

FEMINIST READINGS#3
FEMINIST WRITINGS

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University of Helsinki, Finland



KEYNOTES

AKILA KIZZI

PATHBREAKING FRANCOPHONE WOMEN WRITERS IN COLONIAL ALGERIA: SITUATING WOMANIST/FEMINIST WRITING IN TAOS AMROUCHE, DJAMILA DEBBECHE AND ASSIA DJEBAR

This talk aims to bring the audience on a journey into the written works of three historical Algerian women authors: Taos Amrouche, Djamilia Debbèche and Assia Djebar. It will show some of the difficulties they faced as they emerged onto the literary scene, or what I called in my research their moments as « les essuyeuces de plâtre » (plaster wipers). I will also address how and why these authors were ignored or devalued in Algerian official literary history after Algeria's independence (1962). Amrouche and Debbèche edited their first books in 1947, and Djebar in 1955. Amrouche and Debbèche began to write before male writers but Algerian official literary history gave more importance to the latter. The male writers were presented as the « fathers of Algerian literature » while women's writing was reduced to insignificant « personal stories » to be left in the private sphere. This double discrimination (negative towards the women, positive towards the men) did not destroy, but rather inspired, the women authors. They wrote about their own society with the aim of contributing to changing women's social status, and out of their own urgent need to speak. They also critiqued French colonialism which had constructed them as victims and imposed upon them some elements of conditional emancipation, thereby deploying them as a weapon in colonial war (Fanon, 1959). In particular, the intellectual career of Taos Amrouche in France is illustrative of ambiguities and complexities involved in being an Algerian woman who writes in French. Her engagement as an exiled subject in France is at the heart of her political fight for recognition. Sixty years later, the situation of women of color writers and other intellectuals in France has not changed. They always fight on several fronts. Despite the newfound popularity of postcolonial studies in France, which revolves mainly around British and not French colonialism, the participation and contribution of French women of color in academic spheres in the production of knowledge, remains highly marginalized.

Akila Kizzi is an Algerian exiled woman in France. She has a PhD in gender studies in Paris 8 university. Her dissertation aims to take stock of the work and life of Marie-Louise Taos Amrouche (1913- 1976), in its capacity to speak out, engage politically, and write multiple identities. Akila's actual fields of research are gender immigration, women and writing in francophone area.

HETA RUNDGREN

SERIOUS PLAYFULNESS AND SELF-CRITICAL PRACTICE – ARTICULATING ACADEMIC (IN)FORMALITY AND WHITE FEMINIST RACISM

Lately I've been reading and thinking about white feminist racism. I did not come to these thoughts and readings out of nowhere, or out of my own striking white intelligence. I needed to be taught about racism and the persistence of colonial structures in our everyday lives, and this teaching was mostly done by non-white fellow PhD students. Starting with the constant that white feminist racism gets reproduced in feminist thought through narratives, attitudes and exclusive practices, I will engage, with your help, in some seriously playful self-criticism.

First, I want to acknowledge post- and decolonial black and women of color feminist writing and action as a central influence to the work you/I/we are doing with Feminist Readings to disrupt the reproduction of habitual academic forms and orientations. Second, I want to question the role of playfulness in my own work and its relationship to whiteness. Finally, I want to relate to María Lugones's (1987) idea of playfulness as a necessary attitude for "world"-travelling, a complex skill developed by the "outsiders to the mainstream" and/or white malestream, a skill that she wants to affirm as "partly constitutive of cross-cultural and cross-racial loving".

Heta Rudgren works at the intersection in between comparative literature and gender studies. She presented her PhD dissertation entitled "Vers une théorie du roman postnormale. Féminisme, réalisme et conflit sexuel chez Doris Lessing, Märta Tikkanen, Stieg Larsson et Virginie Despentes" in December 2016 at the Paris 8 University and Helsinki University. A more playful biography and links to some of her work is found here: <https://feministreadings.org/equipe/heta-rundgren/>

PRESENTATIONS

YELDA BASARAN

CONTEMPORARY FRENCH WOMEN FILMMAKERS' AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL DOCUMENTARIES NEGOTIATING BETWEEN SELF AND HISTORY: CHILDREN OF WHITE MEN

Contemporary French women filmmakers in their autobiographical documentaries, often return to their family to delve into their past, as a kind of quest for identity. These autobiographical films concern the privacy /intimacy of the filmmaker who feels the need to disclose a subject which is at first sight personal but personal history is always in relation to collective History. These films, by revealing the family to be an impediment to any full or complete constitutive rendering of one's self as a subject in history, obviously don't fit the classic model of Western autobiography, as it was defined according to some classical texts, notably of Rousseau and Goethe. They can rather be considered as examples of the autoethnographic impulse, wherein cultural concerns are explored or displayed through the representation of the self.

Following Michel Renov, we adopt the concept of "domestic ethnography" that he coined in his article "Domestic Ethnography and the Construction of the 'Other' Self". Renov explains the concept and its use as "a vehicle of self-examination, a means through which to construct self-knowledge through recourse to the familial other". It is a practice in which autobiographical self-examination adds to the concern of the ethnographer to document the lives of others.

As case study, we will analyse *Les Enfants du Blanc* (Children of the White Men, France- Burkina Faso, 2000) of Saray Bouyain, daughter of a French mother and a Burkinabe father, in which she explores her mixed-race roots. The film reveals a family secret but also shows us a forgotten aspect of the civilizing effects of colonization. Born in Upper Volta, Bouyain's grand mother is the offspring of the meeting of a French colonial and an African girl. Like the mother of Bouyain's grand mother, many Burkinase girls were requisitioned by the French army during the first decade of the twentieth century to become women of the French lieutenants. The children born from these unions, generally abandoned by their French fathers, were placed into specially created orphanages. The fate of these indigenous women and their children is almost absent from the history books. Through the testimony of her grand mother Sarah Bouyain discovers the singular destiny of this mulatto minority to which she belongs to and reconstructs the puzzle of her heritage. Bouyain not only treats personal and family memory as historical, but also treats history as personal. Children of the White Men thus, can be considered as an exemplary of the crisis of definition and categorization that plagues documentary, autobiography and identity, opening the border.

Yelda Basaran is born in Turkey. She is graduated from Galatasaray University in Istanbul. She earned master degree from Centre d'Etudes Féminines et d'Etudes de Genre of Université Paris 8 Saint Seine-Denis. She worked at Akdeniz University (Faculty of Fine Arts) for 4 years as research assistant. She is PhD candidate and works on feminist film studies, women filmmakers and autobiographical cinema.

ANA BELÉN ESTRADA GORRÍN & MARGA BUJOSA SEGADO

ETNOGRAPHY OF RESISTANCE

We understand feminist research as an act of revolt with the main objective to share the experience and the knowledge developed by those groups performing resistance against the patriarchal power. With this work, first we will point how patriarchy in interaction with capitalism has become a global oppression system. Second we will show up resisting strategies used by the considered subalterns against this hegemonic system; the last with the objective to encourage discriminated to weave resistance against oppressing powers and revolt.

We had enjoyed sharing resisting experiences with the evicted Boeung Kak community in Cambodia and sub-Saharan illegal migrants looking for their way to Europe from Morocco. We proposed to share this experiences through a video documentary taking the form of science-fiction ethnography. We had chose this format because it will be useful to explore resistance strategies better capturing the creativity necessary to revolt against authoritarian and violent systems; to explore non-academic knowledge and take it into account on the same level, furthermore recognizing all research actors as subjects of knowledge; to show up individualities challenging the heterogeneity of the normalized pro-patriarchal media image; to stablish a common place out of time for dialoge to all we discriminated.

Ana Belén Estrada Gorrín, Ph.D. candidate at the program of Estudios Migratorios offered by the Instituto de Migraciones of the University of Granada. Researcher on audiovisual collaborative practices in border contexts attached to the Migrations Institute. Actually at the coordination of the Project Imágenes de la Inmigración en la Frontera Sur: Educación y Convivencia Intercultural (Universidad de Granada/ASAD).

Marga Bujosa Segado, Ph. D. Candidate at the Estudios de las Mujeres, Discursos y Prácticas de Género program offered by the Centro de Estudios de las Mujeres y de Género, University of Granada, researcher of the Otras Perspectivas Feministas en Investigación Social team, bachelor degree on Political Sciences and Sociology, specialized in management of the International Cooperation and Gender policies.

OUERDIA BEN MAMAR

YOU CAN BRUSH THE ROSES BUT YOU CANNOT DELAY SPRING

In the context of the Arab Spring, Egyptian women are claiming citizenship and feminism, by a renewal of a feminist activism tradition and a genuine use of social media to disseminate it on the web for a wider collective awareness despite tough repression.

This presentation aims at showing how they perform creative artistic activities that question the patriarchal norms,

Bahia Shehab for example made of the « No, a thousand times No » translated from Egyptian Arabic, the symbolic word of an artistic political speech act, voicing multiple resistance.

Sama El Masry, an actress performed what I call a « political belly dance » video mocking and contesting the « conservative » Muslim Brotherhood governance, when going to change the constitution, besides denouncing, in a movie she produced, belly dancers' sexual exploitation in the Egyptian movies' production.

The Ballerinas Girls, brought up ballet, a bourgeois dance into the street, « Stop and Dance » group staged modern dance in the Cairo underground.

By so doing, Egyptian women are assuming an aesthetic political feminist agency as a part of a wider political feminist perspective.

Ouerdia Ben Mamar. I was born and I grew up in Algeria where I studied Arabic, French and English. I left Algeria in 2000 to settle in France. I resumed my studies on North African societies and cultures (Master). I am currently a Ph.D. candidate in literature and History. I am interested in Arab women and the process of empowerment they genuinely set up to empower themselves individually and collectively. I am a teacher, a feminist interested in literature, history gender and social issues, reading and writing.

HANANE BOUTENBAT

DIGGING DEEPER: FEMINIST ARTWORK FOR MORE ACADEMIC RESEARCH

Feminist art legacy of the 20th century is still tremendously challenging and worthily valuable for academic researchers to cover or discover as it stands for a multi-layered critique of misogynist practices of art.

Feminist artists during the 70s called for more subversive ways to do art. Some claimed for new theoretical paradigms that stemmed from political and social feminist consciousness, underlying the rich diversity of women's artworks that denounced gender stereotypes like Judy Chicago's *The Dinner Party* (1974-1979), laying bare the male-oriented history of art and the marginalization of women artists. Others advocated an activist approach which would grant women artists more representation in the canonical institutions of art. Guerilla Girls, for example, led many actions against the absence of women from standard art histories and museums. Guerilla Girls' ad "Do women have to be naked to get into the Met. Museum". This presentation seeks to explore some feminist artistic practices and trends that fostered the question of gendered representation of women in art as it is still relevant to underscore the importance for scholars, students and researchers not to overlook the feminist legacy in art.

Hanane Boutenbat got her PhD at the University of Paris 8 in contemporary American and North American literature. She currently teaches ESP (English for Academic Purposes) in Paris 8. Among her fields of interest and research are feminine historiography in art, philosophy and literature.

JO DARNLEY

FEMINIST READINGS/WRITINGS IN THE ARCHIVE: CO-OPERATIVE WOMAN AND WOMAN'S OUTLOOK IN INTERWAR BRITAIN

This provocation invites the audience to consider how innovative artistic research pays attention to co-operative woman and gender identity represented in the first edition of co-operative movement magazine, *Woman's Outlook*, published by the Co-operative Publishing Society, 1919. Alternative ways of knowing are suggested through feminist praxis entangled with the process of historical analysis and agency of a book art collection.

The collection is a series of collage book art constructed in participatory collaborative workshops in response to woman-edited *Woman's Outlook*. *Woman's Outlook* presents a window into women's everyday lived experience in 1919. Conference workshop participants responded to *Woman's Outlook* by ripping, sticking, marking and transforming the contents into collage pages in Latvia, Hungary, Portugal and the UK, including Feminist Reading 2, University of Leeds, 2016. These individual pages, collated into a series of collaborative book arts, encourage multiple readings across individual interpretations of the magazine.

The process of deconstructing the magazine in collaborative book-making opens new archival spaces, meanings and dialogues. This provocation offers a fresh multi-voiced innovative book-making opportunity to explore how this book art collection, as an interdisciplinary approach to gender identity, can uncover nuanced findings, develop new questions for further research and foster agency for social change.

Jo Darnley is in the second year of an Arts Humanities Research Council Collaborative Doctoral Award, a partnership between the Faculty of Arts and Humanities and the Education and Social Research Institute both at Manchester Metropolitan University and the National Co-operative Archive, Manchester, UK. Primarily, her research seeks to enrich historical analysis of the co-operative movement in interwar Britain. The complexity of gender ideology in a consumer based movement with democratic principles will be examined through the dynamics of women's everyday engagement and through its visual and material culture. It will use gender as a medium through which to encourage contemporary audiences to engage with the archive.

SUSANNA HAST

WORKSHOP: WRITING/THINKIN FROM THE BODY

The small exercise is an adaptation of a method by dance researcher Heli Kauppila in which thinking out loud and moving in space make flesh connect with words. It proceeds in stages: from movement and speech, to writing without judgement, to selecting words, creating an assemblage from the words, and feedback with a partner.

Dr. Susanna Hast is a researcher-artist currently working in the Finnish Centre of Excellence in Russian Studies, Aleksanteri Institute, Helsinki. She is interested in art as a political witness, body as the site of emotion/knowledge, and songwriting as a research practice. Hast is also working with dance in the project InHaLe - InHabiting Language, funded by the Kone Foundation, and she is the media producer of *Politiikasta* journal. www.susannahast.com

JAMIE HERD

FOR INTERRUPTIONS THERE ALWAYS WILL BE...

Bang, bang, bang: that is the sound of my father's imaginary hammer driving the last nail into my mother's coffin, the one that locked her out of my memory. It's actually a silent sound. In the 1990s, I came to feminism in a climate that upheld that the personal is political, but at university, it was best to keep that shit (your personal blah, blah, blah) to yourself. After all, it wasn't about you. This creative piece is a revival because all this research is really about me after all. Perhaps it will sound like stand up comedy. Perhaps it will sound like the jaded tirade of an American feminist in the Trump years. Perhaps it will sound like music to your ears. Whatever it sounds like, it will sound. Bang, bang, bang: "For we think back through our mothers if we are women." Photos of my mother, lines from Alice Walker and Helene Cixous, thoughts and images from Alix Cléo Roubaud, Virginia Woolf and Audre Lorde on interruptions and whatever else I can dig up. Am I like the bird in that Dr. Seuss story Are you my mother? Come and see. Come and listen.

Jamie Herd is a PhD student at University of Paris 8. She is writing her dissertation, " Ecrire pour nourrir : vers une perspective féministe et permaculturelle des œuvres de Marie NDiaye, Jamaica Kincaid et Ken Bugul " under the direction of Anne Berger, that is when she writes, because those three kids have way too much vacation time.

EMILY MADDOX

AUTISM AND GENDER: READING WOMEN'S ONLINE AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL WRITINGS AS A FEMINIST RESISTANCE TO THE DOMINANT DISCOURSE OF AUTISM

Since the beginning of what we now categorise as autism it has been attached to cultural and social understandings of masculinity. In recent years as we move deeper into an understanding of the human being as a 'cerebral subject' autism has become somewhat of a lens through which to find essential sex differences in the brain. Influential research is being conducted in the neuroscientific community which problematically suggests that autism is attached to an essential masculinity. The cost of this attempt to find the new gendered ontology of the self is the loss of a holistic understanding of how autism manifests in women outside of a framework of masculinity or indeed how we might think of masculinity as separate from the male sex. By a consideration of women's experiences and their modes of transmission through the act of writing autobiographical accounts and reading other women's on online forums we find a challenge to the dominant discourse of autism. To use Shoshanna Felman's paraphrasing of Judith Fetterly they are an attempt to 'exorcise the male brain that has been implanted in them'. Within this act of reading and writing women are finding ways to 'become' autistic and create knowledge of the self through what Felman calls the 'bond of reading and writing'. This paper will ultimately consider these autobiographical accounts as a feminist tactic and the act of reading and writing as opening a space in which women can become autistic.

Emily Maddox is a first year PhD student in the School of Sociology and Social Policy, University of Leeds. Having previously studied Critical Theory at the School of Fine Art, History of Art and Culture Studies, Emily's research attempts to draw upon the theoretical work from both disciplines in order to think about how autism is interacting with gender. This pays particular attention to how individuals who identify as women and non-binary understand and create their narratives and ontologies of the self and whether these are influenced by the gendered discourse of autism.

JOANA MATIAS

"BEAUTIFUL WOMEN" IN THE CITY OF MIRRORS: MIAN MIAN'S CANDY, SEXUAL POLITICS, AND FEMINISM

Mian Mian's Candy (Tang), published in mainland China in 2000, is regarded as one of the founding texts of an autobiographical literary phenomenon emblematic of 1990s post-socialist China. Its graphic depictions of sex and drug use warranted a government ban that didn't stop Candy's wide circulation and bestselling status. Most academic discussions on *meinv wenxue* or "beautiful women literature" tend to adopt one of two positions: the books are either subversive and feminist, or commercial and degrading. This dichotomy is simplistic and ignores indigenous Chinese feminist studies on women's literature, media representations of sexuality, and the novel's concern with national identity. To escape this double-bind, I will rely on two main axes of analysis: firstly, Lacanian cultural critic Dai Jinhua's work on *écriture féminine chinoise* and the cultural landscape of the 1990s, and secondly, my research into Taiwanese queer novel *Crystal Boys*, which similarly forges a connection between sexual citizenship and political economy, as well as illustrating Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick's concept of "sexual shame". In this sense, I hope to draw conclusions as to Candy's place in the genealogy of Chinese women's literature, the limits of a feminist analysis that focus on respectability, and the dialogue between Euro-American and Chinese feminist scholarship.

Joana Matias researches queer and women's literature in China and Taiwan.

ELSPETH MITCHELL

WRITING LA JEUNE FILLE: SIMONE DE BEAUVOIR'S SECOND SEX

This paper traces the figure of the girl in *The Second Sex* (1949) as a necessary figure for understanding what it means to 'become woman'. I argue that Simone de Beauvoir's overall significance and philosophical contribution is intimately connected to what she discovered by asking about this moment of feminine becoming. My central contention is that we cannot understand how one 'becomes' woman without first/also undertaking the task of understanding the situation of the girl. Drawing on the new translation of *The Second Sex* by Constance Borde and Sheila Malovany-Chevallier (2010), I first explore the politics of naming 'the girl' or 'la jeune fille' via an analysis of terminology and translation. I then offer a close reading of the chapter entitled 'The Girl'. In so doing, I seek to expand and refine our understanding of Beauvoir's philosophical project in *The Second Sex*; a project which launched a fundamental challenge to the meaning of being and gave rise to the possibility of a feminist philosophy.

Elsbeth Mitchell is a PhD researcher at the School of Fine Art, History of Art and Cultural Studies, University of Leeds, UK. Her doctoral project examines the figure of 'the girl' in the moving image and feminist philosophy. She is associate editor of the journal *parallax* and recently co-convened the second Feminist Readings symposium in 2016. She is also co-director of SPUR, a contemporary arts collective based in the North of England.

CRISTINA MORAR

SARAHK. WHEN DRAWING SUPPLEMENTS WRITING

Still awaiting recognition, Sarah Kofman's work, at the crossroad of reading, writing, and drawing, illustrates one of the most fascinating philosophical gestures in twentieth-century French philosophy. It exemplifies what we take to be the most distinctive aspect of the postmodern movement: the articulation

of a creative and self-transformative call to philosophical practice, and a depersonalizing style of writing. It is little known that parallel to her philosophical writing and teaching, Kofman was a « compulsive » drawer (Boutibonnes, 2010) leaving over 300 drawings, most of which vanished after her death. It is this overlapping of writing and drawing in Kofman's gesture that I would like to discuss here, in light of the literary and autobiographical voices in some of her later texts. They suggest an ambiguous link between the act of drawing and her difficult childhood as a hidden Jewish girl in the Nazi occupied Paris.

Now Sarah Kofman refused for long any autobiographical or feminine identification to her philosophical gesture. Occupied nonetheless with the analyzing of what she calls the 'becoming woman' of male thinkers, such as Kant, Rousseau, Nietzsche or Freud, Kofman brilliantly shows how their discourses were entangled with affective and sexual positions. Significant for our purpose, only one of Kofman's texts includes samples of her drawings, a small conference on Rousseau, firstly pronounced in Derrida's seminar in the beginning of the 1980's. Published in German under the title *Rousseau und die Frauen*, it has gone unnoticed. Now, how is one to read this? Why keep her drawings from the French audience? Is it that this intimate gesture could undermine her legitimacy as an established philosopher still in need of recognition? What does all this tell us about the life of a philosopher when being a woman, particularly in the French context?

Philippe Boutibonnes, « En ce commun effroi... », *Fusées*, n 17, 2010, p. 9-18.

Sarah Kofman, *Rousseau und die Frauen*, Tübingen Rive Gauche, Fuldaer Verlagsanstalt, 1986.

Cristina Morar is a postdoctoral research fellow at the Laboratoire d'Études de Genre et de Sexualité, Paris 8 Vincennes Saint-Denis, with a research project entitled : "The body, the text, the 'woman'. Approaches of femininity by Sarah Kofman and Hélène Cixous". Cristina completed a PhD in political thought at the University of Ottawa in September 2014. By drawing mainly from the works of Emmanuel Levinas and Jacques Derrida, her thesis examines the emergence of a materialist philosophical gesture in contemporary thought. It discusses how their work on language is rooted in their lived experience, giving rise to what she depicts as an "embodied writing" which appears central to their ethical thought. She pursues this interrogation on a bodily and emotional approach to identity, thought and writing in her postdoctoral research on the topics of the 'feminine' and the 'woman' in contemporary French theory. Cristina has published a book chapter building on her thesis discussion of femininity in Levinas and Derrida, and is currently working on several publications examining the connection between issues of femininity, writing and living in the works of Catherine Malabou, Hélène Cixous and Sarah Kofman.

JOANNA NEIL

INTERVIEW WITH SELF PART II

Both my reflection and making of art work was documented with a variety of digital tools, platforms and approaches as a digital auto-ethnography. It concluded with responses to my own questions: 'Interview with self: 12 questions November/December 2016'.

The digital technologies and heightened awareness of my own physicality from this research project, impacted on, and influenced my practice in unexpected ways; a recent presentation included a monologue performed as dialogic reflection. The desire to develop the performative in my practice further, is in part to seek out a space where practice and research become inseparable, but also to feel empowered from finding alternatives to the ingrained conventions of displaying work and gaining acceptance.

'Interview with Self Part II' is a response and extension to the dialogic reflection documented from the questions in Part I. The performance is a response to a pre-recorded art work that prompts a live dialogic

conversation. Although elements are pre-determined and scripted, there is room for new practice to emerge, through the process and experience of performing. The performance seeks to explore how audience as well as technology, can facilitate in depth reflection on practice, in a space where reflection becomes the practice.

Joanna Neil is currently working on her PhD at the University of Glasgow. She is based in the school of Education where she is bringing together her research interests: Arts practice, Education and Technology. She is interested in what can be made visible by reflecting and re-seeing through different media and using digital auto-ethnography as a methodology to do this. A recent Digital auto-ethnographic research project: <https://drawnconversation.wordpress.com/> enabled her to record her making process and personal reflections using a headcam, video and audio recordings. The technologies documented her practice but also led to interesting ways to make new work including 'spoken drawings' and using film as part of her practice. This project has fed into research with undergraduate art and design students who have experimented with their own digital auto-ethnographic approaches through the 'Seeing Practice' project: <https://seeingpracticeblog.wordpress.com/>. Joanna teaches drawing, research methodologies, reflective practice and textiles at University Centre, Blackburn College. Drawing is central to her practice, happily moving from pen to sewing machine to digital voice recorder and more recently to performance to explore this. Her research blog: <https://feltlikeit.wordpress.com/> documents several finished and in progress projects.

JONNA NUMMELA

FAILURE AS A FEMINIST ACT

In this paper I talk about failure as a comedic and feminist tool used in questioning norms of success in the context of performing arts and creative activism. Following Jack Halberstams's theory on failure in their book "Queer Art of Failure" I use Finnish Loldiers of Odin clown activists as a topical example of performative failures and explore the links between clown, feminism and activism. I propose that it is the creative use of failure that has made Loldiers of Odin effective grassroots activists.

Before presenting the paper, I perform a short clown act, part of my performance art project Single Mother Earth that deals with the theme of failure and motherhood through performance.

Jonna Nummela. I'm a first year post-graduate student at Gender Studies masters' programme at University of Helsinki. I have a decade long career in performing arts, seven of which were spent living and working in the United Kingdom. In 2014 I received my BA (Hons) at Royal Central School of Speech and Drama in London. My bachelor's dissertation was a performance analysis on stand-up comedian Simon Amstell's show Do Nothing in relation to Foucault's theory on Western man as a "confessing animal". Both in my artistic and academic work I'm interested in humour, comedy and failure as feminist narratives. Alongside of my post-graduate studies I work as a freelance writer, performer and creative facilitator.

SARA NYMAN, MARI LINDMAN & SALLA PELTONEN

READING, WRITING AND THINKING WITH VALERIE SOLANAS

In reading one of the, perhaps, most outrageous texts feminism has produced, namely The SCUM manifesto by Valerie Solanas we ask how questions of feminism, politics and philosophy are intertwined in the text. We investigate the ways in which Solanas takes on what we call the "grammar of patriarchy",

through her writing, style and voice. We argue that the manifesto provides us with philosophical insights, similar to those of thinkers such as Nietzsche, Butler, Adorno and De Beauvoir.

S.C.U.M Manifesto is a challenging and difficult text to read, because of its style, its words, its affects. It teases out our gut reactions, it leaves no one untouched. Teaching the text over the years has taught us the importance of, and the difficulty of, suspending judgment. In the manifesto, which is an affective, political, unapologetic, perhaps unsophisticated text, style becomes political. The conventions of philosophical writing, not to speak of feminist academic writing, are challenged. Solanas, the social protagonist as she referred to herself, we argue, brings us right into the heart of the matter of feminism, politics and philosophy. But she also shows us through her writing that the philosophical value in the manifesto lies in her descriptions of the patriarchy. She doesn't need another language or theory to think with: she trusts the reader and she trusts language; she trusts us to know what concepts, such as 'contempt' 'hope' and 'love' mean.

The manifesto focuses on questions of human life, death, hope, change, frustration, anger and love. In reading the manifesto we are not advancing an argument or a thesis about the manifesto, as much as approaching the text by asking what philosophical relevance the text can offer. There is a sense in which the manifesto speaks to us, that contemporary feminist theory does not, a sense we hope to be able to convey to you in our presentation on reading, writing and thinking with Valerie Solanas.

Sara Nyman, (BA), philosophy, free-lance writer with an interest in feminism, politics and philosophy.

Mari Lindman, PhD (philosophy) is a freelance-writer whose research interests range from work/labor, to feminism and moral philosophy.

Salla Peltonen is a phd student (Gender Studies, Åbo Akademi University), writing her dissertation on critique and epistemic habits in feminist theory. Currently she is a visiting scholar at PAL (centre for Philosophy, Arts and Culture), Duke University. Focusing on questions of epistemology, language philosophy and ethics, her research interests include critical gender and queer theory, theories of sexual difference, post-humanism, human-animal studies, and feminist philosophy. Her work is inspired by wittgensteinian language and moral philosophy more broadly. She has recently published two articles together with her colleague Katarina Jungar on savior narratives and homonationalist discourses in the Nordic countries, published in *Sexualities* and *NORMA – Nordic Journal of Masculinity Studies*.

LOTTA PALMGREN

STANDING STILL: WALKING INTERVIEWS AND POETIC SPATIAL INQUIRY

In this hybrid poem, the voices of four teenaged girls, a thirty-six year old feminist scholar, a shopping mall, several different bodies and scholars on place and walking interviews share space and rhythms. Drawing on data generated during interviews with four teenaged girls about their relationships to a shopping mall in Turku, Finland, the author examine (walking) interviews as a method and power structures related to movement and non-movement, interviewer and interviewee, as well as inclusion and exclusion. Utilizing Lefebvre's rhythm analysis, this experimental, poetic and reflexive spatial inquiry aims to show tensions related to the place where the research is conducted.

During the symposium, and related to my poem, I am especially interested in discussing knowledge production and the politics of knowledge in writing practices. Can the hybrid poem be understood as multi-voiced research? What ways are there to discuss and problematize power structures within writing and feminist research?

Lotta (Ann-Charlotte Palmgren) is postdoctoral researcher in Gender Studies at Åbo Akademi University, Finland. Her scholarship focuses on girlhood, urban space, embodiment and internet culture. She received her MA in Nordic Ethnology and her PhD in Gender Studies from Åbo Akademi University. She is also an active slam poet.

CLAIRE PAULIAN

WORKSHOP: THE MANY VOICES OF THE SHUTTLE

The workshop is inspired by a feminist article that has been very important in my own research on Ovid, a Roman poet from the first century. This article, written by Patricia Klindienst in 1979, has been reedited many times in American. It is entitled « The voice of the shuttle is ours » and it deals with the myth of Philomela as well as with the issues encountered by feminist writing in the academic field. This can be heard in the title "The voice of the shuttle is ours", where the word 'ours' first refers to the women who inherit the lost voices of former women, instead of referring to a universal subject, as in this quotation ; "in celebrating the voice of the shuttle as ours, we celebrate [...] Philomela weaving, the woman artist who in recovering her own voice uncovers not only its power, but its potential to transform revenge (violence) into resistance (peace)"

The second part of the workshop consists of a short writing exercise dealing with the notions of myth, language, and sisterhood.

LILY ROBERT-FOLEY

SPECULATIVE THEORY IN AFROFUTURIST AND FEMINIST SCIENCE FICTION

The hierarchical binary of theory and creation finds echoes in many power inflected binaries, within the institution and without. One such binary in literary studies is the one structuring theory and fiction, specifically in the traditional (valid, accepted, publishable) model of the Academic article, wherein a theoretical apparatus is "defined" and then "applied" onto a textual object such as a work of literature, an opus, or a corpus selected to align itself with such predetermined theoretical desires. This can easily be seen in the chronology of many academic articles on literature: theory first, creation second.

This relationship is of course also gendered. This gendering is perhaps most obvious in the selected corpuses. Works of literature by female authors may be "validated" in reference to a male canon, submitted to the theoretical lasers of Knowledge authorities. The same dichotomy can be found in references to theoretical authorities deployed to validate or even "raise up" subaltern or post-colonial literatures.

In this paper, I seek to invert the uneven vector of this relationship, focusing particularly on the theoretical potential of certain notions from afrofuturist and feminist science fiction. A few of these notions I've identified so far include:

- AI and ancillary subjectivities in Anne Leckie's Imperial Radch space opera trilogy.
- Orogeny in NK Jemisin's The Broken Earth trilogy
- Farfetching in Le Guin's Hainish Cycle.
- Apocalypse, utopia, the company store and the destiny of the stars in selected works by Octavia Butler.

- Probability mechanics in Joanna Russ's *The Female Man*

This paper marks the beginning of a larger project reading the canon on translational procedures and rhetorical figures through the lens of afrofuturist and feminist science fiction.

Finally, one does not invert such an inherent structure without upsetting other dearly held laws of theoretical literary research. This paper will not only read and identify the notions listed above, and others found in the meantime, but will explore possibilities for creating its own speculative-theoretical-afrofuturist-feminist-fictocritical world.

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ELINA SALORANTA

VOICES OF CONSOLATION

My contribution consists of the screening of my video piece *Voices of Consolation* (9mins30 secs) and a ten minute talk in which I introduce an essay based on it ("*Lohdutusten arkisto*" / "*An Archive of Consolation*"). Both the video and the essay can be seen as pieces of experimental research writing.

The video's image track shows interior paintings by the Danish artist Vilhelm Hammershøi (1864–1916). On the soundtrack a group of artists and researchers are trying to console the black-clad woman seen in the paintings. In the essay I describe the process of making the piece. The essay's structure reflects the video: the text is like an apartment with several rooms.

The video and the essay have been published in *Ruukku*, a multidisciplinary journal on artistic research (<http://ruukku-journal.fi/fi/issues/4>). For the moment the text exists only in Finnish, but it will be translated into English and published as part of my doctoral thesis in autumn 2017. The direct link to the article is <https://www.researchcatalogue.net/view/136425/136426>).

The video can be viewed also on the website of AV-arkki, the Distribution Center for Finnish Media Art (<http://www.av-arkki.fi/en/works/voices-of-consolation/>).

Elina Saloranta is a visual artist interested in words. She works mainly with film and video, which she has studied at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago (MFA 2001). Currently she is a doctoral candidate at the University of the Arts Helsinki, Academy of Fine Arts. Her essays have been published in the *Journal for Artistic Research* (<http://www.jar-online.net/index.php/issues/view/480>), *Lähikuva* (3/ 2013) and *Ruukku* (<http://ruukku-journal.fi/issues/2> and <http://ruukku-journal.fi/issues/4>). Her video pieces can be seen on the website of AV-arkki, the Distribution Centre for Finnish Media Art (http://www.av-arkki.fi/en/artists/elina-saloranta_en/).

AURA SEVÓN

THE HYBRID AND MULTIVOICED PRACTICES OF FEMINIST WRITING AND LITERARY ACTIVISM

Both Hélène Cixous and Lola Lafon, two quite different French-language authors, have combined multiple genres in their writing, creating styles that cross many borders and can be characterized *entre autres* as "hybrid" and "multivoiced".

Inspired by these two, I have also made a few experiments: what happens when you combine such genres as essay and review – pamphlet and short story – fairy tale and non-fiction – punk and opera? Or when you translate or write with other, even several other people?

Can "hybrid" or "multivoiced" writing styles defy certain ideals of the occidental patrilinear literary canon, such as for instance unity, uniformity and homogeneity? Can such writings disturb "the white malestream" seriously? – laughably? – or in some very other ways?

Mitä se liikuttaa, ketä se liikuttaa?

Can it change something in our thinking/reading/writing habits? What kind of movements can it bring to the world?

Aura Sevón is a full-time feminist literary activist working as a literary translator, writer, freelance copy editor and PhD researcher interested in experimental feminist aesthetics.

LENKA VRÁBLIKOVÁ

BACK TO FEMINIST UTOPIAS: REVISITING WRITINGS OF DRUCILLA CORNELL

Feminist scholars, such as Claire Hemmings (2010), Tuija Pulkkinen (2015) and Robyn Wiegman (2012), have argued that if we are to envision feminism's futures, we need to change how we articulate feminism's history and present. This paper seeks to answer this call both on a literal and a theoretical level by revisiting writings by Drucilla Cornell. In her work, Cornell wrestles with the problematic of how our current practices can open rather than foreclose a more just future. In order to frame the ethical relationship as 'aporetic' and grasp its complex non-linear temporality, Cornell, employs concepts such as 'the feminine', 'the imaginary domain', 'sexual difference beyond duality', and 'the utopic'.

Drawing on Cornell's work, the paper proposes we pursue and complicate 'feminist utopias' by reconsidering sexual difference in relation to ethics. I argue that considering transformative possibility and ethical significance of sexual difference beyond duality, that is, of sexual difference as a movement which cannot be enclosed in any taxonomy, will allow us to theoretically articulate and practice resistance against the sexist and racist manifestations of androcentrism which underlies not only Western jurisprudence and legal practice but societies at a larger scale.

Lenka Vrábliková is a PhD candidate in Cultural Studies at the University of Leeds, United Kingdom. She works in the fields of feminist theory, deconstruction and psychoanalysis and currently finishes her PhD Thesis entitled *Tremendous Pedagogies: Feminist Theory, Deconstruction and the University*. Her article 'From Performativity to Aporia: Taking Tremendous Responsibilities towards Feminism and the University' was published in journal *Gender and Education* in 2016. Lenka is a co-editor of *parallax*, an international journal in cultural studies, critical theory and philosophy.

ALIA ZAPPAROVA

ON WAITING, LEAVING, AND OTHER ABSENCES: NOTHING AS ARTISTIC PRACTICE

The filmmaker Chantal Akerman once said, when describing her work: 'there's nothing to mull over, my father would say, there's nothing to say, my mother would say. And it is on this nothing that I work'. The writer and artist Etel Adnan, writing about Penelope as an embodiment of a woman in our culture whose role is to wait, wrote that 'for the waiting to be perfect, she must produce nothing lasting with her hands.' My presentation considers this nothing, which exists as a legacy and on which we must work, while also producing nothing –or nothing recognisable as significant within a structure that acknowledges only certain types of effort and achievement, where temporality must be productive in specific ways in order to count.

I explore writing and artistic practice as a practice of unlearning and undoing, by focusing on various modes of un-and not-being: not writing, silences, producing nothing, working on nothing; the suspended gesture, the unfinished sentence, the omission, the pause. Based on my recent artistic work dealing with various forms of non-productive temporality in the everyday (habit, waiting, leaving), I aim to articulate a knowledge and practice of nothing and suggest a possibility that it can be a form of feminist practice and thought.

Alia Zapparova is a visual artist. She was born in Moscow and lives in London. She holds MA degrees in philosophy and photography. She makes books and installations composed of photographs; her subject matter is the everyday at the limit of its perceptibility.