their corrosive personal relationship. Johnston’s appropriation of Clift’s original character and “alter ego”, Cressida Morley, was a major factor in Clift’s suicide. In this presentation, I focus on writerly co-dependence and character creation using Cressida Morley as a case study and caution of what can go wrong when a writer gets too close and seeks revenge in the act of fictionising.

### **Biography**

Richard Nile is Professor and Head of Humanities and Creative Arts at James Cook University.

**Catherine Noske**  
University of Western Australia

## **Where are you, gal? Randolph Stow, expatriation and writing outside of 'home'**

### **Abstract**

Randolph Stow moved almost unceasingly throughout his writing life, until the point he settled in England in 1969. While he never returned to Australia, Stow's expatriate 'English' novels can be read as enacting a subtle transnationalism in their interest in themes specifically relevant to Australian being and nationhood. Both *The Girl Green as Elderflower* (1980) and *The Suburbs of Hell* (1984) open questions of identity and belonging, connect to Australian spaces, and are marked by a deep postcolonial anxiety. In this sense, Stow's creative practice as an expatriate continues to consider Australia from the peripheral perspective of his absence. Examining this positionality in Stow's writing has led me in turn to ask questions of my own relationship to the spaces I write. While I am not expatriate, I am in many ways writing from outside the space of belonging – distant from my home, and on Country to which I have no claim. This paper will draw from Stow's creative practice in expatriation to reflect on broader sensations of writing 'ex-habitatio' (from the Latin *habitō*, to inhabit or dwell), and the manner in which this alters creative practices of place-making. It will question sensations both of belonging and of being out-of-place, and relate this to the positionality of centre and periphery in creative practice.

### **Biography**

Catherine Noske is a lecturer in Creative Writing and editor of *Westerly* Magazine at the University of Western Australia. Her work has been awarded the A.D. Hope Prize, the Elyne Mitchell Prize for Rural Women Writers, and shortlisted for the Dorothy Hewett Award. Her first novel is forthcoming in 2019.

**Julian Novitz**  
Swinburne University of Technology

## **Digital technologies and writerly identity**

### **Abstract**

When addressing the rise of mass media, postmodern authors of the late twentieth century often expressed an 'anxiety of obsolescence' in their work: an acute awareness of being potentially displaced. This often led them to adopt an attitude of defiance in the face of technological change.

Many contemporary literary authors adopt and express a similar oppositional attitude towards the rise and encroachment of digital technology, but what is often overlooked is the increasingly important role that new media technologies currently play in expressing writerly identities and signalling affiliation between individual writers and literary movements/communities in online spaces.

This paper will compare and contrast the ways in which characters express writerly identities through their relationships with new media technologies in the recent works of two Australian authors: *Amnesia* (2014) by Peter Carey and *The Life to Come* (2017) by Michelle de Kretser. Both of these works examine the ways in which digital technologies challenge or complicate the role, identity and practice of the print-oriented writer. The telling connection is that they present the relationship between print-based writers and digital technology as being transformative, demonstrating the emergence of complex and nuanced responses to the rise of digital technology in Australian literature.

**Eve Nucifora**  
University of Canberra

## **Complex constructions: Desiring female characters in short fiction**

### **Abstract**

When considering expressions of female desire in fiction, two reoccurring archetypes appear: the 'object of desire' and the 'desiring subject.' These archetypes have traditionally limited female characters to shallow representations, denying them complexity, nuance, and credibility. Writing short fiction has led me to question the construction of complex female selfhoods: characters who draw upon desire, while evading traditional 'desiring' or 'desired' tropes. This research draws upon a number of feminist understandings of what it means to write female desire, as well as exploring the ways in which expressions of desire can accompany a suite of gestures; articulated and enacted by female characters. The process of bringing together these themes within a creative practice offers a space to create characters who express desires, yet who are not defined by them. In doing so, there lies the potential for broader socio-political understanding of what being 'woman' means.

### **Biography**

Eve Nucifora is a Canberra based short prose writer and poet. She has recently completed a Bachelor of Writing (Honours) at the University of Canberra. Eve was awarded a scholarship for poetry to study in Barcelona and Madrid through the International Poetry Studies Institute. Her poetry has been published in *Tryptich, an anthology of student verse*.

**Emily O'Grady, Ella Jeffery & Alex Philp**  
Queensland University of Technology

## **Blueprints: Constructing the creative writing PhD**

### **Abstract**

This panel uses architectural analogies to explore the complexities of planning and executing a practice-led PhD project in contemporary Australian writing. Louisa Hall argues that 'from Chaucer to Heaney, the writing of a poetic line has been linked with the construction of a sure foundation, the use of a carpenter's level, the solidity of physical enclosure' (2002, 207). Is a PhD like a bridge, built from either side of a river? What happens if or when the creative and critical components don't connect? Or is it more like a home renovation project, fixing up past ideas? A PhD always involves some aspect of planning – but to what extent can the creative practice be planned for? What happens when the project outpaces the planning, or when a writer finds herself in unscaffolded space?

This 60-minute panel presentation examines practice-led research methodologies drawn from the experiences and insights of Emily O'Grady, Ella Jeffery and Alex Philp, three award-winning creative practitioners who are also current and recently-completed PhD candidates. The panellists discuss the creative work they produced during the PhD and speak to the concerns of developing creative writing projects that operate in different mediums and styles. Each panellist will present a ten-minute paper followed by a short discussion with fellow panellists and questions from the audience. Their perspectives reveal the multiplicity of approaches available in creative practice research and the potential for dismantling the structures of traditional research.

### **Biographies**

Emily O'Grady is a writer and sessional academic at QUT. Her practice-led doctoral thesis researched intergenerational trauma in serial killer narratives. Her fiction, poetry, and essays have appeared in *Meanjin*, *Southerly*, *Australian Poetry Journal*, *The Big Issue Fiction Edition*,

and *Award Winning Australian Writing*. In 2018 she won the *Australian/Vogel's Literary Award* for her debut novel *The Yellow House*.

Ella Jeffery's poetry, essays and reviews have appeared in *Meanjin*, *Westerly*, *Island*, *Best Australian Poems* and elsewhere. Her poetry has won or been shortlisted for a number of national prizes and awards. She is a sessional academic and doctoral candidate at QUT, where she researches the intersections between contemporary poetics and home improvement culture.

Alex Philp is a sessional academic and doctoral candidate at QUT. She researches sister relationships, the body, and transgression in literary fiction. She won the 2017 Rachel Funari Prize for Fiction, and her short fiction has appeared in *Overland*, *The Review of Australian Fiction*, *Voiceworks*, and on the *Meanjin* blog.

**Alison Owens & Donna Lee Brien**  
Central Queensland University

## **Writing for survival: The non-fiction prose of Australian women novelists in the 1930s**

### **Abstract**

Feminist scholars in the 1970s undertook important critical work to recover Australian women's writing of earlier eras from the borders of the national canon and promote their fiction, through publications by the Virago Press and other avenues. This work has been continued through important specialist vehicles such as *Hecate* journal and its associated publications, and *Lilith* journal, and through publication in more general literary publications. However, little attention has yet been afforded to the voluminous non-fiction writing of Australian women and, in particular, these Australian women fiction writers of the 1930s. Important connections exist between the newspaper and magazine articles, essays, pamphlets and speeches and the more 'artistic' publications of Australian women writers of the early twentieth century, such as Henry Handel Richardson, Miles Franklin, Eleanor Dark, Katherine Susannah Prichard, Kylie Tennant, Christina Stead, Jean Devanny, Dymphna Cusack, Marjorie Barnard and Flora Anderson. Just as women's artistic writing has been overlooked and/or dismissed as second-rate, non-fiction as a genre of writing is frequently dismissed as formulaic, 'easy' and secondary to fiction and its significance denied or overlooked when in fact, the non-fiction prose work of Australian women writers was critical for a number of reasons. Firstly, it was voluminous, popular and critically engaged with a tumultuous political, social and moral landscape in which the subjectivity of women themselves was fluid and contested as women's rights were increasingly realised through legislation. Secondly, the non-fiction writing of Australian women authors informed and influenced their fictional interests, themes and characters. Lastly, and critically, their non-fiction publications in periodicals helped sustain them with a regular income unforthcoming from their fiction publications. This paper explores the broad influence of women's non-fictional prose on Australian public affairs, on the personal livelihood of women authors and on the themes of their fictional publications.

## **Biographies**

Alison Owens, EdD and PhD, is an Associate Professor of Education (adjunct) at Central Queensland University and teaches postgraduate Education courses at Australian Catholic University. Alison recently completed her PhD in Creative Writing (historical fiction) and regularly researches and publishes on topics related to education, culture and writing.

Donna Lee Brien, PhD, is Professor of Creative Industries at Central Queensland University, Australia. A Past President of the Australasian Association of Writing Programs, Donna has been publishing on creative writing and biography since the 1990s. Donna is co-editor of *The Australasian Journal of Popular Culture*. Recent books include *Recovering History through Fact and Fiction: Forgotten Lives* (eds. Dallas John Baker, Donna Lee Brien & Nike Sulway, 2017); *Offshoot: Contemporary Life Writing Methodologies and Practice* (eds. Donna Lee Brien & Quinn Eades, 2018); and *The Routledge Companion to Literature and Food* (eds. Lorna Piatti-Farnell & Donna Lee Brien, 2018).

**Sarah Pearce**  
Flinders University

## ***Wuthering Heights* is not a love story: Performance poetry as revisionary practice**

### **Abstract**

This presentation explores the ways in which creative work may extend the boundaries of the scholarly, allowing different and more radical perspectives to emerge. I discuss my own performance poem about *Wuthering Heights* by Emily Brontë. The poem draws upon, extends and re-works my PhD thesis, which positions both the text and Brontë herself as radical and proto-feminist. In writing the poem, and examining the ways in which Brontë and her female characters sit on the peripheries of both Victorian normative femininity and Victorian literature, I discover a perspective that pushes past my own 'academic' readings of the text. The poem, which acts as a revisionary and critical re-casting of 'romantic' narrative, draws attention to the ways in which women are domesticated in the novel, but also to small moments of radical insubordination. *Fight* and *flight* are given centre stage, despite the inevitable eventual death of female characters. The poem challenges canonical readings of *Wuthering Heights*, positioning Emily Brontë and her female protagonists as radical characters on the Victorian stage. Ultimately, the poem takes me to a place, beyond normative interpretation, of realising that "Brontë herself was a crack shot with a pistol/And you better believe that... *She pulled the trigger*".

### **Biography**

Dr Sarah Pearce is an emerging performer, poet and academic from Adelaide, Australia. Her research explores female subjectivity and embodiment and the Gothic mode. Her work has appeared in *Meniscus*, *Writing from Below*, *Aeternum* and *Outskirts* and she has held residencies at the Adelaide City Library and FELTspace Gallery.

**Reneé Pettitt-Schipp & Rosemary Sayer**  
Curtin University

## **Mapping from the margins: Stories that help us find our way home**

### **Abstract**

In this presentation, writers Rosemary Sayer and Renee Pettitt-Schipp will take you on a journey beyond Island-Australia. Blurring our notions of our insular nation, Sayer and Pettitt-Schipp will use their research into oral histories and story-telling to paint rich and complex images of what it means to be an 'Australian', sharing the words of islanders, migrants, refugees and Australians with complex matrixes of 'home', inviting the audience in to a richer vision of national identity and what it means to belong.

### **Biographies**

Reneé Pettitt-Schipp lived in the Indian Ocean Territories from 2011 until 2014. Reneé's work with asylum seekers in detention on Christmas Island and the Cocos (Keeling) islands inspired her first collection of poetry, 'The Sky Runs Right Through Us'. This manuscript was shortlisted for the Dorothy Hewett manuscript prize and released by UWA Publishing in February 2018.

Rosemary Sayer is a published writer and former journalist. Her most recent book, *More to the story-conversations with refugees*, was published in 2015. Rosemary is in the final year of her PhD in writing and human rights. Her research and creative work focus on collaborative life writing with refugees.

**Reneé Pettitt-Schipp**  
Curtin University

## ***The Sky Runs Right Through Us: Writing as witness***

### **Abstract**

From 2011 until 2014, Reneé Pettitt-Schipp lived on Christmas Island and the Cocos (Keeling) Islands where she taught English to asylum seeker children held in detention. This experience inspired her first collection of poetry, 'The Sky Runs Right Through Us', launched by UWA Publishing in February 2018. In this presentation, Reneé will read from her collection and, drawing on Bird Rose's concept of 'Slow Writing' as well as Hirshfield's explorations of the creative impulse, Reneé will share how poetry became both an act of bearing witness as well as a will to '[keep]faith with life' (Rose, 2013), as she responded to the mass suffering that played out in asylum seekers lives' imprisoned on the periphery of our nation.

### **Biography**

Reneé Pettitt-Schipp lived in the Indian Ocean Territories from 2011 until 2014. Reneé's work with asylum seekers in detention on Christmas Island and the Cocos (Keeling) islands inspired her first collection of poetry, 'The Sky Runs Right Through Us'. This manuscript was shortlisted for the Dorothy Hewett manuscript prize and released by UWA Publishing in February 2018.

**Alex Philp**  
Queensland University of Technology

## **Out of bonds: Writing sister, the body and transgression in Australian literary fiction**

### **Abstract**

The female body is a space often governed by patriarchal boundaries within the West. If the female body shifts, grows, or seeps beyond the established (approved) delimitations, she is considered disruptive and grotesque. As a practice-led researcher, my writing reveals that in the eyes of a sister, a female can shift and transgress established body boundaries and the connotations that come from crossing them. However, my writing also reveals that the relationship between biological sisterhood and the body harbours significant complexities and challenges. The upbringing and ‘doubleness’ of biological sisters facilitate their potential to reveal new ways of reading (and representing) the fictive female body. This individual presentation will explore transgressive sisterhood through a combination of reflective practice and textual analysis of the *Sisters* anthology (1993), edited by Drusilla Modjeska and including stories and autobiographical essays by some of Australia’s most celebrated writers. Though both the idealisation and rivalry of fictive sister bonds have been examined in literary scholarship, the question of the *body* remains largely unexplored. This presentation shifts focus to this lacuna and, in doing so, begins to examine the potential of biological sisters to challenge and push against body boundaries in Australian literary fiction.

### **Biography**

Alex Philp is a sessional academic and doctoral candidate at QUT. She researches sister relationships and the body in literary fiction. She won the 2017 Rachel Funari Prize for Fiction, and her short fiction has appeared in *Overland*, *The Review of Australian Fiction*, *Voiceworks*, and on the *Meanjin* blog.

**Jo Pollitt**

West Australian Academy of Performing Arts at Edith Cowan University

## **Solo for two: *Writing as dancing***

### **Abstract**

*Writing as dancing* is an embodied writing practice developed with, and driven by a dancers' acute awareness of the slippage between physical, conceptual, sensorial and imaginative worlds. Harnessing the compositional scores of solo dance improvisation, momentum, compression, associational response, disruption, pace, and physical imagination, the practice demands an acute attention to lived experience. The curatorial responsiveness and embodying of energetic states applied in this form of dance improvisation are transferable to the practice of writing. These bodily inscriptions act as the ground for the physical and energetic locating of improvised decision-making in writing with the body; a body that potentially knows what we mean before we can say it. Engaging processes of both dancer and writer in a 'solo for two' configures the practice of *Writing as dancing*. My research aims to reveal the apparently 'hidden' texts of the dancer, not as a description or internal monologue, but as continuation of the dance, and as a revelation of the *state of dancingness* in words. Excerpts of my experimental novella titled *The Dancer in Your Hands* will be presented as part of a participatory timed reading.

### **Biography**

Jo Pollitt is a choreographer and writer whose practice is grounded in improvisation and creative arts research. She lectures at WAAPA, works as dramaturg and mentor, and is Co- Director of *BIG Kids Magazine*. Currently completing a PhD in 'writing as dancing', her latest work "she writes like she dances" is featured in *Choreographic Practices*.

**Antonia Pont**  
Deakin University

## **Forgetting our way into the past: Deleuze's 2<sup>nd</sup> passive synthesis and the writer**

### **Abstract**

In *Difference and Repetition* (2004) [1968], Deleuze writes: 'Spiritual repetition unfolds in the being in itself of the past [...] The question for us, however, is ... can [we] in some sense live [this] in the same way that we live the passive synthesis of habit [the living present]' (106). This paper brings Deleuze's work on temporality, specifically that concerning the a priori past of Bergson, into conversation with writing's temporalities. Deleuze emphasises that reminiscence, as best seen in Proust, is not available to us via active modes of memory, but rather only via a kind of forgetting. A relaxed mode, this passive synthesis accounts for and constitutes a deep past that never was (present). It would not be an aspect of the stable (but interminable) present, but another mode of time altogether, sub-representative and where repetition is other. Reminiscence, Deleuze claims, is always erotic—constituted by a 'virginal repetition' (107) that cannot align with represented pasts or presents of the usual order. How could writers include such a practice of artful forgetting and access glimpses of this peripheral temporality in our work—a mode able to decentre the habitual now on the way to creativity and futurity?

### **Biography**

Antonia Pont is Senior Lecturer at Deakin University, Melbourne. She is the current Chair of the AAWP, and a founding member of PHI—Philosophy and History of Ideas—group (part of the Alfred Deakin Institute). She publishes scholarly research about creative practice and theorises the notion of Practising, which offers a meta-account of the interrelation between repetition, newness, habit, difference and stability. Her creative work includes fiction, poetry and personal essays. In 2017, with a group of fellow thinkers, she published *Practising with Deleuze*, with Edinburgh University Press.

**Thea Porter**  
University of Sydney

## **Text-based scores in Australian poetry**

### **Abstract**

This paper will examine the use of text-based scores in Australian sound poetry performances, which proliferated during the 1980s – 1990s, as the trend toward concepts of intermedia and transdisciplinarity began to take hold within experimental fields. These concepts, owing in part to both Fluxus and the concrete poetry movement, encouraged an aesthetics and practice of notation within poetry. Within the marginal yet lively field of Australian sound poetry, several poets were influenced by the conceptual art, sound art and experimental music contexts, and in particular by the Cageian concept of ‘indeterminacy’. Within these contexts, scores were often used more as generative tools for an open-ended performance than as a means of documenting a performance. This paper considers the function of poem-scores within two Australian sound poetry collectives: Machine for Making Sense and Arf Arf. The scenario of the poem-as-instruction, which the poem-score both formalizes and undermines, allowed these text-based collectives to explore a spectrum of anti-expressive tendencies.

### **Biography**

Thea Porter is a PhD candidate at the University of Sydney. Her research is in Australian concrete, sound and visual poetry. She examines several Australian sound poets and collectives, considering them alongside an international avant-garde concrete movement, as well as various movements that foreground the material aspects of language. She is currently exploring the ways in which experimental Australian poets have interrogated lyric subjectivity and vocal presence in performative and collaborative sound poetry contexts.

**Julia Prendergast**  
Swinburne University

## **‘Sowing the wind’ from *The Earth Does Not Get Fat***

### **Abstract**

This presentation comprises a reading of one chapter from the novel in stories: *The Earth Does Not Get Fat* (UWA Press 2018). This reading is a practice-based example of the work of ideasthesia—Professor Danko Nikolić’s definition of definition of ideasthesia arises from the ‘Ancient Greek words *idea* (for concept) and *aesthesis* (for sensation). Hence [...] the term ideasthesia [or] sensing concepts’ (Nikolić 2016). Ideasthesia is a means for understanding writing process—a way of deconstructing the ways in which writers ‘sense’ concepts (ideas) in metaphorical, associative and sensory ways.

What is the relationship between the ideas that underlie narrative and the language used to convey those ideas? What modes of poiesis are involved? What are the dynamics of the conversion process? The concept of ideasthesia can be used to tackle these questions.

Unpacking meta-level processes of association from a practice-based perspective, asking about the relation between narrative content and *idea*, I argue that ideasthetic practices, in creative writing practice, represents an empathic engagement with idea. I understand the fractured narrative structure of *The Earth Does Not Get Fat* as a peripheral vision—a metaphorical representation of the novel’s central themes: trauma, grief and memory.

### **Biography**

Julia’s novel *The Earth Does Not Get Fat* was published by University of Western Australia Publishing (2018). Julia’s most recent short stories feature in *Australian Short Stories 66* (Pascoe Publishing, 2018). Julia’s theoretical work focuses meta-level processes in narrative composition.

**Kevin Price**  
Murdoch University

## **The observation, the observed, and the observer: Narration and knowledge in the writing of story**

### **Abstract**

Thomas McCormack (1988) says, 'One way or another, writers always start with an observation.' Observation lies not only at the heart of where writers start, but it also determines the perspective for how a story is told, and the relationship a reader has with its characters. In this fictocritical paper, drawn from the creative component of my PhD research, the central character of a novel, the teacher/writer Art Lazaar, examines the position in which his author places him by presenting his perspective of the narrative in the first person. He compares the range of perspectives open to him with the knowledge available to the omniscient narrator of the same novel accessing multiple character perspectives when writing in the third person, concluding that his position is not only limited, but prejudicial to his standing, and argues against the privilege of omniscience that the narrator writing in the third person possesses, questioning whether such a narrator is genuinely acting on behalf of the reader, or merely an agent of misleading objectification, providing a distance on events that is not indicative of the partial perspective on reality we as readers of reality all struggle with.

### **Biography**

Kevin Price is a PhD candidate in Creative Writing at Murdoch University, investigating the role of story and its transformative experience in creative writing practice, study, and teaching. He is published in *Writing in Education* (NAWE), and is the author of *Kumakana, A Gronups tale* (2017) and *Story Craft* (2014).

**Carolyn Rickett, Sue Joseph, Maria Northcote, Beverly J. Christian & John Seddon**

Avondale College of Higher Education & University of Technology Sydney

## **Peripheries and praxis: The effect of rubric co-construction on student perceptions of their learning**

### **Abstract**

The construction of assessment rubrics is often educator-centric as lecturers work in isolation to compose grading tools. While there is a pedagogical goal to construct instruments that align with learning outcomes and guide the assessment of students' learning, students are often at the periphery of this process. In many higher education institutions, students are accustomed to receiving assessment feedback; typically they are not active participants in the feedback cycle. Increasingly, institutions are seeking evidence of greater student engagement in their tertiary learning experience. Accordingly, academics seek to innovate and enhance curricula by creating more opportunities for student involvement, thus creating a shared understanding of it and associated assessment tasks.

Responding to a gap in rubric construction practice, this paper discusses an Office for Learning and Teaching Innovation and Development Grant research project where students moved from rubric user to the centre of collaborative design. Drawing on data collected from a team of rubric co-constructors from one Sydney university campus – first year students and an academic in a creative non-fiction writing subject – we set out to answer the following question: What effect does the co-construction and use of rubrics have on students' perceptions of their learning?

### **Biographies**

Carolyn Rickett (DARts) is an Associate Dean of Research, Senior Lecturer in Communication and creative arts practitioner. She is co-ordinator for *The New Leaves* writing project. Her research focusses on: trauma and bereavement studies; writing as therapeutic intervention; memoir and autobiographical writing; medical humanities; journalism ethics; poetry studies; and the psychosocial care of patients.

A journalist for more than thirty-five years in Australia and the UK, Sue Joseph (PhD) began working as an academic at the University of Technology Sydney in 1997. As Senior Lecturer, she teaches journalism and creative writing. Currently Joint Editor of *Ethical Space: The International Journal of Communication Ethics*.

Maria Northcote (PhD) is an Associate Professor in the Faculty of Education, Business and Science at Avondale College of Higher Education in New South Wales Australia. She is an experienced higher education teacher, leader and researcher and is involved in undergraduate and postgraduate education, and professional development.

Beverly Christian (PhD) is a Senior Lecturer in the Faculty of Education, Business and Science at Avondale College of Higher Education in New South Wales Australia. Her specialty area is classroom pedagogy and professional development. Her research interests include school culture and ethos, pedagogical approaches to learning and the role of nature in well-being.

John Seddon's (PhD) main research interests are in reflective practices for learning, metacognitive learning skills and assessment methods. Currently, he is the project manager for the *Owning the rubric: Student engagement in rubric design, use and moderation* project (OLT). Other interests include transition to university, conceptual change and experimenting with his wood fired oven.

**Carolyn Rickett, Sue Joseph & Paul Race**  
Avondale College of Higher Education & University of Technology Sydney

## **The limits of trigger warnings and the value of trauma informed educational practice in creative writing courses**

### **Abstract**

Humanities and creative practice disciplines provide and produce texts informed by trauma. As universities work to manage the possible risks associated with student re-traumatisation and vicarious traumatisation, the implementation of trigger warnings for particular course content has increased as the impact of trauma is seen as a less peripheral consequence.

Increasingly, the tertiary context is informed by protocols intended to mitigate risk to an institution and its students. While some educators see trigger warnings as providing a proactive starting place when acknowledging and responding to students' possible reactions to trauma content in classes, their efficacy and value in tertiary settings remains a contested and controversial space as other academics argue trigger warnings present a fundamental incursion into academic freedoms. Some academics further contend trigger warnings are quite inadequate without other changes to practices.

This paper reflects on the use and limits of trigger warnings in creative writing courses where students increasingly draw on traumatic events from their own lives to produce autobiographical artefacts. We argue that the work of Janice Corello and Lisa Butler on "trauma informed education practice" offers more useful strategies that might be applied to our own teaching praxis.

### **Biographies**

Carolyn Rickett (DArts) is an Associate Dean of Research, Senior Lecturer in Communication and creative arts practitioner. She is co-ordinator for *The New Leaves* writing project. Her research focusses on: trauma and bereavement studies; writing as therapeutic intervention; memoir and autobiographical writing; medical humanities; journalism ethics; poetry studies; and the psychosocial care of patients.

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Paul Race (PhD) is Dean of the Faculty of Arts, Nursing and Theology. He teaches ethics and clinical dilemmas in the discipline of nursing. His research interests are in preparation for practice, career development and specialisation in differing areas in nursing, and the effects of health and social policy, and organisational structures on professional practice.

**Nicholas Robinson**  
University of Melbourne

## **Autofiction, politics and practice: the re-emergence of autofiction in twenty first century literature**

### **Abstract**

Readers of Ben Lerner, Maggie Nelson, Elena Ferrante, and Rachel Cusk often feel encouraged to identify the narrating self with the historical author. For this reason, many scholars and reviewers have linked the re-emergence of autofiction in the twenty first century with The New Sincerity, with some deriding this pairing of autofiction and sincerity for missing the point of the form, and undermining its radical practice.

Autofiction traditionally invites but ultimately resists reader identification, representing the narrator as a fictional object. Literary theorists such as Marcie Frank and Rachel Greenwald Smith have expressed concern that if this link of identification is not broken, autofiction, and other texts which foreground the personal become compatible with neoliberal subjectivity. In other words, autofiction could make the self of narrative fiction available to marketisation.

Developing out of my PhD thesis, my proposed paper will argue that our unique contemporary moment, defined by the braided concerns of ecological collapse and economic instability, inspires a re-thinking of fictionality as it is transposed onto the reader-writer relationship. Rather than seeing this connection between fiction and non-fiction, reader and writer, as a potential space of alienation and commodification, it is reimagined in twenty-first century autofiction as a space for community formation, and resistance.

### **Biography**

Nicholas Robinson is completing his PhD at the University of Melbourne in the School of Culture and Communications. He is researching the evolving nature of the relationship between fiction and reality in contemporary writing.

**Sarah Roffey**  
University of Melbourne

## **Writing madness**

### **Abstract**

*'One could write a history of limits, of those obscure gestures, forgotten as soon as they take place, by which a culture rejects something that henceforth will be outside it'* (Foucault, 1961).

*Off The Wall Inc.* is a not-for-profit grassroots association. We are passionate about interrogating the dominant discourses around madness, disability, progress, sexuality and other contested social categories. We have been facilitating workshops and *Critical Perspectives on Madness* reading groups for over 2 years. The groups and workshops bring together academics, mental health professionals, writers, artists and people with lived experience of distress. Critically exploring texts which critique bio-medical models around madness and sanity and explore madness through literature, mad studies, poetry, philosophy and other discourses such as feminism and queer theory.

Through reading, writing and somatic practices, we question how we might read and write 'madness'. Examining texts which don't follow traditional structures such as Lindsay Eales' eclectic piece, *Loose Leaf Writing* (2016), "I attempt to theorise mad, by writing mad." We question whether madness can be written or performed, with Bataille (1943) theorising that madness is a limit experience, at the threshold of what is known.

This paper will discuss how practices of 'mad' writing and reading may contribute to explorations of 'madness', distress and extraordinary experiences and how we use these in our activism and creative practices.

### **Biography**

Sarah Roffey has qualifications in Gender and Cultural Studies and Social Work. She is one of the founders of Off the Wall Inc and Sydney's Critical Perspectives on Madness Reading Group. Sarah is informed by her own experiences of diverse states of mind and the intersections between the body, writing, literature and madness.

**Rubik Roy**  
Flinders University

## **The love triangle: A model to capture reality, or to question it?**

### **Abstract**

The love triangle is a geometric model that tries to put some order or structure on the often chaotic nature of human relations. Rene Girard's *Deceit, Desire and the Novel* is considered a classic in the field of literary studies, with "triangular desire" becoming a part of the jargon. It proposes that in each love triangle, the real relationship is actually between two rivals whose common desire for an object actually binds them together. However, if desire is indeed "triangular" and imitative then what happens to the love triangle when it is subverted? In Dostoevsky's *The Eternal Husband* (1870), a text Girard uses to substantiate his theory, the love triangle is subverted by eliminating one of its members from the very outset. Often the death of a member resolves the love triangle, but in this instance it seems to intensify the triangular relationship. This paper will be analysing Girard's theory, Dostoevsky's text, and my novel (*Bizarre Love Triangle*) which is a response to both writers, and subverts the love triangle by questioning whether one of its members ever existed. Specifically, I will be investigating whether subverting the love triangle undermines the assumption that reality is intelligible.

### **Biography**

Rubik Roy is a PhD candidate at Flinders University. He studied arts and law at the ANU, and journalism at the University of Queensland. He was the runner-up of the Questions Writing Prize at the Melbourne Writers Festival in 2015. His research interests include 19th century Russian literature.

**Francesca Jurate Sasnaitis**  
University of Western Australia

## **Imaging the past: Extracts from *Summerlands*, a novel of displacement**

### **Abstract**

'Writing, in its noblest function, is the attempt to unerase, to unearth, to find the primitive picture again, ours, the one that frightens us,' wrote Hélène Cixous (*Three Steps on the Ladder of Writing*, 1993). In the case of my novel *Summerlands*, the challenge was to find an authentic vocabulary for *unerasing* the past and verifying the present of characters who were survivors of collective trauma and mass displacement; how to represent their deliberate and unwitting silences, their secrets, and failures in memory and communication with emotional veracity; and how to embody the effects of transgenerationally transmitted memories on their children.

This paper will present aspects of creative writing practice as a methodology for engagement with processes of remembering and memorialising, with particular emphasis on the use of prose-pictures and image-embedded text to generate and multiply connections and coincidences; and to convey the ambiguities of rejection and desire, mourning and nostalgia, connection and disengagement inherent in the refugee-migrant experience.

### **Biography**

Francesca Jurate Sasnaitis is an Australian-born writer and artist of Lithuanian background. She lives in Perth and is completing a doctorate in Creative Writing at the University of Western Australia. Her research interests include catastrophe, exile, alienation, the burdens of transgenerational memory, and image-embedded text.

**Hayley Scrivenor**  
University of Wollongong

## **Throw yourself at the ground and miss: Writing from the corner of the eye**

### **Abstract**

*'There is an art to flying, or rather a knack. The knack lies in learning how to throw yourself at the ground and miss. ... Clearly, it is this second part, the missing, that presents the difficulties'* (Douglas Adams, *Life, The Universe, And Everything*, 56-57).

Creative Writing PhD candidates must present an exegesis as part of their doctoral project. According to Fletcher & Mann, 'The role of the exegesis is to present the research framework: the key questions, the theories, the disciplinary and wider contexts, of the project' (2004, 6). My proposed paper is interested in problematising the Creative Writing exegesis with a mind to highlighting the ways in which writing is often an exercise in 'side-eying'. Like the person learning to fly according to the instructions found in Adams's *Hitchhiker's Guide*, the writer flings themselves against the ground again and again to find that sometimes what you need is distraction at a critical moment. How might the exegetical requirement of a Creative Writing PhD interact with, refine, or perhaps even hinder the associated creative work? Drawing on my experiences writing my first novel as part of my PhD research project, this paper is interested in what we set out to write and what we end up writing.

### **Biography**

Hayley Scrivenor is a creative writing PhD candidate at the University of Wollongong. Her fiction and non-fiction has appeared or is forthcoming in *TEXT*, *CINDER*, *Seizure Online*, *SCUM*, *Mascara Literary Review*, *Phantasmagoria Magazine*, *SWAMP* and *Verity La* and she has been shortlisted for *Overland's* Story Wine Prize. Hayley is the Director of Wollongong Writers Festival, a literary festival held annually in November.

**Ravi Shankar**  
University of Sydney

## **On surveying the lines between cultural appropriation, cultural appreciation and cultural exchange**

### **Abstract**

Recently in *The Nation*, the weekly American journal of progressive political and cultural news, the poetry editors published a poem by Anders Carlson-Wee, a white man, entitled "How-To," which was written in the vernacular speech of a homeless black woman. Two years ago, American journalist and author Lionel Shriver gave the opening address at the Brisbane Writers Festival, asking the audience, "What stories are 'implicitly ours to tell.'" She made these points while wearing a sombrero, offending a number of people who she had explicitly hoped to offend.

Taking these two examples as a starting point, I will investigate the history of cultural appropriation, both as a tool of oppression and one of empowerment. Where are the lines between what constitutes a necessary embrace of something beyond ourselves, and what becomes a craven usurpation from a dominant culture on what is a more marginalized community's authentic forms of expression? In this paper, I'll delve into the dangers and rewards of this phenomenon as well as our heightened sensitivity to such acts, hoping to trace out a nuanced response to what is too often rendered as black-and-white. In doing so, I will scrutinize the process of canon-formation, identity politics and intellectual freedom with respect to works of literature and pedagogy in the classroom.

### **Biography**

Ravi Shankar is the author/editor of 13 books and anthologies of poetry, including most recently, "The Many Uses of Mint: New and Selected Poetry 1998-2008." He currently holds a research fellowship at the University of Sydney.

**James Shea**  
Hong Kong Baptist University

## **The translation's invisibility: On classical Chinese poetry and James Wright's "Lying in a Hammock at William Duffy's Farm in Pine Island, Minnesota"**

### **Abstract**

Adapting its title from Lawrence Venuti's seminal book *The Translator's Invisibility: A History of Translation* (1995; 2008), this paper argues that the influence of classical Chinese poetry in English translation on the development of James Wright's poetry has been largely overlooked by critics and biographers. Wright's well known poem "Lying in a Hammock at William Duffy's Farm in Pine Island, Minnesota," for instance, while frequently anthologized and analyzed, rarely occasions a reference to classical Chinese poetry in translation, despite being an explicit influence on the poem, as stated by Wright in an interview from 1980. This lacuna in Wright studies invites a consideration of the reasons why there remains a relative absence of Chinese poetics in discussions about Wright's poetry. This paper suggests that it may be due, in part, to the perception during the height of Wright's popularity in the U.S. that Chinese culture was distant and unknowable, because the People's Republic of China was "closed" to the west, despite the proliferation of classical Chinese poetry in translation at the time. Given Wright's outsized influence on American poetry, this paper reckons with the largely absent discourse of Chinese poetics in relation to his work.

**Rosemary Stevens, Jenny Hill, Dale Irving & Renate Millonig**  
Curtin University

## **Dancing backwards: Performance with presentation**

### **Abstract**

The performance is an interweaving of biographical stories from four women (actors and writers). Drawing on Rudolf Steiner's philosophy and the connections he makes between vowels, planets and the different life stages, we began an exploration of Shakespeare's female characters, who are (or eventually become) ill-fated, marginalised and peripheral. Our aim was to bring our own voices and stories from the periphery to centre stage through an experimental and phenomenological approach.

Little of Shakespeare's scenes remain, other than key phrases which punctuate each planetary quality/vowel/biographical sketch, interwoven via a collaborative process involving Authentic Movement, Life Writing, speech and drama techniques. This dynamic exchange through workshopping, writing (through a different lens), editing, and reshaping as text for performance revealed rich and surprising resonances (and dissonances) within our own life stories.

*Dancing Backwards* embraces the following AAWP themes:

- Reading / writing through a different lens
- Writing for performance
- Collaborative writing

The presentation elaborates on the collaborative approach we undertook and our vision for community development.

### **Biographies**

Rosemary Stevens, BA, MA Creative Writing, Doctor of Creative Arts:  
Creative and Professional Writing academic, writer.

Jenny Hill, BA, Dip Ed, M Ed, Dip Speech and Drama: professional storyteller with extensive experience in performance, education and community projects.

Dale Irving, BA, MEd, PhD: Drama and Arts' educator, trained in Biography Consultation.

Renate Millonig, BA Dip Ed: Steiner's Speech and Drama training, workshops, performance and direction.

**Kieran Stevenson**  
Deakin University

## **Conspiracy Mick's**

### **Abstract**

In 1989 Francis Fukuyama published his essay 'The End of History?', suggesting that political evolution had come to an indefinite rest at its apex. In the developed West, those coming into adulthood in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century were presented a neat vision of a world which needed only to be refined and perfected. Political and economic systems had, supposedly, achieved a productive equilibrium and a stable form – the solution to any given social ill was only a matter of time. This has not proven accurate; for the 'millennial' generation, and those following, life experience has often been on the periphery of this crumbling grand narrative.

'Conspiracy Mick's' is an excerpt from a longer work which seeks to examine this patchwork of experiences. Atomised, alienated, and to various degrees paranoid or desperate, the characters in the piece struggle to piece together a coherent reality and reconcile individual experience with increasingly insubstantial identities as socio-political subjects. With practice informed by Deleuze and Guattari's *Towards a Minor Literature* and Han's *The Expulsion of the Other*, this paper seeks to explore one small way in which literature might be used to give voice to such experiences.

### **Biography**

Kieran Stevenson is a writer from Melbourne and current PhD candidate at Deakin University. His practice and research explores the shifting space between genre and literary fiction, particularly in the novel form, and how the lines drawn there speak to ideas of authenticity and illusion.

**Kieran Stevenson**  
Deakin University

## ***Dark Souls, Bloodborne* and ergodic myth: The role of suggestive detail in complex world-building**

### **Abstract**

This paper seeks to examine the video games *Dark Souls* and *Bloodborne* as unique examples of ergodic literature as defined by Espen J. Aarseth, texts which are “non-trivial” to traverse and, as a result, open themselves up to a multiplicity of interpretation. By taking a minimal approach to the central narrative and distributing complex suggestive fragments at the edges of the game world, *Dark Souls* and *Bloodborne* evoke a profound sense of thematic mystery which never collapses, but rather unfolds endlessly.

This design approach is reflected on numerous levels but this paper focuses specifically on the games' writing, their use of suggestive rather than exhaustive detail to create worlds and stories which are ever-shifting but remarkably solid. This effect hinges on a double distancing – the player being kept at the periphery of a larger story which is in turn kept at the periphery of the player's perception. Using Daniel Vella's investigation of the ludic sublime in *Dark Souls* as a starting point and then pulling from post-structuralist theory, this paper argues that the games' design philosophy works to create a deceptively subversive interrogation of the metanarratives of both fantasy fiction and the socio-political experience of the contemporary individual subject.

### **Biography**

Kieran Stevenson is a writer from Melbourne and current PhD candidate at Deakin University. His practice and research explores the shifting space between genre and literary fiction, particularly in the novel form, and how the lines drawn there speak to ideas of authenticity and illusion.

**Shane Strange**  
University of Canberra

## **Improve your Marx: Creative research and the ‘problems’ of theory and practice**

### **Abstract**

Many creative (practice-led) research discussions are presented as problems of knowledge. i.e. ‘new’ or ‘innovative’ or ‘validatory’ claims to the knowledge produced by engaging in art practices that complicate more traditional or hegemonic conceptions of research. While much of this has arisen from administrative necessity in a changing tertiary education environment, I would like to suggest an analogous relationship between the kinds of knowledge production suggested in creative research discussions and those of some heterodox forms of Marxist thought, particularly in the complex relationships between theory and practice, and in the subjectivities pointed to by both.

### **Biography**

Shane Strange is a doctoral candidate and Teaching Fellow in the Faculty of Arts and Design at the University of Canberra and an HDR member of the Faculty’s Centre for Creative and Cultural Research (CCCR). He is also a publisher and editor at Recent Work Press, a small poetry press based in Canberra, Australia.

**Emily Sun**  
Murdoch University

## **“How to Read Shakespeare in the Post-Atomic Age Whilst Duck-sitting in Outer Suburbia”: The construction of a multi-ethnic and multi-generational Australian story**

### **Abstract**

This paper explores the process and the challenges of writing a contemporary Australian story from a liminal space. “How to Read Shakespeare in the Post-Atomic Age Whilst Duck-sitting in Outer Suburbia”, a story from my (unpublished) anthology of short fiction, re-imagines how members from a multi-generational and multi-ethnic Australian family value different forms of reading. The story examines the cultural value of reading specific texts, and how the value is negotiated in a specific micro-social space—the outer-suburban backyard. “How to Read Shakespeare ...” is inspired by Pierre Bourdieu’s theory of cultural capital and explores the ways in which entangled generational, ethnic and cultural identities shape and are shaped by individual readers’ different attitudes towards reading. In reflecting on the construction of this story, I discuss the challenges of and opportunities in presenting pluralist Australian narratives from a culturally ambiguous position.

An earlier version of “How to Read Shakespeare ...” was published in 2016 as “How to read Shakespeare while duck sitting in outer suburbia.” *Transnational Literature* 8 (2): 1-7.

### **Biography**

Emily Sun is a West Australian whose poetry, fiction and essays have been published in various journals and anthologies including *Island*, *Westerly*, *Hecate*, and *Growing up Asian in Australia*. Emily started writing fiction at an Iowa summer fiction workshop at the International Institute of Modern Letters (Victoria University), Wellington, NZ. More recently, she was one of three writers selected to participate in KSP Writers Centre’s First Edition retreat. Emily has an MA in English and Creative Arts from Murdoch University. Her blog can be found at <http://iamemilysun.com>.

**Michelle Symes**  
Edith Cowan University

## **How to be you, me, and everything else**

### **Abstract**

Compassion is surprisingly controversial. Within studies of morality there are contrasting conclusions. Some theorists think that compassion is an unreliable guide to judgements about rights and wrongs; others view compassion as a principle source of moral judgement (Nussbaum, 1996, 2001). Compassion is the foundation of all monotheistic religions and as a concept has a legacy that takes its roots in ancient traditions (Armstrong, 2011). Compassion is predominantly connected to states of suffering and love, but also (and interestingly less acknowledged) compassion is connected to states of joy (Braidotti, 2017a,b, 2013, 2011; Nussbaum, 2016, 2013, 2003; Ricard, 2015a,b). This paper proposes to explore how a contemporary ethics of compassion, influenced by a posthuman lens, might function as a new meeting ground for difference (gender, race, earth). It will seek to explore how we might extend compassion from a dramatic response to events, to an everyday way of being. It will pose the questions – How can we be both the same and different? Particularly important to this research is the notion that deep listening and embodied experience encourage and enable compassion.

### **Biography**

Michelle Symes is a PhD candidate at Edith Cowan University writing a thesis, comprising a novel and an essay, concerned with the nature of belonging in Australia. Prior to study, Michelle was a corporate communicator and journalist (*The Age*, *AAP*).

**Lorinda Tang**  
Deakin University

## **Speaking the unspeakable**

### **Abstract**

As a literary trope and a clinical consequence of trauma, 'the unspeakable' is insufficient to explain the lived experience of trauma, unless the *cause* of the inability to speak is addressed. As writers, deferring to 'the unspeakable' may entice the reader by subconsciously invoking their worst fears, but it also acts as a barrier to empathy, and limits the complexity of character in the context of trauma.

The effect of the unspeakable is to keep trauma out of sight, with survivors presumed to be ambivalent or unreliable when they do speak. This trend is most clearly observed where the survivor is from a minority group and the trauma they have experienced was interpersonal.

This paper examines literary trauma theory and affect theory to explain *why* trauma may be unspeakable, and how writers may give their characters the ability to speak. To demonstrate this, I analyse *The Lover* and *The North China Lover* by Marguerite Duras as an example of the evolution of speech.

### **Biography**

Lorinda Tang is an Adelaide-based writer of fiction and short stories. She has an extensive background in professional and legal writing. Before focusing on her writing career, Lorinda worked as a nurse and a lawyer. This experience underpins her concern with the ethics of creative writing, and the way in which intimate life events are explored. Lorinda is currently pursuing a PhD through Deakin University.

**Josephine Taylor**

Edith Cowan University & University of Western Australia

## **Fiction from the periphery: Creative strategies in writing vulvodynia**

### **Abstract**

Vulvodynia is a condition affecting up to 16% of women and is experienced as discomfort through to severe pain. Contemporary understandings of genital pain are inadequate; this is reflected in the discrepancy between incidence and awareness. My primary research interest is in the impact of socio-cultural factors on the perception of such disorder, especially in attitudes towards women with illness traditionally understood as hysterical or psychosomatic.

This paper presents my novel-in-progress as a challenge to skewed understandings of genital pain. The narrative deals with vulvodynia in the lives of two couples in two time-lines: 1960s London, and Perth 2007–2011. The subject matter of the fiction excavates doubts and presents challenges. While any creative response to a lacuna in knowledge is to be commended, fiction writing presents specific opportunities: through drawing the reader into a world understood as imagined, the reader is freer to engage with characters, and potentially open to receiving alternative ideas.

An extract from the historical timeline will illustrate my writing practice. It includes reference to real-life surgeon Isaac Baker Brown, who performed clitoridectomies as a solution to an eight-tiered deterioration leading through hysteria to death, and suggests new possibilities of understanding through identification with the central characters.

### **Biography**

Dr Josephine Taylor is a West Australian writer of fiction and essays. She is also Associate Editor at *Westerly* Magazine (UWA), an Adjunct Senior Lecturer in Creative Writing (ECU), and a member of the editorial board of Margaret River Press. Her work has been anthologised, and published in periodicals such as *Axon*, *Outskirts*, *Southerly* and *Westerly*; she is also a regular reviewer of new Australian fiction for *Australian Book Review*.

Josephine's writing is especially concerned with gynaecological pain and disability; she is passionate about the creative response to chronic suffering.

**Jay Daniel Thompson**  
University of Melbourne

## **Learn all about it: How can journalistic reportage of the Australian marriage equality debate assist in the teaching of news reportage?**

### **Abstract**

This paper poses the question ‘where to now?’ in relation to the teaching of text-based news reportage. This topic proffers a host of challenges for teachers and students. For example, anecdotal evidence alone suggests that students can encounter difficulties in writing in an objective manner, as well as developing an interest in a notoriously ‘dry’ media writing genre.

I suggest that the strategic use of contemporary and controversial case studies can enrich the study of text-based news reportage for educators and their students. This point will be teased out using a specific case study: the journalistic coverage of the 2017 marriage equality debate in Australia. This coverage has the potential to generate lively and productive classroom discussion about three issues: what counts as ‘objective’ and ‘subjective’ prose; the multiple ways in which journalists can frame an issue, while still remaining ‘neutral’ in tone; and how this framing is influenced by and/or reflects the ideological stance of its host publication.

The paper will focus on journalistic coverage of the marriage equality debate that was published in two Australian newspapers during 2017: *The Australian* (the national broadsheet, published by News Corp) and *The Age* (a Melbourne-based newspaper that is published by Fairfax Media). The paper will also focus on the teaching of text-based journalism as this is undertaken in journalism and communications courses run by Australian universities.

### **Biography**

Dr Jay Daniel Thompson lectures in media writing in the Media and Communications program, School of Culture and Communication at the University of Melbourne. Dr Thompson is also a freelance journalist, blogger and editor.

**Julienne van Loon**  
RMIT University

## **Dilemmas of authorship and cultural value for creative writers in Canada and Australia**

### **Abstract**

This paper explores current paradoxical dilemmas in the book industries of Canada and Australia concerning authors as creators. It raises questions around the cultural value of a local national literature in the context of the global, digital-dependent marketplace, particularly for those English-speaking nations under the constant influence of dominant market practices driven out of the US and UK. The paper traces instances of collective action by or on behalf of authors as creators in both Canada and Australia over the last five years. It attempts to stimulate debate on, and promote greater understanding of, divergent views on critical questions around authorship and culture, the maintenance and protection of small nation literatures and local author livelihoods, and collectivism versus individualism in the era of 'digital disruption.' The paper puts forward the argument that cultural value is an important consideration when advocating for the protection and promotion of small nation author interests, and that the relation between cultural value and creative writing as an academic discipline warrants closer attention.

**Ariella Van Luyn, Kate Cantrell & Beck Wise**  
University of New England & University of Southern Queensland

## **Not-so-invisible mending: Teaching and learning editing skills and standards in a large online class at a regional university**

### **Abstract**

Aviva Tuffield (2015) recently described editing as ‘the art of invisible mending’. However, teaching professional editing skills involves a complex process of making visible these largely hidden practices. For online students from diverse social, cultural, and linguistic backgrounds, training in ‘an invisible profession’ presents particular challenges. This paper draws on a case study from the University of New England (Armidale) to outline key considerations for teaching editing online. The study focuses on an editing subject that includes both an undergraduate and postgraduate offering, and which was developed in response to student requests for more ‘hands-on subjects’. The cohort represents a wide range of skill-sets, from practising editors undertaking professional development to first-year students with little editing experience. Since online students may be accustomed to content-based rather than skills-focussed modes of delivery, certain tensions arise when students undertake ‘visible’ learning activities. These tensions are heightened by the fact that working as an editor involves meeting deadlines, while online learning is asynchronous. Further, in the online setting, there are fewer opportunities for peer-to-peer interaction, which makes working as an online editor additionally challenging. Therefore, course design must effectively utilise online learning tools, while simultaneously employing learning cycles that encourage critical reflection.

**Meg Vann**  
University of Queensland

## **Voicing trauma: Feminist criminology and domestic noir**

### **Abstract**

Historically, crime fiction has been underpinned by assumptions regarding criminality and victimhood that reproduce hegemonic masculinist concerns, for example, the use of violence against women as an inciting incident to propel male characters into conflict. What is generally referred to as the 'Second Golden Age' in crime writing in the 1980s saw the rise of feminist crime fiction, which centralised women's agency in the narrative through showing: women in paid work; the intersection of gender, class, race, and sexuality in criminal justice issues; and the value of women's social and non-traditional familial networks. Now, a genre is emerging that combines the themes of this Second Golden Age with elements of the female Gothic to produce 'Domestic Noir'.

Domestic Noir's literary themes and features align with biases and advancements in criminological research, most specifically, feminist understandings of women and violence. Using the work of criminologist Drew Humphries to provide a conceptual framework, I will show how key concepts in feminist criminology addressing domestic violence are useful in 'reading with the grain' to understand the production and subversion of generic features in Domestic Noir.

### **Biography**

Meg Vann is a sessional academic and MPhil student at The University of Queensland, where she was recently awarded the Melanie McKenzie Teaching Award. A crime thriller writer, her work is published in literary journals and interactive platforms, including *The Review of Australian Fiction* and *Story City*.

**Elena Volkova**

## **Thresholds of change: A digital story of one woman's journey in preparation for surgery**

### **Abstract**

The proposed paper presents a reflection on the creation of the digital story 'Thresholds of Change'. This digital story was co-created by author Pam Blamey and producer Elena Volkova. The methodology used in this case study is Autoethnography. The author evaluated her experience in preparation for surgery, creating a ceremony, Sacred Women's Ritual. The producer of the story witnessed the ceremony and was an active participant, using hindsight to reflect on the experience.

The significance of this production is in sharing the record of this event with a wider audience. For the author, it brought validation of womanhood and sisterhood. She became aware of her gratitude for the nurturing female friendship she had experienced. For the producer, witnessing the ceremony and creating a tangible record of it brought a better understanding of her own journey as a creative and as a woman.

The potential trauma of impending surgery became a work of art. It also created a safe distance for the author to reflect on the crossing of the threshold of change and discovering her courage. She discovered that her experience can be beautiful and empowering for her as well as for those who witnessed the ceremony across the globe. As the producer and the author looked at each other at the end of this journey, they agreed: "It's not your story only! You can't keep it for yourself. When you invite others it becomes part of the community".

### **Biography**

Elena Volkova (Lena) is a transmedia storytelling facilitator and producer, an oral historian, and a writer. She holds a Bachelor Degree in Literary Studies (Moscow, Russia), a Graduate Diploma in Museum Studies (Melbourne, Australia) and a Master Degree (Research) in Creative Industries

(Queensland University of Technology). Her artistic practice includes digital storytelling, creative life story writing and oral history.

**Debra Wain**  
Deakin University

## **T-shirt slogans as potential micro-fictions that align the wearer with their social narrative**

### **Abstract**

*Her t-shirts are faded with wear and emblazoned with slogans like: 'I'll be post-feminist in a post-patriarchy' and 'This is what a feminist looks like' but sometimes she allows some whimsy and wears her shirt that reads: 'Allow me to explain through interpretive dance' or the one with the haiku that reads, 'Haikus are easy / But sometimes they don't make sense / Refrigerator.'*

Can we consider t-shirt slogans as forms of literature? This paper will argue that t-shirt slogans are the narratives of the individuals who are happy to be seen wearing them. They tell our stories and mark our allegiances from 'The Greens' to 'Go vegan and nobody gets hurt' to 'Go away I'm reading' to 'No one is illegal'. Through these fractions of micro-stories that we wear, we are marking ourselves as enacting a particular character within a particular type of story. By investigating the role of slogans as forms of narrative, I will discuss the nature of the short-short or micro-fiction, the role of blanks or spaces in such narratives and, through the creative practice of short stories, look at ways in which the lives lived while wearing t-shirts with slogans make up a longer narrative.

### **Biography**

Debra Wain holds a PhD in Creative Writing. Her research interests include women, food and belonging, which she has investigated through short stories. Her work has been published in *Meniscus*, *Journal of Post-Colonial Cultures and Societies*, *Verity La*, and *Tincture*. She is a current sessional academic at Deakin University.

**Debra Wain**  
Deakin University

## **Writing from the regions: Outback towns and their borders in short fiction**

### **Abstract**

My creative-practice considers the nature of belonging and isolation in the context of post-colonial concerns of identity, mimicry and representation and how these concerns impact upon each other in fiction located in outback towns. Newcomers to country towns often come up against barriers to inclusion. The newcomer's presence has the ability to highlight and juxtapose the differing attitudes of people or characters from different social backgrounds. With this in mind, I have written to investigate the functions of towns and the development of communities in terms of who they admit and who they exclude with a focus on the role of food as a social conduit that helps to overcome these barriers.

White Australians in outback towns tend to be protective of the place they have forged for themselves. The defensiveness of their place by town inhabitants indicates anxiety about belonging. The outback town acts as a community on the border of society which itself is very protective of its boundaries so that there is a dual marginality at work in these locations.

This paper considers the ways in which outback towns could be said to function allegorically as post-colonial or neo-colonial colonies where exclusion of the other is perpetuated.

### **Biography**

Debra Wain holds a PhD in Creative Writing. Her research interests include women, food and belonging, which she has investigated through short stories. Her work has been published in *Meniscus*, *Journal of Post-Colonial Cultures and Societies*, *Verity La*, and *Tincture*. She is a current sessional academic at Deakin University.

**Amelia Walker & Chloe Cannell**  
University of South Australia

## **Writing queer time in young adult literature using Eades's theory of *écriture matière***

### **Abstract**

Our collaborative presentation responds to Halberstam's (2005) work on queer time as something that challenges time as made legible—and thus legitimate—in mainstream discourses. Defining 'queer' as that which eludes both heteronormativity and homonormativity, we broach the challenges queer time presents for writers of queer-themed young adult fiction. This includes a survey of young adult texts featuring ostensibly queer characters and/or themes, through which we observe widespread tendencies towards the same literary conventions typically present in Western canonical texts. We contend that these devices fail to encompass queer time's rich complexities, which renders them problematic for the telling of queer stories. Much of what is currently marketed as queer young adult fiction effectively marches queer time to the heteronormative beat, insidiously promoting homonormativity and thereby maintaining heteronormativity's reign. Seeking more appropriate ways to write queer time, we consider *écriture féminine* (Cixous 1976) as one initially attractive option. This, however, raises its own problems, observing which we turn instead to *écriture matière* (Eades 2016), and elucidate the particular benefits this offers for writing queer time in young adult fiction.

**Amelia Walker & Corinna Di Niro**  
University of South Australia

## **Re-envisioning duoethnography: A methodology for collaborative research in creative writing and theatre**

### **Abstract**

Duoethnography is a qualitative methodology for social, health and educational research in which two or more researchers generate knowledge about a topic by sharing and comparing perspectives (Sawyer & Norris 2015). Our presentation re-envisioning duoethnography for creative arts research in the fields of creative writing and theatre, arguing the benefits of a duoethnographic approach for these contexts. We draw on our reading of relevant scholarly literature, and on our experiences of co-creating a recently-published duoethnographic book chapter (Di Niro & Walker 2018). Beginning with a survey of collaborative research methods and methodologies broadly, we outline duoethnography's defining features and history before explaining its appeal to us as creative writing and theatre practitioners-turned-researchers. Then we explain how we adapted duoethnography to suit our aims and context. Key to our approach was the interweaving of theatrical 'scenes' into our duoethnographic dialogue, which produced a chapter comparable to a 'plaited' creative writing thesis (Krauth 2011). By sharing this process and its benefits, we offer tips and guidelines for other creative writing and/or theatre researchers also interested in using duoethnography to conduct inquiry and generate knowledge in collaborative, arts-friendly ways.

**Ross Watkins**  
University of the Sunshine Coast

## **In the hands of children: Posthumanism and the primacy of picture book thingness**

### **Abstract**

While publishers, educators and academics have been grappling with the impacts of digital media on children's publishing, another trend has quietly emerged on bookshelves in the children's section of the library: faced with its once-propheesed extinction, the haptic qualities of the paper picture book have surged, led by trade publishers making concerted efforts to emphasise the medium's materiality. From a wider range of textured paper stock, to increasingly sophisticated paper engineering techniques, and the use of vegetable-based inks that emanate a patent scent, the picture books in our children's hands have become not only extraordinary story objects but a contact zone for them to experience what Karen Malone calls 'child-body-animal-place relations' (2016). Rather than viewing the digitisation of children's literature – television and tablets – as the posthumanist challenge, I view the printed picture book as an exceptional medium where its thingness offers children an encounter with the more-than-human. That is, while a child engages in the narrative world of their book, they are also engaging in an embodied and embedded subjectivity consistent with Rosi Braidotti's concept of the 'posthuman': one that is materialist and vitalist, and firmly grounded in a sense of place. While the original purpose of a picture book is anthropocentric, this does not mean that its function is purely anthropocentric – by emphasising the book's presence, attention is also drawn to our own presence, our own thingness, and the sustainability of our relationships with the non-human.

### **Biography**

Dr Ross Watkins is an author and illustrator for both children and adults. His book *One Photo* (Penguin Random House) was shortlisted for the 2017 CBCA Picture Book of the Year, and *The Boy Who Grew Into a Tree* (Penguin) was shortlisted for the 2013 Aurealis Award for Speculative Fiction.

His adult novel *The Apology* (UQP) was published in 2018. Ross' scholarly research explores practices in illustrated narrative, representations of grief, and radical modes of scholarly writing. Ross is a *TEXT* Editor and Senior Lecturer in Creative Writing at the University of the Sunshine Coast.

**Ross Watkins**  
University of the Sunshine Coast

## **Animal ambivalence in *Baited Breath* (a novel excerpt)**

### **Abstract**

*Baited Breath* is loosely based on the arrest and conviction of a greyhound owner/trainer whose live baiting practices at his Queensland training facility were exposed by the ABC's *Four Corners* in 2015. The footage on the program is undeniably shocking in the inhumane treatment of the animals used as live bait – piglets, possums and rabbits attached to a mechanical arm and swung around the track at high speeds, sometimes for up to an hour, or until the animal dies – with the aim of developing faster dogs due to heightened prey drives. But after witnessing this footage, I couldn't help speculating that although greyhounds are racing stock, they might also form meaningful roles within the lives of trainers and their families. A pragmatic and even ruthless approach to the welfare of these dogs is well-documented, particularly in large enterprises (thousands of breeding and training dogs per facility), but there also exists small operators whose relationships with these dogs is more ambivalent – both loved pets and financial investments. *Baited Breath* is a novel that focuses on this ambivalence, and the moral incongruence apparent in the acts of someone who can dedicate their life to one animal, while participating in systematic acts of brutality against another animal.

### **Biography**

Dr Ross Watkins is an author and illustrator for both children and adults. His book *One Photo* (Penguin Random House) was shortlisted for the 2017 CBCA Picture Book of the Year, and *The Boy Who Grew Into a Tree* (Penguin) was shortlisted for the 2013 Aurealis Award for Speculative Fiction. His adult novel *The Apology* (UQP) was published in 2018. Ross' scholarly research explores practices in illustrated narrative, representations of grief, and radical modes of scholarly writing. Ross is a *TEXT* Editor and Senior Lecturer in Creative Writing at the University of the Sunshine Coast.

## **Contemplating ‘the edge that never arrives’**

### **Abstract**

The experience of being in the world, of trying to make sense of it, and of interacting meaningfully with others has always challenged us to find better ways of expressing ourselves through language, and more original ways of articulating ideas. This is why the literary arts, especially poetry, have traditionally been so important to so many cultures. Now, as our world increases in verbosity, if not articulacy, the imperative for meaningful verbal expression and exchange grows ever more pressing. Yet even the most skilled writers cannot take it for granted that they will always find the right words. This paper argues that it may be better not to try. For if we consider writing solely to be a question of “finding the right words”, not only do we limit language’s power and possibility, we also limit ourselves. This paper contemplates language as ‘the edge that never arrives’, and suggests that the more we strive for, and fail, to reach the limits of language, the closer we may come to accessing, not only the originality and expressiveness we crave, but also the means to engage with a deeply enriching literacy of uncertainty.

**Darryl Whetter**  
Lasalle College of the Arts

## **Instapoetry: Fad or (necessary) evolution? A travel-poetry test case**

### **Abstract**

This presentation combines photography, a reading from a poetry manuscript, and a critical examination of 'Instapoetry,' the online fusion of poetry and social-media posts (including imagery). The presenter brings his dual experience as a poet and novelist in his native Canada and, more recently, as the inaugural programme leader of the first dedicated Creative Writing MA in Singapore. Singapore is surely the most vibrant English-language poetry market on the planet, with collections routinely selling 3000 copies domestically.

Readings will be drawn from a developing poetry manuscript entitled *#TravelSend: Poems at Travel's End*. Somewhat paradoxically, this collection uses travel poetry, including Instapoetry, to examine coastal environmental precarity. Because of their (i) brevity and (ii) partial transcendence from the linearity of prose, poems have found a healthy new habitat in social media. Discussing the phenomenon of social-media poetry (aka 'Instapoetry'), *The Guardian's Books* section notes, 'According to *the New York Times*, three of the top 10 bestselling poetry books in the US [in 2015] have been written by poets at the forefront of the Instapoet movement.'

Travel poems from precarious environments like the Maldives and Koh Rong are, and are not, ideal test-cases to discuss the merits and pitfalls of 'Instapoetry.'

## Trees, women and walking: New forms in life writing

### Abstract

‘But after reading a chapter or two a shadow seemed to lie across the page. It was a straight dark bar, a shadow shaped something like the letter ‘I’. One began dodging this way and that to catch a glimpse of the landscape behind it. Whether that was indeed a tree or a woman walking I was not quite sure. Back one was always hailed to the letter ‘I’ ... But — here I turned a page or two, looking for something or other — the worst of it is that in the shadow of the letter ‘I’ all is shapeless as mist’ – Virginia Woolf, *A Room of One’s Own*.

As Virginia Woolf noted back in 1929, a literary form shaped in privilege may not capture the nuances of particular lives. These three papers address the craft and form of writing about lives that cannot be adequately expressed by traditional life writing, such as those of the non-human, or of Aboriginal artists, or which defy the neat, literary boundaries of the self. They draw attention to the necessity for new, more elastic forms that reflect an engagement with the circumstances and environments of the ‘I’ of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Paper One: Ecobiography: Decentring the human in life writing (Jessica White)

The term ‘autobiography’ emerged in the West in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century. Analyses of the form have historically attended to the concept of a unified selfhood, which is seen as representative of universal human nature. This interpretation of autobiography is emphatically anthropocentric, with the human at its core. Yet we cannot have a life without the lives of others (such as plants, fungi, or air, for example), and thus it becomes desirable, in creating an autobiography, to include the lives that sustain its subject: the *autos* of a biography must automatically include its environment. Such an account accords equal weight to its human and non-human subjects and is known as an ‘ecobiography’.

This paper explores my process in writing an ecobiography of Western Australia's first female scientist, 19<sup>th</sup> century botanist Georgiana Molloy. It demonstrates how Georgiana's sense of self was shaped radically by her immersion in her environment. It also describes the lives of the plants she collected, following them on their journey to England, as well as attending to their current condition in the South-West Australia Floristic Region. In doing so, it draws attention to the importance of plants, indicating how if they become extinct, so will we.

Paper Two: Bespoke biography: tailoring the form (Louise Martin-Chew)

Based on interviews with three women who were adopted under closed adoption laws, I have written an experimental lyrical essay using a shared voice to tell what ties these women's stories to each other: being adopted as infants and a strong link to Scotland; and individual voices to describe each woman's unique experiences with place, memory and identity. The creative work in part uses the structure of a Greek Chorus for the women's collective voice, which comments on and draws together their shared experiences. It also borrows from the witches in Shakespeare's *Macbeth*, who speak both collectively and individually. This work is undertaken during my creative practices research. The reader is invited to form fresh, and perhaps transformed, understandings of the impact of adoption on the Australian cultural and emotional psyche.

Paper Three: Stillness in motion: Writing a life while living a lie (Melissa Fagan)

The traditional notion of autobiographical writing involves looking backwards to a life already lived, writing about events that have already taken place. Yet, in practice, life writing often occurs concurrently with the life, as it is being lived.

This paper addresses this concern: how to pin down or make still experiences and moments in time that are still unfolding? How to find a form for that? In narrating ours and others lives, the author or narrating "I" is necessarily

present in the creation of the text, and has ultimate control over the text. Or does she? I will consider how writing about life as it happens, is akin to finding ones feet within a moving force, a way of finding stillness in motion. Looking at travel narratives that take the concept as 'travel' as broadly as possible – specifically Patti Smith's *M Train* and my own work-in-progress, a collection of travel and leisure themed essays – I will consider whether writing a life while living a life takes you out of experience or deeper into it, or whether it can do both, simultaneously. I will consider the ways in which a narrator shapes not only the text, but also her life as she's living it.

### **Biographies**

Dr Jessica White is the author of *A Curious Intimacy* and *Entitlement*. Her short stories, essays and poems have appeared widely in Australian literary journals and she has won awards, funding and residencies. Her memoir, *Hearing Maud*, is to be published by UWA Press, and she is currently a DECRA postdoctoral fellow at The University of Queensland, where she is writing an ecobiography of 19<sup>th</sup> century botanist Georgiana Molloy.

Louise Martin-Chew is author of *Linde Ivimey* (2012), and co-author of *blood language: Judy Watson* (2009), *Robert Brownhall: Australian Stories* (2012), *The Heart of Everything: the art and artists of Mornington & Bentinck Islands* (2008) and other art books. She is a regular catalogue essayist, and contributor to art magazines and books, having worked freelance since 1993. She is presently finalising her PhD in Creative Writing at the University of Queensland with her project a biography of influential Aboriginal artist Fiona Foley (born 1964).

Melissa Fagan is a writer and editor based in Brisbane, where she also teaches and lectures in creative writing courses at the University of Queensland and QUT. Her fiction and nonfiction have been published in *Overland*, *Kill Your Darlings*, *Meanjin*, *QWeekend*, and others. She is currently completing a PhD in travel writing with Curtin University and the University of Aberdeen. Her first book, *What Will Be Worn*, will be published by Transit Lounge in September 2018.

**Kim Wilkins & Lisa Bennett**  
University of Queensland & Flinders University

## **Writing bestsellers: Money, popularity, branding**

### **Abstract**

The term 'bestseller' labels both books and the people who write them. The commercial pressures of publishing are often imagined to be in tension with the creative impulses of individuals. While most writers hope for market success in order to be financially free to write, does achieving bestseller status actually support creative liberty or does it impose new limits? Drawing on interviews with three international bestselling writers, this paper seeks to understand how achieving a level of market success might affect (or not) the writers' work. We seek to answer three questions that seem almost dirty to ask about literature: what do money, popularity, and branding do to creative practice?

### **Biographies**

Kim Wilkins (University of Queensland) is an Associate Professor and director of the postgraduate Writing, Editing, and Publishing program at University of Queensland. She is also the author of 30 full-length works of fiction.

Lisa Bennett (Flinders University) is a Senior Lecturer in Creative Writing and English at Flinders University. Under the name Lisa L. Hannett, she has published over 70 short stories and been shortlisted for the World Fantasy Award.

**David Thomas Henry Wright**  
Murdoch University

## **Text/Image strategies and possibilities: Visibility in Ross Gibson's *The Summer Exercises***

### **Abstract**

In *Six Memos for the Next Millennium* (1988), Calvino argues for a clearer understanding of the visual imagination:

...that would accustom us to control our own inner vision without suffocating it or letting it fall... into confused, ephemeral daydreams, but would enable the images to crystallize into a well-defined, memorable, and self-sufficient form... (92)

*The Summer Exercises* (2008) (*TSE*) by Ross Gibson combines visual and literary art. It contains black-and-white photographs, which were made available by the Justice & Police Museum in Sydney, accompanied by a series of fictional entries of a chaplain who worked at the Police Station in 1946. The liberal use of photography together with text results in an illustrated novel in which the various media transform each other. By exploring this image-text relationship, I explore and propose new approaches and strategies to Calvino's value of 'visibility' as it applies to contemporary literature and creative practice. Specifically, I will explore how images transform text, how text transforms images, and propose approaches to text/image power relations for both creative writers and readers.

### **Biography**

David Thomas Henry Wright has been published in *Southerly*, *Westerly*, *Seizure*, *Verity La*, *Electronic Book Review*, and *MATLIT*. He won the 2018 Queensland Literary Awards' Digital Literature Prize. He has a Masters from The University of Edinburgh and is currently a PhD candidate at Murdoch University.

**Christina Yin**  
Swinburne University of Technology

## **Narrative inquiry, creative nonfiction and two braided stories of the rehabilitation and release of orangutans in Sebuyau, Sarawak, Malaysian Borneo**

### **Abstract**

The rehabilitation and release of captive orangutans remains a contentious issue in the conservation of the endangered species. In the 1970s, three rescued and captive-raised orang-utans were released at Sebuyau, Sarawak. Using narrative inquiry as research method and in the form of creative nonfiction, the ever-evolving fourth genre, the researcher-writer tells the stories of two people instrumental in the experimental rehabilitation and release of the three orang-utans. Their stories tell of personal experience working with the rescued animals; how the young orang-utans were raised, cared for and released, and the consequences of well-meaning but ill-fated human actions. This creative nonfiction work reveals views different from the conventional scientific and academic documentation of conservation efforts. The voices of the wildlife researcher, the forest guard and the researcher-writer take us through a gamut of emotions: wonder, compassion, frustration and sorrow. This writing is part of the researcher-writer's postgraduate work using creative nonfiction to tell the stories of men and women working to conserve the orang-utan over a span of fifty years in Sarawak, Malaysian Borneo.

### **Biography**

A former news anchor, broadcast journalist, newspaper columnist and communications officer for a non-profit conservation organisation, Christina is a Senior Lecturer at Swinburne University of Technology's Sarawak Campus. Apart from teaching, Christina organises Swinburne's annual conservation events and inter-school debating championship, the largest English debating tournament in Borneo.